NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY

NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE

THE U.S. MILITARY'S ROLE IN PEACE OPERATIONS:

TIME TO WASH THE WINDOWS

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Report Documentation Page

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

1. REPORT DATE	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED
1998		**00-00-1998 to 00-00-1998**

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
The U.S. Military's Role in Peace Operations: Time to Wash the Windows	5b. GRANT NUMBER
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER
6. AUTHOR(S)	5d. PROJECT NUMBER
	5e. TASK NUMBER
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) **National War College,300 5th Avenue,Fort Lesley J. McNair,Washington,DC,20319-6000**	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Approved for public release; distribution unlimited

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT
see report

15. SUBJECT TERMS

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT **unclassified**	b. ABSTRACT **unclassified**	c. THIS PAGE **unclassified**		**17**	

Properly constituted, peace operations can be one useful tool to advance American national interests and pursue our national security objectives. The U S cannot be the world's policeman Nor can we ignore the increase in armed ethnic conflicts, civil wars and the collapse of governmental authority in some states - crises that individually and cumulatively may affect U.S interests [1]

President Clinton's remarks, quoted in Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 25, set the stage for United States (U S) involvement in peace operations, or operations other than war (OOTW), which encompass a spectrum of activities from peacekeeping and peace enforcement to disaster relief and humanitarian assistance Subsequent iterations of the National Security Strategy (NSS) and National Military Strategy (NMS) confirm U S participation in peace operations as valid components of the national security and military strategies. Joint and Service doctrinal guidance have emerged detailing military considerations for involvement in OOTW Most recently, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) issued a May 1997 *Concept for Future Joint Operations* which identifies U S military participation in humanitarian assistance and conflict prevention and resolution as a military-specific trend [2] Yet, despite this foundation for military involvement, both civilian and military leaders tentatively embrace these "nontraditional" peace operations, which they reason may detract from our warfighting capability

After the U S. involvement in Rwanda in July 1994, the CJCS General Shalikashvili stated, "My fear is we're becoming mesmerized by operations other than war and we'll take our mind off what we're all about, to fight and win our nation's wars "[3] Secretary Perry echoed those concerns when he stated, "We field an army, not a salvation army "[4] A senior military officer addressing the National War College Class of 1998 commented disparagingly on OOTW, saying, "We don't do windows " A survey of recent national security and military strategy literature confirms this lingering doubt about U S military involvement in peace operations

This paper examines key issues in the debate regarding U.S military involvement in peace operations and suggests it is time to stop debating the issue and focus our energies on accepting a strategy that reconciles and fully integrates peace operations within available means The paper analyzes three arguments suggesting that peace operations are a nontraditional role, that they contribute to readiness degradation through high operations tempo (OPSTEMPO) and by limiting available combat training, and that they undermine available funding The paper concludes with an analysis of the military strategy available to encompass peace operations

Traditional Versus Nontraditional Roles

One of the first arguments critics proffer regarding participation in peace operations is that these are new, "nontraditional" roles for the military These emerging gray areas constitute distractions that conflict with the primary, "traditional" role of combat Indeed, Joint Pub 1, *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States*, identifies the fundamental purpose of the U S Armed Forces as defense of our nation and its interests through deterrence and, if deterrence fails, to win our nation's wars [5] However, this should not imply that combat is the only military role for which these forces exist. The U S Air Force alone conducted over 600 operations between 1947 and 1992 and only 10 involved combat operations against major armed forces The remaining operations ranged the entire spectrum from disaster relief and non-combatant evacuations to nation assistance, raids, strikes and show of force [6] Additionally, nowhere within the Joint Publication series is there a definition of "traditional" or "nontraditional" military roles or missions, combat or otherwise

In fact, the U S military has a heritage of performing noncombat roles Samuel Huntington states, "The fact is that there are almost no conceivable roles in this new phase of our

history that the Armed Forces have not performed in the past."[7] Joint Pub 1 confirms the U S history of domestic and foreign service in MOOTW, which serves to protect our national interests Throughout U S. history the Army helped build the U S economic infrastructure by constructing roads, conducting coastal surveys, developing waterways and administering civil government in the South after Reconstruction When necessary, the Army intervened in labor disputes and domestic unrest Abroad, U S forces supported civic, democratic, and health projects in Panama, Cuba, Haiti, and Nicaragua [8] Huntington maintains "It is hard to think of a nonmilitary role without precedent for such roles are as American as apple pie."[9]

