

DEFENSE, ARMED FORCES AND SPANISH PUBLIC OPINION

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Despite all the efforts made for adapting and modernizing our Armed Forces and the new kind of missions they face, the Spaniards do not show much interest neither in questions related to security and defense nor in supporting an increase in the defense budget. This paper examines the reasons for the reported low level of culture of defense existing among the Spanish citizenry and the possibilities to act on this sort of causes in order to offset its effects. Likewise, this report analyzes the measures adopted by the Spanish authorities in order to promote the culture of defense and highlights which are their main deficiencies and weaknesses.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Spanish Armed Forces have become a basic instrument for the international recognition of Spain and have contributed as well to international peace and security. Despite this fact has favored a substantial improvement of the image of the Armed Forces and an increasing positive evaluation as institution, there is still a lack of interest in questions related to security and defense and a lack of knowledge about the work developed by the Spanish Armed Forces in and out of the State borders. This phenomenon is called “limited culture of defense”.

The objective of this paper consists both of analyzing the causes lying in the low levels of the culture of defense among the Spanish citizenry, which are far from satisfying the expectations of the political institutions and the Armed Forces, and offering a series of proposals that can improve this situation. With this aim, this report analyzes the factors that prevent citizens from being aware of the value that the functions developed by the Armed Forces have and their budget requirements to keep on working. The paper identifies a first category of causes that have a structural nature and that, therefore, have their origins in previous periods of the political history of Spain, but whose effects have remained in successive stages creating a series of images and prejudices about the Armed Forces and their function as a State institution. However, the culture of defense levels in Spain have been also highly determined by a second category of circumstantial

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causes that have recently appeared and perpetuate the low levels of the culture of defense.

Finally, this paper examines as well the most important scope of the policy for promoting the culture of defense carried out by the Ministry of Defense, whose main objective is to promote the interest in security and defense issues in the civil society, offsetting the consequences of the factors that pass on an old-fashioned image of the Armed Forces - of both the individuals and the institution. At the same time, the report identifies the policy deficiencies and weaknesses that have consequences specially in the quality, clarity and immediacy of the message transmitted to citizenry about the Armed Forces, prevent counteracting the factors that keep the culture of defense levels at a lower point than the one desired. In conclusion, this paper highlights the need of redefining and revising a great part of the scope of the policy for promoting the culture of defense and offers a series of conclusions that remark the fields where it is most necessary to face urgently some changes in the promotion of the culture of defense in Spain.

II. THE SPANISH PUBLIC OPINION AND THE NEW FUNCTIONS OF THE ARMED FORCES

Within the framework of redefining and widening the concept of security at an international, regional and national level, the Spanish Armed Forces have done, and keep on doing, a great effort to adapt and widen their activities, which have an increasing international dimension, an increasing number of different destinations and a great variety of functions. (BUSQUETS: 1999, 283). The new missions developed by the Spanish Armed Forces require an important degree of adaptation to the changes of circumstances during the mission, high levels of specialization and interoperability, a great capacity of deployment and important efforts to coordinate and cooperate with other units of other Armed Forces, police forces and civil officers. Most of the actions carried out by the Armed Forces in the last few years have showed these new functional standards both in the Spanish territory and abroad. This happens above all, in missions that face different security threats through the use of military instruments. For example, in the Spanish territory it is possible to highlight the works of surveillance and cleaning carried out by the Armed Forces as a consequence of the ecological disaster provoked by the *Prestige*¹, the surveillance of train railways and subway stations after the March 11th, 2004 bombings, the civil protection works during the rescue operation at the

¹ In the case of the environmental catastrophe of the vessel *Prestige*, the action of the Armed Forces – all the Army, the Navy and the Air Force – reached high levels of coordination and success. A contingent of 25,000 soldiers - men and women - were deployed in the coast of the Spanish region of Galicia and 3,500 were kept in alert to be transferred in 24-72 hours. 14 vessels, 11 airplanes and 100 vehicles participated in the works for finding, guarding and cleaning. By May, 2003 they had already removed 18,400 tones of petrol and cleaned 1,000 m² of rocks surface (See *Revista Española de Defensa*, No 182, 2003, pp. 131-135)

village Santibañez-Zarzaguda (province of Burgos)², etc. Out of the Spanish borders, the functions of the Armed Forces have been even more functionally different and more demanding and risky. Within the framework of different peace missions, Spanish soldiers have developed tasks of ceasefire supervision, verification of troop withdrawal and disarmament, elections' observation, protection of civil agencies and NGOs that work in the field, delivery of emergency humanitarian aid, rebuilding infrastructures, participation in health and educational services, rescues, etc. that have occasionally required the use of armed deterrence and even the use of force in self-defense to guarantee the fulfillment of the mission objectives (WELCH: 1992).

In short, the Spanish Armed Forces have become a basic instrument to guarantee the security of citizenry and to contribute in regional and international security. Furthermore, they are an important element to the international recognition of Spain and to the compromises assumed with several international organizations like UN (United Nations Organization), NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), EU (European Union) and OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) (GALLOIS: 1993). However, the adaptation and modernization efforts and the important dimension of security among the activities carried out by the Armed Forces have not been translated into an interest by civil society in knowing and valuing the contribution of the Armed Forces to the national and international security and defense. Although citizens keep a very different evaluation of all the State Institutions depending on their efficacy to maintain the democratic system and the way they execute their constitutionally assigned functions, in the case of the Armed Forces, the opinion of citizenry is not guided by the same parameters than the rest of the State Institutions.

The military institution is usually placed in intermediate positions at the evaluation ranking, while the last positions are frequently occupied by political parties, trade unions or judicial institutions³. Nevertheless, the Armed Forces do not reach a lower evaluation than other institutions due to a lack of inefficiency or slowness, but they are object of a lack of agreement about the functions they have or they should have and their specific utility as a State institution. And, as the State institutions evaluation of citizens affects their position when showing their conformity with the budget assignments⁴, the increase of the economical material and human resources in the field

² In the magazine No 179 of the *Revista Española de Defensa* it is possible to find information in relation to these rescue works. In any case, from the creation of the Military Unit for Emergencies, with a contingent of 4,310 people and depending on the Chief of Defense Staff, the Armed Forces will stop doing occasional works in catastrophes or emergency situations, but they will assume a hard core of functions in this field in a permanent way.

