

IRFD Project Description

Special Assistance: Military and Police Joint Operations 1971-2018

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1. Introduction

An important change made to the Danish Police Act on July 1 2018 (Lov nr. 708) defined for the first time explicitly the governance of military assistance to the police and has been identified as a paradigm shift from very rare, temporary occurrences of assistance from the armed forces to a much more permanent condition of domestic militarization (Stevnsborg 2018B). We also note that the political agreement for the Danish Defence 2018-2023 explicitly states that the level of support from the military to the police is expected to increase in the near future (Regeringen 2018).

Together these changes mark a pivotal moment in the development of Danish internal security policy and practice which calls for historical analysis and contemporary interpretation from a military, police science and legal perspective. Based on unique access to classified sources, interviews with central actors and a strong research team this project will be the first to fully answer the important question: How and why did we end up with soldiers in the streets of Denmark?

2. Research question

This research project investigates the historical context and legal aspects of the above-described paradigm shift in civil-military relations in Denmark. Our analysis follows a three-tier process: First, we describe how joint operations between the Danish police and military were governed from 1971 to 2018 and analyze the development at the intra- and inter-organizational level by also including the legal and political levels. Then we compare the historical background and the current situation in Denmark with Norway and Sweden to discuss similarities and differences the governance of joint operations in the Nordic welfare states. Finally, in order to problematize the challenges a small state faces in the age of terrorism, we discuss the proportionality and accountability of the current legal basis in a European and global context.

We expect to find signs of change over time in the definitions of aims, scope, limitations and procedures for military and police joint operations that can help us understand the intricate civil-military interactions and relations. Civil-military relations manifest themselves in the practices and documents that govern joint operations (for example directives at the operational level, legal agreements and joint training programs at the strategic level and introduction of new legislation at the political level). An important question we aim to answer in this project concerns *how* such civil-military relations have changed in Denmark from the early 1970s to the present.

3. State of the field

Historically, civil-military relations in the Danish case stands out as a remarkably under-researched topic. Recently, however, the field has attracted some attention from Danish scholars: A report from the Center for Military Studies at the University of Copenhagen reviewed the field and found that Denmark should look to Norway for inspiration (Schack 2016), and a BA-thesis, published in a law journal, investigated how the military has provided Special Assistance to the police from a legal perspective (Olsen 2016). None of these analyses, however, were based on access to classified data and interviews with central actors, which will be important contributions from this project.

International research on civil-military relations is highly interdisciplinary and covers a diverse field of interactions “between the armed forces of a state as an institution, and the other sectors of the society in which the armed force is embedded” (Owens 2017). Comparing the historical developments and the current situation in Denmark with other European countries places special emphasis on the organization of military components as internal security forces in the shape of gendarmerie, paramilitary police units etc. (Gobin 2007, Beede 2008). This project combines the international research literature dating back to the World War II (for a review, see Owens 2017) and the Danish historiographical tradition primarily represented by Professor Henrik Stevnsborg.

The history of military engagement in policing dates back to the Age of Absolutism when police forces were almost non-existent and European state often had to rely on the military for internal security as well as external. For example, a rescript from the absolute Danish king allowed light cavalry to assist the police in Copenhagen in controlling urban unrest. In 1948, however, the commanding general of the Danish military expressed concern over the possibility of soldiers being ordered to coerce communists (as had happened in France) and requested the political level to state that military assistance to the police was to be considered the “absolute last option” (Stevnsborg 2018A). The violent demonstrations in September 1970 during the World Bank meeting in Copenhagen led to a confidential operating order from 1971 distinguishing between “Ordinary Assistance” (transport, logistics etc. with no direct citizen contact) and “Special Assistance” (activities involving potential direct armed interactions with Danish citizens).

The political violence of the late industrial society in the 1970s prompted the beginning of a second era of para-military policing (Jefferson 1987). In the 1990s, following the end of the Cold War, globalization, transnationalism and Europeanism blurred “the distinction between the internal and external” and posed new challenges to governments providing societal security (Bigo 2000). At the turn of the new millennium, scholars debated the tension between combating crime and protecting civil rights after demonstrations had turned violent during summits in Prague, Gothenburg and other European cities (Flyghed 2002). Then came a wave of terrorism, beginning with 9/11, Madrid and London in 2001-2005 and striking Scandinavia in 2011 (Norway) and 2015

(Denmark). A government report emphasized as early as 2005 the need for closer cooperation between the Danish Defence and the police (Regeringen 2005). Ten years later, another government report presented 12 initiatives to strengthen Denmark’s defense against terrorism that included tighter integration with the military (Regeringen 2015). Such “militarization” of internal security raises many questions with regard to doctrine, use of force, political control etc. (Lawson 2018).

The definitions of “Ordinary” and “Special Assistance” were central to the governance of military and police joint operations in the years between 1971 and 2018. They were, however, vague and open for wide interpretation, and the fact that military support to the police was not formally codified into legislation until 2018 has caused concern among scholars and politicians (Stevnsborg 2015). Our project provides a deeper understanding of this era of uncertainty.

4. Theoretical framework

This project approaches its topic from three different, yet complementary angles: Police History, Military History and Legal & Policy Matters (Fig. 1). The two focus areas of our investigation will be “Joint Police-Military Operations” and “Police-Military Governance”. Fig. 1 visualizes these as the two top overlapping areas. “Joint Police-Military Operations” addresses the first part of our research question by looking at the specific history of joint operations 1971-2018, while “Police-Military Governance” includes legal frameworks and the policy level of decision-making during the same period.



Fig. 1: Theoretical framework.

