



CFB Halifax Photo by Pte C. Stephenson, HSC 920849-329

Airborne Regiment soldiers taking down the wire around their compound for the return to Mogadishu, May 1993.

## BYSTANDER NON-INTERVENTION AND THE SOMALIA INCIDENT

Much has been written in an effort to account for the beating death of Somali Shidane Arone on 16 March 1993 at the hands of members of the Canadian Airborne Regiment (CAR). The young Somali was detained in a bunker intended as a machine gun position, in the custody of a master corporal and a private soldier. Over the course of approximately four hours – and within earshot of other members of the Regiment – Arone was subjected to an ongoing brutal beating, which included severe blows to his head, periodic burning and suffocation which eventually killed him.<sup>1</sup>

Whereas the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia (the Somalia Inquiry) stipulated leadership failure as the overriding factor underlying the conduct associated with the incident, other accounts<sup>2</sup> highlighted the potential

destructiveness of extreme in-group loyalty and “hyper-investment” of certain Airborne Regiment members in a ‘rebel-warrior’ identity and sub-culture. Two books<sup>3</sup> which provide an historical analysis and perspective on the Canadian Army in general and Airborne Regiment in particular, suggest much of the CAR conduct in question stems from a significant erosion in military professionalism, supplanted by careerism and a diluted sense of responsibility among the Canadian Forces officer corps. In turn, former members of the Airborne Regiment who served with the Unified Task Force (UNITAF) in 2 Commando may hold strong personal views based on their first-hand experience as to what, how and why things went wrong.

As a result of the incident, a range of charges and

Lieutenant-Commander George Shorey is with the Department of Military Psychology and Leadership at Royal Military College.

punishments (including dismissals from the CF and prison terms) were imposed on several individuals. What remains unclear, is why so many bystanders to the incident took little or no action to prevent the violent misconduct while it was underway?

The focus of this article is on the apparent lack of response on the part of many service personnel (bystanders) who either overheard or directly observed fellow members of the Canadian Forces abusing the Somali detainee. The aim is to draw the reader's attention to certain situational and group influences that can undermine bystander intervention, despite an awareness of wrongdoing and need for help. This paper is an effort to further our understanding of these social-psychological forces that may well have influenced the responses and reported non-action of individuals in proximity to the bunker. Remaining mindful of such forces might prove the necessary first step to avoiding their often subtle and potentially destructive influence in the future.

The research and discussion points raised in this paper provide a degree of explanation for the inaction of bystanders. They should not, however, be taken as

somehow absolving those involved of their personal and professional responsibilities in this situation.

Research has revealed four social-psychological factors that often negatively influence or undermine bystander willingness to intervene to aide other persons in physical distress or danger. These include:

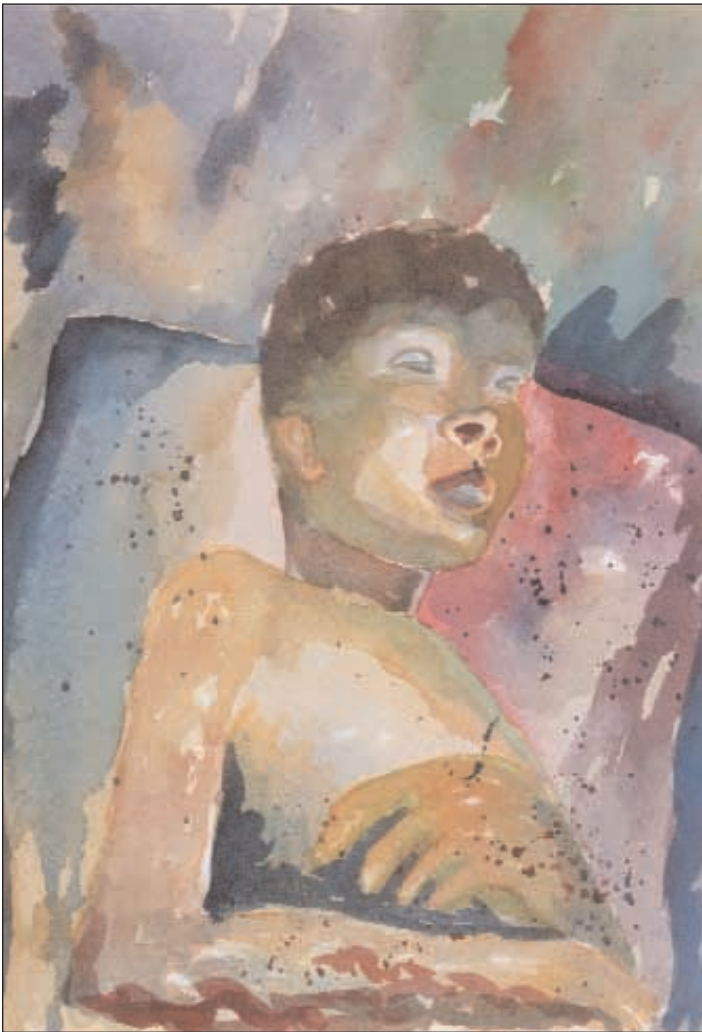
- the 'bystander effect' and two related aspects, diffusion of responsibility and normative social influence;
- the 'victim-bystander relationship' concerning the matter of psychological distance between victims and witnesses to their distress;
- 'authorization', including both formal and tacit or informal authority legitimizing normally illegitimate behaviour or misconduct; and
- concern regarding 'personal consequences' or one's private assessment of the pros and cons of choosing to aid someone under threat or in distress.