³ Juan Díez Nicolás made an opinion survey to citizens about the main institutions during seven consecutive years (1991-1997). In this survey, the Armed Forces occupied the fifth position, after the Crown, the Ombudsman, the Municipal Councils and the Constitutional Court. With a lower evaluation than the Armed Forces there were the regional Governments, the Church, the Congress of Deputies, the National Government, the Senate, the Employers' Associations, the Trade Unions and, finally, the Political Parties (DÍEZ NICOLÁS, J. (1999). *Identidad Nacional y Cultura de Defensa*. pp. 161 *et seq.* Madrid: Ed. Síntesis)

⁴ This diagnosis of the situation has been assumed by the Ministry of Defense and, specifically, by the Direction-General for Institutional Relations of Defense when it is said that: "Opinion surveys and sociological analysis made out of Spain in the last few years show a good, even very good evaluation of

of security and defense go on finding reticence, at the same time that the specific tasks to which those resources must be assigned are questioned. This situation is frequently explained as a result of the low levels of the *culture of defense*, i.e. a lack of knowledge about the functions, activities and utility of the Armed Forces, and that consequently causes a lack of *consciousness of defense*, understood as the expression of civil society and even of other State institutions about the importance of the military institution to defend a series of common democratic values, the integrity of the State and its role for the international recognition of Spain. In short, the goal is simply to pretend that the existence of the Armed Forces will be assumed by society as a natural piece of the democratic life not being continuously questioned.

The most important indicators of the culture of defense come from opinion surveys which are periodically done by public and private institutions. In this sense, the last of the surveys dealing with the topic of the culture of defense has been the one made by the Spanish Sociological Research Center (Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas) about “The National Defense and the Armed Forces (VII)” in 2007. The conclusions drawn from this study are not really promising, mainly because it is only possible to appreciate a slight increase in the culture of defense in Spain, and because it obviously does not show a good evaluation by part of citizenry about the changes experienced by the Armed Forces regarding the image of both the soldiers and the institution, specially in relation to the security dimension of their activities, their functions diversity and their utility to the international recognition of Spain.⁵ This situation forces to revise the issue,

the Armed Forces in society. But it is also truth that this statement is expressed together with a certain rejection of our citizens to participate in the defense and to approved the investment in armament (...)” (Culture of Defense Master Plan passed by the Ministry of Defense through the Directive No. 5/2002 from January 11th, 2002, p. 2)

⁵ It is possible even to notice a slight decrease, in some fields, in the interest of the citizenry in security and defense issues if we compare the results of the survey “The National Defense and the Armed Forces” made in 2005 with the same study made in 2007. Among the most interesting results of the survey, in 2005, it is found the fact that the evaluation made of the career soldier or professional soldier, among other professions, is one of the lowest (5.7/10 and 5.8/10, respectively). In 2007, the evaluation of the professions of career soldier and professional soldier increases, although they go on being the worst evaluated (6.11/10 and 6.23/10 respectively). Thus, approximately 64% of those polled in 2005 and 63.6% in 2007 state having a very few interest or none in the information related to the Armed Forces and the security and defense issues. Most of the people polled in 2005 thought that the volume of the troops was the most appropriate one and only 21.9% considered it was not enough. In 2007, 40.5% thinks that the volume is the appropriate one and 21.9% believe it is not enough. Besides, if in 2005 18.8% thought the Armed Forces contributed a lot to the international recognition of Spain and 42.4% believed that it was enough, in 2007 only 17.2% thinks that they have contributed a lot and 40.5% say their contribution to that international recognition is enough. Regarding the budget aimed at defense, in 2005, 30.2% considered it was the appropriate one and 14% considered it was not enough. In 2007, 30.9% thinks the budget is the appropriate one and 14% considered it is not enough. In the case of the question about the possibility to assign more money of the budget to professionalize the Armed Forces, the percentage of those polled who agreed a lot or just agreed in 2005 reached the 36.2% and those who disagreed a little bit or a lot were 45.1%. In 2007, 36.5% of those polled who agreed a lot or just agreed and there were 44.6% who disagree a little bit or a lot. However, in 2005, 53.3% considered the Armed Forces go on being necessary, although there is a decrease of two points in the percentage of the population who keep a positive or a very positive opinion about the Armed Forces. Finally, if in 2005 92% of those polled agreed about the Spanish participation in peace international missions, in 2007, that percentage decreases to a

starting from an analysis of the factors that generate both the low levels of the culture and consciousness of defense in Spain and the continuity of the situation, despite the measures taken in this sense. It is necessary as well to analyze the actions decided and taken to promote the culture of defense by the public institutions, specially by the Ministry of Defense, the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, in order to identify the main deficiencies and faults at their design and implementation with the aim of proposing a series of measures that can mitigate them and that can, in short, contribute to increase the culture of defense levels in Spain (JANOWITZ: 1964).

III. CONDITIONING FACTORS OF THE CULTURE OF DEFENSE LEVELS IN SPAIN

Not all the underlying causes of the low levels of the culture of defense in Spain have the same scope and nature. In fact, it is possible to identify a first category of causes that have a structural nature and that, therefore, have their origins in previous periods of the political history of Spain, but whose effects have remained in successive stages creating a series of images and prejudices about the Armed Forces and their function as a State institution. (LA PORTE: 2004, 203-226). Although the historical legacy of the functions of the Armed Forces can seem to be, at the beginning, difficult to overcome, the truth is that its consequences can be offset by concrete measures that will be presented in successive sections. The culture of defense levels in Spain have also been conditioned by a second category of causes which have been recently generated and have a circumstantial nature, what means that can easily disappear or be modified in the short or medium-term. However, the circumstantial causes are able to strengthen the structural factors, contribute them to be perpetuated, and consequently, hinder to reach a significant increase of the culture of defense levels in Spain. In this sense, the structural and circumstantial factors of the culture of defense in Spain will be presented in the successive sections with the aim of making a series of proposals that can offset and even neutralize some of their effects - something not reached at the moment despite the actions taken for promoting the culture and consciousness of defense.

