



**STRATEGY
RESEARCH
PROJECT**

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**THE ARMY'S ROLE IN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE,
CHALLENGES NOW AND IN THE FUTURE**

BY

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ABSTRACT

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Since the end of the Cold War there has been a quantifiable upsurge in regional instability throughout the world. Recent times have been punctuated by natural disasters, drought, starvation, civil wars and unmitigated suffering by multitudes of innocent victims. Nations and private relief organizations have helped ease the suffering as a matter of human kindness and demonstration of political good will. The United States' involvement in humanitarian assistance, whether as a gesture of good will, or as an instrument of its foreign policy, places a potential burden on the military, particularly the Army. The resulting scenario brings competing issues into conflict - ability to fight and win the nation's wars and the concept of charity and assistance from a wealthy country. Both aims serve the nation's interests, the degree of which will vary, dependent upon the situation and threat to the livelihood of the U.S. This paper will analyze the policy of humanitarian assistance as stated in the 1995 National Military Strategy and review the conceptual application of Army forces in humanitarian assistance operations overseas. The recommendations suggest methods to prevent the degradation of warfighting skills and set conditions for success in supporting humanitarian assistance operations.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of humanitarian assistance may be as old as civilization itself. From the conquering Greeks and Romans to the modern armies of today, examples of compassion and assistance to vanquished foes or to people in need are well documented in the pages of history. Recent times have been punctuated by natural disasters, drought, starvation, civil wars and unmitigated suffering by multitudes of innocent victims. Nations and private relief organizations have helped ease the suffering as a matter of human kindness and demonstration of political good will, a sharing of one's treasures.

The United States' involvement in humanitarian assistance, whether as a gesture of good will, or as an instrument of its foreign policy, places a potential burden on the military, particularly the Army. However, the military has two unique advantages compared with other actors in the relief community. One is its ability to move an enormous number of people, weapons, equipment, and commodities such as food and medicine over very long distances at short notice by means of its air, sea, and ground-based assets. The other is its combat capability, by which it can provide security.¹ But the continuous reliance on or overuse of the military could undercut warfighting skills and readiness for combat. The resulting scenario brings competing issues into conflict - ability to fight and win the nation's wars and the concept of charity and assistance from a wealthy country. Both aims serve the nation's interests, the degree of which will vary, dependent upon the situation and threat to the livelihood of the U.S.

The purpose of this paper is to review the conceptual application of Army forces in humanitarian assistance operations overseas. As part of this process, I will:

- 1) describe the present day strategic environment,
- 2) review and analyze the policy of humanitarian assistance as stated in the 1995 National Military Strategy,
- 3) define the doctrinal principles,
- 4) describe the operational environment,
- 5) offer an assessment on future impact on the Army, and
- 6) provide recommendations.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

Since the end of the Cold War there has been a quantifiable upsurge in regional instability throughout the world. These situations are characterized by volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) conditions.² This new world order, marked with rising tensions caused by nationalistic aggression, armed conflict, and ethnic cleansing, can generate potential flash points. A vivid by-product of this wide spread conflict has been a dramatic increase in human suffering due to drought induced famine, starvation, disease, collateral combat injury, and infrastructure destruction. This situation has created critical humanitarian emergencies. These emergencies are normally natural and manmade disasters. The definition of a humanitarian emergency is a crisis in which there is a gap between the need for emergency assistance and the ability of the local government to respond. Emergency humanitarian assistance from the international community includes funds for food, water, medicine, sanitation, medical care, shelter, seeds, farm equipment, and mine clearing.³ The ever growing dilemma facing the international community is that these humanitarian emergencies are becoming more and more complex. Complex emergencies combine internal conflicts with large-scale displacements of people, mass famine and fragile or failing

economic, political and social institutions.⁴ In a study released in January 1995, the United States Mission to the United Nations identified 30 countries/areas where there are ongoing or potential humanitarian crises. Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ethiopia, Haiti, Liberia, Rwanda, and Sudan were leading contenders. A quick analysis shows the commonality of conditions includes: 1) civil unrest; 2) landmines - there may be as many as 110 million uncleared landmines in 64 countries;⁵ 3) shortages of hospitals, doctors, safe food and water; 4) lack of or destroyed infrastructure -which impacts on ability to assist; and 5) low rates of immunization for measles and diphtheria - tetanus.

