

# Towards a Thinking Military Philosophical Practice and Botswana Military Training<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Obedience is traditionally the supreme virtue of the military and, for many people, a soldier is an unthinking automaton that has been conditioned to respond to commands and operate in strictly hierarchical environments. But as soldiers progress in rank, they are required to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate commands as well as to reason concerning their commands and other military and non-military engagements. This paper is an overview of the practical steps adopted to foster independent thinking among student officers at the Botswana Defence Command and Staff College. It shows how the tools of critical thinking can be used to help student officers overcome the lessons of unquestioning obedience ingrained in them at cadet training and gain an awareness of themselves as autonomous individuals with responsibilities to and beyond the military hierarchy. It also shows how critical thinking can assist in the evaluation of military objectives and in the decisions that follow such evaluations.

**Keywords:** *critical thinking, military obedience, Botswana military, military training, regimentation*

## Introduction

The pursuit of professionalism has always been important to the military throughout history, not only because professionalism enhances capacity of the soldier to prosecute wars but also because it enhances the social responsibility of the soldier and his capacity to manage violence, which as Harold Lasswell observes is a peculiar skill of the military and as such a defining feature of a professional soldier. It is the drive toward professionalization that led to the replacement of the citizen army (which was mobilized on the basis of property in response to a particular military situation and disbanded when the objective had been achieved) with standing armies which did not disband in times of peace. The underlying logic of the move was probably that keeping soldiers focused on soldiering will enhance their professionalism and thereby make them more adept in responding to military situations. It is also the desire for greater professionalism that has informed the many innovations that have been introduced and continue to be introduced into the education, command structure, and equipment of soldiers. Here again, the underlying logic is that when soldiers "become more professionalized, with greater training, greater skills and greater responsibility, there is less need for regimentation and close supervision" (Radine 1977, p. 141).

Professionalism has been severally defined but as it relates to the military, three main dimensions define professionalism: expertise based on higher (initial and continuing) education in a socially important domain; an ethic of service and responsibility to the society which, based on higher values or principles, partly removes specific types of expertise from the purview of market forces; a sense of cooperate unity, and delegation of public authority in setting and enforcing of professional standards (Maman 2001, p. 51-52).

Here, there is need to distinguish between military education and military training. Whereas training aims at achieving some level of proficiency at the tactical level, military education aims at a more wholesome development that will assist the development of the two other dimensions of professionalism, i.e., ethics of service and responsibility and a sense of corporate unity. It is such rigorous and focused education

that results in a high standard of military professionalism which becomes apparent to the general public that delegates the authority of setting and maintaining professional standards to the military establishment.

Although professionalism has always been an important preoccupation of the military, Huntington observes that it is in the last quarter of the nineteenth century that the desire for professionalization assumed greater urgency (Huntington 1957). During the last quarter of the nineteenth century the seed for the transition from military training to military education was sown, and the foundation for many important developments in military professionalism was laid. Even in the Swiss military where “the politically cherished militia ideal and the constitution do not favor professionalization, an increasing professionalization of the militia force, both latent and manifest, has been observed since World War II” (Haltiner 1988, p. 263). What this means is that professionalism has been and continues to be a cherished ideal in the military.

Part of this desire for professionalism has seen military trainers of the 20th and 21st century being more concerned with the intellectual development of the officer corps as opposed to the development of mere tactical competence. It is this desire for intellectual development that is responsible for the broadening of the military curriculum and the insistence on secular academic attainment by those who aspire to the higher cadres of the military. It is also this impetus toward intellectual development that has made the study of critical thinking an important part of the military curriculum at the level of operations planning. The understanding here is that critical thinking adds value to officers and broadens their mindset, not only in the area of military operations but also in terms of their ethics of service, responsibility and sense of corporate unity. In most Staff colleges, however, the approach has been to teach critical thinking as a tool of reasoning, in the hope that officers will somehow make use of this tool at the level of operations planning.

The Botswana Defence Command and Staff College, even though it is at a foundational stage, has benefited from the experiences of older staff colleges and as such has already incorporated some of the best practices of military education into its curriculum. The guiding principle of the college is that officers should learn how to think and not what to think and this makes the development of critical thinking pivotal. It is this desire to develop an officer corps that thinks-on-the-move that informs my attempt to elevate the teaching of critical thinking to the level of philosophical practice and in what follows, I discuss an innovative and practical approach to the development of critical thinking in military officers based on my current work at the Botswana Defence Command and Staff College with some modifications. It aims at showing that critical thinking and indeed philosophy is not only relevant to the training of military officers but can also have practical applications both in the conduct of war and other military operations.

