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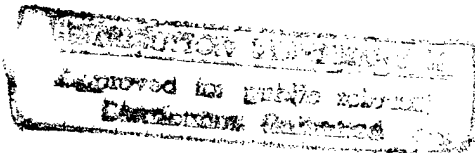
PEACE OPERATIONS: READINESS and RELEVANCE

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.



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ABSTRACT

The shifting nature of the post-Cold War national security environment requires a close look at the changing role of the U.S. military. The 1990s has seen the direct involvement of U.S. forces in peace operations ranging from humanitarian assistance to peace enforcement. Continued and increased participation of the military in such peace operations will not only have strategic implications but will also effect the operational readiness of U.S. forces.

Peace operations are an important tool for the unified commander (CINC) which enable him to preserve national security and interests in his Area of Operations (AOR). It will be critical for a CINC to have forces at his disposal which are capable of handling the full spectrum of military missions - both high and low intensity. From an operational standpoint, the growing emphasis on peace operations requires attention with respect to force readiness and military doctrine and training. The challenge that faces the U.S. military is to maintain its credibility as a war-fighting force while developing new skills designed for success in peace operations.

“Consolidating (the Cold War) victory requires a continuing U.S. role and new strategies to strengthen democratic institutions. Military civic action can, in concert with other elements of U.S. strategy, be an effective means of achieving U.S. objectives around the globe.” - General Fred F. Woerner, Jr., U.S. Army, Retired¹

In the preface to the 1996 National Security Strategy (NSS) document President Clinton states the following: “When our national security interests are threatened, we will, as America always has, use diplomacy when we can, but force if we must.”² Somewhere between diplomacy and the use of force, however, is a middle ground. This gray area encompasses a domain which is becoming increasingly familiar territory for the United States’ armed forces: peace operations.

Until the early 1990s, U.S. involvement - militarily and otherwise - in peace operations was confined to providing support in two areas: transportation lift and financial support for UN elements.³ In a September 1992 address to Congress, President Bush announced a significant change to that approach. He directed the Secretary of Defense to initiate training for U.S. combat, engineering, and logistics units in preparation for future peace operations.⁴ President Clinton further addressed the topic of peace operations with the issuance of a presidential decision directive on multilateral peace operations in May 1994. This document contains a wide ranging review of factors, including the support of UN peace operations and the deployment of U.S. forces for peace operations in both multi- and unilateral situations.

¹ Joint Pub 3-07, *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War*, 16 June 1995, page I-1.

² The White House, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, February 1996, page iii.

³ William Lewis, ed., *Peacekeeping: The Way Ahead?*, McNair Paper 25 (Washington: National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies, November 1993), page 21.

⁴ *Ibid.*

Validating this increase in administrative attention, the decade of the 1990s has seen the direct involvement of the U.S. military in various peace operations ranging from humanitarian assistance to peace enforcement. As a result of changing strategies and the austere budgetary environment, however, the continued and increased participation by U.S. military forces in peace operations or Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) is the source of substantial discussion at the highest levels of U.S. military leadership. Much of this debate is centered on the strategic implications of obligating an already stretched military to peace operations whose significance to U.S. national security may not be readily apparent. This paper will attempt to address the issue from the operational standpoint. Specifically, what is the expected impact, from a Unified Commander in Chief's (CINC) perspective, on the operational readiness and overall effectiveness of U.S. forces due to a shift in emphasis from traditional war-fighting to greater involvement in peace operations?

Refocusing The Mission

Before discussing the relative pros and cons of this likely shift in military emphasis on the operational capability of U.S. forces, it is important to understand what the mission of the U.S. military is and how it may be changing. A commonly heard definition of this mission is that it is simply to fight and win wars. In the bipolar world of the Cold War, this premise was clearly validated. But the demise of the Soviet Union and the scattering and increased unpredictability of threats to U.S. national security and interests have altered the once clear focus of the U.S. National Military Strategy (NMS). In simplistic terms, the fundamental change is that the United States no longer bases its strategy on

winning a total war against the Soviet Union, but rather on being able to win two simultaneous major regional contingencies (MRC). The two MRC scenario is being challenged now as well. In January 1997 General Ronald Fogleman, Air Force chief of staff, voiced an opinion favoring a new strategy that maintains all the forces for the current two MRC strategy, but introduces an emphasis on peacekeeping and humanitarian missions as well.⁵ Under his proposal, U.S. forces should be capable of simultaneously winning one MRC and another conflict requiring half those forces, while also undertaking two peacekeeping or humanitarian missions.

