CIVIL-MILITARY COOPERATION IN PEACE OPERATIONS: THE CASE OF KOSOVO

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FOREWORD

The U.S. missions to Bosnia and Kosovo and the current operation in Iraq make it clear that winning wars accomplishes little if we cannot also win the peace. The strategic goals for which the wars are fought can only be achieved if the follow-on mission leaves an occupied territory more stable and democratic than before. Civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) is the key to achieving such stability.

Although such cooperation has occurred in the past, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization developed its own CIMIC doctrine in response to the humanitarian interventions of the 1990s. Humanitarian intervention requires the intervening military force to provide security and lend its considerable assets to relief operations and rebuilding.

CIMIC provides the mechanism for such cooperation and support. Like any concept employed in coalition warfare, CIMIC application varies widely. Examining diverse national approaches to CIMIC in the field reveals best practices and common mistakes. Properly analyzed and learned, these lessons can inform the conduct of current and future operations.

This study, by Dr. Thomas Mockaitis, is based on field work in Kosovo, supported by several years of research on peace operations. Its principal value is as a historical record of where the U.S. military was with regard to CIMIC in the 1990s. Much progress has been made, though more remains to be done. The study concludes with general recommendations for all militaries engaged in humanitarian intervention and specific suggestions for improving the U.S. approach to CIMIC.

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SUMMARY

The NATO deployment in Kosovo provides a unique opportunity to study the effectiveness of civil-military cooperation in humanitarian interventions and other stability and support operations. Such a study can provide valuable insights into how better to conduct a wide range of future missions. The importance of this cooperation has already been demonstrated in Somalia and Bosnia. The occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq suggests that it also has an important role to play in the war on terrorism. Winning hearts and minds through humanitarian assistance and development often produces the intelligence necessary to find terrorists.

A clear distinction must be made at the outset between the NATO concept of "Civil-Military Cooperation" (CIMIC) and the American term "Civil Affairs" (CA). While CIMIC refers specifically to cooperation between NATO units on the one hand and civilian institutions (including humanitarian organizations, the United Nations, etc.) on the other, CA includes a broad range of activities, of which civil-military cooperation is but one. The distinction between the two concepts has more than academic significance and helps explain some of the difficulty the U.S. military has with humanitarian interventions.

CIMIC now figures so prominently in NATO planning that all Partnership for Peace (PfP) nations and prospective members are scrambling to develop their own CIMIC doctrine. Given the lead role the United States often plays in NATO missions, the U.S. military must make sure that its own approach to CIMIC is as consistent as possible with that of its allies. The best way to assure this consistency is to compile a list of best practices and common mistakes discovered by different national contingents in an actual mission and to then work these lessons into CIMIC doctrine.

The current disinclination to assume the long-term task of nation-building makes CIMIC even more important. The best way to assure that humanitarian interventions remain of limited and reasonable duration is to hand over control as soon as possible to civil authorities and international, nongovernmental, and private

volunteer organizations (IO, NGO, and PVO). CIMIC is the tool for this transition. CIMIC also operates as a force multiplier, making it possible for a significantly smaller force to have the same or greater effect than a larger one. The ability of CIMIC to make possible shorter, smaller deployments should have great appeal to militaries concerned about over-extension of their limited resources. Making CIMIC more effective requires garnering lessons from past and current missions.

Many characteristics of Kosovo and the international mission there commend it as a case study. To begin with, the province is both small and compact with a manageable population. This compactness has meant that, despite widespread destruction of infrastructure and homes, rebuilding has occurred rapidly. Unlike Bosnia, where a brutal war lasted for 3 years, conflict in Kosovo remained brief and the loss of life, though considerable, was not appalling. Such conditions make the possibility of return of the minority Serbian community possible. The Kosovo Force (KFOR) faced the possibility of armed confrontation with the Yugoslav Army and the reality of guerrilla action by the Kosovo Liberation Army. The first possibility quickly disappeared, and the second proved easily handled.

For its size, though, Kosovo has all the problems of humanitarian intervention writ large upon it. A multiethnic state fractured by apartheid and war, it dominated the headlines for 8 months. Consequently, over 500 NGOs, IOs, and PVOs descended on the province in the wake of the multinational KFOR. Coordinating activities of all the players has been a major challenge. Properly analyzed, the Kosovo mission may yield valuable lessons that will inform the conduct of future operations at the policy, strategic, operational, and tactical levels, all of which are more closely interrelated than they might be in conventional war.

Analysis of the Kosovo intervention reveals certain valuable lessons that may inform the conduct of future missions:

- Military units and humanitarian organizations should participate in joint pre-mission planning to ensure greater cooperation in the field.
- Joint training and education can break down misunderstanding and mistrust so that CIMIC can be both a force

multiplier for the military and an aid-delivery enhancer for the humanitarian community.

- Training and education can also help bridge the cultural gap between the military's formal vertical organization and logistics-based approach to problem solving and the less formal, horizontal organization and pragmatic approach to problem solving of NGOs/IOs.
- A military intervention force must be prepared to assume police functions until a working civil police force can be established. A power vacuum such as occurred during the first months of the Kosovo mission invites lawlessness and revenge.
- Tours of duty for troop contributors should be standardized at no less than 6 months. Tours should overlap sufficiently to allow the replacement unit to learn as much as possible about the local situation. CIMIC units, or at least the officers, should have a longer hand-over period.
- Military units should reevaluate rules for classifying information. NGOs/IOs frequently complain that military units ask them to share information but are unwilling to share information with the humanitarians.

In addition to providing these general lessons, the Kosovo intervention reveals specific challenges for the U.S. military:

- U.S. troops need to base force-protection rules on the level of threat in the field. Over-reliance on body armor, visible display of weaponry, and maintaining distance from the civilian population interfere with the mission and, under some circumstances, may even put soldiers at greater risk. Officers and enlisted personnel engaged in CIMIC should be allowed greater latitude in determining appropriate force protection.
- The U.S. military should adopt NATO terminology, definitions, and doctrine on CIMIC and clearly distinguish between CA and CIMIC.

- CIMIC units (usually Reserve Civil Affairs battalions) should be more closely integrated into the operational mission so that they may have access to the resources of the entire force. The force commander should have greater latitude in employing civilian contractors assigned to U.S. missions.
- Humanitarian intervention requires decentralization of command and control so that CIMIC personnel are free to act on their own initiative within broad mission guidelines. Currently American personnel are over-constrained by the need to ask up the chain of command for permission to act on even relatively routine matters.
- American soldiers need to be better educated about the history and culture of lands in which they deploy. Training should focus on more effective ways of interacting with local people, which take into account culturally determined rules of hospitality, conflict resolution, etc.