To say that humanitarian assistance is a growth industry may very well be an understatement. Between 1978 and 1985, an average of five complex humanitarian emergencies occurred each year. By 1992, the number had grown to 17. Budget figures echo these trends. In fiscal 1992, for the first time, the U.S. government spent more on humanitarian relief to complex emergencies in Africa (\$824 million) than on development projects there (\$800 million).⁶

Between the period 1983-1993, U.S. joint task forces (JTF) conducted a total of 12 humanitarian assistance operations. All but one were conducted outside the continental United States. The nature of the emergencies ranged from a massive oil spill, natural disasters, refugee control, food transportation, and medical support.

In recent years, external military forces have increasingly been called on for a range of humanitarian missions. Oftentimes only the military can deliver relief in time to save substantial numbers of lives or provide the security required to deliver aid.⁷ As stated above, this situation has only evolved in the years since the end of the Cold War and has caused the

militaries throughout the world to form uneasy alliances with civilian organizations whose purpose is to render aid to those in need. For clarity, humanitarian organizations include nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations (UN) humanitarian agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC). Collectively, they are often referred to as Humanitarian Relief Organizations (HROs).⁸

The global strategic environment has been further clouded by extensive involvement from the UN in humanitarian assistance. Oft maligned as an intense bureaucracy and perceived by the public as wasteful and inefficient, the UN's image/ability to conduct successful operations has been undercut by difficulties in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia. Even with the UN's institutional weaknesses, the international community needs the UN when responding to a humanitarian crisis. No sovereign state alone has the UN's legal and moral sanction to intervene, its coordinating authority, its peacekeeping troops (however constrained by their home governments), its diplomatic good offices, and its financial and staff resources.⁹

There are many factors that create situations that require humanitarian assistance. Perhaps the most significant may very well be the implosion of the USSR and subsequent splintering into independent and aligned republics. The Soviet's economic collapse, shift toward a democratic form of government and free market economy triggered a new wave of nationalism and independence throughout the former Union and the Warsaw Pact countries. The termination of over fifty years of oppression caused by economic policies, military control, and limited access to world media quickly unravelled the Soviet way of life. Client states that depended upon the USSR for military and economic aid were left to fend for

themselves. These and other countries could no longer play the USSR and the U.S. against each other for favor and aid. As the U.S. emerged as the only remaining superpower, this created a vacuum in the general balance of power in the world.

The U.S. military's own draw down of nearly 40 per cent since 1990 has further complicated the concept of global leadership. This reduction has been fueled in part by economic concerns, i.e. the budget deficit, and a perceived lack of a viable threat to national livelihood. Further cuts in the future are possible as domestic economic issues dominate U.S. politics. The global expectation of U.S. leadership remains, but it takes sufficient wherewithal (money, military structure, and will) to exercise dominant, unilateral leadership.

Never before in the history of mankind has the media, especially television, made such a profound impact on public opinion and governmental policy. The pioneer in this regard is perhaps CNN, which has been able to bring real time misery, death and destruction into our living rooms with unprecedented speed and precision. Often the sight of young children suffering from hunger or the ravages of war will invoke emotions in public masses. The resulting public opinion and moral conscience of the world has become strong enough to incite governments to commit resources to mitigate the distress. A new emphasis on responsible global citizenship is becoming a clear mandate to help others that cannot be ignored.

