Disenchanted Conscription: A Military Recruitment System in Need of Justification

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"Conscription: It's had its day."
Economist (Feb. 10, 1996)

The *Economist's* point of view is a widely shared one. It also seems warranted by current trends in policy-making in developed democracies. The US, the UK, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Spain, and Portugal have abolished or are phasing out conscription.[2] Even France, mother of citizens armies through the revolutionary *levée en masse*, just saw (literally as the event was broadcasted as a main feature of the evening television news) its last conscript leave the armed forces. The Nordic countries and Germany have not abolished conscription, but conscripts make up a shrinking share of the armed forces[3], which governments plan to shrink even further. For many observers this confirms that they simply lag behind. They will soon be brought to reason and abolish conscription. But this is a simplistic understanding of what determines the fate of conscription.

There are no technical or economic imperatives which *a priori* exclude continued reliance on conscription. Technology has to be controlled and used by people and in war situations greater numbers of foot-soldiers than planned tend to be needed.[4] Moreover, there is no necessary link between conscription and everyone serving. Classically understood conscription refers to "the common writing down of eligible names for the purpose of a ballot, with only the unlucky numbers having to serve".[5] Third, there is no contradiction between conscription and military competence. Most armies – including those based on conscription – have professional cadres. One of the key arguments made *for keeping* (in Russia) or for introducing (in the US) conscription is that it facilitates recruiting qualified professionals. Finally, it is impossible to make any general judgement about the relative costs of conscription to its alternatives. These depend on what kind of conscription is practised, how many are called to serve, and on what terms as compared to an equally wide range of alternatives. In clear, conscription can be shaped to suit the needs of the

armed forces and hence cannot simply be written off on technical or economic grounds.

Consequently, the fate of conscription is *not* primarily a matter of how militarily or economically efficient conscription is (as one would think reading most present discussions on the issue). Of course, these considerations are important. Conscription might be criticised for not fulfilling minimal criteria of economic and military efficiency. Moreover, the changing nature of war is a main reason for the disenchantment with conventional myths about conscription. However, as long as conscription is a legitimate social and political institution, this kind of criticism will produce reform proposals and might lead to profound changes in the practice of conscription. But if conscription is held to be a viable and legitimate institution, it will not be abolished. In other words, the fate of conscription (the decision to keep or abolish it) as – opposed to its shape (how conscription is practised) – depends on how conscription fares as a social and political institution, how legitimate it is understood to be, that is, how enchanting the "myths" about it are.[6]

The reason a growing number of countries are abolishing conscription is therefore *not* the changing nature of war *per se*, but the growing disenchantment with the myths justifying conscription. The old myths about the social functions of conscription ring hollow and new ones have to be invented and credible if the system is to be continued. The article makes this point first at a general level by showing why the myths that traditionally made conscription meaningful no longer do so. It then proceeds to show that the significance of this overall change for the fate of conscription in any specific context depends on exactly how the overall myths have been articulated. To make this point the article relies on the contrast between the French abolition of conscription and the Swedish reform of it.

1. Conscripting for the Construction of Community

A recent work on the Norwegian defence tradition argues that conscription has become an aim in itself. It is an institution simply assumed

to be good and worthwhile preserving. The reasons why are mostly unarticulated. When they are articulated they have little or nothing to do with military efficiency.[7] The legitimation of conscription outside the strictly military sphere is far from uniquely Norwegian. Rather, in most contexts conscription is legitimated with reference to its virtues in constructing community, and not on strictly military grounds. Just as war and conflict more generally has often been argued to be constitutive of community, so by analogy has conscription.[8] It is argued to be important for integrating society, for forming polities, for ensuring civilian states and for controlling the use of violence in society. These arguments do not reflect the role conscription "really" played historically, nor have they weighed equally in all contexts. But the legitimation of conscription in western democracies is derived from (variations on) these myths. At present profound changes in the way Western democracies understand society, politics, the state and violence has led to a growing disenchantment with the traditional myths justifying conscription. For many conscription has become outmoded, inadequate and unwanted. If this becomes the dominant position, conscription might indeed have had its day.

a. Integrating diverse, multicultural societies

The first conventional myth justifying conscription is that it works to construct a more closely knit society. Through conscription social groups are brought into contact with each other. They are forced to interact directly in ways they might not otherwise have. Particularly historically, when personal movement and information flows were far more limited than at present, conscription is argued to have provided a direct way for conscripts to learn about each others habits, language, world views, and understanding. They got to know the national community. They got a wider view than that of their own village on who was part of that community and what the other participants actually looked like. They got a sense of the realities, hierarchies, and problems that might have existed elsewhere. But conscripts also got an understanding of the social life outside their own community. They would take part in traditions and social events where they were stationed. They might even marry, cementing the social links more

permanently. More than simply a meeting place, conscription has often been portrayed as promoting social mobility. Conscription gave an opportunity for young people of modest means to get into a career, perhaps even to make it to the top of society, by advancing in the military or by using specialised skills they learnt there outside the military.

This myth is silent on the crucial question of who is part of society, which social groups are integrated (and excluded), and how effectively, by conscription. However, it relies on two assumptions. First, conscription has only ever concerned men. It has not (and is not) "universal" enough to encompass women, Israel being a notorious and ambiguous exception.[9] Its social integrative nature rests on the unarticulated idea, fundamental to much political thinking, that men are the actors in the public realm.[10] The second assumption made is that society stops at the border. Conventionally, the integration has been thought of mainly in terms of overcoming class and/or regional divisions – within the national borders. Both assumptions are questioned by fundamental changes in the way that Western societies think about themselves.

First, feminism has become influential both politically and culturally in Western societies.[11] This has created awareness that "universal" conscription, even at its peak, covered no more than 50% of the population (males). But perhaps more profoundly it has lead to a revision of traditional gender roles, of the status of the family and the central role of men in taking the lead of the family's public life. This in itself makes the idea that "social integration" can work exclusively through men far less persuasive than it might have been in the past. This is even more the case as together with the rise of feminism there has also come an awareness of the importance of gender and gendered constructions of identities. The gay and lesbian movements have strongly demanded both recognition and rights, but also the end of practices which reinforce identities constructions. The result is strong pressure on armed forces to adapt. Indeed, according to the military sociologist Charles Moskos the full integration of women, the acceptance of homosexuals and removal of the role of spouses will become a defining characteristics of the "post-modern military".[12] But that integration is not yet there and for the time being, the consequence of these changes is a

decreasing acceptance of a myth presenting conscription as a site for societal integration.