Conclusion: CIMIC will be vital to the success of U.S. missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as in future missions.

CIVIL-MILITARY COOPERATION IN PEACE OPERATIONS: THE CASE OF KOSOVO

INTRODUCTION

While civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) is arguably as old as warfare itself, CIMIC as a formal doctrine dates to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) operations of the 1990s.[1] Faced with a series of complex humanitarian emergencies in Croatia, Bosnia, and Kosovo, the Alliance recognized the need to develop regular procedures to facilitate cooperation between its military units and the relief organizations with which they needed to work. NATO defines CIMIC as:

> The coordination and cooperation, in support of the mission, between the NATO commander and civil actors, including national population and local authorities, as well as international, national and non-governmental organizations and agencies.[2]

CIMIC includes three core tasks: liaison between the military contingent and all the civilian actors in the area of operation, "support to the civilian environment," and "support to the force."[3]

"Support to the civilian environment" includes tasks that the U.S. military would consider "Civil Affairs (CA) activities:"

> 1. enhance the relationship between military forces and civil authorities in areas where military forces are present; and
>
> 2. involve the application of CA functional specialty skills, in areas normally the responsibility of civil government, to enhance conduct of CMO (Civil Military Operations).[4]

CMO, in turn, are "the activities of a commander that establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relations between military forces, governmental and nongovernmental civilian organizations and authorities and the civilian population in a friendly, neutral, or hostile operational area."[5]

While the American concepts of CA and CMO include tasks common to CIMIC and the U.S. accepts in principle NATO doctrine,

the distinction between the two is more than semantic. In practice, U.S. forces appear to place less emphasis on CA activities than some of their NATO allies. CA/CMO also relegates the liaison and cooperative functions of CIMIC to secondary roles. As will be seen, this approach creates problems for the U.S. military in a humanitarian intervention, such as Kosovo, beyond those faced by other NATO nations.

While CIMIC has a role to play in a wide range of military missions, humanitarian intervention presents such unique challenges that it deserves to be considered a unique phenomenon. Lessons learned from this, the most challenging type of CIMIC operation, will, of course, be applicable to other activities. Humanitarian interventions of the type seen in Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo require the intervention of a military force to end fighting, establish and preserve order, facilitate relief operations, and aid in the rebuilding of infrastructure and civil institutions. The environment in which such operations occur, most commonly a failed state, determines the actors with whom the military force must work. By definition, a failed state, or in the case of Kosovo a province from which the once legitimate authority has withdrawn, has few, if any, functioning civil institutions. The primary players will be the intervention force and relief organizations. The latter consist of International, Non-governmental, and Private Volunteer Organizations (IO, NGO, PVO). CIMIC provides a mechanism for bridging the gap between the intervention force on the one hand, and the relief organizations and civil institutions (as they emerge or are rebuilt) on the other. When successful at this task, CIMIC operates as a force multiplier, making it possible for a significantly smaller deployment to have the same or greater effect than a larger one. Effective CIMIC may also shorten deployments and mitigate what critics deride as long-term and costly "nation-building" operations.

As with any strategic concept, the best way to make CIMIC more effective is to garner lessons from specific operations. Many characteristics of the Kosovo intervention commend it as a case study. To begin with, the province is both small and compact, with a manageable population. This compactness has meant that, despite widespread destruction of infrastructure and homes, rebuilding

has occurred rapidly. Unlike Bosnia, where a brutal war lasted for 3 years, conflict in Kosovo remained brief, and the loss of life, though considerable, was not appalling. Such conditions have made the challenges of post-conflict peace-building more manageable. For its size, though, Kosovo has all the problems of humanitarian intervention writ large upon it. A multiethnic state fractured by apartheid and war, it dominated the headlines for 8 months. Consequently, over 500 NGOs, IOs, and PVOs descended on the province in the wake of the multinational Kosovo Force (KFOR). Coordinating activities of all the players has been a major challenge. Properly analyzed, the Kosovo mission may yield valuable lessons that will inform the conduct of future operations at the policy, strategic, operational, and tactical levels, all of which are more closely inter-related than they might be in conventional war.[6]

KOSOVO IN CONTEXT

Geography.

Kosovo (Albanian, *Kosova*) became the southern-most province of Serbia following the 1913 Balkan War. With an area of only 4,126 square miles (about half the size of New Jersey), Kosovo lies at the crossroads of the central Balkans and, for this reason alone, has long been of strategic importance. It borders the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on the south, Albania on the southwest, Montenegro on the northwest, and Serbia proper on the north and west. (See Figure 1.) The land consists of a large central plain divided by low hills running north to south through its center and ringed with mountains. These are highest along the Montenegrin and western Macedonian borders. Those along the Albanian border are considerably lower, and most of the Serbian border passes through low hills. To the east Kosovo opens into the Prestvo Valley of Serbia proper.

Besides its rich soil, Kosovo has deposits of lead, zinc, lignite, chrome, magnetite, and nickel. The lead and zinc mine at Trepca and the magnetite mine south of Pristina are particularly valuable.[7] Despite its mineral wealth, Kosovo was the poorest region of the former Yugoslavia.

KOSOVO REGION
Y U G O S L A V I A
S E R B I A
MONTENEGRO
K O S O V O
ALBANIA
THE FORMER
YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF
MACEDONIA

Figure 1.

Demographics.

Despite Serbia's sporadic efforts to colonize Kosovo with ethnic Serbians, Albanians have been the majority at least since the second half of the 20th century. Poverty and ethnic strife encouraged many Serbians to immigrate to Serbia proper or abroad. According to the last census taken before the disintegration of Yugoslavia (1991), Albanians comprised almost 82 percent of the population, Serbians just under 10 percent, and Roma (Gypsies), Muslim Slavs, and others the remaining 8 percent.[8] Despite their minority status, Serbians were concentrated heavily in certain areas of prewar Kosovo. They comprised the majority in the northern Mitrovica region and could be found in large concentrations around the provincial capital, Pristina, in the Gjilan/Gnjilane region to the east, and around the town of Stripca in the south. These concentrations would have profound implications for the Kosovo mission, particularly in north Mitrovica.