The UN has increasingly focused on responding to this rising tide of ethnic violence and political instability, but with mixed results. The United States has played a leading role in these efforts, offering not just food and medical supplies but, in Kurdistan and Somalia, the military forces necessary to sustain humanitarian operations. Its willingness to play such a

role issues from the conviction that it is morally unacceptable to allow many people to die when it is possible, with existing resources and some leadership by the United States, to prevent it. One measure of the depth of this conviction is the fact that the United States has sometimes applied this principle of intervention in emergencies even when its geopolitical interests would have suggested a very different direction. During the Persian Gulf War, for example, the United States delivered 330,000 metric tons of food relief to Sudan during the worst drought in decades, although the Bashir regime was tacitly supporting Iraq.¹⁰

In the macro analysis, these flash points and other contributing factors have created a more unstable environment in the world today. Daily collisions of emerging national and ethnic interests have caused many countries and international organizations to dedicate increasingly more resources to humanitarian assistance. The U.S. now finds itself engaged in humanitarian assistance on nearly every continent of the world. Impacts of which, both long and short term on the country and its military, especially the Army, are yet to be fully reckoned. Within the all encompassing virtue of service to nation, the Army and its soldiers respond when called and execute whatever missions are required to pursue the national interests, however vaguely they may be defined.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

JOINT PUB 1-02 defines humanitarian assistance as programs conducted to relieve or reduce the results of natural or manmade disasters or other endemic conditions such as human pain, disease, hunger, or privation that might present a serious threat to life or that can result in great damage to or loss of property. Humanitarian assistance provided by U.S. forces is limited in scope and duration. The assistance provided is designed to supplement or complement the efforts of the host nation civil authorities or agencies that may have the primary responsibility for providing humanitarian assistance.¹¹

The National Military Strategy states, "Our Armed Forces stand ready to participate in humanitarian and disaster relief operations at home and abroad."¹² This policy supports the concept of peacetime engagement that is clearly defined in the President's A National Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement. In this era of ever dwindling resources and competing priorities, the decision to use the military and the resultant level of participation in humanitarian operations has critical consequences. As stated in the National Security Strategy, "Our decisions focus on the resources we can bring to bear by using unique capabilities of our military rather than the combat power of military force. Generally, the military is not the best tool to address humanitarian concerns. But under certain conditions, the use of our armed forces may be appropriate:

- when a humanitarian catastrophe dwarfs the ability of civilian agencies to respond;
- when the need for relief is urgent and only the military has the ability to jump-start the longer-term response to the disaster;
- when the response requires resources unique to the military; and
- when the risk to American troops is minimal."¹³

These criteria are relatively new, evolving from the decision process to conduct Operation Support Hope in Rwanda in July 1994. The Department of Defense (DoD) views this operation as a classical example of properly scoping the deployed capability, rapid execution, well coordinated hand over to civilian humanitarian support agencies, and expeditious redeployment. The tenets and procedures applied in Rwanda were the fruit of a great evolution in doctrine. In the past five years there has been an acceleration of doctrine development - both joint and service specific, as well as perspectives from NATO and the UN, that delineate procedures for conducting joint, interagency and multinational operations, and providing humanitarian assistance. These publications include:

JOINT PUB 3-07 Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War.
JOINT PUB 3-08 Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations.
FM 100-7 Decisive Force: The Army in Theater Operations.
FM 100-8 The Army in Multinational Operations.
FM 100-19 Domestic Support Operations.
FM 100-23-1 Multiservice Procedures for Humanitarian Assistance Operations.
Joint Task Force Commander's Handbook for Peace Operations.
Complex Emergencies: Bureaucratic Arrangements in the UN Secretariat.
NATO Doctrine for Peace Support Operations.
A United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Handbook for the Military on Humanitarian Operations.

Additionally, there has been a plethora of published articles since 1991 by civilian and military authors on topics related to humanitarian assistance. Equally important texts are the after action reports/lessons learned from the various operations the U.S. has recently supported. In many ways these lessons learned have driven and become embedded into U.S. policy and doctrine.