Each of these factors may have influenced the behaviour of bystanders who briefly visited or were near the bunker where Arone was detained on the evening of 16 March 1993.

## BYSTANDER EFFECT

The March 1964 *New York Times* headline, "37 Who Saw Murder Didn't Call Police", concerned the murder of Catherine Genovese, who, over the period of half an hour and within a hundred feet of her apartment, was victim to three separate stabbing attacks.<sup>4</sup> With the exception of one man calling out from an upper apartment window, "Let that girl alone!", not one of some 36 other 'observers' took any action to assist the woman, who several times screamed and cried out for help that she was being stabbed. This incident triggered considerable research into the question of what factors influence decisions to either help or not help others in physical distress. While it is a very complex issue, the research findings about bystander behaviour do warrant attention to further a better understanding both of the Genovese affair and of the Arone tragedy which occurred in Somalia some 29 years later.

It may seem reasonable to assume that the larger the number of people who witness a situation where someone in distress needs assistance, the more likely it is that the person in distress will receive help. In other words, the odds are increased that someone in the group of observers will take it on themselves to intervene or assist in some way. However, the opposite often proves to be the case. Awareness of the presence of others witnessing an emergency or problem situa-



Watercolour by Monica (Muller) Bland

Shidane Arone.

tion which calls for assistance can in fact undermine individual (observer) initiative and attempts to assist. This phenomenon has been well researched, and is referred to as the 'bystander effect'. It concerns the finding that people are often less likely to provide help when others are present.<sup>5</sup>

The Somalia Inquiry testimony (and other sources) make it clear that several individuals near the bunker where Arone was being beaten could hear his periodic screams, howling and crying out. The Inquiry Report noted:

During the time that Mr. Arone was being tortured and beaten to death, there were a number of Canadian soldiers in both the command and sentry posts. The distance from the command post to the bunker was 84 feet; from the sentry post to the bunker, 59 feet; from the bunker to the observation tower in Service Commando (across the road from the 2 Commando compound), 214 feet. One witness recalled hearing a "yelp" from the bunker, and stated "I recall everybody kind of looking in the direction of the bunker, and then just kind of went back to what they were doing." There was also evidence that soldiers in the observation tower heard screaming (at a distance of 214 feet). Certainly Arone's howls were heard by many over the operating noise of a nearby diesel generator.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to those 'bystanders' outside the bunker who could hear portions of what was happening, it was estimated by another, detailed account of the incident "...that during the course of the evening perhaps seventeen individuals came by the bunker, looked in, and left without commenting or interfering."<sup>7</sup>

Closely aligned to the bystander effect is the finding that individuals often feel they have less responsibility to act in situations where multiple witnesses are present. This notion of 'diffusion of responsibility' suggests that while in general people may feel some responsibility for helping others in distress, often "...when other people are present, the feeling of responsibility gets diffused. Every single person feels less responsible to act."



Somali encampment just outside the Airborne Regiment's perimeter wire, Belet Huen, January 1993.