1. Structural factors:

A) One of the main features of the Spanish Armed Forces has been their long **tradition of intervention in civil affairs** along all the 19th century and most part of the 20th asserting progressive or conservative positions, although the defense of the last ones has been more common and has given them a greater representation and a significant historical and social weight. (CARDONA: 1996, 83-96). The most recent episodes were the national military uprising and the dictatorship of General Franco, as well as the failed coup d'état on February 23rd 1981, which was the last time a part of the Army tried to occupy civil positions because of disagreements about the social-political events happening once the democratic transition had already started.

85%. (Surveys from the Sociological Research Center (Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas – CIS) about “the National Defense and the Armed Forces”, 1997-2007).

(AGUILAR OLIVENCIA: 1999, 389-397). Therefore, in a quite recent period of the history of Spain, the Army occupied important spheres of influence in civil issues, most of them reserved to political parties. A period that keeps on being part of the life experience of most of the citizens of the country who were living during Franco's dictatorship or were witnesses of the coup d'état. (LLEIXA: 1986, 23-30). Thus, the military sector has been considered a true political group with many prerogatives in the field of the public order. The functions of the Spanish Armed Forces in the field of the public order were based in the perception of a domestic enemy against whom it was necessary to fight and who was represented by the ideals and beliefs of a part of the population who did not share the political views of the military institution, and that was the argument to justify the repression actions taken by the Armed Forces against national civilians. (GÓMEZ: 1996).

The circumstances previously mentioned have generated a series of perceptions, images and prejudices about the Spanish soldiers that are maintained by an important sector of the Spanish population. Among these perceptions and images we can highlight the following ones:

Firstly, the members of the Armed Forces share a right, conservative and catholic ideology which only connects them with a part of the population. Secondly, the Armed Forces do not traditionally accept easily the subjugation to civil power, thus at any moment they can take political positions and desire to intervene in political affairs of the State. Thirdly, the Armed Forces are not able to evolve and modernize themselves at the same rhythm and level than the rest of the democratic institutions. Fourthly, at an internal organizational level, the Army is surrounded by an image of obscurantism and corporatism of the military career which gives a sense of ignorance and suspicion about the military activity and a rift with civil reality. Fifthly, the Armed Forces represent an old-fashioned conception of the national union and the defense of the homeland which does not reflect the evolution of the distribution of competences undergone in the territory of our State.

However, in spite of 17 years of experience in peace operations, the participation in activities in the framework of different international organizations that have forced the Armed Forces to acquire high academic levels of education, the knowledge of several languages and the collaboration with other Armies of democratic States which have provided them a behavior pattern of Armies of long democratic countries, the image of the Spanish Armed Forces has not changed much. (FERNÁNDEZ VARGAS: 1989, 407). As a result, although the individual features of the Spanish soldier and the characteristics of the military institution as a whole have changed a lot, the continuity of the prejudices and the images assumed, show that the mechanisms adopted to offset and modify these old-fashion schemes are not the right ones.

B) Differently from the Armed Forces of the Western States, **the participation of the Spanish Armed Forces in international missions has been quite late**, except for the last 18 years in which Spain has acquired an important presence in peace missions. Previously, the Spanish Armed Forces did not have an international

recognition. Spain was declared neutral at the First World War and finally no belligerent at the Second World War. Consequently, the foreign experience of the Armed Forces was reduced to keep the Spanish protectorate in North Africa. Furthermore, Spain, differently from other European colonial powers, was unable to keep neither a relationship scheme with old ruled territories in Latin America and North Africa, which could have supposed a continuity of a military presence or cooperation, nor a political or economical framework. (GREGORY: 2000, 435-448). The lack of an exterior dimension of the functions assigned to the Spanish Armed Forces, contrary to the case of other Western democracies, has been interpreted sometimes as the reason of the excessive military interest in civil affairs (DELGADO: 2005).

Moreover, although the entry of Spain in NATO made the Spanish Armed Forces find a foreign enemy - the communism - and a coalition of States to be introduced in and to participate within an international defense strategy inserted in an adaptation process, at the end, the new enemy disappeared with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the USSR (CASANOVA: 2004). And, despite the fact that the new adaptation crisis was equally lived by all the allied States of the NATO, the truth is that the Spanish case was already dragging a delay in the identification of the functions of our Armed Forces in a democratic society and, in short, their position as a State institution. Thus, at the beginning of the nineties, the Spanish Army not only had to face an imminent emptiness of functions, but also the influence over the Spanish public opinion of a European pacifist movement who was against keeping the high levels of military expenditure and the compulsory military service due to the perception of a lack of threatens in the national territory (ABRAHAMSON: 1972). However, in a brief period of time, the Armed Forces of many countries, Spain included, found a new source of legitimization: the peace operations (ORDIÑANA: 2006, 76-77). In this security framework, the Spanish Armed Forces discovered a great range of international missions, most of them supported by the public opinion, but that required from them an effort of adaptation and modernization and the acquisition of the proper resources to develop the new tasks.

Even so, this delay in the development of the international dimension of the functions of the Spanish Armed Forces has also contributed to extend an individual and collective old-fashioned image of this institution and its tasks.

C) Spain constitutes a State with a complex organization of its territory and competences, as a consequence of the different perceptions about the existence of a national reality. In previous periods, the Spanish Army was a guardian of the national unity, indisputable for some people. Therefore, its condition of institution prepared for the national defense in and out of the State has been obviously accepted and applauded in very different ways in the diverse regional realities of the Spanish territory. Nowadays, the autonomous regions have inherited this image of the Armed Forces defending a clear political position in favor of the most centralist thesis of the competences distribution and against the proposals from the nationalist governments and parties that desire higher levels of devolution (CLEMENTE: 2005). In geographical terms, this situation has provoked specially unequal levels of the culture of defense. In some autonomous regions, such as Catalonia, Navarra or the Basque Country, the

culture of defense levels are below the average, in others like Castilla-La Mancha, Castilla y Leon or Extremadura, the levels are above and the rest of the autonomous regions are placed in an intermediate area⁶. This geographical disparity of the culture of defense levels in Spain clearly demands a different treatment for the applicable actions and policies from both a quantitative and a qualitative point of view. Consequently, it could be advisable to know and evaluate the different existing realities in the autonomous regions in relation to the culture of defense in order to design specific measures that pay attention to the specificities and characteristics of the dominating perception of the Armed Forces and their function as a State institution in each of the autonomous regions.

