Peace(keeping) in Our Time: The UN as a Professional Military Manager

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How can you get very far,
If you don't know Who You Are?
How can you do what you ought,
If you don't know What You've Got?
And if you don't know Which To Do,
Of all the things in front of you,
Then what you'll have when you are through
Is just a mess without a clue
Of all the best that can come true
If you know What and Which and Who.

-- From *The Tao of Pooh*[1]

It is ironic for the United Nations that, as a prelude to the celebrations of its 50th anniversary, the Secretary-General's most notable policy statement concerning the maintenance of international peace and security had themes of retreat and lowered expectations. In January 1995, the Secretary-General trimmed the sails of his ambitious 1992 Agenda for Peace, stating that neither the UN Secretariat nor the Security Council was the proper organization for managing large, complex, and ambitious military operations such as those in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia. The New York Times noted that "the United Nations erred badly in straying from traditional peacekeeping into peace enforcement."[2] The Secretary-General himself wrote that the UN did not have "capacity to deploy, direct, [or] command and control [peace enforcement] operations . . . [and] it would be folly to attempt to do so at the present time when the organization is resource-starved and hard pressed to handle the less demanding peacemaking and peacekeeping responsibilities entrusted to it."[3] This was an explicit recognition of the failure of the UN's complex military operations and ambitious mandates of the peacekeeping missions in the former Yugoslavia and Somalia over the previous three years.

Between 1989 and 1991, the end of the Cold War and the unprecedented international cooperation shown in the Gulf War were thought by many to foreshadow a new era of collective security, one in which the UN could be actively involved as a military manager. During the "explosion of peacekeeping" that followed these events, the military requirements of operations sponsored or sanctioned by the UN increased significantly, both quantitatively and qualitatively. This simultaneous increase in the number of operations, the size of the forces involved, and the complexity of their military tasks prompted a plethora of studies and workshops aimed at improving the professional military management capabilities of the United Nations.[4] The recommendations of most reports centered on giving the UN the resources and mechanisms it would need to manage these large and ambitious military operations, while at the same time preserving the integrity and sovereignty of member states.

The underlying premise of these efforts was that the Cold War impasse that had gripped the United Nations for 45 years had also stymied the development of an inherent capacity in the organization for the effective management of military operations. In a new era of cooperation this capacity could now be nourished and brought to fruition as the UN founders undoubtedly intended. However, the failures of a reinforced UN in an era of unanimous Security Council approval contradict that interpretation. A far more fundamental question has been prompted by the very nature of the complex and dangerous military operations undertaken in the new generation of post-Cold War peacekeeping missions. Can the UN ever wield the attendant political legitimacy and authority that would enable it to manage the

military requirements of these missions? The short answer is no--not without a profound change in the UN and the international system. The UN system is inherently dysfunctional in regard to mobilizing and controlling complex military operations in dangerous environments. The politico-military challenges of these operations beg a management capability that is antithetical to the concept of the United Nations as an international organization based on the voluntary membership of nation-states.[5]

Even if one were to describe the present as an unprecedented era of collective security, one must also recognize that the complex set of relationships that distinguish professional military operations are all contained within the nation-state.[6] These are political, moral, functional, and legal relationships that are characterized by legitimacy, authority, and accountability. The relationships greatly influence decisions about force structure, command and control, and military objectives. These relationships, as they apply to mobilizing military forces, commanding their activities with authority, and providing competent strategic direction and resources are not characteristic of the UN. Without them, the UN can never be a professional manager of significant military operations.

This article presents the thesis that the United Nations does not have an inherent capacity for such professional military management, and that such capabilities were not "present but dormant" throughout the Cold War. In fact, the UN is inherently anti-professional in the military sense; at best, it is suited for managing only quasi-military and very limited operations such as observation missions and small, traditional peacekeeping missions. The recent steps taken to professionalize UN military operations have failed because the military capability of the UN cannot be separated from its political nature, from political characteristics that purposely limit and constrain its forays into the functional management of military force. To paraphrase Clausewitz, UN military operations have their own grammar (no matter how unintelligible), but their logic is the logic of the UN's political character.

Professional Military Management

Given the nature of the military tasks at hand, there is no doubt that the complex and ambitious military operations recently undertaken by the UN require professional military management. Whatever definition of professional is used,[7] it can be generally agreed that one expects professional activities of any sort to be predicated on efficiency, expertise, dedicated training, rehearsed procedures, legitimacy, singular authority in the field, and some tangible measure of accountability. This article will briefly explore those concepts in the management of UN military operations, examining both structure (What You've Got) and method (Which to Do). It will also couple those conclusions with an exploration of the nature of the UN itself (Who You Are), inquiring into the degree to which political characteristics constrain military methods or military methods redefine political characteristics.

These observations show that over the years the UN cultivated a limited approach to military operations which, Cold War or no, distinctively suited its institutional characteristics and political limitations. The UN and its traditional military operations (observation missions and traditional peacekeeping) did not meet by accident--they were in many ways meant for each other. The innocuous nature of these techniques suited the institution, and the restricted powers of the institution suited the conduct of these limited techniques of conflict resolution. Through ad hoc and improvised management procedures, the UN developed a military doctrine of limited utility that was based on the consent of belligerents, the passive use of military force, and the strict impartiality of UN forces and their operations.