### **Military Obedience and the Blight of Regimentation**

The military is often regarded as a highly disciplined organization not only in the sense of its ability to quickly mobilize in response to both military and non-military emergencies but also in terms of its ability to stay focused and organized even in the absence of perceivable threats. The ability of the military to maintain this high level of discipline is sometimes attributed to its strict hierarchical structure and its culture of respect for hierarchy. Although this strict hierarchy and discipline is sometimes seen as necessary given the peculiar functions of the military, it is not always appreciated by scholars, some of whom see the military establishment as stifling and unnecessarily restrictive. Greg Foster subscribes to this view when he observes that “the military is, by nature, a hierarchically organized, authoritarian institution built on rank, the sanctity of command, uniformity and rigid rule following” (Foster 2004, p.91). Although Foster’s view has negative undertones there is no doubt that part of the achievements of the military as a disciplined organization is attributable to the inviolability of its rules, the uniformity of its rituals and the fact that command is highly respected even by officers on a higher rank than the one in command. It is the sanctity of command that



makes organizational discipline possible and is therefore responsible for what some may regard as an authoritarian streak of the military.

The sanctity of command makes it mandatory that officers and men of the military obey their commanders and ensure that commands are always carried out at all times. The primacy of obedience as a military virtue was acknowledged as far back as 431 BC by Thucydides in his *History of the Peloponnesian War* and more recently by Samuel P. Huntington who refers to it as the “supreme military virtue” (Huntington 1957, p. 74), and it has been argued no military organization can survive without a properly instilled culture of obedience. In obeying an order, a subordinate forgoes critical judgment in the selection of alternatives and “uses the formal criterion of the receipt of a command or signal as his basis of choice” (Cockerham 1980, p. 1273). In doing so, the soldier defers to the superior knowledge and experience of the commander, trusting that the net effect of carrying out the command will be beneficial to all concerned. A culture of obedience is important, not only because the military must be united in confronting a set of objectives, but also because such a unity of purpose translates to efficiency and efficacy.

The faith in the culture of obedience notwithstanding, it has been argued that there are times where blind obedience could be counterproductive, even in the military. Unquestioning obedience is often blamed for regimentation; a situation where agents are forced by the system to follow rules in an automated and unconscious manner. Under regimentation, agents do not necessarily understand why certain orders have to be obeyed nor are they encouraged to reason concerning the orders. This is in direct contrast to the self-discipline inherent in a democratic society (Brumbaugh 1944, p. 503) in which agents act because they are convinced of the rightness of the course of action. Regimentation may be appropriate for parade ground drills but cannot be desirable especially within the officer corps which is involved in the planning and direction of both military and non-military operations. It is this undesirability that Foster expresses when he observes that “obedience stifles dissent—responsible or otherwise. It inhibits initiative. It deadens the intellect. It is largely antithetical to moral courage. And thus it undermines the development of true leadership” (Foster 2004, pp. 90-96). It would appear, therefore, that unquestioning obedience and its attendant regimentation is not desirable within the officer cadre.

It would appear that while regimentation and unquestioning obedience is usually emphasized for men of the military, its disadvantages have been recognized within the officer corps. Janowitz, for instance, observes that the size and technical complexity of contemporary military organizations renders unquestioning obedience impractical (Janowitz 1964, p.4). This means that professional soldiers may, in fact, evaluate the orders they have been given and are actually at liberty to disobey such orders that they consider to be illegal. Huntington agrees with this view when he argues that “there are circumstances where military obedience can be sacrificed for higher goals. Such instances include, where military obedience conflicts with professional competence, non-military values, military competence, legality and basic morality (Janowitz 1964, pp. 74- 79). Thus an officer with a superior technical competence is not bound to obey an order which by his estimation goes against his specific technical knowledge, neither is he bound to obey orders that are obviously illegal, immoral or at variance with the professional military code of duty, honor and country. In order to do this, it is important for an officer to develop an acute sense of discernment especially as it relates to the military as an organization and his function within it. Doing so entails not merely assimilating the best techniques of his profession but also developing an intellectual outlook that can be brought to bear on both military and non-military decisions.

