

National security policymaking



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

National Security Policymaking Civil-military relations concern the relationship between the armed forces of the and the larger society they serve, in how the relations between them are regulated. 1 The U. S. military has played an important role in national security issues by functioning as an advisor; however Schonberg² (2002) argues that in recent years, it has assumed a dominant role in the diplomatic process, becoming the ultimate decision maker where matters such as treaties are concerned. Feaver and Kohn (2000) note that a real gap has developed in civil-military relations, which could pose serious national security consequences for the United States.

An ideal civil-military relationship is one where civil leadership provides the broad political and security objectives, while military leadership is primarily concerned with the execution of such civilian policies on the field (Elliot, 2002: 2). The military institution functions on the basis of a set of values that restricts individual behavior since it emphasizes organizational success and victory in war over the elevation of personal goals. 3 However as Feaver and Kohn (2000) point out, since there is currently an absence of an urgent threat to the nation's security, democratic society will not support an adequate military, as a result of which the military's loyalty to civilian authority is likely to diminish.

Hooker (2003-4) asserts that civilian control over the military is undisputed, since Presidential approval is required for all senior military officers and Congressional approval is mandated for all officer promotions⁴. Military structure, pay and budgets are regulated by civilians, therefore civilian authority can disregard independent military advice. However, as Hooker points out, the reality is that civilian authority which attempts to force the

military to do its bidding may pay a political price, since opposition parties are likely to exploit such differences of opinion, especially in war time.

Besides, political leaders consistently seek affirmation from the military for their programs and policies. Military leaders are obligated to testify honestly to Congress about policy decisions affecting their service – especially those they disagree with, while simultaneously refraining from publicly exposing differences within the Administration due to the acknowledged precedence of civilian authority, which again blurs the dividing line between civil and military.

A survey conducted by Hooker⁵ demonstrates that the civil-military gap is widening, with the increasingly conservative military being out of step with the liberal values of civil society. A majority of military officers today believe that it is proper for the military to “insist rather than to advise” in security and policy matters, especially those concerning the use of force⁶. There is a growing belief among mid level officers in the military that senior leadership should stand up for the right in military policy. As Schonberg⁷ also points out, there has been a growing military influence on policy making in security issues during the Clinton and Bush administrations, especially in the framing of treaties such as the CTBT, START II and the development of the Statute of the ICC. On this basis therefore, it may be concluded that the traditional military role as subservient to civilian authority is increasingly being challenged in recent times, as senior military officers become more active in strategic decision making processes which have been the province of civilian authorities.

References:

* Cohen, Elliot, 2002. “Supreme Command in the 21st Century”.

<https://assignbuster.com/national-security-policymaking/>

* Hooker, Richard D, 2003-4. “ Soldiers of the State: reconsidering American Civil-Military Relations.

* Feaver, Peter D and Kohn, Richard H, 2000. “ The Gap: Soldiers, civilians and their mutual misunderstanding”, The National Interest.

* Schonberg, Karl K, 2002. “ The Generals’ Diplomacy: U. S. military influence in the Treaty Process, 1992-2000.” *Sevon Hall Journal of Diplomacy and International relations*, 68-86.