Readiness

The growing momentum in peace operations has given rise to a second area of debate - the readiness of U S. forces to perform their primary mission But Louis Finch, Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Readiness, admits that measuring a unit's combat readiness is as much art as science "This is amazingly complex." [10] The Services generally evaluate readiness in terms of available personnel, training, and equipment Critics and military analysts contend that the barrage of peace operations dilutes these components and degrades readiness overall Representative Floyd Spence, chairman of the House National Security Committee, contends that " an increase in the number of peacekeeping and humanitarian operations are stretching the U S military forces to the breaking point "[11]

OPSTEMPO. One measurement of that breaking point is a high OPSTEMPO which ultimately translates into overtaxing personnel and equipment through extended unit deployments, less time for equipment maintenance and repair, time away from families, eroded morale and lower retention rates Senior military leaders do worry about the excessive workload

pace, the amounts of time people are deployed, and the documented cases of stressed units A Government Accounting Office (GAO) report noted that a Marine unit was deployed to Somalia for six months and upon return to home station, was redeployed to Haiti within three weeks The report also related instances where Air Force squadrons have been continuously deployed supporting peace operations since 1993 [12]

However, as Mr. Finch states, "If you look across the force to determine where is the stress of conducting these operations other than war, largely it is not universal across the force Most of the time it is in very specific units such as military police, airlift and reconnaissance units "[13] Additionally, various methods do exist and can be employed to reduce OPSTEMPO impact A common tactic for operation planning is to tailor the force mix to the specific contingency, and at least two avenues exist for force tailoring

One avenue is to increase the use of reserve component (RC) units through volunteers, selected call up, and involuntary mobilization. Many RC units have specific capabilities such as civil affairs, military police, airlift and engineering skills that many peace operations require These units can either be used in the operation directly or as "backfill" for the active component (AC) units A second approach is to redefine the available "force." The Department of Defense doesn't have a monopoly on capabilities and resources. A host of available resources can be found by considering private contractors, international and coalition assets, non-governmental agency assets and private volunteer organization capabilities Innovative integration of these "force" resources can impede the deleterious effects of OPSTEMPO on readiness

Training. Another realm in the readiness debate concerns the effects of peace operations on training Training arguments will vary depending upon the exact type of operation and units involved. For every anecdote or report that suggests that peace operations degrade combat skills,

another anecdote or account can be found which suggests the opposite effect Major General David Grange, Army Director for Operations, Readiness and Mobilization, states that "what's good for one unit's readiness often hurts another's.. it depends on where you sit "[14] An October 1995 GAO report on military training concluded that peace operations result in "mixed" training effects Lost opportunities to exercise combat skills and the amount of time required to restore those skills concern the Army Yet, the report cites that peace operations can be beneficial to some units These missions enhance the training and skills for service support units such as medical or engineering units and approximate similar tasks that some aviation, naval, ground support, and special operations forces would perform in a combat operation [15]

While many of the tasks performed in peace operations are similar to ones conducted in combat or normal military functions, analysts contend that some tasks may be very different, and will require new or additional training, and some tasks will not be exercised at all But, training is not a zero sum endeavor Many skills learned from combat training translate into the peace operations environment Skills required in peace operations that have no combat counterpart can be incorporated into unit training The Services need to evaluate future scenario requirements and guidance depicted in the NSS, NMS, the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan, treaties and regional policy documents and stratify requisite peace operation mission tasks against combat mission requirements Subsequent mission essential task lists (METLs) need to identify and incorporate both noncombative and combative tasks to determine the direction of training development Combat tasks, which aren't part of a particular peace operations environment, can still be exercised selectively using innovative methods The 1st Armored Division in Bosnia compensates for the lack of gunnery training by rotating its tank and artillery units to live-fire ranges in Hungary and has developed live-fire ranges in Bosnia [16]