2. Circumstantial factors

A) Nowadays, there is an important **confusion about the nature and scope of the functions developed by the Armed Forces** as a consequence of the revision and redefinition of the concepts “security and defense” (KLARE: 1994). In the last few years we have attended a political and scientific revolution regarding the security and defense researches that has completely finished with the simplicity of the Cold War analysis, centered in the guarantee of the territory integrity and the political independence through the nuclear dissuasion and the possession of big conventional capacities. This complexity to define new security strategies and instruments has also been noticed at the missions currently developed by the Armed Forces, which eventually involve the use of armed force (BUZAN, WAEVER AND WILDE: 1998). These changes pass on to people many times a confusing and incomplete image of the functions assigned to the Army that makes them be suspicious about the goals and interests of this kind of activities and also about their legitimacy and legality. The changes on the security and defense strategy in Spain, which have pushed the Spanish Armed Forces to face new tasks, have not been combined with a policy for informing and educating the citizenry (OLMEDA GÓMEZ: 1997, 125). The specificities of the political history of Spain and of the military institution would have required the design of specific strategies in order to prepare the people and make them easier to assimilate the new national and international security requirements and the importance of the Armed Forces in that framework.

B) The second circumstantial factor, which in part arises from the previous one, is the **low perception of the classical threats by the Spanish population**. It is understandable that there is a low level of perception of threat, from the moment where there are only a few citizens that identify a potential aggressor State that can attack the integrity of the Spanish territory and its political independence⁷ and, furthermore, if the

⁶ Juan Díez Nicolás presents a study about the image and functions of the Armed Forces in all the autonomous regions during thirty four trimesters concluding that the only autonomous regions in which the Armed Forces evaluation has been above 6.0 points are Extremadura, Andalucía, Murcia y Castilla León (DÍEZ NICOLÁS, J. (1999). *Identidad Nacional y Cultura de Defensa*. pp. 172-176. Madrid: Ed. Síntesis).

⁷ In the last two surveys made by the INCIPE in 2002 and 2006, 38% and 37% respectively of those polled stated that there was a country that supposed to be a threat to Spain. While in 2002, 48% of those

population is not informed about the utility of the Armed Forces functions, apart from the strictly defensive tasks. As a result, if the Armed Forces are mainly identified with defensive functions, their activity becomes a continuous preparation for a possible future and hypothetical attack that it is unlikely to happen. But, if, on the contrary, there were high levels of perception of new threats and the conviction of the necessity of the Armed Forces work to manage with them, the Army would have a more dynamic and current image.

C) Nowadays, **there is not a full agreement between the main political forces about the basic elements and objectives of the Spanish foreign policy**, which means that it is not possible to guarantee a line of continuity of the Spanish position at the main international forums of decision. This situation has consequences sometimes because the most important political parties take position about security and defense issues, fields that are part of the Spanish foreign affairs. (LOPEZ, FABIAN Y SAIN: 2003). There is not an agreement either about the international rules, which have to be observed in the process for adopting and executing international missions, specially referring to the circumstances of the State where the mission is developed, the international organization under whom the mandate is deployed, the functions to be developed and the circumstances that legally allow the use of force. This situation generates a series of uncertainties in relation to the basic principles and objectives that inspire the Spanish foreign policy and the functions of the Armed Forces. It is obvious that the just-mentioned circumstances are not perceived by far from the organs and institutions that are directly in charge of the development and execution of the culture of defense policy.

In short, while the historical factors have determined the low levels of the culture of defense in Spain, deepening the distance between civil society and the military institution, the circumstantial factors have contributed to maintain them, in spite of the changes experienced by the Spanish domestic policy and the Armed Forces, and have added confusion to the current functions of the Armed Forces in the security and defense fields in and out of Spain, to the legitimacy of their actions and to the normative basis guaranteeing their legality. It seems that most part of the people believe that the military sector has not assimilated and has not been adapted to the great changes undergone by the Spanish society with the same speed as other institutions, and that the transformation of the international situation has not helped them to identify quickly and clearly the hard core of the functions of the Armed Forces, whose utility and social importance are questioned (BERTRAND: 1996). The truth is that, by the moment, there is not a united culture of defense accepted by most of the people. In fact, the population sectors that most positively evaluate the Armed Forces are the ones among the older range of age, who have a right-centered or right-wing political ideology and who live in autonomous regions where there are not nationalist parties or they have a marginal representation. This situation can pass on the impression that the Army only represents

who answered positively considered it was Morocco the country that threatened Spain, in 2006, 24% considered Morocco to be the main threat, 18% believed it was Iraq and 14% the Arab Countries (INCIPE: pp. 185-196)

the values of the part of the population that support a concrete kind of culture of defense.

This scene obviously demands a consistent, global and planned strategy that has effective control mechanisms given by the public institutions, which are able to face and neutralize the incidence of the factors conditioning the low levels of the culture of defense in Spain. In the following section, the paper analyzes some of the elements of the policy for promoting the culture of defense with the aim of, firstly, determining to which extent have they been able to face the effects of the structural and circumstantial factors or causes that are an obstacle to promote reasonable levels of culture and consciousness of defense in Spain, and secondly, detecting the possible faults or deficiencies and, starting from them, making a series of proposals and suggestions.

IV. ANALYSIS OF THE POLICY FOR PROMOTING THE CULTURE OF DEFENSE

The Spanish government started to develop a policy for promoting the culture and consciousness of defense seven years ago and it created some organs in charge of managing, planning, coordinating, executing and controlling all the activities in this field. From the assessment of the developed activities in the relatively short period of running, a series of conclusions can be drawn about the fields in which the public policy has apparently been most deficient and unable to reach the planned objectives that consist, in short, of increasing the levels of culture and consciousness of defense among the Spanish citizenry.