A second sea change in the way that societies are conceived is the increased contestation of the relevance of national boundaries for the delimitation of societies. That delimitation has always been problematic of course. Minorities have demanded (and to varying degrees obtained) special status and treatment and rights in the armed forces. However, the difficulty of dealing with the matter has increased. Diversity, identity politics and multiculturalism are seen as positive and justified by a substantial share of the population and policy-makers in Western countries. The majority culture can no longer unashamedly claim to do a civilizing favour when it pushes others to assimilate. Moreover, societies are increasingly transnational. Migrants, but also their friends and neighbours are not necessarily members only – or even mainly – of a society delimited by the borders of the state. Their society might span several states; as does that of the Kurdish immigrants in Sweden or that of their Swedish friends. Moreover, the expansion of social and political agendas to include issues which are inherently transnational such as the environment, universal human rights, or gender relations has resulted in a growing number of persons who do not think that the society of closest concern to them corresponds to that contained within the boundaries of the state where they live.[13]

The understanding of society as gendered and multicultural pose any presentation of conscription as an important institution for integrating societies with a number of concrete questions to answer. At its most restricted and banal, there are questions about how to deal with the myriad of practical problems including everything from how to plan meals, which holidays to grant, how to construct toilets, showers, and dormitories and how to organise training so that religious and sexual identities are respected.[14] But the development also raises more fundamental issues. One issue is to what extent women, homosexuals, dual and foreign citizens should be conscripted. Should they also be required to do military service, and if yes, on what terms? Morever, if the idea is that conscription should work to integrate society and create opportunities for social mobility, the

entire range of issues of how to promote those (women, minority groups, homosexuals) who are disadvantaged by the traditions of the armed forces – as well as by their position in society as a whole – arise. How is it possible to motivate and support these groups in seeking advancement? To what extent is there a need for positive discrimination in recruitment and career procedures? These are questions which are no easier to answer in the armed forces than they are in society at large. But the myth that conscription is essential for social integration has to provide answers of sorts, or it will simply lack credibility.

b. Conscription, new military humanism, and polity formation

A second myth enchanting conscription has presented it as forming loyal and virtuous citizens either because of its effect on the individual or because of its role as a "school of the nation". Neither idea can carry its conventional weight in a context where war mostly takes place in far away locations, usually without the involvement of conscripts, and where the armed forces offer education mainly for those who choose to engage as professionals.

The classical way of linking military service and the formation of polities is to point to the relationship between martial and civic virtues as a close one. Military service makes for virtuous, self-sacrificing and less corrupted individuals who can be contrasted with ordinary citizens used to the comfort of peaceful life. Moreover, military service is held forth as an institution which demands that members of a polity be loyal to the community and to its values, rather than to the traditional ones of family, or clan.[15] Hence, conscription is argued to have been fundamental in tilting the balance towards the more abstract values of the polity. It tied the individual to the state by placing the responsibility of military service on him. More generally it worked to sediment loyalties to the polity by demanding of conscripts that they be willing to die for this abstract loyalty and by demanding of families and relatives that they be willing to accept this. The "Athenian" city state model has often been invoked (somewhat mistakenly[16]) as a precursor illustrating the beneficial effects of conscription.

A less classical version of the myth presents conscription as forming polities by educating them. As the French captain Lyautey explained at the end of the 19th Century: "To tomorrows officers, you must say that if they have placed their ideals in a career of wars and adventures, it is not with us that they should pursue it: they will no longer find it there... Instead give them the promising conception of the modern role of the officer who has become the educator of the entire nation".[17] Here conscription works as a "school of the nation". This is true in a general sense where conscription becomes a fundamental vehicle for the transmission of "official nationalism" and for the creation of the "imagined community" of the nation.[18] Civic and historical education is often a formal requirement for conscripts. In Turkey e.g. this is such a central part of the military service that even those who buy themselves out have to make a three months basic service which is designed largely as an intensive course in national history. But conscription also works as a school of the nation in a more technical sense. Conscription has brought basic educational skills (technical, language, or cultural) to conscripts who need it for their service. Tilly draws a close link between the development of universal educational systems and the needs of the army for more adequately trained conscripts.[19] In many countries the military educational institutions (particularly those set up in the course of the 18th and 19th Centuries) have been among the most prestigious, particularly in areas of technical knowledge.[20] At present both versions of the myth seem anachronistic.

Disregarding the decreasing numbers actually asked to do military service, even those who do military service often do so at a distance from combat. This breaks the link between conscription and virtuous citizens which would work via the experience of war and the development of martial values. The main reason for this de-linking is the growing importance of international operations and the development of the new military humanism. Conscripts are usually excluded from these operations as it is difficult to justify involving conscripts in these operations far from home. Moreover, the Revolution in Military Affairs and the blurring of the lines between the police and the armed forces accentuate trends set in motion by the development of nuclear weapons: the increased importance

of specialised training combined with the decreasing importance of masses of men and, consequently, a decreasing involvement of conscripts in operations. This makes it more difficult to sustain arguments to the effect that conscription plays a role in shaping virtuous citizens loyal to the community. In a situation where conscripts are no longer asked to fight, reference to these ideas are largely irrelevant. The consequence is that the "curious combination of rationalist disbelief in the utility of conscription with an attraction to military service for its moral virtues, embodies an ambivalence"[21] which is no longer a simple ambivalence: it has become a deep through which can not be filled by the argument that even if conscripts do not fight, they still learn about war and martial values.

Similarly, the idea that conscription is important in shaping polities by working as a "school of the nation" rings hollow. It takes considerable imagination to picture the armed forces as a key site of national(ist) education in a context where the weight of other social institutions – media, films, books travelling, but most centrally the role of the compulsory civic educational system – is so clearly more important. This is broadly confirmed by studies showing that conscription has little or no impact on political attitudes and the understanding of the nation.[22] Moreover, conscription is no longer important for education. Basic education is offered outside the armed forces and more specialised education is reserved for those who engage professionally, not for conscripts. The consequence is that the general myth about conscription as serving the formation of loyal citizens seems in need of revision.