Several operational characteristics emerged as constants during the evolution of observation and traditional peacekeeping missions. For instance, the force structure of these missions would always be influenced far more by political sensitivities than by purely military requirements (the UN was politically correct before its time). In addition, the command and control of these UN military operations would always be based on a loose definition of command that recognized the prerogatives of the nation-state in regard to its troops in UN service. Finally, the operations themselves would always (Congo operation excepted) rely for success on the consent and cooperation of the belligerent parties, which, if not forthcoming, could not be obtained by coercion or through force of arms.

Naturally, such operational characteristics made these ad hoc and improvised military operations fairly inefficient from a political-military point of view. However, given low expectations about results, no pressures of time and mission completion (two operations from the 1940s are still ongoing), the innocuous nature of the simple military operations themselves, and the overwhelming political character of these missions, military efficiency was not a prime

determinant of mission success. The military stakes were low, and traditional UN operations could stumble through their simple missions, making up their modus operandi as they went along, being relatively certain that a second or third-rate military effort would not preclude attaining the political objective. That was, after all, the primary responsibility of the belligerents.

Given the significantly more difficult challenges of the new generation of peacekeeping undertaken after the Cold War, this limited and somewhat amateurish approach to military operations would no longer suffice. The Secretary-General's 1992 call in *An Agenda for Peace* sounded the need for a more efficient and robust military approach to UN military operations. For that, the UN would need more reliable and professional capabilities to form, employ, and direct its more vigorous military operations. However, experience from 1993 to 1996 reveals that the operational characteristics that were consistently present in traditional UN military operations are also constants in the new generation of robust peacekeeping and peace enforcement. Steps taken to reinforce the UN structure and variants of operational methods have not made much difference in the conduct or outcomes of those missions. The result is that these traditional UN "qualities" have been aggravated, exposed, and exacerbated by the far more significant military challenges of recent UN operations--much to the overall detriment of the missions themselves.

Who You Are

Despite the many manifestations of a rapidly fragmenting world, the imminent death of the nation-state has been greatly exaggerated. Today, the nation-state remains the highest legitimate entity that can order the sacrifice of its resources and its citizens in its causes. The nation-state also remains the political entity most capable of efficiently mobilizing, employing, and directing military resources for a variety of duties. All the recognized lines of authority and accountability in strategic matters run within nation-states. No such lines of legal and political authority exist between the citizens of any nation-state and international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, or any other sort of private, business, or corporate entity.

Nation-states do, on occasion, "lend" their military resources to international alliances or international organizations. However, while in military terms there may be a temporary transfer of operational control, there is never legally a transfer of command. Command is an inviolate, indivisible, and nontransferable authority that stems from founding documents or national legislation and is reinforced by the laws of nation-states.[8] This relationship of authority, legitimacy, and accountability is critical for many reasons, not the least because it provides a political and functional backbone for contentious or dangerous operations. Conversely, the operational control relationship exercised by international organizations or multinational alliances is a temporary and voluntary association subject to breaking under pressure. Because of this the UN has found that when the going gets tough for its military forces, the tough want to go in many different directions.

A professional military manager must "command" the resources at his or her disposal. After all, it is hardly professional to have to beg, borrow, and bargain for resources. However, the UN was never intended to "command" any resources--it was always an organization predicated on volunteerism and collectivism, which is at once its moral strength and its functional weakness. The UN was never intended to inherit or replace the complex set of relationships between a people and their state that allow for the mobilization and employment of military forces in a hazardous cause. This has always been the political nature of the UN and one that cannot be avoided. The organization is cooperative by nature, a political characteristic that permeates all levels of UN military operations. It extends beyond the Security Council right down to checkpoints in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The political character of a 185-member multinational organization restricts the UN's military capabilities whether they are engaged in the conduct of a small observation mission or a peace enforcement operation involving 40,000 troops. The constraints exist in both structure and method. More important, it will be seen that attempts to improve that structure and method have not managed to outrun the fundamental political nature of the organization and its attendant constraints. This political nature is rooted in the diplomatic, and not parliamentary, character of the United Nations.[9] Sir Brian Urquhart, former Under Secretary-General, was present at the UN's inception. As he wrote,

> The Charter had been based on the concept of an extension of the wartime alliance into peacetime. The "United" in United Nations came from the Atlantic Charter of 1941 and referred to nations united in war,

not in peace. The permanent members of the Security Council with the power of veto were the leaders of the victorious wartime alliance, and the Charter assumed, with a stunning lack of political realism, that they would stay united in supervising, and if necessary, enforcing, world peace.[10]

It remains to examine, through structure and method, the UN's attempts to fulfill this goal before returning to the question of whether there is a fundamental flaw in the very concept of the UN that prohibits it from successfully and professionally managing military forces.

What You've Got

In the political patois of most analysts and observers, UN peacekeeping operations are most often referred to as "Chapter VI operations" and peace-enforcement operations as "Chapter VII operations." While this may be handy and not entirely inaccurate, it is misleading in that it may give the impression that these various types of military operations are actually addressed in the UN Charter. They are not. It is supremely ironic that the only type of military operations for which the UN Charter provides competent guidance are those that have never been undertaken, and which do not stand much chance of happening in the future.