Ready For What? A final issue to explore within the readiness debate is to ask the question, "Readiness for what?" As Carl Von Clausewitz stated, "The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgement that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish the kind of war on which they are embarking neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature This is the first of all strategic questions and the most comprehensive "[17] Also, Sun Tzu advised that " those unable to understand the dangers inherent in employing troops are equally unable to understand the advantageous ways of doing so,"[18] and " those skilled in war subdue the enemy's army without battle "[19] Taking heed of their advice, perhaps it's time to re-examine and redefine our concept of the nature of war and our employment of forces A myriad of official government documents and military analysts predict that the future security environment will be one in which the U S faces no near-term strategic peer competitor, but the U S will face complex, more diffuse, and multi-dimensional threats As the strategic calculus evolves, future scenarios will be replete with old and new dangers including weapons of mass destruction, regional and ethnic instability, transnational challenges, information warfare, and state and non-state actors resorting to asymmetric measures A pure force on force equation cannot readily address many of these threats, yet military resources can offer unique capabilities to assist in prevention or resolution of these threats

Thus, the nature of future wars will be an integration of both conventional and nonconventional aspects and not an either/or assessment As one analyst postulates, "If the end of past wars was to win by fighting better than one's adversary (violence marked by a hardware-driven physical contest to destroy the enemy's means), the end of future wars may be *not* to lose by *not* fighting an adversary (peaceful competition characterized by a software-driven, moral and cerebral contest to change perceptions) "[20] Given this paradigm, there are a diverse range of

ways (strategies) in which the military instrument (means) can be employed to achieve U.S national interests (ends) We ignore the unconventional or "nontraditional" aspects of war at our peril We must be ready to engage in peace operations, at all levels throughout the spectrum of conflict, as well as combat encounters

Funding

Closely intertwined with the readiness debate is the third, and most serious, argument over funding peace operations Critics and proponents both agree that the current funding process can have a deleterious impact on readiness The funding problem becomes most serious when peace operations are unanticipated or when multiple deployments to crisis situations arise Since the Department of Defense cannot budget for unplanned contingencies in advance, the two financing options available are to request supplemental appropriations from Congress or divert funds from other accounts to offset contingency costs

However, supplemental appropriations may not be immediately forthcoming or provide full reimbursement of expenses Additionally, Congressional laws prohibit funds appropriated for one purpose, such as procurement or research and development, to be used for another account The remaining available option is to divert funds from Operations and Maintenance accounts, which are used to finance readiness-related activities such as training, maintenance, and supplies As a result of diverted funds, training opportunities such as gunnery practice or exercises may be curtailed or eliminated, parts inventories may be reduced, supplies may be unavailable, and equipment repairs may be delayed Therefore, supporting peace operations can seriously impair readiness of nondeployed units as the consequences of funding cuts emerge, especially when the effects of curtailed maintenance and cancelled training become cumulative [21]

A number of proposals have been advanced to correct the deficiencies in the funding mechanisms and forestall potential readiness impacts. Unfortunately, avenues to resolve the funding debate remain contentious issues between the Executive and Legislative Branches in their continuing struggles over the control and direction of foreign policy and the proper application of checks and balances However, one consideration must remain paramount Once the decision is made to engage in peace operations, the Executive Branch and Congress must exhibit the fortitude to pay the costs.

Strategic Imperative

Given the historical legacy of conducting peace operations, the current prevalence in participating in these missions, and a threat perspective which entails both conventional and nonconventional aspects of war, what strategy does the U S military pursue with regard to peace operations? We can't wish these missions away, nor should we. Used properly, the capabilities of U S forces can be leveraged within peace operations to prevent, contain, and resolve conflicts and promote peace

The current NMS, *Shape, Respond, Prepare Now: A Military Strategy for a New Era*, provides an existing template to leverage those capabilities Through selective and innovative use of existing assets, peace operations contribute directly to the accomplishment of national security and NMS objectives by supporting deterrence, forward presence and crisis response On-going, everyday activities conducted in a peaceful environment contribute to shaping elements of the strategy by supporting deterrence and forward presence Military-to-military contacts, international exercises, port visits, foreign military training, and foreign community support are deterrent and forward presence examples that demonstrate U S resolve to use force,

provide a climate of peaceful cooperation to enhance regional stability, and promote U S peacetime influence Unique capabilities, such as strategic global mobility and the extensive U S. military infrastructures, allow peace operations to assist in crisis response with an appropriate array of options and contribute to the resolution of regional instability