In the Ministry of Defense, it corresponds to the Direction-General for Institutional Affairs of Defense (Dirección General de Relaciones Institucionales de la Defensa, from now on DIGERINS) because it is the management organ, to “plan and develop the departmental cultural policy and the institutional relations of the defense”⁸. The same resolution clearly establishes as well that “the organs of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the autonomous organisms of the Department with competences in the mentioned areas depend functionally on this management organ – the DIGERINS –”⁹. The competences assigned to the DIGERINS and to the two Deputy Directions-General depending on it, are extraordinary wide, taking into account what implies running, planning, coordinating and executing the development of the departmental cultural

⁸ The Royal Decree 1551/2004, from June 25th June, 2004 develops the basic organic structure of the Ministry of Defense (published at the Spanish Official State Gazette on June 30th, 2004) and establishes in the article No. 14 that one of the functions assigned to the General Secretary of the Defense Policy is to “conduct the departmental cultural policy”.

⁹ There are two other organs that also depends on the same Direction-General which are, on the one hand, the Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies, in charge of developing two of the functions assigned to the Direction-General: “a) to drive and coordinate the policy for promoting, spreading and encouraging the national consciousness and b) to coordinate, drive and spread the cultural action of the department”, and, on the other hand, the Deputy Direction-General for Historical-Artistic Heritage, in charge of “c) managing the protection, preservation and dissemination of the military heritage, both the movable assets and the documents; e) to catalog the castles and military establishments with a historical-artistic value and program their activities, and f) to catalog the military files and program their running”.

policy; boosting and coordinating the policy for promoting, spreading and encouraging the consciousness of the national defense, and protecting, preserving and disseminating the historical-artistic heritage.

If we make an exhaustive analysis of the running of the DIGERINS and its activities, we can draw some conclusions that show that the policy for promoting the culture of defense has a series of deficiencies. Six areas have been concretely assessed and there has been detected a series of elements requiring to be revised or reconsidered: the functional-organic outline, the planning, the coordination, the execution, the financial control, the evaluation and the communication. As it will be observed along this section, the faults, errors and weaknesses identified in these seven fields have specially consequences at the quality, immediacy and content of the information received by the citizens about the Armed Forces because they basically affect the course of the creation, management and transmission of the information and also the content of the message that is wanted to be communicated, hindering like this to offset those factors contributing to maintain the culture of defense levels at a lower point than the desired one.

1. The planning for promoting the culture of defense has been made thanks to the development of a Culture of Defense Master Plan - still valid – which was passed during the second term of office of the ex-president Jose Maria Aznar in 2002. This is an extremely wide, complete and, above all, ambitious document. These features have allowed it to be kept in force up to this time, in spite of all the important changes happened in the national and international society since 2002 such as the March 11th, 2004 bombings or the change of Government after the elections held on March 14th, 2004. The same document recognizes that, in spite of the positive evaluation received by the Armed Forces, at the same time, citizens fear an important rejection to participate in the defense and to endorse the investment in armaments as a consequence of the low perception of the risks and threats. The document defines as well the objectives to be reached in the field of the culture of defense and the principles of behavior, it covers a series of plans to be developed through different programs including direct actions, and, finally, it establishes a series of direction and coordination organs in charge of the plans, projects and actions, and the procedures for monitoring and revising.

The best virtue of the document is undoubtedly the fact that it identifies the areas to act over and which are the projects and actions that have to be set up. The document covers specifically six different plans: the Social Communication Plan, the Plan for Collaborating with the Educational System, the Society and Armed Forces Plan, the Plan for Collaborating with Public Administrations, the Cultural Action Plan and the Research Plan. However, despite this wide planning, there are a series of elements that, to a certain extent, have conditioned the implementation results not to be the most desired ones.

A such ambitious planning over the time, that has been inherited and assumed by a different Government from the one who prepared it and passed it, needs an annual development that at least identifies which of the activities covered at the Master Plan

will be carried out in that period of time and which are the short-term objectives. A policy such as the one for promoting the culture of defense, that involves necessarily a great volume of activities, the participation of a great number of administrations and whose results are not immediate, must have an annual planning that guarantees the fulfillment of the fixed objectives in a most periodic way.

The Master Plan does not identify the priority sectors nor the regions of the culture of defense promotion fields. As a result of this situation, there is a very heterogeneous intervention, basically because some of the fields have been subject to a wide number of projects and actions, such as the promotion of the culture of defense in the framework of the University education and the research, and the protection and promotion of the historical-artistic heritage, while others, such as the Social Communication Plan and the Plan for Collaborating with Public Administrations have been subject to almost no development. As it was noticed in the previous section, some autonomous regions have lower levels of the culture of defense than the average, but the planning does not consider this circumstance to foresee more activities or more intensity in the same activities in the autonomous regions that present comparative deficits of culture of defense. What is more, in the fields of the University and the promotion of the historical-artistic heritage, the developed activities are placed in the main cities of Spain, specially in the capitals, and therefore, the culture of defense promotion has not even been addressed in these two cases in a special way to the Spanish regions that should be subject to a more specific treatment.

2. The coordination of the culture of defense policy presents a series of deficiencies from the moment the activities of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force and the DIGERINS pass on an image of independence. In the practice, among the great catalogue offered by the Master Plan, there are no actions jointly developed by the DIGERINS, the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. However, the Master Plan establishes the set up of a coordination organ, the Board of the Culture of Defense (Junta de Cultura de Defensa), composed by the Director-General for Institutional Relations, the Chief of Defense Staff, the second Chief of Defense Staff of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, the Chief of the Center for National Defense Studies (CESEDEN) and the General-Director of the Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies. Nevertheless, this organ has only had one meeting from its creation and that was in the previous term - what explains why the coordination in the culture of defense field is almost inexistent. But it is possible to identify another series of elements that deepen this uncoordinated situation.

The Board of the Culture of Defense has become in practice an inactive coordination organ because the Master Plan does not establish clearly neither the periodicity of its sessions nor its mechanisms for coordination. The Master Plan only establishes in this sense that, depending on the issues to be treated by the Board of the Culture of Defense, other responsible staff of the Department can be summoned. Consequently, the coordination between the works directly developed by the DIGERINS and the organs in charge of promoting the culture of defense in the Army, the Navy and the Air Force

does not practically exist, and thus, there is not a direct exercise of the authority of the DIGERINS over the whole activities in the field of the culture of defense promotion.