Developing the intellectual outlook of the military is sometimes looked upon as a double edged sword. There is the view that an overtly intellectual military may adversely affect the subordination of the military to civilian control and raise the level of praetorian tendencies within the officer corps. But there is also the

view that an intellectual development may actually reduce the level of authoritarianism within the military, encouraging thereby a culture of persuasion and manipulation (Janowitz 1964, p.4). It is this latter view that is more common in the contemporary military and is responsible for the high academic attainment of military personnel in the last fifty years. It is also the need to infuse greater intellectual discernment into the military that has made a study of critical thinking an important component of military training especially at the level of operations planning.

### **Philosophical Practice and Botswana Military Training**

The guiding principle of my approach to developing critical thinking in the military takes its cue from what Richard S. Kohn identifies as the challenge to military professionalism in the twenty first century. According to him,

The challenge to military professionalism in the twenty-first century lies in three interconnected areas. The first is intellectual: the ability to wage war successfully in a variety of circumstances without wasting the lives of soldiers or their equipment and supplies (which are always limited, even for a superpower at the zenith of its relative strength). The second is political: the absence from the officer corps of partisan political divisions, its subordination to the legally constituted civilian authorities in charge of the state, and its ability to establish an effective working partnership or collaboration with the civilian political leadership regardless of party or faction. The third challenge to professionalism is what I would call the moral or ethical: the honour, integrity, honesty, and self-sacrifice of the officer corps, the commitment of individual officers to the norms and values of personal and organizational behaviour that permit them to lead, and their subordinates to follow, in the heat and stress of battle (Kohn 2009, p. 74).

Critical thinking is therefore meant to assist in the development of these vital aspects of military professionalism not in an incidental manner (where critical thinking is taught in the hope that in some way the student officers will make a connection between the topics covered and their vocation in the military) but by encouraging the involvement of critical thinking in the core business of the military through practical exercises and training. The understanding here is that a practical program with set objectives and a clearly defined method is more likely to achieve results envisaged in the guiding principles of the college than any pretense of academic purity. This is more so since the object of the college is not mere academic attainment but the development of skills that will further professionalism. The program therefore consists of sets of lectures where critical thinking concepts are introduced and practical exercises that aim at objectifying and concretizing the subjects of the lectures.

#### **Objective 1: Breaking the Ice**

My first interaction with student officers is usually a debate as to whether there is any difference between the attrition warfare of old (where a battlefield was usually open and two armies confront each other and proceed to inflict casualties on each other until one of them is too weak to continue) and contemporary warfare that targets the weaknesses of the enemy and thereby minimizes its own casualties. The discussion is done in groups and the choice of topic is aimed at achieving two goals. The first is to start a discussion around a topic that student officers are familiar with and could readily express an opinion without fear of contravening any military regulations. The second is to encourage a comparison between war strategies where the answer appears obvious.

In discussing attrition warfare, the questions usually are:

- Whether warfare has changed significantly since the days of battle lines where adversaries stood at their battle lines and fire volleys at each other,
- What reason each officer has for the position he holds on the issue,
- For the officers who think there has been a significant change, what they consider to be the most significant change between the two periods.

This exercise usually serves as a way of introducing them to Socratic dialogue—where questions are asked to establish leads which are subsequently pursued so as to demonstrate the absurdity of what had initially appeared to be an intelligent position. What usually comes out of the discussion is that victory in a war of attrition usually depended on the number of riflemen and the speed at which they can fire and reload. It also usually brings home the point that in a war of attrition even the best riflemen could never be sure of returning from war alive. Concerning the question as to whether military strategy has changed between the two periods, Socratic dialogue usually demonstrates the absurdity of a military strategy that follows clearly recognized patterns and since war strategy as taught at military academies are the same, the possibility of both armies predicting each other's strategy reduces even the best planned military operation to a war of attrition, with heavy losses on both sides. The aim of the Socratic dialogue is usually to demonstrate the absurdity of war, viz. that in any war, there are usually losers on both sides and that irrespective of the outcome, war always leaves a bitter memory for people on both sides.

To ensure that all student officers participate in the discussion, a participation log that shows the level and quality of participation is kept by the directing staff of each syndicate.<sup>2</sup>

## Objective 2: Dismantling Regimentation

The objective of my second level of interaction with student officers is to dismantle regimentation which is often not consciously attained but is inadvertently acquired through the tightly scheduled daily routines and the strict enforcement of regulations that is associated with officer cadet training as well as the common belief in the military that “the soldier is protected by orders which are not obviously illegal and unjustifiable” (*Obedience to Orders ...*, 1961, p. 657). In attempting to dismantle regimentation and make argumentation a way of life, student officers are required to develop an opinion on subjects that are controversial but have nothing to do with the government or the military. The understanding here is that it will be much easier to engender a lively discussion on an everyday topic that is unrelated to the military than on a topic that may be regarded as sensitive. The discussions usually center around newspaper clippings on topics such as follows.