Chapter VI of the UN Charter is entitled "The Pacific Settlement of Disputes." The provisions of this chapter make no reference at all to any sort of military operations, but many analysts insist that observation and traditional peacekeeping missions fall under Chapter VI because of broad clauses in Articles 33-38 that refer to action taken through "other peaceful means."[11] International lawyers can argue this point ad nauseam, but from a functional point of view the connection is tenuous at best. The critical point here is that the framers of the UN Charter did not intend for Chapter VI to provide a political, strategic, or operational framework for UN military operations. The pacific measures taken in Chapter VI were traditionally considered to be in the realm of diplomacy, which is why former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold referred to the limited military operations of the UN as "Chapter VI and a Half." The UN itself writes that peacekeeping operations "fall short of the provisions of Chapter VII [but] at the same time go beyond purely diplomatic means or those described in Chapter VI."[12]

Chapter VII however, is very different in that it in fact *was* intended to provide a political, strategic, and operational framework for UN military operations. The provisions in Chapter VII imply a logical sequence of events. Article 39 allows the Security Council to identify a threat to international peace and security, while Article 40 permits it to call upon the parties to the conflict to voluntarily comply with suggested "provisional measures."[13] If that is not successful, the Security Council can impose economic, political, and diplomatic sanctions as authorized in Article 41; thereafter, if that fails, it can take military action through "air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security" as prescribed in Article 42. These forces can be provided by the member-states of the UN through agreements concluded under the provisions of Article 43.

Here is the point in the policy framework where the entire mechanism breaks down. It is generally well known that the agreements for national forces committed to UN actions have never been concluded. This lapse deprived the UN of an authoritative and rehearsed mechanism that would allow it to mobilize the military forces of member states. Other articles in Chapter VII about methods of devising strategy for and directing these forces have also lain moribund. Most significantly, the Military Staffs Committee described in Article 47 has been a nonentity, thus depriving the UN of any regular, competent, and professional military advice.[14] Former Israeli Ambassador Abba Eban recalled that negotiations over Article 43 were effectively dead by 1947, and with the demise of that article, "the United Nations had renounced the special quality that was intended to distinguish it from its predecessor."[15]

The UN was thus left to improvise its military operations, creating from scratch every facet of forming, deploying, and directing the military forces called into being by Security Council resolutions. The Secretary-General relied on a small Secretariat staff in the office of the Under-Secretary General for Special Political Affairs to develop policy and provide guidance in such matters. In 1993, a Department of Peacekeeping Operations with its own Under Secretary-General was created, and measures were taken to reinforce its handful of professionals, the staff eventually growing to almost 400.[16] Several other initiatives were also undertaken in 1993, including the creation of a round-the-clock Situation Center to track field operations, plans to use a US-donated management information system, the integration of the field operations division into the Department of Peacekeeping Operations,[17] and a general reorganization that included the

creation of planning cells and analysis sections.

Another initiative was the creation of a database to track standby forces that would be committed by member states to be on call to the UN for future operations. By maintaining such a database, UN planners could identify units early in the planning stage, quickly obtain their commitment to the mission, and greatly reduce the habitual delays caused by having to recruit from scratch through time-consuming bilateral negotiations with member states. The concept of standby forces appeared to circumvent the problems caused by the Secretariat not having any sort of reliable access to forces. It was hoped that forces committed conditionally through the standby arrangements would mature into a semipermanent mechanism for recruiting UN forces. However, because this system as well was predicated on voluntary contributions, it was subject to the same weaknesses as other methods of force recruitment. In May 1994, despite the pleading of the Secretary-General and the commitments of 19 member states to the standby roster, not a single unit from those 19 governments was offered for service in Rwanda.[18] The experience provided an object lesson in the potential futility of enacting structural mechanisms that were completely dependent on best-case scenarios and ran against the grain of organizational culture and capabilities.

All these improvements in the Secretariat were slow in coming, and in a late 1993 analysis of the mission in the former Yugoslavia, peacekeeping analyst Mats Berdal noted,

> The UN machinery for organizing and sustaining peacekeeping missions has not changed fundamentally since the revival of UN field operations in 1988. Indeed the case of the former Yugoslavia has shown that the management of field operations continues to rely heavily on improvisation, ad hoc solutions, and the cultivation of close personal relationships among members of UN departments.[19]

However, while the structure provided for in the Charter never came to pass and the Secretariat has struggled with management tools, the UN Security Council has still managed to exercise impressive politico-military creativity, sponsoring 34 UN military operations and sanctioning three multinational coalitions, in Korea, the Persian Gulf, and Somalia.[20] This activity occurred despite the fact that the veto was wielded over 200 times in the Security Council between 1945 and 1991. For most of that period, the Security Council mandated only very limited observation and traditional peacekeeping missions--missions that were innocuous enough in their military ambitions to exist beneath the threshold of Security Council tensions. However, in 1991, 1992, and 1993, only one veto (later reversed) was used in the Security Council, and this unprecedented consensus was manifested in the creation of as many UN military operations in these three years as had been authorized in the organization's first 40 years.

Through a more liberal interpretation of the Charter, a more aggressive and united Security Council, and a somewhat reinforced Secretariat, the UN has greatly added to its legal and functional structure for authorizing and managing military operations in the past few years. These changes were added to close what one report called a "fundamental institutional gap that must be filled if the use of collectively sanctioned military measures is to be effective."[21] Nevertheless, the nature of the much greater military challenges in the new missions the UN was overseeing still threatened to overwhelm the organization. The large and complex military forces of the new generation of peacekeeping were a far greater management challenge than that presented by missions involving a few hundred unarmed military observers or a few thousand lightly armed peacekeepers. In addition, peacekeepers authorized under the "new" rules were deploying to dangerous, bellicose environments in which belligerents seriously threatened the safety and missions of this version of Blue Helmets.