Ethnicity, language, and religion distinguish Serbians from Albanians. Most Albanians learned Serbo-Croatian of necessity, but fewer Serbians could speak Albanian. While the majority of Albanians are Muslim, most wear their religion lightly, a fact that surprised and perhaps shocked some Middle Eastern NGOs. A minority of Albanians practice Roman Catholicism, although this distinction has had no impact on the conflict. Virtually the entire Serbian population of Kosovo was at least nominally Serbian Orthodox Christian, although practice varied widely. Yugoslavia had been, after all, a Communist country and therefore secular for 50 years. Serbian nationalists have, however, made much of historic monasteries and churches as justification for Serbian control of the province. Not surprisingly, KFOR troops have had to guard these sites. Religious difference in Kosovo, as in most conflict areas, may best be understood as a cultural marker visibly distinguishing one group from another rather than as ancient religious hatred. When other grievances are addressed, religious tension tends to decline.

History.

The real history of the province had little impact on the events that led to NATO intervention. Serbians and Albanians both forged

a national mythology out of sketchy historical detail embellished by folklore and literary imagination. The violent political struggle between Serbians and Albanians has been mirrored by "competing historical perceptions, myths, fears, and vendettas."[9] Cynical politicians like Slobodan Milosevic stirred ethnic hatred fueled by the economic dislocations at the end of the Cold War. The Yugoslav president revoked provincial autonomy in 1989 and systematically repressed the Albanian majority for the next decade.

Faced with overwhelming Serbian military power and isolated from outside help, the Albanians had little recourse but the Ghandian strategy of nonviolent resistance. Led by Ibrahim Rugova, Albanian Kosovars created a parallel state within Kosovo. In addition to underground political institutions, this "state" provided the rudiments of education, health care, and even sports.[10]

This situation changed dramatically in 1997. Following a financial crisis, the government of neighboring Albania collapsed and in the process lost control of its military arsenals. Guns poured onto the black market and into the hands of Kosovo's fledgling revolutionary movement, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA or UCK from its Albanian initials). This small organization formed in 1993 now had the means to conduct an armed struggle and lost no time in doing so.

Adopting a classic insurgency strategy, the KLA assassinated Serbian policemen, Serbian officials, and Albanian collaborators in the fall of 1997.[11] These actions provoked what Rugova had long feared, Serbian military aggression against the Albanian population as a whole.[12] Beginning in February 1998, Serbian police and paramilitaries backed by the Yugoslav Army (VJ) launched a campaign in the Drenica region east of Pristina, a hotbed of KLA activity, killing 51 people, including rebel leader Adam Jashari and 20 members of his family. The dead included 11 children and 23 women. Another 85 people were murdered in the ensuing week.[13] As many as 250,000 Albanians fled the region.[14] The crackdown transformed the KLA from a radical fringe group into a popular movement.[15]

In addition to provoking Serbian reprisals that would win them popular support, the KLA also hoped to draw international attention to their cause. They did not have long to wait. Fresh from the bitter

experience of Bosnia and facing the prospect of yet another round of ethnic cleansing, the Clinton administration goaded its NATO allies into a reluctant air war against Serbia. Milosevic capitulated 78 days later and withdrew from Kosovo.

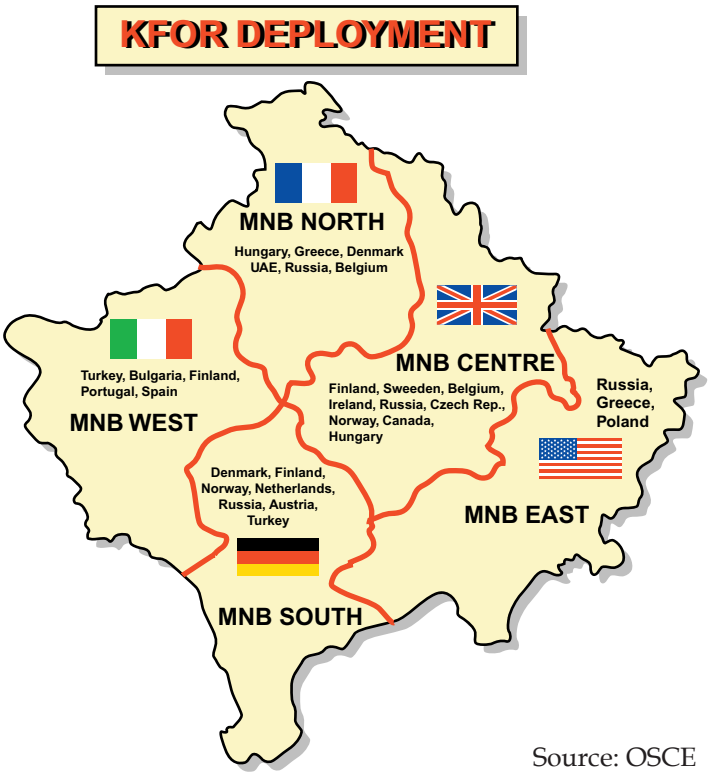
A HYBRID MISSION

The humanitarian intervention in Kosovo consisted of three distinct elements, each with numerous components: KFOR, the NATO military mission, which consisted of contingents from member states, plus "Partnership for Peace (PfP)" countries. Developed in the aftermath of the Cold War, PfP served the dual purpose of allowing former Warsaw Pact nations to participate in the alliance, while placating Russian fears of NATO expansion. PfP allowed contingents from the Russian Federation and Ukraine to take part in the two Bosnia missions (Implementation Force and Stabilization Force) and now the Kosovo intervention. In addition to authorizing KFOR, the UN deployed its own autonomous civilian UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Finally, a host of humanitarian organizations nominally guided by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees entered the province in the wake of KFOR.

Only in the loosest sense of the term could this polyglot collection of players be deemed a "mission." KFOR units had diverse experience in peace operations, interpreted their duties differently, and enjoyed considerable autonomy. NGOs, IOs, and PVOs ranged from the highly competent to the grossly inept and answered only to their sponsors. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had no authority to compel their cooperation. Charged with rebuilding and/or creating civil institutions ranging from the police to a working government, UNMIK oversaw activities by the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Although the intervention restored order, saved lives, and muddled through, poor coordination, overlapping jurisdiction, and gaps in authority created serious problems. CIMIC functioned best in battalion and brigade areas of responsibility and only gradually developed into a coordinated, province-wide effort. The most important cooperation at the outset occurred between the military and humanitarian organizations.

The Five Kingdoms.

The KFOR mission plan divided Kosovo into five multinational brigade (MNB) areas, each under command of a lead nation.[16] (See Figure 2.) This division of responsibility proved a great strength and a glaring weakness of the mission. As one CIMIC officer observed, there is no single Kosovo but many Kosovos. KFOR's decentralized command structure accorded well with the equally decentralized nature of the province and provided local commanders ample latitude for dealing with uniquely local problems or with provincial problems with uniquely local manifestations. On the other hand, the NATO mission suffered from a lack of cohesiveness and consistency that has driven more than one NGO around the bend. Any assessment of CIMIC's best practices and most serious mistakes must focus at the brigade level, taking into account the situation peculiar to each area of operation and the specific military cultures of the units operating within it.[17]



Source: OSCE

Figure 2.