Finally and perhaps most fundamentally, the very idea that the military should and could play a role in forming polities and virtuous citizens sits uneasily with democratic understandings of civic virtue and the nature of polity. Military education inculcates conscripts not only with civic virtue but also with classical military virtues which are distant from the understanding of civic virtue which informs much contemporary thinking. Any attempt to construe the military as playing a central role in shaping civic virtue would have to be very clear on how precisely this is done and how it can avoid to reproduce strongly gendered constructions of national identities and polities.

c. Conscription, civilian states, and the rights exchange

This leads to a third myth about conscription: its significance for the construction of civilian institutions and institutional processes for managing political life. The idea is that there is a link between conscription and the expansion of individual rights, the development of civil and later democratic states. But also this link is tenuous at present as the understanding of citizenship and the entitlement of rights is far removed from one where these are exchanged for military service.

One can package the idea that conscription is important for building civilian states as a bargain between civilian institutions and conscription. In Giddens' formulation: "If the sovereign state is inherently a polyarchic order, in which citizenship rights are the 'price paid' by the dominant class for the means of exercising its power, citizenship in turn implies acceptance of the obligations of military service [....] The nation-state and the mass army appear together, the twin tokens of citizenship within territorially bordered political communities."[23] The widely recognised waste of human lives tied to conscription and the related long history of desertions, mutinies, and testimonies from war periods make it amply clear that citizens have – often unwillingly – paid a high price for the development of citizens armies.[24] It also makes plain that the state has had to offer something in exchange for this. The idea is that "precisely because they were conscripted, citizens confidently insisted on certain rights from their states, rights that were more easily articulated and defended because of increased (state provided) education and growing self-identification as members of a national community."[25]

The idea of a bargain exchanging military service for citizen rights sits uncomfortably with current understandings of citizenship. The development of the welfare-state and its legitimacy is far less grounded in the armed forces and defence against outside threats and much more in its functional capacity to provide welfare services. War is lived and thought of as distant and unlikely. We have gone through a demilitarisation of our understanding of politics. Death and violence have been banished from public life.[26] Arguably we have witnessed a general "demilitarisation" of everyday life as well as of national and international politics and this has added to the

decreasing importance and lower priority given to military and defence matters as compared to other aspects of social life.[27] This makes it far more difficult than in the past to sustain the idea that the military is essential for the survival of the polity and military service a sacrifice in its name. It is as if "war and more generally military activity (since conscription is about learning about war not necessarily waging it) and the horizon of violence and death that both necessarily evoke, could no longer constitute feasible means for the mobilisation around the military service."[28]

The consequence is that citizenship is increasingly conceived of as something one is born with and not something one has to pay for by serving the military. Duties to the state are more likely to be conceived in terms of paying taxes or actively participating in politics (expressed by the compulsory voting clause in vigour in many countries). In fact, *refusing* to serve the military (if it demands morally indefensible acts) might be perceived as something the citizen owes the army and the state. Indeed, one of the main West European armed forces – the German one – is trained on the understanding that soldiers have a duty not only to obey orders, but also to have the courage to refuse them.[29] Arguably this is a more general trend, particularly strong in states with an authoritarian past. In Spain e.g., democratisation has led to a de-legitimation of the armed forces associated with Franco rule and has made conscientious objection legitimate and widespread to an extent which eventually lead to the abolition of conscription.[30] The understanding of "the citizen soldier" is undergoing profound transformations. The good citizen soldier is no longer virtuously and unquestioningly obeying orders to defend the state and the nation. These trends are reflected in the way that conscription is legitimized and its social functions evoked. The traditional ties between citizenship and military service are clearly weakened. "Western European citizens have increasingly sought to retain and even extend their citizenship rights without incurring the obligation of traditional military service".[31]

d. Controlling violence and armies in post-military society

A final myth about conscription – no less problematic than the preceding three – is its centrality for the control over the use of force in

society. One can advance this claim on psychological grounds. There is a supposedly innate, unchanging need of men (especially young ones) to act violently which has to be given an outlet under as controlled forms as possible. Thus, an idea frequently evoked in various guises is that "no system has been better suited to give young men an outlet for the excess aggressions and violent tendencies under delimited, safe conditions than conscription."[32] However, one can also construct the myth that conscription has played a central role in controlling the use of violence in society by focussing on its significance for the state.

Conscription can be construed as central for the nationalisation of the control over the use of violence, that is for the public claim to control the use of violence. One of the main reasons for rulers to rely on conscription was that it made them less dependent on the "whores of war".[33] Creating standing armies, that is nationalizing and taking authority away from private actors, was the obvious way of wrestling control away from unreliable private actors. However, private armed forces were cheaper to hire for states (they only had to be paid when used) and filling their ranks was not an issue for states. However, with the nationalisation of military means, issues of cost and the need to fill the ranks became important considerations. Conscription was then held up as an answer of sorts, and citizens armies gained credence and legitimacy as alternatives to privately controlled forces.[34]

Standing national armies create the disquieting prospect that the armed forces might become a dominant actor in politics. This evokes a second myth about why that conscription is important for controlling the use of violence in society: it is important to control the use of force by the armed forces. Conscription provides an anchor tying the armed forces to society and reducing the risk that it turns into an uncontrollable source of violence. Indeed, the constant presence of conscripts makes it more difficult for the armed forces to develop values which differ radically from those prevailing in society. The conscripts' broad social base will make sure that the army does not become a hermetically closed institution. When parts of the armed forces are tempted to interfere in politics, conscripts may prevent them, as did the French conscripts and junior officers when their superiors

tried to stage a coup in April 1961 (in reaction to de Gaulle's policy in Algeria). But of course there is no guarantee that this works as illustrated by the large number of coups carried out by conscript armies. The idea can even be turned on its head. Conscripts can be seen as importing social and political conflicts into the armed forces, which are politicised and may be pushed to interfere with politics.[35] This is a conventional argument for claiming that professional soldiers pose a more limited threat to politics than broad based conscription armies.[36]

Both myths have lost much of their enchanting capacity. One reason for this is that they suffer from a lack of relevance in Western society. Ideas about innate drives (including of young males to be violent), though still defended by some, no longer go uncontested after decades of identity politics and the related discussions about the multiplicity and complexity of gendered identities. More than this, even if there are clear signs that a reprivatisation of military means may be under way[37], public control is for the time being relatively unproblematic in Western democracies. It is therefore rather irrelevant that conscripts may be important for ensuring the state's claim to monopolize the legitimate use of force. Instead contemporary discussion has largely concerned how to make the state monopoly less costly to society. In that debate, there is no unambiguous and widely accepted evidence that conscription can play a positive role.