Recognizing the challenges of these new operations, some of which entailed limited enforcement, UN scholar Thomas Weiss recently wrote that the UN's "diplomatic and bureaucratic structures are inimical to initiating and overseeing military efforts when serious fighting rages, and where coercion rather than consent is the norm."[22] This conclusion explicitly acknowledged that despite "reinforcement," the UN still lacks a structure that could efficiently mobilize, deploy, and direct military forces in complex and hazardous operations--which brings us back to the concepts of "what you've got" and "who you are." All the additional "what" that could be added onto the UN could not change the fundamental nature of "who" the UN was as long as the UN was an "organization based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members."[23] The next section will examine exactly how those newer military challenges managed to flummox the organization.

Which To Do?

In its first 50 years, the UN sanctioned or sponsored 39 military operations, ranging in military character from a few unarmed observers to the conduct of full-scale war against an intransigent state. Based on their military characteristics, these operations can be organized into four broad categories: observation missions, traditional peacekeeping missions, second-generation peacekeeping missions,[24] and large-scale enforcement operations. Naturally, these categories merge and overlap, and more than a few UN missions could be placed in more than one. In general, however, as a starting point for developing an analytical structure, it is useful to note that of these missions, 21 could be classified as observation missions, seven as traditional peacekeeping, nine as second-generation peacekeeping, and two as large-scale enforcement operations.

Observation missions presented the smallest management challenge to the United Nations, one reason why they make up the majority of UN military operations. These missions consisted of no more than a few hundred military observers, either unarmed or equipped with sidearms only. The observers were composite groups of officers recruited from member states, chosen from "neutral" countries to make up an equitable geographic balance and to reinforce the appearance of impartiality. Each group of observers was an ad hoc composition, usually determining its organizational structure and modus operandi once deployed to the area of operations. The belligerent parties under UN observation had the power of veto over force composition and methods of operation, leaving the military observers beholden to the vagaries of the political environment to which they were dispatched. Because of this, decisions about force structure, command and control, and military objectives were far more subject to political sensitivities than to purely military requirements.

Because observation missions were completely reliant on the consent and cooperation of the belligerents for their success, there was no need for an overwhelming military presence on the part of the UN, one which it no doubt would have had some trouble mobilizing. Observation missions were a self-help technique, with the belligerents providing the great bulk of the "help." The authority of the UN observers was largely moral and political, not military. Observation missions were usually hopelessly small from a purely military standpoint--less than 50 observers cover almost 800 kilometers of Kashmiri mountain border and just over 100 observers were responsible for a demilitarized zone of 15,000 square kilometers in Yemen.[25]

Traditional peacekeeping missions also relied on the consent and cooperation of the belligerents, but were deployed with slightly more complex military tasks than just observation. Traditional peacekeeping missions consisted of no more than a few thousand lightly armed troops typically deployed in an inter-positional buffer zone to separate warring belligerents. Like observation missions, these forces were assembled not on the basis of military requirements, but on factors such as equitable geographic representation, the neutrality of contingents, the approval of the belligerents, and the passive nature of the military operations themselves. As a result, traditional peacekeeping forces were small and light, composed of a few infantry battalions from member states (usually the so-called "middle powers").[26]

Traditional peacekeeping missions also operated with a loose interpretation of command and control, recognizing the inherent political and legal legitimacy of sovereign states in "commanding" their contingents. While the UN commander in a traditional peacekeeping mission had nominal "operational control" over mission forces, this was tenuous authority at best. Such operational control did not prevent contingents from deploying on their own schedules, using different operating procedures and rules of engagement, second-guessing UN orders through national chains of command, or even quitting missions after little consultation with the UN.[27]

The primary military objective of traditional peacekeeping missions was to occupy a clearly recognized and usually linear inter-positional buffer zone. The use of a buffer zone gave the small peacekeeping contingents a mechanism that effectively stretched and multiplied their humble military capabilities. Much like observation missions, traditional peacekeepers were authorized to use force only in a passive sense: in self-defense or in defense of the mandate when under armed attack. The light military capacity of traditional peacekeepers mitigated against the latter, as evidenced by the general lack of resistance from UN troops in Lebanon during the periodic Israeli excursions across its border with Lebanon.

The passive use of force was intended to preserve the impartial standing of the peacekeeping force and reinforce the

concept of voluntary cooperation from the belligerents. Traditional peacekeepers were never intended to use active force to coerce belligerents and were of course never structured for this or mandated to do so.[28] Despite this passive approach, operations were still often dangerous. As noted above, most contemporary studies refer to UN observation missions and traditional peacekeeping as "Chapter VI Operations." However, while Chapter VI addresses the "Pacific Settlement of Disputes," these operations have not been exactly "pacific." Over 500 soldiers have died in traditional UN peacekeeping missions and 40 in observation missions.[29]

From its early experiences in managing observation and traditional peacekeeping missions, the UN developed a doctrine of sorts commonly known as "The Principles of Peacekeeping." These were described in 1993 by the Under Secretary-General for peacekeeping operations:[30]

> 1. They are United Nations operations. [They are] formed by the UN from the outset, commanded in the field by a UN-appointed general, under the ultimate authority of the UN Secretary-General, and financed by member states collectively.