Multinational Brigade Area North, The French.

MNB area North ran from the provincial border of Serbia proper, southwest along the boundary with the Sanjak, and then southeast towards Pristina, taking in the municipalities of Mitrovica, Leposavic, Vucitrn, Srbica, and Zubin Potok. It included the northern part of Drenica and the valuable Trepca mines. Mitrovica city and the region to its north contained the largest concentration of Serbians before the war and remains the only area of Kosovo that has not witnessed a massive Serbian exodus. This concentration of Serbians and the bitterness felt by Drenica Albanians have made MNB North the most difficult area of operation within Kosovo.

The MNB North contingent numbered 9,208 at the height of KFOR troop strength in October 1999.[18] Built around a French brigade, the contingent has included units from Belgium, Denmark, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Hungary, and Russia, under over-all French command. MNB North's CIMIC unit consists of about 60 officers and enlisted personnel drawn from French and other national units. Most are reservists serving a 4-month rotation, with the commanding officer, a French Colonel, serving a 6-month rotation. The French draw some of their officers from branches of the regular army. The CIMIC unit has had a limited humanitarian budget but good relations with NGOs in France and the other troop-contributing countries.

The French have been criticized severely by the NGO/IO community and other national units, particularly for their handling of Mitrovica City, which they occupy. When they moved into the town, French units allowed Serbians from south of the river to flee to the northern part of city and then watched as angry Albanians burned the Roma quarter. They made no effort to stop Serbian paramilitaries from blocking the return of Albanians to their homes in north Mitrovica. A group of 100 "bridge watchers" continue to guard the river crossings, and the brigade refuses to turf them out.

However, critics of the French seriously over-simplify the situation in Mitrovica City. The Ibar River does not, as most sources claim, neatly divide the city into a northern Serbian and a southern Albanian half. Serbian and Albanian apartment buildings alternate

along the north bank of the river. Furthermore, north Mitrovica contains perhaps the only multiethnic neighborhood in the entire region. In addition, Serbian paramilitaries have dug in along the heights north of the river. The French maintain that any effort to forcibly return Albanian refugees or to remove the bridge watchers would unleash a wave of ethnic violence that would take many lives and be hard to contain. Albanians north of the river might well be driven out, and the multiethnic neighborhood would almost certainly be torn apart.

Under these difficult conditions the effectiveness of CIMIC in Mitrovica City has been limited. Brigade CIMIC teams built a bakery in the multiethnic neighborhood. They have also provided escorts to Serbian leaders traveling south for confidence building meetings with their Albanian counterparts. These measures notwithstanding, there are serious problems with CIMIC operations in the city. Relations between the brigade and UNMIK police have been poor. In April 2002, a police unit trying to arrest wanted Serbians in north Mitrovica came under attack and found itself without military backup. Brigade headquarters maintained that, since no one had informed them of the police action, they could hardly be expected to provide support. Such a serious breakdown of communication is itself problematic. NGOs frequently asserted that the French were the worst military unit with which to deal. They maintain that the French have often refused to provide escorts into north Mitrovica City and have not facilitated return of refugees (Serbian, Albanian, and Roma) to their homes in order to achieve the stated UN goal of a multiethnic Kosovo.

However one assesses operations in Mitrovica City, it would be a mistake to judge MNB North CIMIC entirely on operation in this one locale. Projects in the Drenica region represent some of the most effective CIMIC that has been done in Kosovo. The brigade enjoys good relations with many different NGOs, and its CIMIC teams cooperate with them on many projects. In one village, the French Red Cross built a school, and the brigade then added a playground. Brigade engineers have piped running water for entire villages. They have also repaired roads and built bridges.

Several factors contribute to the effectiveness of these CIMIC projects. Foremost, brigade headquarters has interpreted its security

mission broadly and clearly understands that CIMIC contributes profoundly to that mission. As one brigade commander noted, no one likes having his house searched, no matter how polite the soldiers are, but if the home owner sees that those same soldiers also provide running water for his village, he may be more cooperative. The brigade commander's strong support has made the task of the CIMIC unit much easier. MNB North has made its resources available for CIMIC projects throughout the area of operations. A team needing a bulldozer to level a playing field for a school in a hamlet near Skenderaj was not told that such work is not a "security" or "freedom of movement" mission and, therefore, not the brigade's proper job—an answer American teams have certainly encountered. They got the bulldozer, non-CIMIC personnel to run it, and the services of French or Belgian engineers as needed. Since this project and others like it was done in cooperation with humanitarian organizations, it was truly CIMIC and not merely CA.

Reasonable force protection rules have complimented MNB North's flexible approach to CIMIC. Individual units have discretion in determining security measures appropriate to each task and situation. Patrols in north Mitrovica City might wear flak jackets and helmets and carry automatic rifles, but CIMIC teams in Drenica will probably leave helmets and jackets in their jeeps. Realizing that heavy weapons put a barrier between the team and the people it is trying to help, the team will be satisfied with side arms for personal protection. The absence of any serious incident stemming from relaxed force protection and the cordial relations MNB North personnel enjoy with the Albanian and Serbian communities attests to the efficacy of this approach.

Flexible rules of force protection are but one manifestation of the decentralization characteristic of European armies and so vital to CIMIC. MNB North CIMIC teams operate from a general mission plan but are left to implement it without the top-down style of management characteristic of the American military and, indeed, of American corporate culture in general. This approach encourages junior officers and NCOs to develop projects that fit the needs of a particular area. For example, the brigade set up a food and clothing distribution center in Skenderaj. Run by a reserve officer, an NCO,

and local interpreters, the center provided essentials to local people in need. Most of the clothing came from charities in the brigade nations' home countries. The food, however, was collected from the brigade itself. Acting on her own initiative but with active support and encouragement, a young French corporal collected unused portions of field rations and other tinned and packaged items that might otherwise have been wasted.

Finally, cultural similarities between MNB North troop contributors and the Kosovo communities they serve make communication easier. Anthropologists describe these cultures as "high context." Within such cultures, relationship building must precede any business transaction. A CIMIC team wanting to discuss a project must first socialize with local leaders over coffee and cigarettes. Conversation covers the well-being of individuals and their families, the general state of the village, and, rather belatedly, the matter at hand. Relationship building takes up perhaps three-fourths of the visit. Accepting hospitality is vital to the success of CIMIC in most situations.