Conscription is also of dubious importance when it comes to anchoring the armed forces in society. The reduced number of conscripts actually serving makes it difficult to argue that conscription fills an important social function anchoring the armed forces in society and controlling violence. Anyone arguing that the army is linked back to, controlled by, and representing society through the presence of conscripts seems out of touch with reality. The degree to which conscripts could control or influence their superiors has always been in doubt. In a situation where conscripts are ceasing to be significant even numerically, it is even more so. Rather, the numerical reduction of the conscripts actually called to serve is creating a new legitimation problem. The military service now hits "only the unlucky few". Perhaps this would not be too serious, were it not that the supposedly universal and egalitarian conscription systems have loopholes of varying –

but steadily growing – size which make it easier for the socially privileged and well educated to escape service, or at least its less pleasant aspects.[38]

Consequently, it is hard to claim that conscription constitutes a real bond between the community and the army, an anchor which would allow the community to influence the culture within the armed forces and perhaps more directly to prevent it from acting against the interests of community. But more than this, conscription is increasingly argued to work in the direction of splitting and dividing communities: it is an unjust burden disproportionally placed on the weaker in society. These are challenges that anyone trying to justify conscription on the basis that it provides an anchor for the armed forces in society has to confront.

The difficulties of keeping conscription enchanted and legitimate are nowhere more obvious than in the ongoing discussions about conscription. The critique of the non-military arguments in favour of conscription is omnipresent. Relatedly, those who wish to argue in favour of conscription are turning away from social and political arguments and instead focus on economic and military efficiency. The key pieces in their argumentation are the lower cost of conscription, its importance for filling the ranks of the armed forces and for recruiting qualified personnel. The trouble with these arguments is that they are hard to mobilise around. They are ultimately inconclusive since both conscription and its alternatives can be indefinitely reshaped and redefined. But more significantly, they do not answer the big questions about why conscription is an important social and political institution. They cannot re-enchant conscription.

2. Swedish Reform and the French Devolution: Understanding the Fate of Conscription

In both Sweden and France conscription has deep roots. However, while Sweden still has a conscription system, it was abolished in France in 1997. The most common reading of the contrasting fate of conscription in the two contexts is that France has already taken a path that Sweden will soon follow. This reading is mechanistic and simplistic. There has been no

shortage of defenders and critics of conscription in politics as well as in the armed forces in either context. In order to understand why opposite sides prevailed in the discussion, it is necessary to have a closer look at the arguments they had at their disposal and why they managed to impose these arguments. More specifically, this section follows up the preceding analysis and argues that to understand the contrasting fate of conscription it is necessary to look at the myths which give/gave conscription meaning in the two countries. It is necessary to explain why similar myths fared differently when challenged in similar ways. In France the articulate, precise and clear understanding of the myths surrounding conscription produced well defined criteria for assessing the legitimacy of conscription. When the French military service performed badly according to these criteria, the very clarity and centrality of these criteria made reform difficult. The reform of French conscription was paradoxically enough hampered by the centrality of conscription in the republican tradition. Inversely, in Sweden, the fact that justification was and is vaguely articulated, largely intuitive, and very imprecise makes it easier to reform old myths by inventing new criteria for judging their validity or simply not having to refer to any criteria at all.

a. State, nation, and conscription in Sweden and France

When exactly to date the beginning of conscription in Sweden and France is unclear. Some draw it back to the middle ages, some to the absolutist states, others to the Napoleonic wars, and some turn it into a specifically modern phenomenon starting 1901 in Sweden and 1905 in France.[39] This lack of clarity is indicative of the many attempts to use the socially and politically charged institution of conscription for a variety of purposes. Indeed in both France and Sweden conscription has been inscribed in most of the contradictory and conflicting accounts of the state, the nation and their relations to the people.

In France, the "*creuset de la nation*" (the melting pot of the nation) has been so central that Chevènement (former socialist, minister in several governments) could declare when its abolition was announced that he suspected the government of "simply organising the end of France".[40] Chevènement's suspicion was certainly not shared by everyone, even if

similar statements abound. But the fact that he made it public without fear of ridicule is indicative of the centrality of the institution. This is also reflected in the fact that up until 1996, a comfortable majority of the French declared in repeated opinion polls that they wanted the system preserved.[41] Similarly, in the Swedish context conscription was widely held to be essential for guaranteeing the defence of – and peace in – the Swedish *Folkhemmet (*people's home) and the credibility of Sweden's neutrality abroad. Polls show a steady and comfortable majority of Swedes supporting the institution.[42]

It would clearly be misleading to overstate the unity around conscription. Both in France and in Sweden there is a longstanding contestation of conscription both from the right and the left. In 1934, Charles de Gaulle wrote a book, *Vers l'armée de métier*, arguing that professionalisation of the armed forces was a necessity, not implying however that this should necessarily entail the abolition of conscription. More generally, on the French right wing, there has been no shortage of politicians, including Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, raising the idea of abolishing conscription at regular intervals. Also in the Swedish context liberals and conservatives contest conscription pointing to its costs, the restrictions to individual freedom and ridiculing "the outlandish and vague popular anchoring idea that the military defence would be better because more people do military service".[43] Less men, more steel is the bottom line. Similarly, in part of the pacifist and green left in both countries the institution has been contested together with the idea of armed forces in general in both countries.

In the face of the post-cold war pressure common to both countries to reform the organisation of the armed forces generally and conscription specifically, this similarity in background and forms of contestation would probably have lead most observers to predict similar reforms (rather than abolition) of conscription. Up until 1996 this indeed seemed to hold. In both countries, special commissions were charged with investigating and presenting proposals for the reform of the armed forces after the end of the cold war and that task of course included reviewing the role of conscription. In both countries the outcome and proposals reflected "a paradoxical (and

overwhelmingly strong) consensus both on the need to professionalise the army *and* on the need to maintain conscription"[44] which also mirrors (or is mirrored in?) public opinion in the two countries. The reasons for advancing professionalism is military efficiency, while conscription is defended as a social and political institution.