Likewise, no coordination procedure has been established such as a coordination protocol that could allow the DIGERINS to know at any moment which are the activities developed by the different authorities and organs working in the culture and consciousness of defense promotion that could guarantee a united action and more solid activities, avoiding duplicated actions that hinder to abandon the more complex activities, and could warrant at every moment the authority of the Director-General for Institutional Relations. This coordination should be produced specifically in the planning stage, i.e. in the planning process of the Master Plan and of future partial or annual plans, and in this way, the accumulated experience of the Armed Forces and the Ministry of Defense could be useful for identifying the possible faults and the DIGERINS could be more realistic and possibly more successful.

There has neither been foreseen a specific coordination organ between the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, which are in most cases the ones who have more possibilities to have direct contact with civil society and who are the ones that should offer an image of unity and coherence. Furthermore, in the implementation stage, the coordination is basic, first of all, in order not to duplicate activities and resources, and, secondly, to make the unity of action more convincing and representative of the participating institutions and organs.

3. The implementation of the policy for promoting the culture of defense has been greatly conditioned by the problems and dysfunctions produced at the planning and coordination fields of the culture of defense policy and have caused the implementation to present important elements of fragmentation, imbalance and multiple activities in a reduced number of sectors.

A) The fragmentation at the implementation of the culture of defense policy does not have to be, at first, a negative element, if there is a coordination at this implementation and a division of the work between the participating authorities. What is more, the work division at the implementation of the culture of defense policy should be planned and coordinated in a way that the DIGERINS could establish the projects and actions of the Plans to be carried out by the DIGERINS itself, by the two Deputy Directions-General or by the corresponding Departments of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. In this last case, the DIGERINS should be informed about which is the authority that implements directly the action and if that is the highest scale, the intermediate or the lowest one. Therefore, if there is not an implementation planning of all the actions nor a coordination of the direct implementation, in practice, there will be a fragmented implementation in which different authorities intervene sometimes implementing actions in the same fields while other times, they do not intervene at all.

B) Another problem at the implementation of the culture of defense policy in Spain is the imbalance regarding the fields where most of the actions are carried out. At the same in the DIGERINS, most of the actions focus on fields for promoting the

research about issues of security and defense, the relations with Universities (the Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies is in charge of this) and the protection of the historical-artistic heritage (task developed by the Deputy Direction-General for Historical-Artistic Heritage). This situation means that the Plans prepared for non-university education, social communication or society-Armed Forces have been almost not attended or have been subject to actions developed by organs of the lowest scale of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force which, in short, are the ones who can have a more direct contact with civil society and public organisms in the cities where they are posted.

Actually, the deep cause of this imbalance at the fields related to the culture of defense promotion and the preferences of these two just mentioned sectors can be explained taking into account that the Ministry of Defense has a full autonomy of action, like the case of the historical-artistic heritage, or has relations with Institutions that also have autonomy of decision such as Universities or Research Institutes, and so, their relations are more direct and easy. In the other fields it is much more difficult to implement most of the adopted decisions because they need the cooperation of other public administrations such as Ministries, Autonomous Regions, Town Councils or Provincial Councils that are in charge of those fields. This circumstance was foreseen when one of the Plans derived from the Master Plan of the Culture of Defense - the Plan for Collaborating with Public Administrations - was included. The Plan's objective is that public officers of the different public administrations acquire the necessary training in subjects related to security and, at the same time, promote their participation in activities of the culture of defense. However, no program establishing a collaboration between the different activities of public administrations has been included neither in the Master Plan nor in the DIGERINS own activities.

The Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation is another department whose collaboration is crucial as well, mainly if we take into account that most of the activities developed by the Armed Forces out of the Spanish borders involve the collaboration and coordination with civil agents and NGOs that implement aid and development programs regarding food, health, education and protection of Human Rights which are financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but count on the logistics and protection of the Armed Forces. The appreciation of the contribution of the Armed Forces by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the publicity of the features of the activities that require coordination and cooperation of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense could obviously pass on the nature, scope and utility of the Armed Forces action in international missions to citizenry. Finally, it is necessary to point out the fact that there is no organ cooperating with the rest of the ministries and administrations, and that could be very useful to make easier the set in motion of the Master Plan.

C) As it has already been shown, the implementation of the culture of defense suffers consequences derived from the deficiencies at its planning and coordination. That undoubtedly provokes a multiplicity of projects and actions mainly taken at the fields for promoting the research and the relations with Universities. As there has been pointed out, the autonomy of Universities is very attractive to the different authorities

and organs in charge of the promotion policy and so, they see great opportunities to reach the fixed objectives in this field, getting in contact with a sector which has traditionally been against all things related to Armed Forces and Defense. As a result, an important network of contacts and relations has been created between almost all authorities participating in the promotion of the culture of defense. This has obviously caused spectacular results, in the sense that there is a great number of courses, conferences, seminars, masters, postgraduate courses, doctorate courses and research projects whose financial resources come from the budget assigned to the culture of defense. However, there has been an over-treatment of a field whose results reach only a part of the population and even only the areas of knowledge or the Departments which are interested in this kind of studies.

4. The Direction-General for Institutional Relations does not have a control over the economic assignment of the activities for promoting the culture and consciousness of defense developed by the organs in charge of this task in the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. In fact, these organs count on the economic resources contemplated in the budget items assigned to each of the Armed Forces - the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. Then, the three Chiefs of Defense Staff are the ones who decide about the expenditure and the financing of the activities for promoting the culture of defense carried out by their corresponding Departments of Institutional Relations and Communication. As a consequence, the DIGERINS only controls the budget items of the activities carried out by itself and, in practice, it does not assign resources to the activities for promoting the culture of defense in the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, nor it knows about those activities and the budget fixed for each of them.

Despite there is an efficient control of the expenditure of the activities for promoting the culture of defense in the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, the deficiencies in the coordination and the economic independence give to the Armed Forces a total autonomy in this field and so, the possibilities for overlapping and doubling the activities increase, and consequently the expenditure.