To enhance a robust strategy for peace operations, the NMS template must be amplified by three additional mechanisms First, a triage mechanism needs to identify situations, which may be moderated by peace operations. Second, a coalition mechanism needs to enhance the range of assets available to participate in the peace operations and form an equitable burden sharing system. Third, the U S. must ensure an adequate financing mechanism exists to prevent degradation of U S. readiness assets

Triage. Although military force alone cannot solve the root causes of instability or ethnic strife, military capabilities have a preventive value and can engender conditions necessary for diplomatic and economic efforts to prevail. In identifying situations where peace operations may be appropriate interventions, a triage mechanism will help balance the projected benefits against the costs PDD 25, the Clinton Administration's Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations, provides this triage function The PDD outlines three tiers of progressively rigorous review criteria to consider for selective and effective peace operations support, regardless of the mission The criteria include considerations if U S troops are involved and if there is a possibility of combat These criteria focus on U S national interests, the particular threat, objectives to be achieved, available forces, financing and consequences of inaction [22] Although the criteria are oriented toward multilateral operations, they are applicable to decisions regarding unilateral foreign and domestic peace operations.

To strengthen the triage function, the theater commander-in-chief (CINC) and his staff must be fully engaged in the interagency review process With hands-on experience and knowledge of the theater, the CINC and his staff can provide a unique perspective on regional allies, threats, and cultural and environmental characteristics and can recommend the proper mix of capabilities for the operation

Coalition. A coalition mechanism should be intertwined with the triage function A decision to engage in a peace operation, either multilaterally or unilaterally, requires a coalition mechanism to ensure a coordinated and integrated political/military strategy PDD 56, The Clinton Administration's Policy on Managing Complex Contingency Operations, provides the starting foundation for a coalition mechanism The PDD requires establishment of an interagency review process and development of a political-military implementation plan to integrate and synchronize efforts in a complex peace operation [23] This coalition function must be broad enough to engage relationships between countries and include global and regional international organizations, Total Force components, inter-agency governmental and civil organizations, commercial contracting venues, non-governmental organizations, community agencies and private volunteer organizations. Close coordination and proper integration among coalition components provides the foundation to tailor the operation appropriately, ensuring the proper mix of efficient and cost-effective capabilities, and provides the basis for equitable burden sharing among the participants

Multilaterally, the support and assistance of allies and international organizations offers military advantages, resource relief, and political legitimacy to operations In both multilateral and unilateral operations, U S military forces do not represent the only resources available Use

of nonmilitary assets allows the military to retain a readiness balance and ensures that forces are available for large-scale conventional operations and protection of vital national interests

Funding. A final element of the strategy is to determine funding sources, especially for unplanned contingency operations Although efforts can be made to level the costs among coalition components, defense appropriations for the U S commitment must be thoroughly reviewed As previously mentioned, once a decision is made to engage in peace operations, the Executive and Legislative Branches must provide alternative funding sources to preclude damaging current readiness accounts Commitments should not be made without providing the resources necessary to achieve them Without an alternative funding mechanism, Congress must act timely on supplemental appropriations for unplanned contingency operations

Conclusion

At every juncture in history, U S leadership has faced a strategic landscape filled with different challenges Throughout the challenges of European intervention, civil war, world wars, and the Cold War, the U S has juggled national interests, internal and external threats, and the role of the military Against this array of demands, the U S leadership has allocated the military resources across the spectrum of conflict to secure a variety of long-term security interests Whether faced with domestic strife, natural disasters, foreign interventions to stem ethnic conflict, or humanitarian assistance situations, the U S military has presented a legacy of supporting "nontraditional" peace operations and has gone beyond the stated reason for their existence to fight and win the nation's wars Despite concerns about readiness degradation, OPSTEMPO, training and funding, there is no reason to expect this evolution of "nontraditional" missions to abate

While each debate against performing peace operations has valid elements that should be examined, selective and innovative use of existing resources can mitigate these concerns Mechanisms exist to leverage these capabilities into a strategy that will achieve national security and military objectives The current NMS incorporates many aspects of peace operations as daily, normal business routines that allow U.S military influence to help shape regional imperatives. Coupled with triage, coalition, and funding mechanisms, a properly integrated strategy can be devised to balance attainment of national interests with available military means It is time to quit talking disparagingly about peace operations and acknowledge these missions as a fact of life It is time to wash the windows

NOTES

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