Photo by LCol C.G. Magee

Indeed, with few exceptions, most people faced with a sudden need for such action are much less likely to respond if other people actually are, or are believed to be, available.<sup>8</sup> Given the proximity of the command and sentry posts to the bunker, it is reasonable to suggest that those in the bunker vicinity might well have assumed others (in particular those on duty that evening and/or functioning in a leadership capacity) were 'believed to be available' to intervene. As in the Genovese case, individuals were aware that many others were co-bystanders to the incident, reinforcing a diffused sense of responsibility.

Another factor that can reinforce the bystander effect is an undercurrent of anxiety over being evaluated by others that are present at an incident. Of particular concern is a possible negative evaluation and the disapproval by other bystanders and/or seniors through appearing foolish, incompetent, or engaging in behaviour considered by others present as inappropriate. This concern can inhibit action if witnesses conclude that the apparent 'appropriate' response or situational norm is to *not* take any helping action. The influence (on individuals) of cues on how to respond, based on the actions of those around them, should not be underestimated:

The evidence shows that by what they say, by what they do, or by their inaction people affect others' reactions to emergencies. They do this by affecting the interpretation or perceived meaning of the stimulus, whether it is an emergency or not, by affecting the assessment of

appropriate reaction to it, or by producing compliance with their interpretation and with their implied expectation about how to react.<sup>9</sup>

There is much testimonial evidence that the underlying attitude and dominant 'cue' amongst bystanders to the Arone killing was the idea that some punishment of 'infiltrators' would serve as a deterrent. This underlying rationalization may have fuelled a degree of acceptance, captured in such comments as "...the tougher we look the better respect we'll get"; and "we're going to sort them out. We're going to teach them a lesson." This element underlying the bystander effect has been termed 'normative social influence'. The critical factor is that the bystander believes what others think is appropriate. If one believes that it is normatively appropriate to help, then others' awareness of the bystander's behaviour should facilitate helping.<sup>10</sup> Conversely, if no one is observed taking action to assist, as in the Genovese murder and arguably in the case of Arone, such a collective response of inaction can prove an inhibiting influence.

It is important to note that "...often people are likely to act not according to *generalized* expectations about behaviour embodied in norms, but according to *specific* expectations implied or communicated by other people who are present, even if the specific expectations are contrary to normative expectations."<sup>11</sup> That is, the behavioural responses of those involved in the immediate dynamics of the situation, may result in collective behaviour contrary to what might normally be considered an appropriate or common sense response. In essence, situational forces can at times impel individuals to act out of character. As such, this component of the bystander effect may certainly have contributed to the failure of witnesses and bystanders in the vicinity of the 2 Commando bunker to intervene.

While the bystander effect and its associated diffusion of responsibility and normative social influence aspects have received considerable support in research as powerful forces which can undermine observer intervention, other factors may also have contributed to bystander inaction during Arone's detention. These factors include the matter of psychological 'distance' or what is referred to as the 'bystander-victim relationship'; the issue of both overt and tacit 'authorization' of the beating being inflicted; and the 'perceived consequences' to bystanders of assisting or not.

## **BYSTANDER-VICTIM RELATIONSHIP**

**W**hat was the nature of the relationship between those who briefly visited or were in the immediate vicinity of the bunker, and the young Somali who

was being beaten? Several accounts, including the Report of the Commission of Inquiry, which describe conditions in the Canadian compound, highlight the issue of camp security as having been an ongoing concern. Other UNITAF contingents had found the issue of theft and penetration into their bases a "major concern" as well. As stated in the Report:

...one of the most aggravating problems facing the Canadian Airborne Regiment Battle Group (CARBG) was theft. Security for the Canadian base in the layout used in Belet Huen was hindered by insufficient wire for the perimeter of the compound. By the end of January, the troops were dealing routinely with individuals and small groups of Somalis trying to steal Canadian equipment, supplies and personal property. Sometimes only scrap and other minor items such as water cans were taken; however, other things were also stolen, including food, water, gear, radios and parachute equipment.<sup>12</sup>

Further, it has been reported that "at the end of January 1993, the infiltration had become endemic. ...To make matters worse, Somalis armed with knives or small arms began setting up roadblocks near Belet Huen after dark, robbing people and challenging the authority of the Canadian contingent."<sup>13</sup> As stated by a soldier quoted in a study prepared for the Somalia Inquiry:

I don't think anybody likes a thief. There is nothing worse than a liar and a thief. The guys were getting tired of it. Very, very frustrated. And you got to remember, if you're sleeping, it's like, Gurkha used to come in and slit peoples throats. Internal security really threatens people. That sort of victim feeling, that emptiness.<sup>14</sup>