Although MNB North CIMIC must be seen as generally successful, Mitrovica City notwithstanding, problems have occurred. French units deploy for 4 months, among the shortest tours in KFOR. Such short-term deployment is the bane of NGO workers' existence. No sooner do they explain their work and the local situation to one CIMIC officer than another takes his place, and they have to start all over again. Critics also wonder whether the hands-on approach of MNB North fosters dependency that will prove problematic once KFOR leaves. Local people do, in fact, look to the brigade to help them even before they turn to UNMIK or their own emerging civil institutions, rightly perceiving that the military has far greater resources and is generally willing to use them. To borrow a well-worn cliché, the French and their allies are accused of handing out fish without teaching people to fish for themselves. It might be said in response that people must first be given fishing poles before they can learn to fish. Until self-government becomes a working reality, outside actors, military or civilian, have little choice but to do what needs to done.

Multinational Brigade East, The Americans.

MNB East borders Serbia proper on the east and north and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on the South. It includes the municipalities of Stripce, Kacanik, Gjilan, Urosevac, Vitina, Novo Brdo, and Kamenica. One of the most ethnically diverse areas of Kosovo before the war, the brigade area suffered less damage than other areas of Kosovo. These factors have made repatriation of minority Serbians somewhat easier than elsewhere in the province. The United States, in fact, chose this area, believing that it would be one of the quieter ones. The spread of ethnic violence across the provincial boundary to the Presvo valley in Serbia proper and later to Macedonia, however, complicated the mission.

The MNB East contingent numbered 8,453 at the height of KFOR troop strength in October 1999.[19] Built around a U.S. task force, the contingent has included units from Russia, Greece, and Poland, under over-all U.S. command. MNB East CIMIC occurs at the national contingent level with relatively little interaction between units. Reserve CA companies of about 55 officers and enlisted personnel, augmented by regular officers, perform the CIMIC duties of the U.S. military, although the army has not adopted the NATO terminology.

The U.S. military has moved beyond the abhorrence of unconventional war that developed in the aftermath of Vietnam. Military Operations Other than War (MOOTW) occupy a respected place in joint doctrine and indeed comprised the bulk of U.S. missions in the 1990s. Institutional attitudes and culture, however, change slowly. The conventional war mentality affects the approach even to unconventional tasks. Until the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq necessitated change, the Pentagon resisted siphoning off forces for protracted stability and support operations. The political aversion to casualties and the Bush administration's stated opposition to nation-building before 9/11 encouraged this mentality. Operating under such constraints, both perceived and stated, commanders in the field understandably played it safe. They generally kept the Civil Affairs units on a relatively short leash and the rest of the force removed from CIMIC activities.

U.S. KFOR interpreted UN Resolution 1244 as narrowly as possible. They understood the tasks of "security" and "freedom of movement" in traditional military terms. During the summer of 1999, they assigned Greek KFOR troops to protect a handful of elderly Serbians in Urosevic. They have also provided escorts for returning Serbians, cleared land mines, and disarmed the KLA. Additionally, they acted to remove any impediments to freedom of movement within their area of operation. They did not, however, understand CIMIC as vital to security; they considered the task of rebuilding infrastructure and institutions to be almost the exclusive task of the NGO/IO community, with the CA unit providing minimal support largely in the form of expertise. By spring 2002 they had lost access to funds for direct assistance.

Nothing underscores American discomfort with peace operations more than the emphasis on force protection at the expense even of mission success. The bitter experience of Vietnam underscored by the tragedy of Somalia taught the U.S. military to keep local people at a distance. They wished to prevent anyone neutralizing American firepower with "hugging tactics" such as those used by the Vietcong.[20] They also wished to avoid urban terrain, which could have the same neutralizing effect, as occurred in Mogadishu. The main U.S. base in Kosovo reflects these concerns. Unlike other brigade headquarters located in major towns, Camp Bondsteel stands in open country, a huge fire support base capable of withstanding a siege. Bondsteel is, furthermore, a self-contained American city complete with all the amenities of home. Soldiers can buy a whopper, fries, and coke at Burger King or shop at the Base Exchange using American dollars. They need never leave base, and in fact, garrisoning Bondsteel requires an inordinately large percentage of the task force—a fact that those who complain about the overextension of U.S. forces should pause to consider.

Stringent force protection rules complement Bondsteel's emphasis on physical security. Within this virtually impregnable fortress, soldiers walk around armed even as they stand in line at Burger King. Outside the base, they travel in hardtop Humvees and wear their "battle-rattle" (Kevlar helmet and Flak jacket or body armor) wherever they go. During the early days of the mission, such precautions made sense, but they look increasingly out of place as

Kosovo moves towards normalcy. The United States does not adjust force protection to fit the needs of an evolving mission or a particular situation, nor does it allow individual units the discretion to adjust precautions to fit particular tasks.[21] The soldiers themselves are among the strongest critics of these stringent guidelines. A CIMIC officer from another national unit astutely observed that such force protection substitutes "blame management" for risk management. Other foreign observers comment that the Americans seemed to regard force protection as the mission itself, rather than as a means to accomplishing it.

Over-emphasis on force protection wastes human resources because a disproportionate number of troops must be detailed to protect the rest. This emphasis may also interfere with CIMIC operations. Officials from UNHCR and Doctors without Borders commented that robust displays of force often intimidated already frightened people. For example, one UNHCR protection officer complained that heavy escorts for "look-see" visits by potential Serbian returnees created an expectation of trouble. They also left the Serbians wondering how they could possibly live safely in a place that they visit only under heavily armed escort. Reluctantly and belatedly (by the summer of 2002), MNB East had begun to scale back protection to more reasonable levels.

This cautious approach adversely affects civil-military cooperation. Unlike their French, British, or Italian counterparts, U.S. CA teams cannot adjust force protection to fit situations and tasks. As one officer observed, being dressed like a Ninja Turtle gets in the way. Force protection can inhibit the relationship building essential to doing work in the Balkans. American GIs are discouraged from socializing with the locals and are expressly forbidden by regulations from having a drink with them. The inability to give, and especially to receive, hospitality puts distance between the CA personnel and those with whom they are trying to work. Ironically, Special Forces liaison teams enjoy both flexibility and discretion in the conduct of their duties. Since regular CA battalions in the U.S. force structure fall under special operations command, one could expect that the same latitude would be granted to them, but this is not the case. If anything, CA units in Kosovo have been kept on an even shorter leash because they have been reservists.

