

Forum

CONTRIBUTION OF SPECIALISTS IN THE SADF

I would like to contribute to the debate on the article 'DIE AKADEMIKUS SE PLEK IN DIE SAW' (Militaria 8/4 of 1978) with the following observations:

1. The sixth edition of the Concise Oxford Dictionary (1976) defines a 'profession' as '... a vocation or calling, especially one that involves some branch of advanced learning or science' and in fact cites the phrase 'Military profession' as an example of the use of the word. I submit therefore that the selective application of the term 'professional' to a small subgroup of academically qualified personnel in the SADF (such as for example the Corps of Professional Officers) as is the practice, is an unfortunately albeit unintentional slight on the professionalism of general duties officers.

2. As regards the standard which the military must require of suitably qualified specialists recruited into the SADF or for that matter performing their national service, it is essential to bear in mind that the whole motivation for the employment of such personnel in their specialist directions is to increase the efficiency of the SADF in the execution of its role in defence of the nation. Specialists must therefore receive such military training and exposure as to enable them to efficiently perform their specialist tasks wherever and whenever they might be required to do so, in the finest service tradition. To the extent that military demeanor and conversancy with the fundamentals of the military art contribute to this end, they must also be a requirement.

3. What must constitute the goal throughout is a synergistic sharpening of the RSA's combat edge in the broadest sense through the efficient use of all means and expertise at the country's disposal. This goal is ill served by the immoderate pursuit of parochial interests and of exclusivity within the military organisation, *and particularly so by clumsy efforts at apportioning credit for the defence effort.*

4. The military organisation currently finds itself in a state of cultural shock as a result of continual exposure to a plethora of new developments and techniques, a state which it shares with organisations in general. Inevitably there has arisen a tug-of-war between the new undertaking and the status quo ante. This state of affairs has been aggravated as much by the aloof attitude of non-military specialists in the military environment as by the professional jealousy of military men. Specialists must realise that they are entering what has for centuries been virtually the exclusive preserve of purely military men and should therefore display the necessary sensitivity in the execution of their task. In return however, and in the interests of the Service and country, it can reasonably be expected of the military establishment to accord full recognition and status to such personnel as valid contributors to the defence effort and to eschew the deprecating attitude which is still apparent in some circles.

Yours faithfully

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SJAMPANJEGLAS – OPLEIDINGSIKLUS IS DIE ANTWOORD

In die *Militaria* 8/4 van 1978 onder die opskrif 'Die Akademikus se plek in die SAW' maak die skrywer 'n pleidooi vir die afsonderlike identiteit van die professionele offisier in die SAW

'n Paar van die argumente van die skrywer wat beweer dat ons meer professionele offisiere nodig het, is hoogs aanvegbaar.

Hy beweer dat die SAW vir die 80% van die oorlog wat volgens hom uit 'oorreding' bestaan, nie in sy opleidingsbeleid voorsiening maak nie. Dit is in teenstelling met die 20% skietoorlog waarop daar glo 100% gekonsentreer word.

So 'n stelling mag spruit uit die feit dat die skrywer nog nie sy geheel-militêre opleidingsiklus wat so noodsaaklik is, meegemaak het nie.