"Infiltrator", "thief", "looter" – irrespective of the labels assigned to those Somalis who breached the compound boundaries, they were considered to be a significant threat and an ongoing problem. As to how to describe the relationship between Arone and those that either saw or heard him over the approximately four hours he was beaten, it would seem he was largely viewed impersonally, as an unknown thief warranting little empathy. Based on Inquiry testimony and research related to helping behaviour, there is much to suggest that this was the case. Coupled with being marked an intruder and a thief, the cultural and social gap between Arone and his captors only increased the psychological distance between them. The socio-cultural study referred to at the outset provides several testimonial accounts of this 'gap'. One particular



example captures a number of issues that increased the psychological distance between Airborne soldiers and the Somalis:

A lot of the guys had problems with the culture as well. In the sense of the poverty that they saw and for a lot of the guys they had a hard time to see how the women were treated. In the sense that men didn't do a lot of the work, the women did all the household chores, if you want to call them that – going to get the water, the food, the wood for fire. So it seemed that the women were being unjustly treated and the men were being very lazy. Because you would see the men in groups, talking and talking. Also they hold hands. When the guys saw that well everyone thought, "Everybody's gay here! What's going on!" Of course that's the way the Somalis express their friendship. You never saw that, men and women holding hands there. That's taboo, as far as the Muslims are concerned, but still to a lot of soldiers that part of the world is bad, it's wrong. They don't know how to live.<sup>15</sup>

Social science research on the nature of the bystander-victim relationship has consistently demonstrated that people exhibit greater empathy in response to the distress of 'similar others' than the distress of 'dissimilar others'. Studies about ethical decision making have found that people care more about other people who are close to them (socially, culturally, psychologically, or physically) than they do for people who are distant.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, other studies have noted that "guilt and blame for not helping, would likely be relatively high when feelings of closeness, attraction ...or we-ness characterize the bystander-victim relationship".<sup>17</sup>

While it is not the intent of this paper to compare the Somalia incident to the My Lai massacre during the Vietnam War, some of the underlying causes of both incidents are similar. The extreme implications of psychological distancing from victims was highlighted in research on the massacre of some 400 unarmed villagers by US servicemen in March 1968. A key element found to underscore sanctioned massacres is that termed 'dehumanization'. Specifically, "psychological distancing often occurs when the victims have been dehumanized – categorized as inferior or dangerous beings and identified by derogatory labels – so that they are excluded from the bonds of human empathy and protection of moral rules."<sup>18</sup> Moreover:

...victims must be stripped of their human status. Insofar as they are dehumanized, the usual

principles of morality no longer apply to them; ...often the victims belong to a distinct racial, religious, ethnic, or political group regarded as inferior or sinister. Labels help deprive the victims of identity and community, as in the epithet "gooks" that was commonly used to refer to Vietnamese and other Indochinese peoples."<sup>19</sup>

While the Somalia Inquiry report made reference to the use of derogatory slurs of a racial nature (e.g., "smuities", "nig-nogs"), and a limited understanding among some Airborne Regiment soldiers interviewed as to what constituted racist behaviour, it did not conclude or imply the unit was racist. Soldiers in turn felt many of the comments highlighted by media reports were presented out of context. Soldiers did acknowledge some members held racist attitudes, but did not consider them out of proportion to their civilian counterparts in Canadian society:

What the army does, and does pretty well, is teach men to work with others, even though they may not want to. To some degree there is more tolerance in the army than in most civilian occupations. So while there is racism, it isn't the same as Civvy Street. And when you think about it, it's how you treat people that counts, not what you think of them privately.<sup>20</sup>

They were called thieves, looters, not Somali harvesters picking up things, not recyclers but looters. A lot of Somali behaviour was classed as looting, which I think is a derogatory assumption. They were dirty and looters, these are the two concepts that seemed to be understood by Airborne soldiers.<sup>21</sup>

The label of "thief" or "looter" generally carries strong negative connotations, usually categorizing the individual as being outside the community of decent citizenry. Those deemed guilty of theft and posing a threat to security are generally viewed as deserving of punishment, to both right the wrong(s) committed and to contain the threat they pose. Chances are there was little that was positive in bystander attitudes toward Shidane Arone, given his probable classification as a thief and threat to the compound. Worth noting is that an individual exposed as a thief within the military would be looked upon with particular disdain, given the interdependent nature of military service and the high value placed on mutual trust. Certainly the foregoing is not meant to suggest that bystanders were prepared to ignore or sanction a murder, but that their psychological distance from Arone fostered (likely in combination with other factors such as the bystander effect) an

apparent apathy toward actively responding to the abuse taking place.