U.S. CIMIC further suffers from the narrow definition of its tasks. CA units initially had some humanitarian aid funds, but these were cut as the mission evolved. Teams may lend their considerable skills and expertise but have virtually no material resources with which to conduct projects. Nor can they draw on the extensive resources of the brigade. A single episode in Gjilan illustrates the challenge of operating under such constraints. Since potable water must be made available to rebuilt villages, an American CA team needed to get wells dug. They had the trained personnel but lacked the funds for such a project, nor could they use equipment belonging to engineer units since digging wells was not properly "security" or "freedom of movement." Officers from the most powerful nation in the world had to find an NGO willing to foot the bill for the project, while the needed equipment sat idle at Bondsteel. Lending expertise without material resources has been defended on two grounds: (1) rebuilding is properly the task of NGOs, IOs, and emerging civil institutions; and, (2) "it is better to teach people to fish and feed them for a lifetime than to give them a fish and feed them for a day." This logic has two corresponding flaws: (1) post-conflict peacebuilding is the job of all players, military and civilian, and (2) there is no point teaching people to fish if they do not have fishing poles. The Kosovars do not have well-digging equipment.[22]

The limitations under which U.S. CA teams operate make their accomplishments all the more impressive. They have earned high marks from most of the organizations with which they work for the "can do" attitude they take to problem solving. The civilian skills they bring as reservists have proven invaluable to rebuilding critical infrastructure. A civilian police officer convinced the Urosevic police chief to reassign officers to assist the forester in preventing illegal woodcutting. His team also worked with local schools to provide English language books, particularly on the subjects of history and civics, thus teaching language skills and democracy. A civil engineer taught members of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) how to assess structural damage following an earthquake in April 2002. U.S. KFOR also set up weekly shopping trips to Gjilan for Serbians from Stripce. Initially UNHCR considered the trips too risky, but they have since given the Americans high praise for the initiative. U.S. Medical officers help the local hospital with needed supplies.

In addition to problems created by force protection and narrow task definitions, the American approach to civil-military cooperation faces further difficulties. In contrast to most of its European KFOR allies, the United States has a "low-context culture."[23] Americans prefer to "cut the small talk" and "get to the point." They believe "time is money" and have little patience for relationship building. Such an approach may work well enough in the American business world, but it is not effective in the Balkans. While NGOs and IOs appreciate the American desire to solve problems, the line between "can do" and "bull in a China shop" is small indeed. On one occasion an NGO was engaged in delicate negotiations to resolve a conflict between two factions over what color to paint a youth center near Gjilan. Growing frustrated with what he perceived as needless delay over a trivial matter, an American officer forced a solution after a heated exchange with the parties. He then left, satisfied with having solved the problem, leaving the NGO to spend the next month sorting out the mess. The color scheme was nothing but the tip of a very large iceberg.

Like the French, the United States relies on short-term deployment, albeit for 6 rather than 4 months. Consequently, NGOs waste time reexplaining the local situation to every new unit. One aid worker recounted how a CA officer showed up at her door, insisting that more Serbian doctors be brought to Gjilan hospital so that Serbians would feel more comfortable being treated there. She politely informed him that such a program already existed, and that Serbian doctors had been attending patients at the hospital for some time.

On balance, the success of the U.S. approach to civil-military cooperation has been mixed. CA units have accomplished a great deal, thanks primarily to the dedication of their personnel. Given the U.S. resources of Task Force Falcon, however, these accomplishments seem far less than they might be. The weakness of the U.S. approach lies primarily at the strategic and operational levels, rather than at the tactical level. CIMIC smacks too much of the long-term, open-ended commitment, with no clear exit strategy that U.S. commanders abhor. Although more willing than their predecessors to take on nation-building tasks, they still prefer to provide the muscle for intervention (as they did in the Kosovo air war) and then turn over

peacekeeping duties to America's allies. NATO politics, however, require shared risk, so the United States deploys at least some forces to most operations. The U.S. military thus ends up doing reluctantly what it does not really wish to do at all. Believing that the best way to keep the deployment short, they keep CA units on a short leash and at arm's length. Ironically, this approach ends up producing exactly the opposite result. The best way to avoid protracted nation-building is to do CIMIC well.

Multinational Brigade Area South, The Germans.

MNB Area South centers on the ancient city of Prizren. It stretches north to include the municipalities of Suva Reka and Orahovac, southeast to the Macedonian border, and southwest to the Albanian border. Before the war, MNB South, like MNB North, was not particularly integrated. Serbians formed the majority in and around Strpce, where many have remained in one of Kosovo's larger minority enclaves. The southernmost Gora region had the province's largest concentration of Slav Moslems. With the exception of Roma pockets, Albanians constituted the majority in the rest of the brigade area.

MNB South had been the scene of extensive violence during and after the war. Serbian police and paramilitaries backed by the Yugoslav army ethnically cleansed villages and destroyed many homes. Retaliation and looting following the Serbian withdrawal caused further destruction. By October 1999, 97 percent of Serbians and 60 percent of gypsies had left Prizren itself. Fewer than 4,000 Serbians remain in the area.[24] MNB South consists of a German brigade augmented by Austrian, Turkish, Danish, Finnish, Dutch, Norwegian, and Russian units.[25]

The MNB South contingent numbered 8,053 at the height of KFOR troop strength in October 1999.[26] The brigade has the largest CIMIC unit in KFOR, with over 100 personnel. Despite this considerable capacity, it takes a conservative approach to CIMIC, not unlike that of the Americans. This similarity mirrors the resemblance of the two militaries. Germany rebuilt its army on the American model in the 1950s as a strictly NATO force. To preclude its ever acting independently, the *Bundeswehr* did not have its own

general staff, relying on the alliance staff instead. Germany also shares the U.S. aversion to casualties and, because of its Nazi past, is even more reluctant to deploy its forces overseas. Indeed, the first discussions over German participation in peace operations sparked a constitutional debate as to whether such deployment was even legal.