> 2. They are deployed with the consent of all the parties involved and only after a political settlement had been reached between warring factions.

> 3. The forces are committed to strict impartiality. Military observers and peacekeepers can in no way take sides with or against a party to the conflict.

> 4. Troops are provided by member states on a voluntary basis. During the Cold War era, there was rarely superpower or even "big five" participation in these missions, and the majority of troops were supplied by the so-called "middle nations" to reinforce the concept of neutrality.

> 5. These units operate under rules of engagement that stress the absolute minimum use of force in accomplishing their objectives. This is usually limited to the use of force in self-defense only, but some missions have used force in "situations in which peacekeepers were being prevented by armed persons from fulfilling their mandate."

These principles reinforced the political characteristics of a cooperative multinational organization that had no forces, structure, or mandates with which to manage a coercive military operation. From a purely military standpoint, the application of the Principles of Peacekeeping made observation and traditional peacekeeping missions militarily ineffective. The missions were improvised endeavors, thrown together from the disparate military elements of many different member states. They operated under a loose system of command that allowed for competition between the UN chain and national decision structures. There were few common control measures and little interoperability because of a lack of common doctrine, training, and equipment. And most frustrating of all, the missions were so buffeted by the tides of fickle belligerent cooperation that the Blue Helmets could not create the military conditions that would guarantee their own success. However, because the military component of these missions was just one factor in a comprehensive diplomatic and political technique of conflict resolution, military inefficiency in and of itself would not destroy the entire mission. As former peacekeeper John Mackinlay recalls, "The importance of the military factor in the equation of success is considerably less than the political factor."[31]

Much of this equation changed due to the unprecedented Security Council cooperation shown after the end of the Cold War and in the aftermath of the Gulf War. The Security Council began to create missions that would operate in less supportive political environments. The old political prerequisite of a previously concluded peace settlement was no longer always taken into account. In addition, the missions would be considerably more complex than inert buffer-zone peacekeeping. More ambitious missions in unstable environments would require large, robust UN forces that were equipped for an aggressive modus operandi. In 1992 the Secretary-General forecast the environments in which these large and complex missions would operate when he redefined peacekeeping as "the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, *hitherto* with the consent of all the parties concerned."[32] This foreboding observation, that the UN was free to launch peacekeeping missions without the full consent of the belligerents, was the conceptual seed for second-generation peacekeeping operations.

Second-generation peacekeeping missions were qualitatively and quantitatively different from traditional missions,

which the UN had characterized as "holding actions." The new missions were much more comprehensive, with the UN attempting a near-simultaneous management of political, societal, economic, humanitarian, electoral, diplomatic, and military initiatives within a troubled state. In addition, it was attempting to do this in several large and complex operations at the same time.[33] Military forces could now be spread among concentrated and mixed pockets of still-warring belligerents; they were no longer "alert, but inert" in buffer zones. In this environment they attempted *actively* to protect the delivery of humanitarian aid, disarm and demobilize belligerents, maintain and protect safe areas, enforce weapons-exclusion zones, monitor borders, monitor violations of human rights, repatriate refugees, assume temporary control of many government functions, and provide secure environments for elections and other nation-building activities.

Attempting to manage these complex endeavors in dangerous environments required a significant increase in peacekeepers and supporting staff. In 1990, the UN was managing some 10,000 personnel in eight observation and traditional peacekeeping missions. By 1993, it had control over some 80,000 troops in 18 different missions.[34] This explosion in peacekeeping prompted a scramble for troop contributions and a "beggars can't be choosers" attitude on the part of the Secretariat.[35] Finding voluntary troop contributors was not traditionally a problem for the UN. When recruiting for the first UN peacekeeping mission in the Sinai in 1956, the Secretary-General had the luxury of choosing ten contingents from the offers of 24 member states.[36] However, the donor fatigue brought on by the phenomenal growth in peacekeeping in 1992-93 led the UN to have severe recent problems with quality control in its forces. The overall military capability of the forces assembled was frequently less than the sum of their parts. Not only did some forces come to second-generation missions pathetically underequipped and untrained, but well-publicized allegations of favoritism, corruption, and even criminal activities on the part of some UN contingents hurt mission credibility in Cambodia, Somalia, and the former Yugoslavia.

In the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Rwanda, and Haiti, UN-managed military forces were subject to an acute strategic dilemma. The forces provided were hopelessly inadequate for meeting the ambitious mandates provided by the Security Council--means did not meet ends. In these second-generation peacekeeping missions, the UN had to try to find ways to compensate for the failures of its disparate military forces, which were overwhelmed in trying to accomplish these mandates in non-permissive environments. In a break with the principles of peacekeeping, the UN aggressively sought heavily armed and armored forces from major powers. Seventy-five percent of the force in the former Yugoslavia was from NATO countries or other European nations with advanced military capabilities.[37]

The reliance on the sophisticated combat forces of some advanced countries in second-generation operations also had the effect of marginalizing the role of forces from developing countries and exacerbated concerns and prejudices between "have" and "have-not" nations. This had never been a problem in traditional missions because of the innocuous military requirements of those operations. For instance, with a basic light infantry battalion or an individual observer the only requirement, Fiji could always make the same contribution as France. However, the heavily armed and armored combined-arms forces in second-generation peacekeeping missions required sophisticated military forces, not to mention the logistic, communications, aviation, and naval support needed to sustain their complex and expensive operations. The mission to Somalia was beset in particular by the perceived gap in capabilities between first and third world, prompting the Secretary-General to issue a public rejoinder about the quality and good intentions of UN forces from developing nations.[38]