General Fogelman's concept is somewhat controversial, but it acknowledges the changing nature of the world from a national security standpoint. As the complete title of the NSS implies, the United States has gone from a strategy of "containment" to one of "engagement."⁶ It follows that current and future security planning should focus less on countering absolute threats to U.S. national existence and more on protecting and promoting U.S. national interests. Furthermore, it would also follow that the true mission of any nation's armed forces is equally simple, but one that is more flexible than merely winning wars: **to protect and promote national security**. This definition represents more than just semantics. It indicates an awareness of the changing climate of threats to national security and the resultant shifts in the military's role in protecting national interests.

⁵ Bill Gertz, "General Predicts High Priority for U.S. Peacekeeping," *Washington Times*, 8 January 1997, page 4.

⁶ The February 1996 National Security Strategy is entitled: "A National Security Strategy of *Engagement* and Enlargement."

"In the next 15 years, disorder, conflict and war, especially on the low end of the spectrum, will likely remain a growth industry." - General John M. Shalikashvili⁷

Readiness and Relevance

Ever since the 'hollow' forces of the 1970s the issue of readiness has been paramount to the U.S. military. However, today's environment of decreasing military funding illustrates that the need to demonstrate *relevance* is just as great as the need to demonstrate *readiness*. Though military purists may scoff at the concept of having to "justify" the relevance of U.S. forces, there are other observers who note that the powerful threat once posed by the Soviets is gone and question the necessity of maintaining military forces at even current levels. Both groups betray an ignorance to current issues involving the military and national security. Keeping the Soviet threat at bay required huge resources, yet it was a relatively simple policy. The decentralized threat environment of today offers a different, yet still formidable, challenge. Fewer, but still substantial, resources are required to deal with these threats which are more complex and unpredictable.⁸ Demonstrating the willingness and ability to successfully conduct peace operations designed to manage threats to global stability and U.S. national security increases the relevance of a robust military to national security in the post-Cold War era.

In the next 10 to 15 years, the world will likely continue to develop into a complex combination of asymmetrical powers and associated threats.⁹ Conflicts based on ethnic

⁷ John M. Shalikashvili, Gen, "America's Armed Forces: A Perspective," *Defense Issues*, Volume 11, Number 101, 1996, page 3.

⁸ Conference Report: "Allied Planning for Peacekeeping and Conflict Management: Tailoring Military Means to Political Ends," Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, June 24-25 1993, page 38.

⁹ Shalikashvili, page 3.

and religious factors will probably increase. Territorial disputes and environmental issues may also have greater global effect as nation-states grow more interdependent. Because of this, the simple fact is that American military personnel will more likely be committed to peace operations than to an MRC. This means that when the 'operational flag' goes up, it will probably be signaling the often ambiguous realm of MOOTW rather than the black-and white concepts of war. The resultant lack of clear objectives or desired end-states in the typical peace operation is a characteristic which poses a major challenge to U.S. forces trained for traditional warfare.

Despite this outlook and recent direct involvement, the acknowledgment of or acceptance of peace operations as critical missions in support of the NMS and NSS is not necessarily unanimous. Many believe that such an emphasis will severely detract from the primary mission of war-fighting and ultimately endanger the military's ability to protect and promote national security. On the other hand, as evidenced by General Fogleman's opinion, others are convinced that the world has evolved such that the U.S. military will continue to be deployed to foreign peace operations in the future and that the United States, therefore, needs to establish doctrine, resources, and force structure designed to take on these missions. The challenge is to do so without compromising the military's war-fighting readiness.