Given these similarities, it should come as no surprise that the Germans have copied the U.S. approach to CIMIC. They have, arguably, proven to be even more conservative than their American mentors. German KFOR places the same emphasis on excessive force protection. Its soldiers carry automatic weapons into mess halls, where other contingents eat unarmed in shirtsleeves. Signs on German bases and guarded facilities proclaim in Serbian and Albanian a free fire zone. Soldiers manning checkpoints wear the same "battle-rattle" as their American counterparts. This preoccupation with force protection quite naturally produces a play-it-safe attitude toward CIMIC. At the beginning of the mission, MNB South conducted foot and vehicle patrols, disarmed the KLA, protected deliveries of humanitarian aid, and safe-guarded minority enclaves.[27] Once the Albanian refugees and IDPs had returned and the brigade restored a modicum of stability, the Germans became staunch defenders of the status quo. They asked NGOs wishing to facilitate Serbian returns to guarantee that such returns would not provoke conflict. No one could, of course, provide such a guarantee, so the German's objected to return operations. They saw no point in taking any action that threatened to destabilize the situation. Defending the status quo may be easy in the short run, but it delays the building of a lasting peace and may actually increase the amount of time the peace force needs to remain in place. By April 2002, even UNHCR found it necessary to prod the Germans into action.

The resettlement of Albanians was, of course, another matter. The German brigade has been quite aggressive in rebuilding homes for Albanian Kosovars, even lending the brigade's military resources to the project. They may, however, have been motivated more by domestic political considerations within Germany than by concern for refugees. With one of the world's most generous asylum policies, Germany has allowed a large number of Albanian refugees

to enter the country. With the war over, they would prefer that these refugees return home.

Within MNB South, other nations have been more willing to help and to some degree are more effective. The Austrian contingent at Suva Reka demonstrates what even a small CIMIC team can accomplish with limited resources but dedicated personnel and support from the rest of the national contingent. Austrian CIMIC consists of an under-strength platoon attached to a single battalion. Because they have no humanitarian aid or development budget, the Austrians have become very proficient at locating NGOs willing to fund a project and then lending their military assets to it. In what may be a unique innovation, they have charged an individual in the Austrian Ministry of Defense with lining up donors for CIMIC projects in Kosovo. For example, Austrian KFOR worked closely with the German NGO *Kinderberg* to build a youth center in Suva Reka. In cooperation with an Austrian sports league, they also built a sports facility in the city. They also facilitated the visit of a team of planners from the Technical University of Vienna and provided monthly monitoring of a local health clinic built by the Red Cross.[28]

The success of Austrian CIMIC depends heavily on the willingness of the battalion to contribute its resources to projects. A single example illustrates this point. Wells in the Suva Reka area had become contaminated during the war and needed to be cleaned. Since the battalion sanitation officer had little to do in the Austrian camp, she lent her technical expertise to the operation. The Austrians also provided the cleaning equipment and instructed the Kosovars in how to use it. The locals thus did the work that would not have otherwise been done. In other words, the Austrians first lent them "fishing poles" and then "taught them how to fish." This approach contrasts markedly with the American experience in Gjilan, where CIMIC teams received virtually no assistance from U.S. KFOR in getting wells dug.

Not surprisingly, the Austrians have a relaxed attitude towards force protection. Significantly, their CIMIC center stands next to the entrance of the battalion camp with the letters "CIMIC" spelled out in white stones clearly visible from the road. Outside the camp, they adjust armament and protective equipment to the situation. Force protection does not impede the conduct of CIMIC operations.

Multinational Brigade West, The Italians.

MNB West centers on the city of Pec, bordering Montenegro on the west and northwest, the Sanjak on the north, and Albania on the south and southwest. Internally, the brigade area abuts the MNB North, MNB South, and at one point (the town of Glogovac) MNB Center. The area suffered in rapid succession the depravity of ethnic cleansing, damage from NATO bombing, and retaliation by the KLA (UCK) and returning Albanian refugees. By the end of the conflict, the region had one of the highest concentrations of category five housing (totally destroyed), 80 percent in some areas.[29] Most of the Albanian refugees had returned, while most of the minorities (Serbian, Muslim Slav, and Roma) had fled. KLA anger focused on Serbians and Roma, whom they accused of collaboration with the Serbians.[30]

The MNB North contingent numbered 5,222 at the height of KFOR troop strength in October 1999.[31] Built around an Italian brigade, the contingent has included units from Spain, Portugal, Argentina, Bulgaria, and Turkey, under over-all French command. MNB West CIMIC consists of approximately 60 officers and enlisted personnel. From its formation until November 2002, when KFOR combined the brigade area with MNB South, the Italians were the lead nation ably supported by the Spaniards. Because of their long-standing involvement with Albania proper, the Italians understood the local culture and enjoyed good relations with the Kosovar Albanians. The Italians also got on particularly well with Orthodox monks at the monasteries in Decane and Pec, often bringing them food as well as providing escorts.[32]

Initially the troops of MNB West had their hands full trying to keep order and assisting in the massive humanitarian relief effort. As occurred elsewhere in Kosovo, KFOR proved unable to protect all Serbians, Roma, and Muslim Slavs from retaliation. They did, however, succeed in protecting the one remaining Serbian enclave in the brigade area, Gorazdevac. The Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese soldiers in MNB West generally received high marks from the UN and NGOs with whom they worked. Local Albanians criticized the Italians for allowing Serbian paramilitaries to burn buildings in Pec,

but it is by no means clear that they had enough troops to stop them without a major battle. NGO, IO, and UN agency members also complained that Italian officers lacked fluency in English. They gave the Portuguese, and particularly the Spaniards higher marks in this regard. Nonetheless, the brigade performed yeoman service during its first year, protecting minority communities, escorting convoys, providing humanitarian aid, and aiding in the rebuilding effort.

As in all areas of Kosovo, the most challenging task has been to facilitate minority returns. Most went to the village of Gorazdevac. Some returnees had lived in the village before the war, while refugees came from other parts of Kosovo. Understandably, Serbians had little interest in returning to communities from which they had fled. KFOR units had to escort returnees and protect the enclave. Even this activity created problems with the majority community. Albanians living in villages beyond Gorazdevac had to pass through the Serbian enclave to reach Pec. They complained that the new security arrangements cut them off from the regional center. Serbians in the enclave had problems of their own; they required military escort if they wished to shop in PEC. Setting up shopping excursions resulted in a major tactical error on the part of MNB West. The brigade organized one such excursion without coordinating their activities with UNHCR or local NGOs. As a result, local merchants and inhabitants were unprepared for the visit and responded with hostility toward the Serbians.

These problems notwithstanding, the Italians and their allies generally enjoyed good relations with the Albanian and Serbian communities, UNMIK, and the numerous humanitarian organizations in the brigade area. Ironically, the very intensity of ethnic violence contributed to the relative calm that followed. After the ethnic cleansing, destruction of Albanian property in the wake of the Serbian withdrawal, and the KLA reprisals, few Serbians wanted to return to their former homes. Thus while the humanitarian crisis challenged the brigade, the threat of renewed ethnic violence did not, by and large, complicate matters.

