

demanded a Western-style democracy for Tibet, while the Chinese insisted that the Communist Party remain in control. “Complicating matters,” notes Goldstein, “was the exiles’ demand for the creation of a Greater Tibet that would include . . . ethnic Tibetan areas in western China, most of which Tibet had lost in the 18th century.”

After the Dalai Lama launched his campaign for international support in 1987, Beijing was put on the defensive, Goldstein notes. There were protests in Lhasa, and some led to riots. In the belief that events were going his way, the Tibetan leader reject-

ed an overture from Beijing in 1989; then, after another riot broke out in Lhasa, Beijing imposed martial law, adopted a new hard-line policy, and accelerated a program of rapid economic development.

Now it is the Dalai Lama who is on the defensive. His past successes at attracting support in the West “look more and more like Pyrrhic victories,” Goldstein says. The temptation will be strong for him to give a tacit nod to organized violence by Tibetan militants. But, in Goldstein’s view, the exiled leader should opt instead for concessions and compromise.

Why France Ended Its Draft

“Towards the Army of the Future: Domestic Politics and the End of Conscription in France”
by J. Justin McKenna, in *West European Politics* (Oct. 1997), Frank Cass and Co. Ltd.,
Newbury House, 900 Eastern Ave., London IG2 7HH, England.

France is the country that invented the idea of a “people’s army” (during the French Revolution), and military conscription has been in use there since 1905. Yet now, France is phasing out the draft and shifting to an all-volunteer force, writes McKenna, a political scientist at George Washington University.

For decades, the so-called “Gaullist consensus” on French defense policy has been in effect, he notes. In 1964, in the belief that Americans—their assurances to the contrary notwithstanding—might well prefer to fight a conventional war in Europe rather than respond with nuclear weapons to a Soviet attack, President Charles de Gaulle opted for an independent nuclear force (*force de frappe*). As a result, McKenna notes, the French army came to be viewed as, in effect, merely “a ‘trip wire’ for the use of tactical nuclear weapons.”

During the Cold War, the French derived “tremendous political power” on the international scene from their limited nuclear force, McKenna writes. At home, conscription and national military service became “an easy way to involve the citizen in national defense, without really investing conventional forces with strategic or political importance.”

But the collapse of the Soviet Union and the reunification of Germany sharply reduced the military role of nuclear weapons, shifting the emphasis to conventional arms, McKenna observes. The 1991 Persian Gulf

War made that point clear to Jacques Chirac and other French leaders. Out of a supposedly “combat-ready” army of 280,000, as well as the 47,000 troops of the Force d’Action Rapide, the French were able to muster only 12,000 troops for service in the gulf. Britain, by contrast, was able to raise three times that number from its professional force of only 160,000. The problem: French law prevented the government from sending conscripts overseas unless they volunteered, and then-president François Mitterrand refused to ask Parliament to lift the restriction.

Chirac’s plan for the professionalization of the armed forces, unveiled after his election to the presidency in 1995, aroused no strong opposition. Although service in the military was traditionally a French rite of passage, many now saw it as “a waste of time”—and avoided actual military service. Highly educated conscripts, often from the upper crust, increasingly were sent on nonmilitary duty (*service civil*), serving overseas as *coopérants* (junior executives) for French corporations, and getting paid far more than the average draftee.

The transition to a leaner, all-volunteer military force is due to be completed in 2002. But the French tradition of mandatory service to the nation will not be entirely dead. Starting that year, McKenna says, young men and women will be obliged to attend an annual “citizen’s rendezvous,” lasting no more than a week, to imbibe “basic republican values.”