Having discussed the potential impact of both the bystander effect and the matter of psychological proximity or relationship to the victim, the influence of authorization needs to be considered. As will be seen, tacit authorization can at times prove as potent as authority that is formally sanctioned.

## AUTHORIZATION

**W**hile captured Somali intruders were not Prisoners of War (PWs), they were nonetheless to be treated with-

ularly: murder; torture of all kinds; corporal punishment; mutilation;

- outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment, enforced prostitution and any form of indecent assault;
- the taking of hostages;
- collective punishments; and
- threats to commit any of the foregoing acts.<sup>22</sup>

Contrary to these obligations, under humanitarian law and the CF guidelines espoused in leader education and training concerning the treatment of captured combatants or civilians posing a threat to security, abusive treatment of detainees was authorized at a 16 March morning orders group by the Officer Commanding, 2 Commando. This officer testified later at his court martial that he had said “I don’t care if you abuse them but I want those infiltrators captured....Abuse them if you have to. I do not want weapons used. I do not want gun fire.”<sup>23</sup> Interpretation varied among platoon and section commanders as to the nature and degree of abuse being advocated. It was not clear whether such treatment was restricted to the capturing of infiltrators, or applicable throughout their detention once in custody. Irrespective of these nuances, the use of physical force had

been authorized. Furthermore, the powerful influence of authorization can spawn a certain loss of restraint and moral suspension:



DGPA Photo by Sgt Ed Dixon, ISC-93-1049

General view of the 2 Commando camp, Belet Huen.

in the spirit of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relevant aspects of the Additional Protocols to the Conventions. The basic rules of International Humanitarian Law provide treatment guidelines for PWs and certain fundamental guarantees for those held in custody:

...Among the fundamental guarantees, it is specified that the person, the honour, the convictions and religious practices of all such persons must be respected. The following acts in particular are prohibited under any pretext whatever, whether committed by civil or military agents:

- violence to the life, health and physical or mental well-being of persons, partic-

ularly: murder; torture of all kinds; corporal punishment; mutilation; outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment, enforced prostitution and any form of indecent assault; the taking of hostages; collective punishments; and threats to commit any of the foregoing acts.<sup>22</sup>

Thus when acts of violence are explicitly ordered, implicitly encouraged, tacitly approved, or at least permitted by legitimate authorities, people’s readiness to commit or condone them is considerably enhanced. The fact that such acts are authorized seems to carry automatic justification for them. Behaviorally, authorization obviates the necessity of making judgments or choices...normal moral principles become inoperative.<sup>24</sup>

Regarding the extent to which bystanders to the incident were aware that at least a degree of abuse was formally authorized is not clear. For instance, not all section commanders privy to the instructions given by the Officer Commanding chose to pass it on to their section members. Additionally, some Forces personnel who were bystanders to the incident were not members of 2 Commando, and therefore, likely not aware of any explicit authorization of abuse.

While several of the bystanders may not have been aware of any 'formal' authorization of abuse, they might well have assumed the abuse taking place had at least the tacit, 'informal' approval of duty staff, and other officers and NCOs in the vicinity. As noted in research addressing the issue of crimes committed under seeming tacit authorization:

A similar mechanism operates when a person engages in antisocial behaviour that was not ordered by the authorities but was tacitly encouraged and approved by them – even if only by making it clear that such behaviour will not be punished. In this situation, behaviour that was formerly illegitimate is legitimized by the authorities' acquiescence.<sup>25</sup>

At issue then is that authorities can wield influence, in terms of what constitutes acceptable actions and what does not, not only through overt communication channels, but equally at times through what they condone or fail to take any apparent stand on. For the bystanders at least partly aware of the severe beating being inflicted on Arone, it would seem reasonable that they might regard authorities and others in leadership positions in the vicinity as approving of the beating. This apparent authorization of abuse, in conjunction with the bystander effect and psychological distance from the victim, could certainly have contributed to the lack of bystander response associated with the tragedy.

## PERSONAL CONSEQUENCES

The fourth and final social-psychological factor to be considered is the perception of bystanders as to the 'personal consequences' that could result from their either helping or not helping someone in distress. It is



Airborne troops on patrol, Somalia, January 1993.