POLICY ANALYSIS

The strategic thought model (ends-ways-means) will be the mechanism to analyze U.S. policy on humanitarian assistance.¹⁴

A) ENDS/OBJECTIVES: In the broadest of terms the ends/objectives are clear, yet extremely vague and generic. Specifics become clearer once JCS defines the mission and issues the execution order. The mitigation of pain, suffering and loss translates to promoting regional stability and goodwill for the U.S. During Operation Restore Hope in Somalia there were conditions vital to humanity for which the international use of force was justified despite state sovereignty.¹⁵ A possible issue or bone of contention is the concept of humanitarian vital interests. Nowhere in the U.S. national security or military strategies is there a clear statement of what are the humanitarian vital interests.

B) WAYS/CONCEPTS: The how, the where and the when of humanitarian assistance are situational and often unpredictable. During FY 1994, 60 countries benefited from DoD humanitarian assistance. These included major operations to: Rwanda (Operation Support Hope); former Yugoslavia (Operation Provide Promise); northern Iraq (Operation Provide Comfort); and refugee camp management and construction for Cuban and Haitian migrants.¹⁶ While the U.S. does not have a narrowly-defined security interest in responding to every humanitarian disaster, Washington is finding it increasingly difficult to resist the public and international pressure to intervene that such suffering elicits.¹⁷ Typically, these operations have been joint in nature and often in conjunction with a coalition of nations' military forces and NGOs.

C) MEANS/RESOURCES: The very policy statement alone represents a be prepared, contingency mission for the entire military, not just the Army, and other elements of the U.S. government. However, in some situations the mission has become more of a long term activity, than a spur of the moment contingency. These include: Operation Provide Promise (1992-1996: airdrop of food, airlift to Sarajevo and medical support to the UN in Croatia), Operation Provide Hope (1992-present: medical support to former Soviet republics) and Operation Provide Comfort (1991-present: food and other supplies to Kurds in northern Iraq). Past operations indicate the tendency is greater for special operations forces, civil affairs, military police, engineers, medical personnel, logisticians and air crews to be used for humanitarian missions rather than infantryman or marines.

The reserve components now play an ever critical role because many capabilities and specialties are not in the active forces in sufficient number. Additionally, the overall reduction of the U.S. military and emphasis on jointness has led to a construct of interdependence among the services. No one service has the capability or capacity to single handedly execute support to a long term, complex humanitarian emergency. This interdependence is the foundation for the operational doctrine of the U.S. military.

OPERATIONAL DOCTRINE

Army FM 100-23-1, which also serves as a joint publication for the Navy, Marines and Air Force, stipulates six operational principles for humanitarian assistance:

OBJECTIVE: Direct every military operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable goal.

UNITY OF EFFORT: Seek unity of effort toward every objective.

PERSEVERANCE: Prepare for the measured, protracted application of military capabilities to support strategic aims.

SECURITY: Never permit hostile factions to acquire an unexpected advantage.

RESTRAINT: Apply appropriate military capability prudently.

LEGITIMACY: Promote the willing acceptance by the people of the right of the government to govern or of a group or agency to make and carry out decisions.¹⁸

The above doctrine has been applied in operations throughout the world and is barely 18 months old. Since its inception the operational environment has become more complicated, with potential complex humanitarian emergencies festering primarily on the continents of Europe, Africa and Asia, and closer to home in Haiti.

OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The operational environment is no less intricate than the strategic. Multinational military, the UN, and NGOs are often brought together through an international humanitarian response system to provide assistance. Additionally, the U.S. military must also pursue an interagency coordination process with several other U.S. government activities (Department of Agriculture, DoD Office of Humanitarian and Refugee Affairs, et al) and the Department of

State. State's primary agent is the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) within the U.S. Agency for International Development. OFDA is responsible for providing non-food, humanitarian assistance in response to disasters and crises in foreign countries.¹⁹

The ambiguous situation in which the U.S. military now finds itself requires a doctrine of cooperative engagement with humanitarian agencies in which the military contributes three key proficiencies: security, logistics, and limited, temporary assistance when humanitarian organizations are unable to cope with a life-threatening emergency event.²⁰ Cooperation with the UN and the other organizations can be an arduous task at best, due in part to a general lack of understanding by U.S. personnel of their procedures and a specific frustration for bureaucratic inefficiencies.