The CINC's Perspective

As Unified Commanders, CINCs are charged with carrying out the NMS in support of the NSS by successfully preserving national security and interests in their respective Areas of Responsibility (AOR). More specifically, the mission of a CINC is to support and advance U.S. interests and policies throughout the assigned AOR, to promote regional stability, and to maintain ready forces to conduct the full spectrum of military operations.¹⁰ From the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) perspective, for example, the CINC has further broken down his particular theater strategy into 'ends' and 'ways'. The objectives or ends are to Promote Stability and Thwart Aggression. The concepts or ways he plans to achieve his objectives are to Engage in Peacetime, Respond to Crisis, and Fight to Win.¹¹ The concept of fighting to win is an obvious one, but the two former objectives - peacetime engagement and crisis response - merit further focus in this discussion of the relevance of peace operations to the U.S. military.

Peacetime engagement includes a variety of responsibilities such as strengthening political and military organizations like NATO, security assistance, arms control, and maintaining forward presence. It is specifically geared toward promoting regional stability. As such, forward presence is increasingly directed toward developing nations, especially when it involves peace operations.¹² Crisis response involves humanitarian operations, Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO), and peace operations. The

¹⁰ CINC's Posture Statement, U.S. European Command Home Page (http://199.56.154.3/library/posture/CINC_posture_06.html), 16 DEC 96.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ohlinger, Brian J., "Peacetime Engagement: A Search for Relevance?", U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, October 1992, page 3.

basic premise of crisis response is to provide the means to rectify a dangerous or unsatisfactory condition or to preclude the development of one in which hard-core military action is the required course of action. Developing and maintaining the ability to respond to crises is the driving force behind the high operating tempo found in any unified command. Such an ability mutually supports the other objectives of promoting stability and thwarting aggression. In basic terms, for a CINC such as EUCOM, Engage in Peacetime is a full-time job designed to limit the requirement for the Respond to Crisis phase which is designed to prevent the need to Fight to Win.

To fulfill his or her mission, a CINC must promote regional stability while at the same time maintain forces capable of conducting the *full spectrum* of military operations. In general, the American military has drawn its strength from its sheer size and the coordinated force of large units - the combination of infantry, armor, artillery, and air support, for instance. It follows that the United States has always trained and equipped its forces for this type of approach, one designed purely for succeeding in the primary military mission of high-intensity armed conflict. On the other hand, humanitarian assistance, relief operations, and other aspects of peace operations have been tertiary missions accomplished on an ad hoc basis. Because of the increased likelihood of peace operation involvement, the U.S. military's approach to these lower intensity missions must become more formalized.

*"Visible use of military forces in peacetime serves the purposes of nation building, influence building, deterrence, and promoting stability, which may eliminate the need for lethal military response and complement its effectiveness should deterrence fail."*¹³

Accepting The Challenge...and at what cost?

From an operational standpoint, the growing emphasis on peace operations or MOOTW represents a challenge to force readiness and military doctrine and training. The major emphasis of military training has been to put bombs/missiles/bullets on target and rightfully so. The basis of peace operations, however, is the prevention of the need to apply deadly military force by utilizing the unique capabilities of the military, which effectively promote peace and stability. In striving to meet mission requirements the CINC must develop an organization which can respond to any and all circumstances necessary to protect U.S. interests in his or her AOR. To that end, cultivating command and staff organizations proficient in the planning and logistical challenges of peace operations and developing the forces which are capable of successfully executing these missions will prove to be critical to the continued success of U.S. unified commands.

There are two essential questions which need to be addressed when analyzing the operational impact of deploying (and training) troops for extended peace operations. First, does participation in peacekeeping, conflict management, or related humanitarian assistance missions "dull the sword" of the American fighting forces? Second, do peace operations represent an inappropriate mission for the U.S. military? Direct participation in peace operations does provide the military and the United States, in general, beneficial results. Lives are saved, escalation is prevented, peace is preserved (or reinstated),

¹³ Ohlinger, page 4.

national security/interests are protected, and the relevance of the U.S. military is enhanced. The question which arises though is: "At what cost?"