DGPA Photo by Sgt Snashal, ISC-93-35A

a subjective, somewhat intuitive, and often rapid, personal assessment of the pros and cons of getting involved. Social research on this issue describes the 'costs' being weighed by bystanders as comprising two types – the costs of helping and the costs of not helping:

Costs of helping include physical and material costs, time, embarrassment, and feelings of inadequacy if help is ineffective. Costs of not helping include self-blame, public censure, and in some situations prosecution as a criminal.<sup>26</sup>

Given that the beating of Arone had received tacit approval and the diffusion of responsibility resulting from the large number of soldiers in earshot of the beating, the perceived *costs of not helping* Arone (such as public censure and fear of prosecution) were probably minimal. Indeed, the 4 March 1993 shooting of two suspected infiltrators (in which one Somali, Mr. Arush, was killed and the other, Mr. Abdi, wounded), by mem-





DGPA Photo by Sgt Ed Dixon, ISC-93-10052

A Grizzly at sunset, Somalia.

bers of the Airborne Regiment's Reconnaissance Platoon, may have softened CAR soldier's attitudes towards the perceived severity of Arone's treatment and any serious concerns regarding consequences to not acting in his aid. Certainly the Somalia Inquiry Report highlighted the handling of the shooting incident by the Chain of Command as "weak...unjustifiable" and based on a "cursory Summary Investigation", strongly suggesting it "...may have made possible the torture death of a Somali youth 12 days later".<sup>27</sup> The Report essentially implies the response of senior leadership to the 4 March incident may well have sent the message to Airborne soldiers that they need not fear adverse consequences should they be involved in any questionable captures and/or mistreatment of Somali nationals in the future.

The potential negative *costs of helping* – such as being perceived as somewhat disloyal to the unit, embarrassing oneself and/or inviting a backlash from

others who authorized or at least were condoning the beating of Arone – were likely salient given certain situational variables (namely, authorization, collective group mentality of condoning, and, weak bystander-victim relationship). As well, a final subtle element that may have played a role in bystander inaction is that of the importance placed on unit cohesion. Unit cohesion is defined as "the bonding together of soldiers in such a way as to sustain their will and commitment to each other, the unit, and mission accomplishment, despite combat or mission stress".<sup>28</sup> The Airborne Regiment's isolation in an outer sector of a strife-torn, foreign country, combined with their mutual dependence and need for collective security, could well have undermined the willingness of some who felt the need to assist Arone. That is, bystanders might have believed they ran the risk of being perceived by their peers as somehow disloyal and weakening solidarity if they voiced their concerns or otherwise acted to challenge what was knowingly taking place. The importance and power of cohesion, particularly for deployed units given their isolation is captured in the following quote:

Whether the small unit is the dominant primary group for the individual soldier is of the utmost importance. Primary social affiliation within the unit is an extremely significant indicator of cohesion because it means that the small military unit has replaced other influences such as the family as the primary determinant of the soldier's day-to-day behaviour. In such a unit, the soldier becomes bound by the expectations and needs of his fellow soldiers. Such relationships completely overshadow other obligations and claims on his loyalties....The soldier merely recognizes that more immediate considerations and relationships have displaced family, parents, and friends as the prime determinant of his behaviour. Despite the intensity of the relationship, it is not usually seen as permanent but as one that is limited to a specific period or to the duration of the conflict.<sup>29</sup>

Considering the importance placed on building and maintaining unit solidarity, particularly for operational units, cohesion should not be underestimated as a force that may have prevented bystanders from helping Arone. This is where the potential dark side of strong cohesion can surface, whereby maintaining unity at all costs becomes a dominant norm, irrespective of what the situation demands.

In short, the personal costs to bystanders associated with *not* helping Arone were likely perceived as limited,



while the potential consequences of intervening, for the reasons outlined, were not seen to warrant the effort. On the balance, as in the Genovese case, it would seem that for the majority of bystanders who were at least partial witnesses to Arone's final few hours, complicity and the personal decision not to get involved proved dominant.

## CONCLUSION

At this point, it should be evident that the social-psychological forces associated with being one of several bystanders witnessing a tacitly authorized beating, combined with having little or no relationship with the victim, or concern regarding repercussions of not challenging the abuse being inflicted, are potentially powerful forces that undermine intervention. Although these forces alone do not fully account for the lack of bystander response associated with Shidane Arone's death – nor provide any condolence for those personally affected by the tragedy – they can serve to further our understanding by providing a degree of explanation as to why so many knowingly stood by.