How well this humanitarian response system works with military forces in peacekeeping operations, whether or not the forces operate under the UN banner, will be determined by the quality of military and civilian leadership and its familiarity with the humanitarian response structure. The only part of the military force (U.S.) structure prepared by doctrine, training, experience and personnel recruitment policy to deal with these organizations is the civil affairs branch of the Army. Unfortunately, commanders and military planners often include a civil affairs function in a humanitarian relief operation as an afterthought, if at all. Both PVO (private volunteer organizations) and UN managers have repeatedly commented how well they could work with U.S. forces if they could deal with civil affairs officers instead of combat commanders.²¹ Most of the Army's civil affairs expertise is not in the active component. Recent demands have been heavy, with great reliance on reserves volunteering for active duty. A Presidential Selected Reserve Call up

was used for Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia to fill key specialties, including civil affairs.

Perhaps the most consistently difficult lesson for U.S. military forces to learn is that unlike their role in combat, they are not in charge of managing the response to a complex humanitarian emergency.²² The role is strictly support, that of leveraging the capabilities and expertise of the forces involved, to set the conditions for the NGOs to succeed. A simple enough prospect, but more difficult in execution because there is often no central node within the NGOs that performs the synergistic coordination of all parties concerned.

The unfortunate reality is that usually no one is in charge in a complex humanitarian emergency, a situation which is unlikely to change at any point in the foreseeable future. The notion that if any institution is in charge it should be the UN is by no means universally acknowledged among relief responders. Furthermore, it will be challenged as well by UN agencies that don't want their rivals in the system to be in charge if they can't be. UN performance has not matched its mandate: until it does, the UN cannot assume an undisputed leadership position.²³

Within the context of this operational environment the Army commander must be prepared to operate in a joint or multinational scenario and support NGOs that heretofore have only been organizations read about in the newspapers. There are five key responsibilities empowered to commanders: planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating and controlling.²⁴ These responsibilities are applicable not just for humanitarian assistance, but throughout the normal range of peacetime and combat operations. However, the operational environment and process of humanitarian assistance often dictates procedures,

missions, and relationships that are beyond the realm of day to day operations and training for most Army units.

Planning: Typically, the crisis action planning model becomes activated to respond to a humanitarian assistance mission. Theater CINC's and supporting service components may have contingency concept plans (CONPLANS) "on the shelf" to respond to generic situations. But as with most situations in the military, the force package is dependent upon many variables (METT-T) and the CONPLAN must be fleshed out in greater detail.

The most significant challenge arises from insufficient information and too little time to initially respond. As more information becomes available, plans (in actuality, the OPOD) get modified/revised. The overriding focus of the planning process is to define the mission, identify all specified and implied tasks and determine the pertinent players, i.e. supported CINC, force/resource providers and if possible, participating NGOs.

Organizing: Activation of a joint task force (JTF) has become the normal mode of operandi for executing humanitarian assistance. The Army and other services become "force providers" to support a headquarters designated to conduct the operation. This emphasis on joint operations has dominated military thinking since the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and even to a greater extent during the post-Cold War draw down.

A potential pitfall of the JTF concept is the deployment of an ad hoc organization, a patch work staff pulled together from disparate sources. But this lack of synergy is usually short lived, overcome by the professionalism of those individuals and units comprising the JTF. Two warfighting CINCs - USACOM and USEUCOM have been making great strides in

training and perfecting the JTF concept. In the USEUCOM case, small and large JTF "core" headquarters have been designated in each of the supporting components. Additional personnel from the USEUCOM staff and other components augment the "core" to compose the JTF headquarters. Periodic warfighting or contingency exercises have been conducted to develop a closer working relationship among all the players. The prime benefit is the normalization of staff operations and the JTF commander gains confidence in working with known personnel from his staff and the force providers.