The similarity stops when on 22 February 1996 President Jacques Chirac took most Frenchmen by a probably genuine surprise, as he announced a sweeping reform of the armed forces, including the phasing out of conscription in a television interview. The reasons for surprise were good. Previous commissions and White Papers had stressed the need for reforming the conscription system, not argued for its abolition.[45] The actual preparation of the reform Chirac announced had been secretive. Moreover, the reform procedure and format reflects a concern to make the reform appear less radical. It was designed to give the French time to become accustomed to the new order of things. The plan was to take six years to phase out conscription. Initially, the reform was also accompanied by the idea of launching "*rendez-vous citoyen*" which should ensure that the social and political functions of conscription are continued. This was subsequently shrunk to a day long "*appel de préparation à la défense*". But, there can be no misunderstanding. In France "conscription is dead, ready to be stoved away in the military museum, along side the crossbow, the sabre, and the feudal ost."[46]

No steps in this direction have been taken in Sweden. Although the armed forces are undergoing a reform which according to Supreme Commander (ÖB) Johan Hederstedt is more profound than most people actually know or imagine, the reform does not entail anything like an abolition of conscription. Its declared aim is to transform the Swedish defence from one focussed on outside (classical) invasion threats to a defence aimed at dealing with "new threats" and international intervention. The reform is designed to create a "network based" defence,[47] and to organise it from "invasion defense to intervention and competence defense".[48] In this reform process, there is little which signals a questioning of the principle of conscription. The number of conscripts actually required to serve are steadily shrinking, there are reforms in the kind of tasks

conscripts are asked to perform and in the training they receive. However, the importance of the conscript system is repeatedly confirmed both by ÖB and by policy-makers. There is little doubt that conscription is alive and kicking.

b. Re-enchantment and disenchantment with conscription

Considering the common long standing tradition of conscription in France and in Sweden and the similar difficulties the institution faced from the mid 1990s, it is clearly difficult to provide any mechanistic explanation of the opposed fate of the institution. However, looking how conscription was faring as a social institution in the two countries inscribes the choices in a context which can to some extent explain them.

(i) Of melting pots and social mobility

First, there can be no doubt that the image of conscription as a site of social integration has been far more tarnished in France than in Sweden. When authors of the 1994 White Paper conclude that "military service must remain an integrating melting-pot, a school for good citizenship, a paradigm of the Frenchmen's allegiance to France"[49] they are in the realm of exactions, *not* expressing an interpretation of the actual role of the service. Rather, the opposite. The White Paper – as most observers and the broader public – did not think highly of the equality of the French system. The *coopération* (doing the service by working for French institutions or companies abroad), the exemption of managers (*chefs d'entreprise*) and the *service civile* (doing back up service in France) had created a two tier system where military service was a reality only for those lacking higher education. As pointed out by Chirac, "when we come from well connected families we do our military service in a bank in Singapore, whereas when we are not, we do it under much harsher conditions."[50] The statistical measure of this is impressive: 78% of those with a university diploma in one way or another escaped military service (restrictively defined).[51] Similarly, the idea of relying on the armed forces to integrate socially disadvantaged groups has turned out to be a chimera. Of the 5% least educated youngsters, 80% were not apt to serve.[52] The integration of immigrants (in the second generation

and particularly the *beurs*[53]) has been a very partial success. They have been rejected in a far larger proportion than those of French origin.[54] For those accepted, a special report on the issue concludes that they were "disoriented, victims of racist harassment" and pushed to "recoil on the values of their communities". The high hopes they had placed in their military service were "too often disappointed" and replaced by "a profound resentment and manifest unease."[55]

Conscription might well have the same inegalitarian and socially regressive characteristics in Sweden as in France, even if Swedish conscription appears to function more as a socially integrative institution. The official line is that "ethnic and cultural diversity should be seen as a precondition for the personnel provision of the defence and for its anchoring in society as a whole.[56] Racial discrimination particularly beyond first generation immigrants seems a non-issue[57] and institutionalised exemptions for the socially privileged are few and far between. From a French perspective the worries seem minor. However, the truly relevant point in this context is that in Sweden the issue of social integration is not contested. There is little in terms of reports, commissions and investigations exploring how to handle a problem few seem to believe exists. The question of how women – who are allowed but not compelled to serve – and homosexuals fare has received some attention.[58] But the question of who is exempted as a result of the shrinking reduction of the numbers of conscripts serving is an open one. Officially the basis for selection is a combination of the "motivation" of the conscripts and their suitability for the tasks for which they are needed.[59] But how this plays out in sociological terms is not an issue of public debate.

If anything, the Swedish armed forces are using the new context where educated professionals are becoming increasingly central in the armed forces as a further argument legitimating continued conscription. The Swedish armed forces emphasise the importance of conscription for creating awareness about the potentials for individual career, educational possibilities, and the possibility of serving abroad. ÖB has made a "personal development system" a pivotal part of his efforts to increase the attractiveness and legitimacy of the armed forces.[60] Taken together with the new emphasis on

"motivation" as a selection criteria, and on improved material conditions for conscripts, these ideas indeed seem tailored to present conscription as a new attractive career alternative for young people who place their individual ambitions and motivations far above the conventional concerns of national duty.[61] In other words, in Sweden there is little contestation (or interest) in what continued conscription does to social hierarchies, it continues to be possible to refer to *värnplikten* (defence duty) as a socially egalitarian institution, and in fact the armed forces rely on references to career options and adventurous lifestyles to legitimize conscription.

(ii) Conscripts in new wars

Similarly, in France the changes in the nature of warfare (RMA, humanitarian interventions, and increasing role of policing functions) have been widely read as spelling the end of conscription. In Sweden, the same developments seem to call for little more than a reorganisation of the armed forces.

The French experience in the second Gulf war is usually considered as the turning point leading to the French abolition of conscription. The most widely accepted version of the French Gulf experience is that it could not muster the men needed for the operation in spite of the important numbers of men under arms. Moreover, the overall performance of the French force finally dispatched was below all critique. The Gulf war was a "wake up call" for the French armed forces and for public opinion.[62] Subsequent interventions, including the performance of the French troops in the Balkans are read as confirming what the second Gulf war had made plain.[63] The growing share of professionals in the armed forces reinforced the impression that conscript armies could not be used in international interventions and that conscripts hamper the efficiency in these by diverting scarce resources which could have been spent on training and equipping the necessary professionals. This interpretation is by no means uncontested. Prominent figures including admiral Lanxade (Mitterand's defence advisor during the Gulf war) have a very different reading of the relationship between conscription and the French performance in the second Gulf war and in international operations more generally. They argue that not only were

conscripts not to blame for the difficulties in the Gulf war, but without them, future international operations (such as the 1998 evacuation of noncombatants from the Republic of Congo) will be more difficult and important "situational intelligence" lost.[64] But this is a minority opinion in a general context where conscription is seen as rather useless. Conscripts can neither be asked to engage in operations far from home, nor be expected to be competent enough for contemporary warfare.