The UN has also recruited "sub-contractors" in the form of NATO, the US-led Unified Task Force in Somalia, the French Task Force in Rwanda, and the US force in Haiti. These forces were authorized to use limited military enforcement measures. In Somalia the mix of enforcement and the traditional operations of passive peacekeeping backfired, bitterly dividing mission participants and bringing the UN into an internal struggle it could not hope to win. Much the same dynamic was at work in the former Yugoslavia. In both cases the use of limited enforcement measures in what were (strategically speaking) peacekeeping missions caused terrific problems for the missions and made the UN look as though it had abrogated control of the mission to its "sub-contractors."[39]

In 1992-93, the traditional UN approaches to questions of force structure and questions of military objectives were seen to be impractical for the military challenges of second-generation missions. However, despite some changes in structure and methods, many of the same crippling problems remained and were exacerbated by the higher stakes of large and ambitious second-generation missions. Admiral Jonathan Howe, the Special Representative of the Secretary-

General in Somalia, was extremely frustrated by the congenital frailties of UN military operations. In a mission post-mortem he wrote,

> The UN has all the disadvantages of a volunteer organization. Troop contributors rotate units at short intervals and withdraw them altogether with little notice. Nations want to dictate where their contingents will serve and what duties they will perform. The UN does not have the authority to hold individual nations to a fixed contract. The result in Somalia was a significant loss of time due to constant reassignment and readjustment of the forces.[40]

The UN thought it could address the new mission challenges by revising the traditional deployment formula of small, lightly armed, impartial, and passive forces. However, because traditional failings were magnified by the new scale of operations, this effort caused more problems for the UN than it solved. In much the same way, the traditional loose interpretation of UN command and control was proven insufficient. In dangerous second-generation missions, the propensity for national contingents to "phone home" rose accordingly. Competition from national chains of command was replete in second-generation missions, with units in Cambodia, the former Yugoslavia, and Somalia at times flatly refusing to obey the UN chain of command. When ambitious missions in potentially hostile environments can turn into dangerous combat missions, the authentic and functional lines of authority and legitimacy that exist in the nation-state rapidly supersede the limited and temporary lines of quasi-authority voluntarily ceded to the UN.

The inability of the UN to be a functional military manager for militarily complex and ambitious second-generation peacekeeping operations was foreshadowed in a sense by UN involvement in the Korean War and the Gulf War. In both those *large-scale enforcement missions*, the UN sanctioned the active use of force by a coalition of member states and had to cede the functional management of operations to a major power. In Korea it even mandated a United Nations Command and made some provision for exercising limited oversight in its operations. However, in both cases the UN had no role in the strategic direction or functional military management of these extremely large and complex military operations. That role was left to the United States, which, as a major military power, could provide a legitimate and authoritative framework through which these enormous military efforts could be mobilized, organized, and executed.

In the wide spectrum of military operations that the UN has undertaken over the past 50 years, it is clear that the organization is better suited for managing some and not others. Operations that are small and unambitious, with simple and passive military activities, can be managed by a large, disparate, multinational organization that has limited authority, few organic resources, and improvised structures and procedures. Large, complex, active, and dangerous military operations need to be managed by an alliance or coalition that has a framework state or group of states with real political and military legitimacy. This legitimacy stems from the ability to mobilize competent military resources, direct them through unambiguous and authoritative chains of command, and employ them in timely and efficient operations.

"Who You Are" Revisited

The functional military capabilities of any political entity cannot be separated from its inherent political character. This rudimentary and profound relationship vis-à-vis the UN was not fundamentally altered by either Cold War tensions or post-Cold War cooperation. Managing complex military operations in bellicose environments requires more than cooperation within the Security Council. It requires the relationships of legitimacy, authority, and accountability that allow a political entity to mobilize military resources, send them into harm's way, and hold a steady course during times of casualties and the threat of mission failure. Throughout the existence of the UN, the nation-state has remained the only entity in which this relationship exists by law and tradition.

Some observers feel that the only answer to this fundamental dilemma of collective security is to give the UN the resources it will need to have such a relationship: permanent forces under UN authority, strategic independence from the unilateral decisions of member-states, and the mechanisms and procedures to apply forcefully the collective will of the international community in matters of peace and security. Two authors at Cambridge recently wrote, "It is a cornerstone of political legitimacy that both individual nations and regional organizations should possess mechanisms for exercising political control over the military operations which they authorize. That the United Nations is without

such means is not only ironic, but deeply inimical to its credibility."[41] Other observers feel that the lack of this politico-military legitimacy is precisely what gives the UN its strength as an organization that is not a "world government."[42] Former Assistant Secretary-General Giandomenico Picco writes that the UN can be a strong and effective international force because the "institution does not carry with it those basic tools of states. . . . The more the institution tries to resemble a state, the more it will fade away and, most seriously perhaps, the UN will become no more than the sum of its members."[43]

The functional difficulties experienced by the UN in its attempts to manage military operations are legion. However, through a process of trial and error, a system of limited military operations evolved that was well suited to the inherent political and military constraints of a unique institution such as the UN. A workable UN military doctrine reflected in the "Principles of Peacekeeping" was the result. In many ways these principles can be considered not just a means to an end, but an end in themselves. They accurately reflect the unchanging and unique nature (and constraints) of a disparate multinational body.