- Friends from the net—an opinion on internet relationships,
- Dying to be someone else—an opinion on the doctoring of photographs to produce the perfect image by people who are less perfect,
- Don't play God—an opinion on abortion,
- Seeing violence through the camera's eye—an opinion on the publication of graphic images of violent death by newspapers.

After the general discussion on a particular topic, student officers return to their syndicates to write a response to the article. When the responses are ready, student officers reassemble in the lecture theatre where a member from each syndicate presents the response of the group to the gathering. The objective of this is to encourage the officers as a group to own up to an opinion and to publicly air their criticism of others.

The next step involves using appropriate local examples to introduce student officers to Kahane and Cavender's 'Impediments to Cogent Reasoning' (Kahane 2006) i.e.,

- Loyalty, Provincialism and the Herd Instinct;
- Prejudice, Stereotypes, Scapegoats, and Partisan Mindsets,
- Superstitious Beliefs,
- Wishful Thinking and Self Deception,
- The Pull of Pseudoscience,
- Rationalization and Procrastination.

The purpose is to equip them with tools of analysis that will help in evaluating information and opinions as opposed to their initial evaluation of newspaper clippings that followed a rule of the thumb. Using this new information each group evaluates both the newspaper article and their response to it looking for signs of loyalty, provincialism, superstitious beliefs, etc. This process is repeated until there is ample evidence that student officers have been able to apply the impediments to cogent reasoning in the evaluation of writings and speeches. Here again, a participation log is kept by the directing staff in an effort to ensure that there is close to equal participation by student officers.

The introduction of each new topic on critical thinking follows the same pattern where student officers initially critique an article and are later introduced to a particular critical thinking skill which they then use to evaluate the article they had earlier criticized and the critique they made of it. In undertaking each new task student officers are encouraged to use the basic principles of Socratic dialogue by asking penetrating questions on the issues that are raised until such a time that a particular point is seen to be thoroughly interrogated. The other topics introduced at this stage include:

- The Uses of Critical Thinking
- Qualities of a Critical Thinker
- Evaluating Arguments
- Fair Mindedness
- Dealing with the Ego
- Overcoming Conformity
- The Art of Listening

- Analysis of Claims
- Vagueness
- Ambiguity

At every stage of the interaction, effort is made to create a relaxed atmosphere where student officers are free to air their opinion. The College Commandant and other officers of the college regularly participate in the discussions to lend legitimacy to the process. A proposal has been made to involve other top military officers in our discussions and thereby reassure student officers that the process is acceptable and enable them feel free to hold views that may differ from the views of their superiors. This is done following Robert Gainsburgh's view that "it should be possible, however, to encourage more original military thinking without sacrificing the traditions of obedience to higher authority" (Gainsburgh 1964, p. 267). At every stage in the process, a participation log is kept by the directing staff who discusses the participation profile of each student officer with the student officer concerned. Where there is a participation deficiency the directing staff encourages and gives more opportunity to the particular student officer to have greater participation and thereby compensate for the deficit. The understanding is that it is only through regular participation that each student officer will lose his drill-ingrained inhibitions and adopt a critical thinking attitude.

### **Objective 3: Expanding autonomy of reason**

The emphasis prior to this point had been to encourage groups of student officers to develop and defend certain opinions as well as evaluate the opinion of others. At this third level of interaction, the objective is to gradually shift emphasis from group to individual opinion. To this end, most of the exercises at this level are individualized and greater effort is made to monitor each officer as an individual rather than as a member of a syndicate and ensure that their thought patterns are innovative and rigorous. Here again student officers move from evaluating opinions of members of the public concerning everyday issues to such opinions that are critical of the military institution. Student officers within a syndicate group read and discuss the same article and are thereafter required to write a response to the article as individuals using learned critical thinking tools. Student officers evaluate each other's written response making notes of the achievements and shortcomings of each response. Some of the opinion articles discussed at this level include:

- Lead us not into combat—an opinion on giving female soldiers combat roles
- Military involvement in civil policing is risky—an opinion on civil policing by joint police and army patrols
- New political regime pre-empts oversight at BDF—an overview of the Botswana Defense Force and its expenditure
- Botswana faces a BDF take over—discusses the involvement of retired military officers in politics.