Effects on the "Sword"

On an individual unit basis, participation in an extended peace operation where traditional combat skills are not utilized clearly can have adverse effects on a unit's war-fighting ability. The established train-and-deploy regimen designed to prepare forces for high intensity conflict is disrupted. In particular, the battle readiness of heavy combat arms such as artillery and armor units may suffer when their equipment is not utilized or trained with during a drawn-out peace mission. There are proactive ways of dealing with this issue, however. For example, in Bosnia for Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR, the Army's First Armored Division was deployed with approximately 10,000 combat soldiers for the one year mission of Task Force Eagle which comprised the American contingent of the NATO Peace Implementation Force (IFOR). The primary mission of the task force was to keep the peace by patrolling the corridors designed to separate the warring factions. In general, tanks were left in stationary positions at checkpoints and the soldiers trained to operate them became checkpoint monitors. To meet minimal training requirements and counter the atrophy of combat skills, efforts were made to provide tank and artillery training at a temporary gunnery range in Hungary for the units deployed to JOINT ENDEAVOR during the initial one year mission. The facilities and training were not "first rate" but rotating units out of Bosnia into nearby Hungary for short periods of time enabled those units to maintain their proficiency and levels of readiness.

Because peace operations do not normally rely on or allow for the coordinated use of ground units, the ability of such units to attain and maintain optimal interoperability will undoubtedly suffer.¹⁴ Conversely, other critical skills are developed in a peace operation where not a single weapon is fired. Instead of following planned training schedules which include intermittent two week periods in the field followed by reconstitution periods at home bases, units are typically required to deploy on a contingency basis for indefinite time periods. This provides them several valuable tools as future or potential war fighters. Staff planning and sustainment skills are put to the test. Units “learn by doing” with respect to rapid deployment. They gain a familiarization with their equipment and improve valuable maintenance skills due to 24-hour reliance on the equipment and vehicles - a critical skill required in war time. Force protection - an increasingly important aspect of everything the U.S. military does - receives great emphasis. Most importantly, U.S. forces experience first hand the pace and demands of a real mission.

Looking Abroad

The issue of peace operations and its impact on the military is not unique to the United States. In fact it is useful to look at the different approaches the British and Russians have taken with respect to preparing their armed forces for peace missions. The British do not advocate the requirement for separate, specialized peacekeeping units. Under their approach, combat units fresh from NATO divisions in Germany are inserted into

¹⁴ Mike O'Connor, “Does Keeping the Peace Spoil G.I.’s for War?” The New York Times, 13 December 1996.

Northern Ireland where they receive training and serve as “urban foot soldiers”. These peace assignments typically last five to six months. Their belief in this system is focused on the premise that short periods of new and challenging duty have a positive effect on a unit, especially at the junior leadership level.¹⁵ On the other hand, members of the Russian federation have decided that the contradictory environment presented in peace operations is best served through specialization. They have designated and trained specific units exclusively for handling peacekeeping missions.¹⁶

Thus far, the United States has approached the assignment and training of units for peace missions more in line with the British model. It remains an ad hoc arrangement.

Doctrine acknowledges, however, the need for both unique predeployment and post-peacekeeping training for any unit assigned to a peace operation.¹⁷ Without question, success in peacekeeping operations depends directly upon small-unit tactical competence and the bedrock mastery of basic military skills.¹⁸ But the most challenging aspect in preparing U.S. forces for peace operations is the mental aspect. General George Patton once said: “War is very simple, direct and ruthless. It takes a simple, direct and ruthless man to wage war.”¹⁹ In contrast, waging and succeeding in peace operations demands a different and far more complex mindset, especially at the level of the troops on patrol.

This is where the truly tough decisions will be made - decisions which are not only time-

¹⁵ Lewis, page 48

¹⁶ Conference Report, page 21

¹⁷ Joint Pub 3-07.3, *Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Peacekeeping Operations*, 29 April 1994, pages VI-1 through 7.