We take as our point of departure Samuel Huntington’s seminal book *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Huntington 1957) and build on the tradition that followed from this, especially Janowitz’ introduction of the “constabulary concept” in times when there is no clear distinction between war and peace (Janowitz 1960). We are also inspired by the Copenhagen School of Securitization (Bevir et al. 2014). Our project will contribute significantly to the development and innovation of theory on civil-military relations by investigating the overlapping areas, building on what current research at the Royal Danish Defence College terms “sector convergence”: the militarization of police forces and demands for military forces to adjust to civilian contexts and domestic domains (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen 2018).

5. Methodology

We will take a classic historical enquiry-approach to our research questions and retrieve important documents from archives, generate new empirical evidence by interviewing central actors and triangulate our findings with grey and published literature. Our main sources will be:

- *The archives of the Danish Police and the Danish Defence*: For every occurrence of Special Assistance from the military to the police 1971-2018 a specific directive exists. We aim to identify and retrieve all written instructions from either police or military archives as well as notes from Hot Wash-Ups, After Action Reviews, evaluations, training programmes and other relevant documents. Our primary archival sources are with the Joint Defence Command (VFK), SpecOps Command (SOKOM) and the Danish Police Intelligence Agency (PET).
- *Interviews with both police and military individuals*: Oral History is a common methodological approach in contemporary history in general and specifically in military history (Bak 2016), and we expect to gain an abundance of useful information from the operational level through semi-structured qualitative interviews. We will work with the relevant police and military authorities to obtain classified information from informants.
- *Grey and published literature*: Reports from governmental agencies, parliamentary hearings and questions asked by MPs to the government as well as media coverage of specific incidents that involved joint military and police operations will be analyzed. We do not intend to do archival research in countries selected for comparison, but we may conduct interviews with foreign key informants to supplement our findings from the grey and published literature.

6. Scope and limitations

We focus on 1971 to the present while also including a brief history of earlier civil-military relations. This project involves classified data and is as such depending on third parties granting access (the Danish Police and the Danish Defence). An agreement on access to empirical data was signed by the Danish National Police and the Royal Danish Defence College in 2017, and we have obtained an agreement on cooperation regarding access to empirical data from the Joint Defence Command confirming our access to classified archival material with consent from PET. Based on this we are confident about the feasibility of the project.

7. Project organization and timeline

Our research team consists of two of the best-suited historians in Denmark for the job: Rasmus Dahlberg with a unique background in emergency management and civil-military relations, and Mette Volquartzen with an equally distinctive research focus on police and security history. To complement them, Jens Elo Rytter, professor of law with the Centre for International Law, Crisis and Conflict (CILCC) and a renowned researcher with a strong record in constitutional law and human rights, will serve as the PI of the research project. Assistant Professor Rasmus Dahlberg from the Royal Danish Defence College's (RDDC) covers aspects related to military history, while Mette Volquartzen will be a project post.doc. at CILCC. The three scholars will work closely together to represent the three

aspects of the proposed theoretical framework for the research project and complement each other (Fig. 1). CILCC will host Jens Elo Rytter and Mette Volquartzen, while RDDC hosts Rasmus Dahlberg. The project will be formally anchored at and administered by CILCC with RDDC as a partner organization. Both institutions have offered to co-fund the project with publication support, travel grants, student assistance and salaries.

Special Assistance: Military and Police Joint Operations 1971-2018								
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
1 SP1: Joint operations between the Danish police and military from 1971 to 2018 - Mette V.; Jens Elo Rytter, Rasmus Dahlberg								
Mapping: Historical context and legal aspects								
Analysis: Development at the intra- and inter-organizational level, and at the legal and political levels								
2 SP2: Joint Operations in DK, NO and SE - Mette V.; Jens Elo Rytter, Rasmus Dahlberg								
Mapping: Historical background and the current situation								
3 SP3: The challenges of small states in The Age of Terrorism - Mette V.; Jens Elo Rytter, Rasmus Dahlberg								
Analysis: Proportionality and accountability of the current legal basis in a European and global context								
People - a = journal articles; p = presentations at conferences; m = production of monograph, r = research stay								
<i>PI, Professor Jens Elo Rytter</i>				a			m/a	a
<i>Assistant Professor Rasmus Dahlberg</i>		p			a/r	m/a	m/a	a
<i>Postdoc Mette Volquartzen</i>		p	r	a/r	a	m/a	m/a	a

Fig. 2: Project GANTT-chart.

8. Outreach and networks

We will present our findings from this project in a research-based monograph as well as three articles published in international peer-reviewed journals. The monograph will be written in Danish and aimed at a broad audience as we find that our topic is highly relevant to the public, media and decision-makers. The University of Southern Denmark Press has agreed to publish the proposed monograph, which will go through a peer-review process, with financial support from RDDC. In addition to the monograph we plan to publish three peer-reviewed academic articles: Paper I will focus on police matters, Paper II on military matters, both aimed at international academic audiences (i.e. *International Journal of Police Science and Management* and *The Scandinavian Journal of Military Studies*), while Paper III discusses the theoretical and methodological aspects of the project with a special emphasis on legal matters. Paper III will sum up the theoretical contributions of the project to the field. Finally, we will make our results available to educators and practitioners in military and police organizations in brief publications in Danish.

Our research will be presented and discussed during the project period at international conferences such as the International Society for Military Studies (ISMS), the Conference on North European Emergency and Disaster Studies (NEEDS) and the annual Forskningskonferanse at Politihøgskolen in Oslo and in relevant research networks including the ERGOMAS Workgroup on Police-Military Relations. Both Rasmus Dahlberg and Mette Volquartzen intend to actively seek opportunities to go abroad during the project, as we feel that we will be able to contribute significantly to as well as benefit from the current global scholarly debate about the militarization of internal security. The Danish case will be presented to an international audience as an emblematic example of joint military and police operations with important societal and legal implications for future security governance.

9. References

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