While the foregoing is an accurate account of the majority reaction, it would be remiss to give the impression that all bystanders and unit leaders simply stood by or condoned the abuse order. There were a few individuals who let their seniors know they were concerned about the treatment of Arone, and some leaders who were not prepared to pass on the abuse authorization to their section members.<sup>30</sup> Unfortunately, the follow-up to these actions was either non-existent, insufficient or too late to check what continued to unfold in the bunker.

Although the forces undermining bystander intervention are both powerful and subtle, the potential positive effect of witnessing others taking action to help is equally strong. Social science research targeting 'prosocial' or altruistic behaviour reveals that observing individuals take action to assist those in need significantly increases the likelihood that others will also help, in effect providing cues as to what constitutes an appropriate response.<sup>31</sup> This finding underscores the value of modeling desired behaviour, akin to the enduring princi-

ple of leadership by example. The determined actions of a few may have altered the course of events in Somalia.

Awareness of the potential damaging influence of such forces as the bystander effect and tacit authorization of misconduct seems a useful starting point to countering their development. In particular, officers and senior NCOs need to remain alert to the conditions giving rise to these forces through self and unit monitoring. Such factors as emergent unit attitudes toward the local population, unprofessional behaviour that is overlooked or condoned, questioning whether all avenues available to addressing issues the troops find most stressful have been explored, and maintenance of goals and sense of mission – each require monitoring. This within a context that is often experienced as both thankless and threatening.

Considering the often dangerous and morally taxing context of contemporary peace support operations, the matter of self and unit monitoring is, to say the least, a demanding personal and professional challenge. The stressors associated with peace support missions can generate a simmering undercurrent of emotions, from frustration and anger, to despondency, guilt and revenge. Under such conditions, maintenance of a disciplined, professional self and unit perspective may prove one of the core challenges for deployed military personnel in the 21st century.

In the end, those of us who were not in Somalia in March of 1993 do not know how we might have responded to Arone's treatment during his detention had we been bystanders. It behooves each of us, however, as we try to develop our own professional abilities, to understand the situational factors that can contribute to unprofessional conduct in operations. Acknowledging what this account may have neglected or unintentionally misrepresented, it is essential that each of us in uniform take time to reflect on the lead-up to and tragic death of Shidane Arone, learn from it, and apply what we have learned as we continue to serve.



## NOTES

1. *Dishonoured Legacy: The Lessons of the Somalia Affair*, (Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia, Vol. 1, Ch. 13-14, 1997). See also, B. Bergman & L. Fisher, "A night of terror: The Shocking Account of how Canadian soldiers tortured and killed a Somali", *Maclean's*, March 28, 1994, pp. 26-28.

2. D. Winslow, *The Canadian Airborne Regiment in Somalia: A Socio-cultural Inquiry* (Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1997).

3. D. Bercuson, *Significant Incident: Canada's Army, the Airborne, and the Murder in Somalia* (McClelland and Stewart Inc., Toronto, Ontario, 1996). See also, P. Desbarats, *Somalia Cover-Up:*

*A Commissioner's Journal* (McClelland and Stewart Inc., Toronto, Ontario, 1997).

4. M. Gansberg, "37 Who Saw Murder Didn't Call the Police", *New York Times*, March 27, 1964, pp. 1,38.

5. Latane, Bibb, and Nida. "Ten Years of Research on Group Size and Helping", *Psychological Bulletin* 89, 1981, pp. 308-324. See also, J.F. Dovidio, "The