5. The assessment of the actions in the framework of the culture of defense policy developed by the DIGERINS and the organs in charge of this function in the Army, the Navy and the Air Force is mainly an economic control which consists of checking that the items assigned to each one of the programmed activities are implemented in the proper way. Apart from the expenditure control, in the practice, there is no other mechanism for controlling the effects actually caused by the programmed and the implemented activities at the culture and consciousness of defense levels.

The Master Plan establishes that “in order to study the development of the Master Plan and to monitor its actions in detail, a Monitoring Group of the Master Plan is created”. This Monitoring Group is composed of the Director-General of the DIGERINS, the Director-General of the Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies (IEEE), the Deputy Director-General of the Historical-Artistic Heritage, the Deputy Director-General for Social Relations and Communication and a representative of the Office of the State Secretary for Defense, another one of the Office of the Deputy Secretary for Defense

and one more from each of the Chiefs of Defense Staff of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. At first, the composition of the Group is obsolete if we take into account that the Deputy Direction-General for Social Relations and Communication does not exist anymore. Likewise the Group is a monitoring organ for the Master Plan but not an assessment or control one. In theory, (because there has only been one meeting) in its meetings, the responsible authorities should only enumerate the taken actions and how they have used the budget items for each of them. However, this is an incomplete procedure and lacks the assessment and control of public policies.

Among the different plans, projects and actions contained in the Master Plan, the truth is that many activities require a long and complex control and assessment procedures, while others are more easily assessable. For example, in the case of the research promotion or the relations with Universities, the assessment of the results is more attainable.

The assessment of the developed activities regarding the achievement of the objectives should be firstly made by each of the organs that has directly implemented the activities, and then, by the DIGERINS. However, the Monitoring Group does not have an assessment document saying which are the results achieved by the developed actions nor the possible detected deficiencies and faults. Furthermore, the control of public policies should be developed by external assessors and experts, in order they can apply more objective criteria which can be hardly required to authorities directly involved in the preparation, direction and implementation of a specific policy. Moreover, the data obtained in the assessment and control can make the objectives to be redefined and improved, as well as the planning and coordination mechanisms.

6. The field of communication in the culture of defense promotion also contains important deficiencies. At first, as it was shown in the questions related to the organic-functional framework, there is no specific organ depending on the DIGERINS in charge of the communication of the culture of defense. This circumstance makes more difficult to design a coherent, coordinated and efficient communication policy, more even if we take into account that there is no organ specifically in charge of this and that the current Direction-General for Communication of the Defense, who is mainly in charge of the communication activities of the Minister Cabinet, does not count on the necessary resources to be able to assume all the communication policy in the framework of the culture of defense promotion. But other deficiencies in the communication of the culture of defense promotion can be identified.

A) As there is not an organ directly in charge of the communication of the culture of defense promotion, most of the activities are directly developed by the DIGERINS, the two Deputy Directions-General and the Departments and organs of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force at the fields of the University, research, University education and civil society, so they are only significant for the reduced sector to which are aimed at. A great part of the actions of the culture of defense policy has almost no impact in the media. The relations with the media and the communication strategies cannot be developed if there is no organ which is in practice in charge of its

management and counts on the necessary resources to do it. It is also possible to add the fact that the Communication Departments of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force go on assuming a great part of the tasks of the culture of defense promotion, despite they go on depending on the Direction-General for Communication of the Defense. Therefore, it is very difficult to imagine there could be a coordinated work of a communication function that not even exist.

B) As it has been previously shown, the culture of defense promotion and the development of a consciousness of defense not only depends on the suitability of the programmed activities and the sectors who are aimed at, but also on the ability to communicate and publicize this kind of activities and the obtained results. In this sense, most part of the transformation of the image and the functions of the Armed Forces, of both the soldier and the institution, has not been significant. The truth is that there is no marketing project or policy aimed at offering a more current image of the Armed Forces dismissing the stereotype of the Spanish military and of the institution in general, which does not correspond to reality and does not reflect the current features of the Army and the importance of the functions developed by them. Even though, nowadays, many officers of the Armed Forces are required to have a great preparation in many fields, they should not be themselves the ones to be exclusively in charge of the marketing because there are external experts able to transfer more easily a specific and coordinated message from all the Armed Forces to civil society. At the moment, the only marketing work developed by the Ministry of Defense has been a TV advertisement aimed at the recruitment. In the case of advertisements, their purpose is not to transfer to the population the functions of the Armed Forces, but the possibilities for the youngsters to develop a career that entails a series of satisfactions more personal than economical. Thus, this makes that only a little sector of the population interested in joining the Armed Forces pays attention to this kind of advertisements, while the others think that the offered image can be very partial and magnified by the pursued goals¹⁰.

Therefore, the fact that the huge efforts made for a functional and organic adaptation of the Armed Forces have not had an immediate impact in the culture of defense indexes is due, to a large extent, to the fact that those changes have not been showed to public opinion in a clear, full and explicit way. And that is, in part, the reason why the old-fashioned image of the military professional and the institution with so many prejudices has been perpetuated.

¹⁰ Furthermore, the same DIGERINS is conscious of this situation from some time ago, although no measure has been adopted to offset it because the same Master Plan says that: "It is necessary to make a difference between the action whose direct objective is to encourage the culture of defense, and the other ones whose aim is to reach general objectives of the defense and then, although those influences directly over the first ones, they have other purposes, and therefore, the planning and the implementation should be different." On the other hand, the Master Plans also says that: "The necessity of more resources and of an intensive effort for recruiting during the first years of the implementation of the new model of professional Armed Forces can make the messages aimed at society to reach this objective to be confusing or affect negatively to the parallel effort that is made to spread the culture of defense" (Culture of Defense Master Plan passed by the Ministry of Defense through the Directive No. 5/2002 from January 11th 2002, pp. 6 and 2)

V. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE POLICY OF THE CULTURE OF DEFENSE IN SPAIN

In the previous section there has been shown some of the weaknesses and deficiencies in the culture of defense promotion policy which, to a certain extent, explain why, despite the so many actions decided and implemented in this field, the culture of defense levels are still relatively low, the population is still reluctant to consider the necessity to increase the budget for defense and there are still a series of prejudices around the military institution and a low evaluation of the characters of the professional soldier or the career military as professions. That is why in this final part this study offers a series a proposals that can contribute to enhance some of the procedures, actions or measures in the fields of the culture of defense policy – the planning, the coordination, the assessment and specially, the communication – in which some deficiencies have been detected.