Recent attempts to deviate from these principles, to substantially expand the size and nature of UN military operations, and to have more professional UN military management have overwhelmed the organization and resulted in some expensive failures. These failures threaten any sort of institutional growth the UN may hope to experience in its second half-century. This is not a Chicken Little warning voiced only by critics of the UN--Paul Kennedy and Bruce Russett recently wrote that "these operations, hopes, and expectations far exceed the capabilities of the system as it is now constituted, and they threaten to overwhelm the United Nations and discredit it, perhaps forever, even in the eyes of its warmest supporters."[44]

In addition, attempts to manage difficult security issues through the UN have led to many states using the organization as a policy cop-out. Knowing that the UN is one of the least effective means through which to manage complex military challenges, member-states use this option anyway. After all, the UN is under no pressure to produce results. Its operations are protracted, its credibility already damaged, and the stakes for member-states are low--there is always the UN to blame. Working through the UN allows some member-states to make half-hearted contributions to efforts that would ordinarily require a more serious commitment of resources and political will to competently address the problem (and sets up a convenient "whipping boy").[45] This was quite evident on the part of the major European powers in their approach to the former Yugoslavia, the United States in Somalia, and the entire international community's approach to Rwanda. Using the UN as a mechanism for half-measures and a way to avoid more substantive policy options has recently been labeled the "politics of being seen to do something" and (even more apropos in the information age) "virtual reality politics."

By going back to basics in its *military* ambitions, the UN would restore its credibility and its role as an honest broker in international affairs. This counsel should not necessarily discourage the UN from attempting multi-functional efforts that have been successful in places such as Namibia, El Salvador, and Mozambique. Back-to-basics applies only to the military aspect of UN operations and especially to those missions that require large and sophisticated combat formations employed in a coercive capacity. The UN must recognize, as it manages such operations, that it cannot outrun its inherent political constraints without a fundamental change in the structure of the international arena. The UN's attempts to undertake complex military operations of the sort defined as second-generation peacekeeping missions are antithetical to the UN's political nature and are ultimately futile, hurting both the UN and the mission. More realistic expectations about both the unique politico-military strengths of the nation-state and the diplomatic nature of the UN would serve all members of the international community in better stead.

NOTES

1. Benjamin Hoff, *The Tao of Pooh* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), p. 58.

2. Christopher Wren, "UN is Cutting Back on Its Peacekeeping Ambitions," *The New York Times*, 12 November 1995, p. A14.

3. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *Supplement to An Agenda for Peace*, UN Document S/1995/1, 3 January 1995, p. 15.

4. For instance, the United States Institute of Peace Study Group Report, *The Professionalization of Peacekeeping* (Washington: USIP, 1993).

5. Corporate analogies abound today when trying to define the UN. Madeline Albright quipped that the organization was akin to a corporation that has 185 board members, all of whom have an unemployed brother-in-law. Paul Kennedy and Bruce Russet wrote that the UN was not "an embryonic world government, but an international corporation so to speak, with the nation-states as shareholders." Paul Kennedy and Bruce Russett, "Reforming the United Nations," *Foreign Affairs*, 74 (September-October 1995), 57, 59.

6. To be entirely accurate in these days of deteriorating nation-states, one must note that these sets of relationships are also seen in sub-state entities. The point is that the relationships do not appear in full in any super-state political entities.

7. Samuel Huntington, for instance, defines professionalism through three characteristics: Expertise, Responsibility, and Corporateness. *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1959), pp. 8-18.

8. Definitions of the varying levels and variants of "command" are best seen in DOD, Joint Publication 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington: GPO, 23 March 1994).

9. This important distinction comes from Abba Eban, Israel's former Ambassador to the UN. He writes that "today it is still not clear what the United Nations wishes to be: an instrument for solving conflicts or an arena for waging them. The choice is between the parliamentary and the diplomatic principle." From "The UN Idea Revisited," *Foreign Affairs*, 74 (September-October 1995), 48.

10. Brian Urquhart, *A Life in Peace and War* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987), p. 93.

11. One such interpretation is lucidly outlined by Gareth Evans, the Foreign Minister of Australia, in his *Cooperating for Peace: The Global Agenda for the 1990's and Beyond* (St. Leonards, New South Wales: Allen and Unwin, 1993), pp. 22-23.

12. United Nations Department of Public Information, *The Blue Helmets: A Review of United Nations Peace-keeping* (2d ed.; New York: UNDPI, 1990), p. 5.

13. Given the traditional UN requirement for the consent of the belligerents before deploying military observers or peacekeepers, this language in Article 40 seems the most tangible legal basis for UN peacekeeping--certainly more tangible than any Article of Chapter VI.

14. For a full account, see Eric Grove, "UN Armed Forces and the Military Staff Committee: A Look Back," *International Security*, 14 (Spring 1993), 172-92.

15. Eban, p. 44.

16. There are several good analyses of the organizational changes in the Secretariat in regards to UN military operations. In particular, see Mats Berdal, *Whither UN Peacekeeping?* International Institute for Strategic Studies Adelphi Paper No. 281 (London: Brassey's [UK], 1993), section III; and William Durch, "Structural Issues and the Future of UN Peace Operations," chapter 8 in Don Daniel and Bradd Hayes, eds., *Beyond Traditional Peacekeeping* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1995), pp. 151-63.

