



A Question of Loyalty: Military Manpower Policy in Multiethnic States (Cornell Studies in Security Affairs)

By Alon Peled

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States that use military conscription and whose ethnic minorities have relatives in hostile countries face a "Trojan horse" dilemma: the state demands military service but mistrusts the loyalty of subjugated community members. Some armies brutalize ethnic recruits; others simply reject them. Alon Peled compares the experiences of Malay-Muslim soldiers in Singapore, Arabs in Israel, and blacks in South Africa. Drawing on his interviews with senior officers and policymakers, he examines the histories of these armies and their levels of ethnic integration. He also suggests how minority soldiers can be gradually recruited, integrated, and promoted.

Ethnic soldiers can only succeed, Peled argues, when officers formulate manpower policy on the basis of combat needs rather than political concerns. Peled highlights the behind-the-scenes roles played by officers and ethnic leaders. He advocates new policies for change, recommending that the leaders of ethnically torn countries such as the republics of the former Soviet Union and states in central Africa allow professional officers to introduce soldiers from mistrusted ethnic groups through a process of phased integration.

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