Officers meet in their syndicate groups to discuss the work of individual members of the group and ideas are gleaned from the work of individuals to form a group position which is thereafter presented to the whole class at an assembly session. This exercise is meant to achieve two results. First, it is meant to stimulate innovative and rigorous thought in individual student officers. Secondly, it is meant to expose student officers to criticism such that they get used to having their views criticized by others. It is important to keep in mind that though individual innovative thought and rigor is emphasized, the military usually



functions as a group and that such individual thought has to ultimately fit into the overall plan of the group. Thus, it is important to encourage innovative thinking while at the same time maintaining the military tradition of working in and as a group. This exercise is overseen by the directing staff and supervised by me.

New critical thinking tools are introduced at this level to assist in building the capacity of the officers for innovative thought. The reason is that even though emphasis is on developing individual capacity for thinking, it is important to introduce new tools of thinking from time to time. The new critical thinking topics introduced at this stage include:

- Reasoning and assumptions
- Value Assumptions
- Reality Assumptions
- Reasoning from experience
- Correlation and False Correlation
- Statistical Generalization
- Margin of Error and Confidence Level
- Misleading Claims with Numbers

With each new topic, appropriate exercises are given to illustrate the importance of each new tool. As is usual, student officers are asked to analyze a piece of writing prior to being introduced to a new tool. After being taught the new tool, student officers are required to re-evaluate each other's work in the light of the new tool and then gather in their syndicate groups to discuss the shortcomings of their initial analysis and what they have gained from the new tool. Here again, a participation log is kept by the directing staff for each officer and at the end of each week, each student officer sits with his Directing Staff to discuss his participation profile and ways to improve it, if need be.

#### **Objective 4: Expanding Vision of Alternatives**

At the first level of our interaction, we had discussed the absurdity of a military strategy that is known to both sides of the conflict. Part of the objective at this stage is to avoid this by enabling student officers to apply their critical thinking skills to both military and non-military situations. In doing so, we keep in mind Sarkesian's view that "military systems can retain essential parts of their traditional configuration (i.e., discipline and order), more or less, and still develop an intellectual dimension of the profession with a value system closely linked to society" (Sarkesian 1981, p. 295). Thus in applying critical thinking skills in military and non-military operations, emphasis is laid on the fact that military and civil space often overlap and as such the military should be able to conceive of different courses of action so as to be in a position to choose the best possible course of action from among the options. The new critical thinking topics introduced at this level include:

- The Dilemma
- To act or not to act—case studies in Military Decision Making

- Decision Making
- Critical Thinking Model of Decision Making
- The Military Decision Making Process
- Optimizing Strategy in Corporate Decision Making

In discussing the dilemmas of a soldier, student officers are required to analyze moral and military dilemmas that confront or may confront a military officer in the course of his duties. Famous case studies like the case of Captain Lawrence P. Rockwell of the 10th Mountain Division of the US Army stationed at Port au Prince, Haiti on September 19th, 1994 are analyzed. Imaginary case studies such as below are also analyzed.

*You are on a peace-keeping mission in a foreign country and later found out that a group of your colleagues (officers of the same rank) are violating the rules of peace-keeping by commandeering the moveable properties of local civilians. These officers are close to the commander of the mission and they threaten that you will gain nothing by reporting the matter to the mission commander. You later found out that the last colleague that died from a friendly fire incident had stumbled on the same information and had attempted to bypass the commander of the mission and report the event to army headquarters. What do you do?*

*You are in charge of a group of men on a peace keeping mission and you got the intelligence that one of the warring parties was terrorizing the local population—dispossessing people of their property, raping women and amputating the arms of children. You approach the commander of the rogue soldiers with the intelligence but he tells you he cannot rein-in his men because they might rebel. You have enough men to easily defeat them but your mandate did not include offensive action. What do you do?*

In analyzing and discussing these case studies, the objective is not to settle on any one course of action but to come up with as many possible courses of action as possible. In doing so, the critical thinking model of decision making is applied and compared with the Military Decision Making Process not in a bid to determine the better option but to see how they can complement each other.