1. In the **planning** stage, it is advisable to revise the Master Plan because, once assessed the achieved results during its implementation in the period between 2002-2007, it is possible to establish priorities between the Derived Plans that have had a lower development or the ones that need a higher number of projects and actions. Furthermore, it is also advisable to consider the geographical priorities in the application of all the Derived Plans, depending on the culture of defense indexes presented in each of the Autonomous regions.

The Master Plan of the Culture of Defense and its Derived Plans are very general and wide documents, so it is difficult to determine the duration and deadlines of the actions considered in them. In fact, the same Master Plan establishes an unlimited duration. Therefore, it could be desirable to make annual plans including the priorities, objectives, projects, resources and results expected for each year.

2. Another field where it is possible to find great deficiencies is, undoubtedly, the **coordination** of the actions between the different authorities participating in the culture of defense policy and that have caused autonomous actions, overlaps, areas in which there have been taken many actions and others in which the Master Plan has almost not been implemented. Despite the Board of the Culture of Defense is considered a coordination organ, its activities in this field has not almost existed and no specific procedure guaranteeing the coordination has been established. The Board of the Culture of Defense must be reactivated as a coordination organ and its meetings should be more frequent in order to develop a true coordination for both the planning and the implementation of the culture of defense and should include a most direct participation of the Departments of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force in charge of developing and coordinating activities in this field.

3. At the moment, **the assessment** of the efficacy of the culture of defense policy has been made by checking the budget items for each of the correctly implemented actions and on the basis of opinion surveys made by institutions such as the Sociological Research Center (Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas CIS) or The International

Affairs and Foreign Policy Institute (INCIPE), from which some indicators about the citizenry culture and consciousness of defense levels can be extracted. This kind of studies and the analysis and conclusions developed thanks to them can obviously have a great value, but they are not precise enough indicators to detect the areas of the culture of defense policy that have not achieved the best or worst results. Therefore, this kind of assessment indicators should be completed with a more precise evaluation.

First of all, a procedure of internal and external assessment about the works made by the institutions and organs and the achieved results should be developed each two years. It could be possible to create an assessment committee in the Monitoring Committee of the Master Plan, composed of the people in charge of the institutions involved in the culture of defense policy, and a committee of external assessors that could be composed of the public and private experts who do not develop actions directly related with the culture of defense promotion. Secondly, the assessment should be done in all levels, from the actions directly implemented by the Director-General, the Deputy Directions-General, the Communication Departments of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force and the organs of intermediate and low scale who also implement this kind of tasks. Thirdly, the results of the assessment could provoke the necessity of a new approach at any of the aspects of the culture of defense planning, regardless of the authority who develops it.

4. There is a great ignorance of the changes produced in the features of the soldier and the Armed Forces in general and, consequently, the images of previous historical periods have been perpetuated and have become deeply entrenched prejudices. In order to delete that old concept, it is necessary to design an image **communication strategy** able to reach the highest number of population sectors and to offer a clear and real message of the current profile of the Spanish soldier and the Armed Forces.

As it has been shown in previous sections, the civil servants in charge of the culture of defense promotion do not have to be marketing experts. In fact, the direct implication in the culture of defense makes more difficult to keep the necessary distance to identify the characteristics of the population to which the information is aimed at and the easiest and fastest way to provide it. Therefore, it could be interesting to count on an external assessment and, even, on an authority able to make a marketing plan aimed to offset most of the prejudices that are kept nowadays about the Armed Forces. However, regardless of the final design of the communication strategy that could be made by the marketing experts, there are at least four fields in which it should be necessary to act in order to give more transparency to the activities carried out by the Armed Forces and to improve in this way the knowledge of the citizenry about their functions and utility.

A second field that should be considered in the marketing and communication strategy previously mentioned is undoubtedly the advertisements production. They should be obviously different from the ones aimed at the recruitment and they should emphasize the functional diversity, the geographical disparity and the important preparation required for the new missions developed by the Armed Forces, and the risks taken

sometimes to safeguard and protect the interests of Spain and its citizens and to contribute to the international peace and security.

The third field of the communication strategy should be the one aimed at concluding agreements with TVs and production companies in order to finance the production and broadcasting of documentaries and reports about the functions developed by the Armed Forces in and out of the Spanish borders in collaboration with other Armies and in coordination with civil agents and NGOs. At the same time, this kind of documentaries and reports could focus on the individual image of the members of the Armed Forces and their daily challenges in order to offer a current profile of the soldier, and deleting in this way old stereotypes and prejudices that have not been removed yet because of the lack of information that has civil society about the changes experienced by the Armed Forces also at an individual level.

The fourth and final field is the one related to the institutional and material collaboration of the Ministry of Defense for producing TV serials or movies focused on the Armed Forces or dealing with them, mainly if they are films focused on the most current view of their functions and activities as a State institution. The Armed Forces are not usually a main character in our movies or TV serials, except for the parodies and comedies that highlight the main stereotypes of the Army, inherited from previous historical periods. If we take into account that our movies and TV serials offer a minimum treatment about the Armed Forces, the promotion and institutional and material support to these activities should be a very important part of the communication strategy in the promotion of the culture of defense.

In previous sections several ideas about the disinformation and sometimes confusion existing around the utility of the Armed Forces in both the national and international situation have been offered. In this sense, a clear, coherent and stable message about this issue should be developed to fulfill a series of requirements. Firstly, it is advisable to clarify that most of the tasks developed by the Armed Forces nowadays are focused on the security area and just a residual core is strictly related to defense. Therefore, it should be promoted not only the culture of defense, but also, the culture of security. Secondly, the message should contain objective and quantitative elements such as: the distributed quantities of emergency humanitarian aid, the results of the tasks for rebuilding facilities, the number of people who have received medical care, the effects of their ecological activities, the developed rescues, the supervision tasks in elections and the watching of human rights, etc. The effective results - identified and quantifiable results - are easy to transmit, have more possibilities to gain a positive assessment by citizenry and are a proof of the expenditure. Finally, the tasks of the Armed Forces should offer a message of neutrality, apart from any political consideration or positioning.

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