¹⁸ Kenneth Allard, *Somalia Operations: Lessons Learned* (Washington: National Defense University Press 1995), page 39.

¹⁹ James H. Baker, “Peace Missions Dull the Army’s Combat Edge,” *Army Times*, 6 December 1993.

critical but have the potential for preserving peace or risking an entire mission's legitimacy. Impartiality (not ruthlessness) and the mastery of a concept contrary to most military training must be achieved: the use of *minimum* force rather than maximum force when dealing with threats.²⁰ The bottom line is that individual soldiers in politically charged peacekeeping scenarios are very likely to carry considerable responsibility for the success or failure of such missions.

Wrong Mission?

In general, the commitment of U.S. forces to a peace operation does detract from the training and readiness of the military with respect to the high intensity combat skills necessary in an MRC such as the Gulf War. Participation represents a drain on resources, and limits speed and flexibility of response elsewhere. Despite these realities, peace operations remain an extremely important mission, albeit secondary, for U.S. forces. As such, the United States can not afford to discount the mission of peace operations. In concert with the current strategic policy of engagement and forward presence, it continues to be in the nation's best interests to remain involved and vigilant.

While many of the peace operations the United States can expect to become involved in will be reactive in nature, active participation in and specific training for peace operations represents a *proactive* approach rather than a reactive one. Peace operations focus on resolving conflict, promoting peace, supporting civil authorities in response to domestic crises, and deterring war. In reality, all the non-training peacetime uses of military forces

²⁰ Charles A. Dallachie, Maj, "Meeting the Challenges of Peace," Marine Corps Gazette, November 1995, page 46.

(i.e., security assistance, military/nation assistance, disaster relief, search and rescue, humanitarian assistance, nuclear weapons recovery, civil affairs, noncombatant evacuation operations) are designed to either promote stability or lessen the chance for situations to escalate into actual armed conflict. Fighting and winning wars will always be the ultimate mission of the U.S. military but is by no means the only one.

In addition to their humanitarian and stabilizing aspects, peace operations offer the opportunity for liaison with the other military forces (U.S and foreign), local armed factions, international civilian aid agencies, and non-combatant civilians. The continued significance of coalitions in all future military operations substantiates the importance of refining these needed coordination skills. It is important for U.S. forces to gain experience operating in differing environments especially in light of the uncertainty and unrest characteristic of the Third World. Participation in peace operations provides an opportunity to enhance military training, while at the same time performing actions which should contribute to the overall stability of nations in particular and regions in general. Care must be taken to accept and develop peace operations as a form of proactive deterrence.

Conclusion

Peace operations represent a useful, proactive tool in the prevention and resolution of regional and civil conflicts before they pose direct threats to the national security of the United States and its allies. Participation catalyzes innovation in areas such as joint planning, logistics support and delivery, psychological operations, and information

warfare. It also improves the military's ability to successfully coordinate with UN agencies, non-governmental organizations, the media, and U.S. allies. American forces are provided real world training for many of the peripheral, yet critical, aspects of warfare. In operations like JOINT ENDEAVOR in Bosnia and PROVIDE RELIEF/RESTORE HOPE in Somalia, every critical support capability was exercised in the deployment and sustainment phases. Joint and combined planning skills are utilized and strengthened. Short of war, there is no better training ground for U.S. troops.

The reality of today's shifting threat environment emphasizes the strategic and operational responsibilities of the Unified Commands. To meet current and future national security demands, CINCs must develop and effectively operate military organizations capable of handling contingencies of both high and low intensity. The U.S. military is without peer with respect to military might, however, the ambiguity of peace operations may erode that superior strength. Adjustments to traditional training regimens, military doctrine, and force capabilities must be made to meet these varied challenges. At the same time, U.S. forces must remain capable of achieving success in the most dangerous of missions by being prepared to win the high intensity conflicts. The challenge that faces today's combat forces is to maintain mastery of conventional combat skills and its credibility as a fighting force while developing new skills that support stability operations.

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