Just like in the French debate the question of how to combine a conscript based army with the growing importance of international interventions and tasks demanding greater skills figures prominently in the Swedish discussion. But in Sweden, unlike in France, no one international experience is singled out and read as proving the ultimate and incontestable ineffectiveness of the conscript army. In fact, conscription is not even pitted against international intervention (or for that matter technological change). Clearly, just as in France service abroad is not obligatory and there is a widespread recognition of increasing the need of professionals in the armed forces.[65] But instead of concluding that this proves the uselessness of conscription, in Sweden it has lead to a discussion around the extent to which and the conditions on which conscripts can be used in international interventions. In this discussion conscription is frequently argued to be a necessary condition for international operations.[66] It provides the necessary back support as well as the recruits for the interventions. Moreover, far from being opposed to the development of competence and more specialised skills in the armed forces, conscription in the Swedish context is presented as essential for attracting those who will take on the engagements and pursue a career in the armed forces.[67] In Sweden, conscription is in other words widely thought to be perfectly compatible with the growing share of professionals, the shifting location of conflicts and the changing skill requirements.

(iii) Post-modern citizens in uniform

France and Sweden have not escaped the general trend to demilitarize the understanding of citizenship. However, the two countries have handled the issue very differently. In France there has been relatively little discussion

about the link between citizenship and defence duties after the abolition of conscription. It is as if most energy is now aimed at ridding the country of the republican straightjacket where military service figured so prominently.

On the contrary, the Swedish government has gone to great lengths reformulating the link between the armed forces and the state. In Sweden, the argument has shifted from: military service for citizenship rights bargain, to an argument about the military service as a responsibility to defend rights already acquired. Thus, under the general heading: "a responsibility for all" the government argues that "a strong popular engagement is the precondition if society is to be equipped to handle and resist serious threats, risks and pressures in both peace and war."[68] Reflecting this, in 1994 a "total defence duty" (*totalförsvarsplikt*) was extended to all Swedish citizens (women and men) and all foreign residents in Sweden."[69] The extension of the duty to all residents is only principled though. The practice continues to be that only male Swedish citizens are effectively called to act upon it by doing military service in the armed forces. That is practically, the creation of the total defence duty has had few tangible effects on the actual organisation and practice of military service (except through its indirect effects and particularly the shrinking of the share of conscripts).

Because of this lack of immediate practical implications for conscripts, it is easy to underestimate its symbolic significance. *Totalförsvarsplikten* is an effort to redefine and rethink the relationship between state, society, and the armed forces in an increasingly mixed and multicultural society. It confirms that the relationship between the state, the nation, and the armed forces can be adjusted as "the nation" and the polity evolve. It makes it possible to explain the principled link between the armed forces and society (and the role of conscription in this link).

(iv) Military relations, political power, and indifference

The de-militarisation of society has altered the weight and significance of arguments about the importance of conscription to impose democratic control on military power. At least judging from the discussions in France and in Sweden this is the case. In both countries rhetorical references are made to the risks that non-conscript armies could either act on their own or

be used to act against the political establishment. Thus, in France Lanxade worries that if the army becomes too isolated, it might lead to the development of "*doctrines dangereuses*."[70] Similarly, in Sweden references to Ådalen (where the Swedish army was used against striking workers in 1931) regularly surface to confirm the continuing importance of anchoring the armed forces. Moreover, there is some speculation about the implication of a strongly specialised and relatively closed organisation of the armed forces for the way it categorizes and collects data and for the political advice it gives. These issues are bound to be of increasing importance whether conscription is abolished or reformed.[71] However, the bulk of the discussion focus not so much on the significance of conscription for controlling the armed forces, it is rather the other way around: on the significance of conscription for ensuring the armed forces some contact to politics.

In Sweden, the meaning of the conventional reference to "*folkförankring*" (anchoring in the population) is shifting. Where half a century ago the connotation of that term was popular control over the armed forces, it is increasingly turning into a matter of information about the armed forces and national security matters. "We find it important to have the defense democratically anchored, so that as many people as possible, who otherwise work in the civilian sector, have had and have a contact with the defence."[72] The idea is that the function of conscription is to preserve a certain degree of engagement and information about defence matters.

In France, there was a clear worry that if the army did not remain tied to the nation by conscription, a generalised indifference could develop in its regard and with respect to its engagements (and particularly those abroad).[73] Indifference would entail less political discussion about the interventions the army is used for. The worry is that this in turn might lead policy-makers to employ it more lightheartedly. Political decisions to deploy the army should be checked by public deliberation and conscripts prompt such deliberation. Conscripts are also seen as an important part for keeping debate up about how far the cuts can be allowed to go. In France, the financial pressure has increased considerably since 1996. The abolition of conscription was justified as saving money, consequently budgets have been pressured. Yet, the armed forces face both the costs of doing away with conscription and

the need to cover new professionals. The consequence is a widespread disappointment with the financial consequences of the reform.[74] Worse still, the pressure on the budget has dressed the different parts of the armed forces against each other in the competition for funds. It is producing a "balkanisation" of the armed forces.[75] In the armed forces there is widespread concern that doing away with the social anchor provided by conscription has meant doing away with the political clout necessary to protest these developments.

The main worry in both countries is similar: anchoring the army at present is a question of combatting indifference. But there is a major difference. In France the worry is mainly expressed by the armed forces, in Sweden it is evoked also outside the armed forces. This makes the idea of a "*folkförankring*" carry more weight. It can hardly be read as an expression of partial self-interests.

c. Things could be different

The above discussion gives a basis for understanding why France and Sweden have made opposite choices with regard to conscription. Both countries faced the same general pressure on military service and the myths justifying it. However, in France not only had the traditional myths surrounding conscription lost their luster. It was hard to innovate. The discussion was captured by its own past. The centrality of the myths about the importance of conscription in promoting social integration, in ensuring democracy, and in making the French nation became a real handicap as these myths lost their credibility and appeal. They continued to provide the criteria for judging the social institution, to inform the collection of information and data about military service, but thereby also to hamper the innovation of alternative justifications for the institution. As military service came to epitomise the perpetuation (or accentuation) of stifling hierarchies masquerading behind republicanism, equality, democracy, and nationalism, the haunting old myths made it difficult to invent new ones. The discussion was imprisoned by the republican tradition.