- Social Context of Helping" in L. Berkowitz, *Advances in Experimental Psychology*, Vol. 17, 1984, pp. 398-399.
6. *Dishonoured Legacy: The Lessons of the Somalia Affair*, Vol. 1, p. 324.
7. P. Worthington and K. Brown, *Scapegoat: How the Army Betrayed Kyle Brown* (McClelland-Bantam Inc., 1997), p. 130. See also, "A night of terror", *Maclean's*, March 28, 1994, p. 26, which provides brief testimonial accounts of several visits by different individuals to the bunker over the course of Arone's detention. As well, it purports a minimum of 16 persons either heard or witnessed first-hand the assaults against him.
8. Latane and Darley, "The Unresponsive Bystander: Why doesn't He Help?" in E. Staub, *Positive Social Behaviour and Morality*, Vol. 1, Ch. 3, 1978. Also see, Latane, Nida and Wilson (1981) in J.F. Dovidio, *Advances in Experimental Psychology*, Vol. 17, p. 399, 1984.
9. E. Staub, "Positive Social Behavior and Morality" (Vol. 1, Ch. 3: *Determinants of People Helping Other People in Physical Distress*, p. 81, 1978).
10. J.F. Dovidio, "The Social Context of Helping", p. 401 in L. Berkowitz, *Advances in Experimental Psychology*, Vol. 17, 1984.
11. E. Staub, "Positive Social Behavior and Morality", *op cit.*, p. 89.
12. *Dishonoured Legacy*, Vol. 1, p. 293.
13. Bercuson, *Significant Incident*, p. 233).
14. Winslow, *The Canadian Airborne Regiment in Somalia*, p. 241).
15. *ibid.*, p. 232.
16. T.M. Jones, "Ethical Decision Making by Individuals In Organizations: An Issue-contingent Model", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 16, 1991, pp. 376-377. See also D. Grossman's discussion of the concept of psychological distance as a moral buffer in *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society* (Little, Brown & Coy., New York, 1995).
17. J.F. Dovidio, "The Social Context of Helping", in L. Berkowitz, *Advances in Experimental Psychology*, Vol. 17, 1984. p. 404.
18. Kelman and Hamilton, *Crimes of Obedience* (Yale University Press, 1989), p. 336.
19. *ibid.*, p. 19.
20. Worthington and Brown, *Scapegoat*, p. 61.
21. Winslow, p. 253.
22. International Committee of the Red Cross, *Basic Rules of the Geneva Conventions and Their Additional Protocols*, Geneva, 1983 (adopted by the CF as DND Publication: A-JS-007-008/JD-006). See also D. Bercuson's reference to laws of war training for Canadian soldiers in *Significant Incident*, pp. 5-6).
23. *Dishonoured Legacy*, Vol. 1, p. 319.
24. Kelman and Hamilton, *Crimes of Obedience* (Yale University Press, 1989), p. 16.
25. *ibid.*, p. 16-17.
26. E. Staub, *Positive Social Behaviour and Morality*, (Vol. 1: *Stimulus Characteristics That Affect Helping*), p. 109.
27. *Dishonoured Legacy*, Executive Summary, p. ES-35.
28. E. Meyer (1982) in Gal & Mangelsdorff, *Handbook of Military Psychology*, p. 457.
29. W.D. Henderson, *Cohesion: The Human Element in Combat* (National Defense University Press, Washington D.C., 1985), p. 14.
30. *Dishonoured Legacy*, Vol. 1, p. 320-323. Although largely overshadowed by events and the reaction of the majority, the actions referred to and briefly mentioned in this section of the Somalia Report are worthy of note. They seem, at least, attempts by certain unit personnel to counter both the abuse order and make superiors aware of the severity of the treatment inflicted on Arone.
31. Bryan and Test, "Models and Helping: Naturalistic Studies in Aiding Behavior", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1967, Vol. 6, No. 4, pp. 400-407. See also, the *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 1991, Vol. 21, pp. 896-918, which discusses, as well, the influence of modeling desired, prosocial behaviour in a series of experiments designed to increase the number of persons willing to volunteer their time and give blood via agency centers such as the Red Cross.



CONFERENCE OF DEFENCE ASSOCIATIONS INSTITUTE  
L'INSTITUT DE LA CONFÉRENCE DES ASSOCIATIONS DE LA DÉFENSE

17th ANNUAL SEMINAR  
Thursday, 22 February 2001

Château Laurier Hotel, Ottawa

Theme: *THE CANADIAN FORCES AND THE PUBLIC*

Speakers will include: The Minister of National Defence, Gen M. Baril, Chief of Defence Staff, Hugh Segal, President IRPP, Gen.(Ret'd) A.Zinni, formerly CINC CENTCOM, Michel Ignatief, Hon J.J Blais, David Pratt, MP, Donna Winslow, and Jocelyn Coulon.

For further information and to register please monitor our website at [www.cda-cdai.ca](http://www.cda-cdai.ca), or contact us at  
359 RUE KENT STREET, STE 502, OTTAWA ON K2P 0R7  
TEL: (613) 236-9903 FAX: (613) 236-8191