Commanding: To be sure, the designated JTF commander will have all the normal, legal command functions that are associated with the position. The ad hoc nature of the organization is not detrimental because military personnel are accustomed to taking orders and a structured chain of command. A commander's focus is initially on the near term, day to day operations: stand up the JTF, deployment, and employment to mitigate the humanitarian situation. Later he/she will turn attention to defining the end state, disengagement/hand over to the host nation and civilian organizations, and redeployment planning.

Coordinating: Command is exercised only over the military. To be successful, the commander and JTF staff must rely on skillful and constant coordination with the myriad of NGOs, host nation organizations, and other U.S. government entities that may be in the area of operation. Organizational culture and individual perceptions often hinder general effectiveness in the early stages of an operation. Recent JTF's have used a civil-military operations center (CMOC) to perform this coordination process. All supporting participants have a contribution to make. The NGOs need the military (usually security, transportation,

logistics and communications) to do their job. Most importantly, viable and successful NGOs are the one way ticket home for the military.

A unique and often challenging aspect of humanitarian operations is the necessity to support the information demands of multiple higher headquarters. This can be three fold: to the unified command, to the component command and to the service headquarters in Washington, D.C. An insatiable thirst for information can place unwieldy demands on the small JTF staff. This challenge is often met through daily situation reports to all higher and supporting headquarters. Direct dialogue by the JTF commander and staff with their counterparts at the next level also supports the timely flow of information. Feedback, coordination, and communications must be constant and continuous processes.

Controlling: For any organization this function is essentially the same, whether at home station or during a humanitarian operation. The dynamics may be different - JTF operations in a foreign country, working with NGOs, etc. As discussed later, preventing mission creep is a constant challenge. During Operation Support Hope in Rwanda, as functions were turned over to the NGOs, military personnel previously responsible went home. Only when the JTF commander and his staff continuously assess and monitor progress toward the stated mission can this economy of effort be achieved.

The complexities of shrinking defense budgets, reduced force structure, and increasing employment of the Army and other services for humanitarian assistance and nontraditional missions contribute to a "do more with less" mentality that often prevails in the U.S. government. Sooner or later there must be a day of reckoning to assess the impacts.

FUTURE IMPACT ON THE ARMY

Since the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the Army's draw down in the late 1980s, PersTempo - which is the amount of time soldiers spent away from home station and family because of temporary deployments - has increased about 300 per cent. That trend has not subsided.²⁵ There is no relief in sight unless peace breaks out all over the world with simultaneous instant affluence among the Third World countries, which is doubtful.

As stated in Presidential Decision Directive 25, the Clinton Administration's Policy on Performing Multinational Peace Operations, "The armed forces will include appropriate peacekeeping/emergency humanitarian assistance training in DoD training programs. Training U.S. forces to fight and decisively win wars will, however, continue to be the highest training priority."²⁶ Army participation and support to humanitarian assistance will obviously continue, perhaps to a higher PersTempo as world crises occur.

There are three critical issues that should guide the national command authority (NCA) in the decision making process:

A) Engagement and involvement must be based upon national interest rather than emotional, public opinion. Modern media communications confront every American with images which both stir the impulse to intervene and raise the question of an operation's cost and risks.²⁷ Washington's response to refugee flows, as well as other humanitarian disasters, often appears to be driven by public opinion, which is at least partly aroused by television coverage that emphasizes horrific images. Yet public opinion toward military intervention in such situations is notoriously ambivalent. Public sensitivity to images of widespread suffering may lead to pressure to intervene, but public sensitivity to the loss of U.S. lives and money in

non-essential operations frequently results in pressure to disengage. The evolution of the Somalia operation from late 1992 to the Fall of 1993 illustrates this cycle well.²⁸ Although the Army cannot pick and choose when and where to provide humanitarian assistance, the NCA must make this tough decision, and do it for the right reasons.