In Sweden, re-enchanting conscription was a less difficult task. This is partly because of the floating way conscription has been justified in

Sweden where ideas come as vague headings rather than as precise logical chains of argument, backed up by actual numbers and figures. It is also partly because the institution has been less harshly criticised and generally far less subject to critical scrutiny. This lack of critical scrutiny reflects both the very high degree to which conscriptions has become a taken for granted institution in the Swedish context, and the fact that conscription (and the military in general) plays a reduced role in the articulation and discussion about Swedish nationalism. Studies of Swedish national identity can dispense with giving it any attention at all.[76] The immediate consequence is that it has been far easier to innovate justifications and carry through reforms around conscription in the Swedish context. There is no strong tradition which imprisons debate and provides strict and inescapable criteria of judgement. There is no mountain of critical material amassed over decades of debate showing that the institution does not actually work the way the myth would have us believe it should be working. Reforms are not subjected to critical scrutiny. They pass by quietly, to a large extent unnoticed outside a narrow circle with interests in military affairs. It is not politically hazardous to reform conscription.

However, looking with hindsight at the discussions one easily falls prey to the temptation of thinking that developments that took place were inevitable. Therefore there is a virtue to recalling that things could have gone otherwise and that history, including that of conscription, is not yet at its end. As emphasised at the outset of this section, France and Sweden have much in common regarding the role of conscription in their countries, and unity on the reform side in Sweden and devolution in France is far from total.

For France, the question is what would have happened if Chirac had not been elected president and had not placed the devolution of conscription on his agenda. Much indicates that reform might well have been the chosen path. Reform was the standard solution in the White Papers preceding Chirac's decision. The decision was prepared and elaborated in great secrecy and within the narrow circle of a "Security Committee" set up by the president. Moreover, the attachment to conscription is visible in the attempts to present the present developments as in strict continuity with the

past. Chirac presented his proposal as creating a "truly republican service", not as abolishing conscription.[77] The minister of defence explained that "we are not here to accompany a burial procession, but on the contrary to celebrate a baptism."[78] The "*appel de préparation à la défense*" figures as a lifeline to the past, expected to achieve in a day what military service could not achieve in months. It is hence perfectly conceivable that if Chirac had not been elected, conscription would not have been abolished in France in 1996. However, as the paper has argued, reform would have had to come, and it would have been difficult (but not impossible) to invent the new justifications for conscription and even more to leave the old ones behind. Therefore it seems likely that even if Chirac had not abolished conscription, someone else eventually would have had done so.

For Sweden, the question is if conscription will be preserved, and Sweden hence continue to be something of an outlier in the context of Western countries (excepted the other Nordics and Germany). As emphasised above, there has been no shortage of voices arguing that conscription should be abolished.[79] Hence one could well imagine a future (probably right-wing) government abolishing conscription. This is all the more likely as Swedish defence thinking is increasingly outward looking. From having been very self-centred during the cold-war when neutrality seemed to make Sweden unique[80], Sweden is now opening up not only to military collaboration with others, but also to their ideas. This makes developments among the Nordics and Germany essential. Should these countries decide to abolish conscription, it is not impossible that Sweden would follow suit. However, Sweden abolishing conscription is far from inevitable. Technological and economic imperatives do not dictate reform. But more centrally, in Sweden there is scope for reforming conscription. The old myths may be lacking luster, but as argued above they can also be reformulated in ways which make conscription appear a legitimate practice in the post cold war context.

3. Conclusion

Conscription has not necessarily had its time. It has not disappeared

as a recruitment system for the armed forces, nor is it dead as a political idea. Even in a country, like the US, where conscription has not played a central role in the constitution of the state-nation relationship and has not been extensively used, the re-introduction of conscription is regularly on the agenda.[81] However, the myths enchanting conscription have been tarnished, and it is undeniably becoming more complicated to justify conscription. In the post cold war context conventional ideas are difficult to translate and apply. To claim that conscription integrates societies, forms polities, civilianizes states, and controls violence is not easy in a context where the meaning and status of societies, polities, states, and violence is in flux. Consequently the future fate of conscription will be intimately linked to the extent to which old myths are reformulated and new ones invented to re-enchant conscription. As shown in the comparison of Sweden and France, re-enchantment is not impossible – and therefore conscription cannot be written off. As the comparison also showed, though, whether conscription will be re-enchanted or not depends both on how myths about conscription have been articulated in given national contexts and on how these national contexts are influenced by the fate of conscription and the myths justifying it elsewhere.

Notes:

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2. Bjørn Møller, 'Conscription and Its Alternatives', in Lars Mjøset and Stephen van Holde (eds), *The Comparative Study of Conscription in the Armed Forces* (Amsterdan et al.: JAI Elsevier Science, 2002), pp. 227-306.

3. To illustrate, the share of conscripts in the armed forces is 25% in Denmark, 36% in Germany, 44% in Sweden, and 57% in Norway (IISS, *The Military Balance 2002-2003* (London: Oxford University Press, 2002)).

4. Eliot A. Cohen, *Citizens and Soldiers: The Dilemmas of Military Service* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 60-9.

5. Samuel E. Finer, 'State and Nation Building in Europe: The Role of the Military', in Charles Tilly (ed.), *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 84-163. The meaning is indeed classical as the practice can be found with the Egyptians, Assyrians, Sumerians, or the Israelite community of the old Testament (Bjørn Møller, 'Conscription and Its Alternatives', *COPRI Working Paper*, (1999), p. 3).

6. I use myth here to refer to ideas widely used to give meaning to social phenomena. This does not exclude (or entail) that these myths are true.

7. Ståle Ulriksen, *Den Norske Forsvartradisjonen: Militærmakt eller Folkeforsvar* (Oslo: Pax Forlag, 2002), p. 267.

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guerres', *Revue Française de Sociologie*, II (1961), pp. 15-21.

9. Martin van Creveld, 'Armed but not Dangerous: Women in the Israeli Military', *War in History*, 7 (2000), pp. 82-98.

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13. Anna Leander, 'Shifting Political Identities and the Justified Use of Force', *Paper presented at the conference: Conflits, Paix, et Identité – Regard croisés franco-scandinaves,* Institut de recherches sur la paix (PRIO) /Ambassade de France (18-29.11.2002), (2002).