17. The Field Operations Division, which controlled logistical and administrative support for UN military forces, was, inexplicably, kept separate from the operational staff until 1993. This created dual lines of control for the UN operations deployed before 1993 and created enough administrative and operational headaches to fill volumes.

18. Boutros-Ghali, p. 9.

19. Mats Berdal, "Peacekeeping in Europe," in *European Security After The Cold War*, papers from the September

1993 IISS Annual Conference, Adelphi Paper No. 284 (London: IISS, January 1994), p. 66.

20. Two additional peacekeeping operations were sanctioned by the General Assembly, UNEF1 in 1956-67, and UNSF in 1962-63, for a total of 39 such operations.

21. Jim Whitman and Ian Bartholomew in Daniel and Hayes, p. 173.

22. Thomas G. Weiss, "The United Nations at Fifty: Recent Lessons," *Current History*, 94 (May 1995), 225.

23. UN Charter, Article 2.

24. This is the term first used by John Mackinlay and Jarat Chopra in "Second Generation Multinational Operations," *The Washington Quarterly*, 15 (Summer 1992), 113-31. The many other terms, all with their own definitions, reflect the uncertainties associated with post-Cold War UN interventions. The terms include enhanced peacekeeping, aggravated peacekeeping, expanded peacekeeping, protected peacekeeping, muscular peacekeeping, wider peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peace enforcement.

25. Statistics from S/6651, Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation in Kashmir, 3 September 1965, and Carl Van Horn, *Soldiering for Peace* (New York: David Mackay, 1967), pp. 316-22.

26. This category has included Canada, Sweden, Ghana, Fiji, Austria, Ireland, Norway, Denmark, Chile, and others.

27. For instance, while the Secretary-General was trying to convince Nasser to revoke his decision about ending the first UN mission to the Sinai, two of the largest contingents, from India and Yugoslavia, unilaterally withdrew. *The Blue Helmets*, p. 77. Only 30 percent of the contingents in the second Sinai mission saw the mission through to its conclusion (ibid., pp. 423-24). The mission in Lebanon has been beset by a revolving door of contingents that has forced constant redeployment and weakened its operational standing considerably. See Mona Ghali, "UNIFIL, 1978-Present," in William Durch, *The Evolution Of UN Peacekeeping: Case Studies and Comparative Analysis* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), p. 191.

28. The UN Operation in the Congo 1960-64 did use active force against belligerents, at the cost of 234 UN killed in action. Because of this anomaly in an era of traditional peacekeeping missions, I treat the Congo operation as a second-generation mission along with Somalia, former Yugoslavia, and others.

29. Figures from the UN Department of Public Information, *The Blue Helmets,* and *Peacekeeping Notes Update*, December 1994.

30. Marrack Goulding, "The Evolution of United Nations Peacekeeping," *International Affairs*, 69 (July 1993), 455. The principles first appeared together in this form in S/11052/Rev. 27 October 1973 in reference to UNEF II.

31. John Mackinlay, *The Peacekeepers: An Assessment of Peacekeeping Operations at the Arab-Israel Interface*, (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), p. 199.

32. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace* (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 1992), p. 11. Emphasis added.

33. Cambodia, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, and Mozambique were all active in 1993, as well as a dozen other UN missions.

34. "UN Peacekeeping Information Notes Update (no. 2)," November 1993, and *The Blue Helmets*, Appendix 2.

35. The words of a frustrated official in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Told to the author at a SIPRI conference in Stockholm, Sweden, April 1995.

36. Rosalyn Higgins, *United Nations Peacekeeping 1946-1967, Documents and Commentary, Vols. I-IV* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1970), I, 302.

37. S/1994/300, Report of the Secretary-General Pursuant to Resolution 871, 16 March 1994, pp. 18-20.

38. "I would like strongly to reject the insinuations made in some circles that only the troops from Europe and North America have the necessary qualities to implement the mandate given to UNOSOM II." S/26738, Report of the Secretary-General, 12 November 1993, p. 22.

39. For more on the volatile mix of peace-enforcement with peacekeeping, see John Hillen, *Killing With Kindness: The UN Peacekeeping Mission in Bosnia*, Foreign Policy Briefing No. 34 (Washington: CATO Institute, June 1995).

40. Jonathan Howe, "The United States and United Nations in Somalia," in *The Washington Quarterly*, 18 (Summer 1995), 54.

41. Whitman and Bartholomew in Daniel and Hayes, p. 184.

42. In yet another market/corporate analogy, Professor Ronald Steel states the classic realist's argument when he writes, "The UN was not designed to be a world government, nor the collective conscience of mankind. Rather, it is a marketplace where deals are struck and interests protected." From *Temptations of a Superpower* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1995), p. 86. See also the works of Innis Claude.

43. Giandomenico Picco, "The UN and the Use of Force: Leave the Secretary-General Out of It," in *Foreign Affairs*, 73 (September-October 1994), 16, 18.

44. Kennedy and Russett, p. 57 .

45. Professor Steel writes that "the current enthusiasm for multilateralism results in large part from the *unwillingness* of states to make serious sacrifices to establish order." *Temptations of a Superpower*, p. 135.

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