B) Impact on readiness should be continuously evaluated. The military has to be concerned with the balance between preparation for humanitarian relief operations and its other responsibilities.²⁹ For some services and their branches, support to humanitarian operations replicates normal operations. However, there is potential to erode the fighting edge of our combat forces that become engaged. Units and personnel preparing, participating and/or recovering from humanitarian operations have little opportunity to conduct individual and collective training to hone war fighting skills. Furthermore, most humanitarian operations are not directly funded by DoD. General Gordon Sullivan stated the situation very succinctly: "The U.S. has tended to pay for current missions by diverting dollars from research and development, procurement of modern equipment, leader development, training exercises, and maintenance of facilities. In doing so, we sacrifice readiness."³⁰ Military leaders must be forthright in evaluating readiness impacts and more equally forthcoming in raising these concerns to the NCA.

C) Mission creep must be controlled. By policy and doctrinal definition, humanitarian assistance by U.S. forces is intended to be limited in scope and duration.³¹ General Shalikashvili's guidance is clear: "When we respond to a humanitarian tragedy and our hearts are most affected, we must be wary of the impulse to do more than provide relief - say, to find the source of the tragedy and cure it for all."³² In Somalia, all without much

consideration or authorization, multinational peacekeeping forces deployed by President George Bush to deliver food and medicine were assigned by President Clinton to disarm Somali warlords, pursue General Farah Aidid and undertake nation-building. Such an ambiguous mission led directly to the massacre of U.S. troops in Mogadishu and from there to other ill-conceived initiatives and failure.³³ Operation Provide Comfort in northern Iraq started in April 1991. Operation Provide Promise in the former Yugoslavia had been on going since July 1992, was recently terminated with the advent of Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia. Both Provide Comfort and Provide Promise have long surpassed the definition of temporary - short duration. Although the stated purpose remains humanitarian, USEUCOM and its components continue to execute missions that could possibly be redefined as nation assistance or regional security operations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Listed below in priority are recommendations that if followed, may help avoid the pitfalls identified in this paper, set the conditions for success in future humanitarian assistance operations, and minimize degradation of combat capability:

- A) APPLY LESSONS LEARNED:** The Army and other services must consistently apply the lessons learned from Operation Support Hope in Rwanda: get in quick, minimize the footprint, do the mission, hand off to the civilian organizations, and get out as soon as possible!
- B) FORCE STRUCTURE:** The Army must maintain a robust, flexible force structure with units that are responsive and rapidly deployable. Continued procurement of strategic airlift and sealift assets is a vital part of this equation. Resourcing, planning and training to fight

two nearly simultaneous major regional contingencies may not be enough. According to General George Joulwan, commander USEUCOM and NATO, "During the Cold War, commanders often said that if they had a force capable of defeating the Soviet Union, they could handle any lesser contingency as well. That no longer holds true. The forces able to win two major wars do not provide the capabilities needed to conduct the number of lesser contingencies the military is likely to have . . . over the full spectrum of engagements."³⁴ For example, the Army should increase the number of civil affairs units in both active and reserve components. Further study of unit and individual PersTempo rates will determine the magnitude of the expansion needed to meet increasing demands.

C) OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES: My analysis, review of several recent humanitarian operations, and experience from supporting humanitarian assistance has resulted in an expansion of the principles cited in FM 100-23-1. These are as follows:

Clarity of mission: Every attempt must be made to ensure the mission statement must be clear and unambiguous to minimize interpretation and potential for mission creep.

Command and support relationships: A key concept must be kept in perspective: the military is not normally in charge of a humanitarian assistance operation, but in a supporting role to the NGOs. Defining who is in charge, who is supporting whom, etc. from the military perspective is normally easy to establish. Difficulty may develop when a multitude of NGOs are involved without an over arching central control mechanism. The Army/U.S. military should take the position as an enabler or catalyst to centrally facilitate the support to the NGOs .