14. Karim Bourtel, 'Un 'creuset de la nation' à réinventer', *Le Monde Diplomatique*, (2001).

15. Martin L. Cook, 'Moral Foundations of Military Service', *Parameters*, (2000), pp. 117-129.

16. In the Athenian democracy full citizens made up less than 20% of the male population, the rest being slaves and foreign residents (metoiker) (Uffe Østergård, 'Værnepligt og nationalstat', *Fokus (available at www.dupi.dk)*, (1998)).

17. Quoted in Jean-Philippe Lecomte, *Représentations et Réalités des Fonctions Sociales du Service Militaire dans la Société Française (1868-2001)* (Paris: Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (Thèse de doctorat), 2001), p. 740 - my translation.

18. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991).
19. Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 990-1992* (Cambridge MA and Oxford UK: Blackwell, 1990).
20. Bengt Abrahamsson, *Militärer, Makt och Politik* (Stockholm: Prisma, 1972), pp. 36-40.
21. Eliot A. Cohen, *Citizens and Soldiers: The Dilemmas of Military Service* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 121.
22. Thomas Denk, *Värnpliktsutbildningen - en politisk socialisationsagent?* (Karlstad University: Dissertation, 1999); Tom Skauge, *Den Tendeknde Soldat? Verneplikt i Norge som Demokratisk Institusjon* (Bergen: Instiutt for Administrasjon og Organisashonsvitenskap, 2002).
23. Anthony Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence. Volume two of a contemporary critique of historical materialism* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1985), p. 233.
24. John Keegan, *The Face of Battle. A Study of Agincourt, Waterloo and the Somme* (London: Penguin Books, 1976).
25. Lars Mjøset and Stephen van Holde, 'Killing for the State, Dying for the Nation: An Introductory Essay on the Life Cycle of Conscription into Europe's Armed Forces', in Lars Mjøset and Stephen van Holde (eds), *The Comparative Study of Conscription in the Armed Forces* (Amsterdan et al.: JAI Elsevier Science, 2002), p. 10.
26. Philippe Braud (ed.), *La violence politique dans les démocraties européennes occidentales*, Cultures et Conflits (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1993).
27. Martin Shaw, *Post-Military Society: Militarism, Demilitarization and War at the End of the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
28. Jean-Philippe Lecomte, *Représentations et Réalités des Fonctions Sociales du Service Militaire dans la Société Française (1868-2001)* (Paris: Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (Thèse de doctorat), 2001), p. 744.

29. Wolf Graf von Baudassin, 'Staatbürger in Uniform und Innere Führung -- Zwei Prinzipien zur Demokratisierung des Militärs am Beispiel der Bundeswehr', in Wolf Graf von Baudassin (ed.), *Nie wieder Sieg. Programmtische Schriften 1951-1981* (München: Piper, 1982), pp. 143-167.

30. Rafael Ajangiz, 'The European Farewell to Conscription?', in Lars Mjøset and Stephen van Holde (eds), *The Comparative Study of Conscription in the Armed Forces* (Amsterdan et al.: JAI Elesevier Science, 2002), pp. 307-333.

31. Lars Mjøset and Stephen van Holde, 'Killing for the State, Dying for the Nation: An Introductory Essay on the Life Cycle of Conscription into Europe's Armed Forces', in Lars Mjøset and Stephen van Holde (eds), *The Comparative Study of Conscription in the Armed Forces* (Amsterdan et al.: JAI Elsevier Science, 2002), p. 89.

32. Uffe Østergård, 'Værnepligt og nationalstat', *Fokus (available at www.dupi.dk)*, (1998); Martin van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (New York: The Free Press, 1991).

33. Niccoló Machiavelli, *Il Principe e altre opere politiche* (Roma: Garzanti, 1985/1513), pp. 27-38, 54-58.

34. Deoborah Avant, 'From Mercenaries to Citizen Armies: Explaining Change in the Practice of War', *International Organization*, 54 (2000), pp. 41-72.

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40. Quoted in Michel Auvray, *L'âge des casernes: histoire et mythes du service militaire* (Paris: Ed. de l'Aube, 1998), p. 261.

41. Marc Bessin (ed.), *Autopsie du service militaire* (Paris: Editions Autrement, 2001); Jean-Philippe Lecomte, *Représentations et Réalités des Fonctions Sociales du Service Militaire dans la Société Française (1868-2001)* (Paris: Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (Thèse de doctorat), 2001).

42. SIFO polls are available at www.opinion.sifo.se .

43. "den alltjämt befängda och diffusa folkförankringstanken att det militära försvaret skulle vara bättre för att fler män gör värnplikt." (Henrik Landerholm, 'Människan i Försvaret - Framtidens Personalförsörjning', *Kommittemotion (2001.10.12)*, (2001).

44. Louis Gautier, *Mitterand et son Armée, 1990-1995* (Paris: Grasset, 1999), p. 280.

45. This is no place to go through the details of these developments. Excellent overviews and bibliographies are provided in Michel Auvray, *L'âge des casernes: histoire et mythes du service militaire* (Paris: Ed. de l'Aube, 1998); Marc Bessin (ed.), *Autopsie du service militaire* (Paris: Editions Autrement, 2001); Jean-Philippe Lecomte, *Représentations et Réalités des Fonctions Sociales du Service Militaire dans la Société Française (1868-2001)* (Paris: Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (Thèse de doctorat), 2001).

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48. 'Regeringens Proposition: Fortsatt förnyelse av totalförsvaret', (2001/2: 10).

49. *Livre blanc sur la défense nationale (1994)*, quoted in Justin J. McKenna, 'The End of Conscription in France', *West European Politics*, 20 (1997), pp. 141.

50. Chirac quoted in Justin J. McKenna, 'The End of Conscription in France', *West European Politics*, 20 (1997), p. 135.

51. Michel Auvray, *L'âge des casernes: histoire et mythes du service militaire* (Paris: Ed. de l'Aube, 1998), p. 240.

52. Michel Auvray, *L'âge des casernes: histoire et mythes du service militaire* (Paris: Ed. de l'Aube, 1998), p. 243.

53. Second (third or fourth) generation Maghrebi immigrants.

54. Karim Bourtel, 'Un 'creuset de la nation' à réinventer', *Le Monde Diplomatique*, (2001); Louis Gautier, *Mitterand et son Armée, 1990-1995* (Paris: Grasset, 1999), p. 307.

55. Report on the "*Service national et populations à problèmes d'intégration*" (1989) quoted in Auvray, p. 243.

56. 'Regeringens Proposition: Fortsatt förnyelse av totalförsvaret', (2001/2: 10), p. 216.

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