Discussing military dilemmas is merely a stepping stone to discussing actual military decisions. Here again the emphasis is on understanding the particular military decision and why it was necessary and again articulating the alternatives that were open to the person that made the decision. Each officer chooses a famous battle for analysis and researches every aspect of the battle. Some of the battles that have been analyzed include, Battle of Leningrad, Battle of Stirling Bridge, First Battle of El Alamein, Battle of Gettysburg, Battle of Kolin, Battle of Normandy, Battle of Falkirk, Battle of Tunisia, Battle of Dresden, Battle of Mount Tumbledown, Julius Caesar's campaign in Gaul and so on. In analyzing the battle, each student officer should be able to identify:

- The strategy of the victor and the military decisions involved in that strategy,
- The strategy of the vanquished and the military decisions involved in the strategy,
- Other strategies that were open to both the victor and the vanquished.

In choosing a particular battle, the student officer has to take into account the role played by his specialization. An infantry officer, for instance, cannot analyze the Battle of Britain which had no infantry component. Also, each analysis has to be based on the military technology available to the soldiers at the time, although in addition, a student officer may decide to re-create the battle using contemporary military technology.

Each of the options has to be evaluated using the Military Decision Making Process and ranked in terms of the probability of victory and the men and material that are likely to be expended. Based on the above analysis, each student officer then draws up an operations plan for both the victor and the vanquished, taking into account the need to win the battle with minimal loss of men and material. The finished product is presented by the student officer to his syndicate colleagues who probe and question the analysis and recommendations. Assessments of the presentation are made independently by two directing-staff of appropriate specializations. Throughout the process, a participation log is kept on each student officer by the directing-staff that superintends over a particular syndicate, to ensure adequate participation by members of the syndicate.

### **Objective 5: Integrating Critical Thinking into Operations Planning**

An important aspect of the training of officers at Command and Staff Colleges is the war fighting module. The details of this module are the property of particular staff colleges and cannot be discussed at length. The sketch, however, is that student officers are divided into units, each of which has a commander and advisers from various specialized arms. Each unit is put in command of men and materials of varying strengths and asked to deploy the men and material for different military and non-military operations using appropriate software. The officer representing each specialized arm is required to help in the planning by advising the commander on the best way to deploy the men and material in his service arm. This aspect of the training usually tests their capacity for operations planning and group work and is a purely military affair. It is at this level that the value of their exposure to critical thinking is assessed especially in terms of their capacity for innovation.

At the end of the program, the Directing Staff of the college are expected to assess the critical thinking module as follows:

- The extent to which the module has helped student officers develop a vision of alternatives in the planning of military and non-military operations
- The overall effectiveness of the module in improving the quality of military and non-military strategy developed by student officers
- The capacity of the officer to balance the need for military obedience with the capacity of bringing to bear the military intellectual focus on decisions that affect both military and civil space.

In doing so, it is kept in mind that “to presume that the military perspective should not include the bringing to bear of a military intellectual focus that appreciates and understands the consequences of military decisions upon the political and social life of the system, is to deny the very criteria of ‘profession’” (Sarkesian 1981, p. 296).

## Conclusion

This paper has been primarily descriptive of the processes that I introduced in an attempt to give critical thinking a practical application in the military. It did not originate from any noble attempt to rid philosophy of its abstract nature but rather out of a need to make critical thinking more relevant to the peculiar needs of the military. In the course of the program, however, it became apparent that critical thinking and other tools of philosophy could be used to achieve particular objectives that further everyday utilitarian needs. The focus has been purely academic although the military setting dictates that part of the content be skewed toward the military environment within which this particular need for critical thinking arose. The importance of this exercise is not merely that critical thinking can be utilized in military training but more importantly that it is possible to elevate critical thinking from its traditional roles as a purely academic exercise to a level where practical objectives are set and it is used to achieve such objectives. The more rewarding aspect of this realization is that this practical application of critical thinking need not be limited to military training but can also find application in a variety of settings. This current application of critical thinking in military training eschews regimentation and promotes the proliferation of alternatives to every course of action. This need not be the sole objective of every application of critical thinking in the military. Indeed, it is quite possible to define other objectives and draw up a critical thinking program through which such objectives could be realized. Again, although the particular setting of the current work has been the military, it is possible, using the same general methodology, to use critical thinking to achieve various objectives in business organizations, the prisoner rehabilitation, ethical reorientation and many others. More importantly, I think of my work as part of a larger effort to expand the frontiers of philosophical practice beyond the narrow confines of philosophical counseling, philosophical cafes, and philosophy with children to new territories of equally great promise.

## Notes

1. I thank Col. D. Abdusalam, the Nigerian Army exchange Directing Staff at the Botswana Defense Command and Staff College, for drawing my attention to some inappropriate use of military terminology.
2. The syndicate is the preferred Staff College term for groups that student officers break into for the purpose of studying and holding discussions.

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