Force packaging: As with most operations the application of military capability is METT-T dependent. Circumstances will normally dictate the deployment/employment of a tailored force package - enough capability with minimal footprint. Unit integrity may need to be supplanted to build a capabilities based task force that is self sustainable. This task force could operate in a joint or multinational environment.

Unity of effort: Success cannot be achieved unless all parties are working toward the common goal. Experience has shown that use of a civil-military operations center (CMOC) can help this coordination process. The NGOs cannot usually provide their good works without the security and massive logistics and communications apparatus the Army possesses. By the same token, the Army and other services cannot declare success and depart until the NGOs are fully able to perform.

Jointness: The usual military resources brought to bear include logistics (food, water, clothing, medical, temporary shelter, etc.) and transportation (strategic and tactical airlift). No one service component can realistically, single handedly support a large scale humanitarian assistance operation. Employing a JTF applies a CINC's and service components' capabilities to best support the mission. In essence, this is a prudent use of military power. But care must be taken to ensure the proper mix of capability. In some cases, jointness \neq success.

Security: Force protection must be a paramount consideration. This umbrella not only encompasses the military forces, but often includes personnel from the NGOs as well. Humanitarian assistance operations are not without risk. The commander and staff must continuously evaluate: whether the environment is permissive or not, exposure to disease and other force protection issues from the start and throughout the humanitarian operation.

Readiness for combat: Complex emergencies can quickly deteriorate into threatening situations for the military and the NGOs. Valid rules of engagement (ROE) must be defined from the outset and continuously evaluated. The deployed forces must not be lulled into a false sense of security and should be capable to counter any known or potential threats.

Exit strategy/envision end state: The commander must have a vision of the end state and be constantly evaluating/revising the exit strategy. He must protect his organization from mission creep, transitioning into nation assistance, and/or performing functions normally done by NGOs and other governmental agencies.

D) RELATIONS WITH NGOs: The Army needs to foster a cooperative, working relationship with civilian humanitarian organizations and establish coordination methodology. Supporting standard operating procedures and handbooks should also be developed. Training activities at HQDA and MACOM levels should be conducted to practice and work the interfaces. The U.S. interagency coordination process must be better understood and applied by the Army's leadership down to the operational and tactical levels.

E) UNIT AND PERSONNEL TRAINING: Units and organizations will need to allocate precious resources for training and preparation to conduct humanitarian assistance. The warrior ethos and intense training necessary to fight and win the nation's wars may be too harsh for successful humanitarian operations. Conversely, the complacency and passivity that accrue in many humanitarian situations can undercut the fighting spirit and will require a period of individual and collective retraining to regain full combat readiness. Increased instruction is needed at the command and staff and senior service colleges to expose field grade and senior officers to the concepts and processes of humanitarian assistance.

CONCLUSION

There can be no doubt the Army now and into the 21st Century will remain engaged in humanitarian assistance operations. While the U.S. military will continue to be involved in responding to natural disasters abroad, humanitarian interventions increasingly will be in response to civil wars, ethnic conflicts, and other forms of violence in the troubles states.³⁵ However, in the past, the U.S. military regularly balanced conventional military operations with relief and quasi-police operations. Indeed, those functions were the central role of the U.S. military during the peacetime before World War II. That pattern might reassert itself.³⁶

Perhaps humanitarian assistance may be a means to demonstrate relevance of the military, the Army in particular, to the American public. Over emphasis on humanitarian assistance and other nontraditional roles for the Army may increase the danger of degraded ability to fight and win the nations's wars. Colonel Harry Summers reflects on this possibility with brutal clarity, "Such a collapse of fighting spirit could be as fatal to the survival of American civilization as it was to Greek civilization over two millennia ago."³⁷

Only the future holds the truth. The never ending challenge for the Army - its leadership and soldiers, is to be ready when called, regardless of the mission.

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