The relative calm of MNB West no doubt figured into the decision to merge the operational area with MNB South in November 2002 to create the new MNB Southwest, headquartered in Prizren and lead by the Germans. The Italians, in turn, moved to Pristina to assume

their role as lead nation in the new Multinational Specialized Unit (MNSU). MNSU functions as a military police unit, working closely with UNMIK civilian police to combat organized crime throughout the province of Kosovo.[33]

MNB Center, The British.

MNB center is geographically the smallest, but demographically the largest, brigade area in Kosovo, encompassing the capital city of Pristina and the historic site of Lazar's defeat, Kosovo Polje. The brigade area also contains KFOR and UNMIK Headquarters, as well as the main offices of numerous humanitarian organizations. The capital has also become a center of organized crime as well as the site of intense political activity. While Serbians fled Pristina and its environs, a significant population remains in the city and in outlying villages, usually surrounded by hostile Albanians.

The MNB Center contingent numbered 9,380 at the height of KFOR troop strength in October 1999.[34] Built around a British brigade, the contingent has included units from Finland, Norway, Sweden, Hungary, Ireland, Russia, the Czech Republic, and Canada, under over-all British command. Led by the British, the brigade has worked to provide a safe and secure environment, stem the exodus of Serbians, facilitate refugee returns, rebuild critical infrastructure, and cooperate with UNMIK to further the goal of a multiethnic, democratic Kosovo.[35]

The British army entered Kosovo with more experience of civil conflict than any other NATO country. To 30 years of counterinsurgency operations in Ireland could be added a century of imperial policing throughout a global empire. While none of its campaigns exactly foreshadowed contemporary peace support operations, collectively they provide a vast body of practical knowledge upon which to draw.[36] The British base their approach to internal security on the common law principle, "aide to the civil power." Under this legal construct, soldiers lend their skills and good offices to civil authorities confronted with unrest ranging from riot to insurrection. The civilians never abdicate responsibility, and the soldiers are bound by the same laws governing the behavior of

any other members of society, especially the principle of "minimum force." British soldiers in Northern Ireland, for example, can be charged in a civilian court for any actions taken in performance of their duties. If they kill or injure anyone, they must demonstrate that their use of force was justified and limited.[37]

Limitation of the use of force and legal accountability for using it forced the British army to take a more comprehensive, less military approach to quelling disturbances. Both soldiers and civilians worked to identify and address legitimate grievances upon which unrest fed. Known as "winning hearts and minds," this approach often turned a hostile, or at best sullen, population into a cooperative one. Cooperation in turn produced intelligence on the actions and whereabouts of insurgents, which in turn led to the focused and effective use of force against them. Grievances ranged from bread and butter issues like running water, health care, and education to independence. Tangible improvements in quality of life, however, always proved easier to grant than political concessions.[38] Kosovo is not, of course, Northern Ireland. Neither imperial policing nor counterinsurgency provides a precise formula for peace operations. However, the British army's long experience with civil conflict has profoundly shaped its response to all unconventional military tasks. MNB Center CIMIC operations clearly reflect the influence of the British Army's experience in "operations other than war."

British KFOR has the smallest specifically dedicated CIMIC unit of any lead nation in Kosovo. Only 12 people comprised the Civil-Military Operations (CMO) group at British brigade headquarters in Pristina. Such a small commitment of personnel would reflect a profound disinterest in CIMIC were it not for the brigade commanders proclamation that "CIMIC is every Soldier's job." This simple statement sets the British apart from other lead nations. The American commander behaves as though CA *is not* his primary responsibility; the French commander openly declares that he *cannot perform his duties* without the CIMIC unit; but the British commander understands that CIMIC *is* his job. The distinction in outlook could not be more profound, and it reflects the much older "aide to the civil power" model. This understanding is reflected in the simple but vital decision to co-locate UNMIK police headquarters at brigade headquarters.

The brigade's conceptual approach to its task also reflects this comprehensive understanding of the mission. The CMO group delineates its tasks in three operational categories: support of military operations (primarily facilitating return of refugees), support of UNMIK (political development and critical infrastructure), and "hearts and minds" (schools, clinics, community centers, etc.) Next to "hearts in minds" in the "CMO Operational Lines" flow chart, appear the words, "force protection."[39]

This linkage, so natural to the British approach, so foreign to the American, deserves some comment. The U.S. military generally understands force protection in fairly literal terms: construction of secure bases, robust rules of engagement, protective equipment, restrictions on individual movement, etc.[40] While not neglecting these physical precautions, the British army understands security in broader terms. Good relations with the local community, which often produces sound intelligence, are just as important to protecting soldiers as flak jackets and barbed wire. The British also understand that an over-reliance on traditional force protection creates a barrier between peacekeepers and the local population.

This more nuanced approach to force protection also affects the conduct of operations. Unencumbered by "battle rattle" and the need to move armed to the teeth in groups of four, British soldiers have a much easier time interacting with local people. I once observed an American colonel visit a Kosovo Protection Corps headquarters surrounded by a squad of heavily armed soldiers. Nothing in the situation warranted such extreme precautions. I also accompanied a British Colonel into a Serbian apartment building surrounded by hostile Albanian neighbors in downtown Pristina. Assisted by a single interpreter, he entered the building in shirtsleeves, wearing a beret, and carrying only a sidearm. This relaxed approach soon revealed his real source of security. An elderly Serbian woman (obviously a leader in her community) gave the colonel a hug and kisses on both cheeks and invited him up to her apartment for coffee. Her friendship provided far more protection than a flak jacket.

This episode also reveals another truth about peace operations: the importance of receiving hospitality. The United States has what has been described as a "low-context" culture. Impatient of results and persuaded that "time is money," Americans in their

business and even in their social dealings want to "get to the point," "cut to the chase," "talk turkey." They have little patience for the relationship building that most cultures require before doing business. The British colonel chatted with the Serbian women over various mundane things for most of the meeting before getting to the reason for his visit. Accepting a cup of coffee or a cigarette from some one who has nothing else to offer is vital for building the good relations upon which CIMIC depends.

Despite this highly effective approach, MNB Center's CIMIC record is not perfect. Early efforts to construct a market for Serbians and Albanians failed. Ironically, members from the two communities will engage in business out of their car trunks at night, when no one can see them interacting with the "enemy." There have also been complaints of the brigade setting up their own refugee returns without involving the humanitarian community. Finally, the British army's comprehensive approach feels very much like co-option to some NGOs. These criticisms notwithstanding, the MNB Center approach to CIMIC and its results remain impressive.

UNHCR representatives and NGO personnel generally found the British to be more effective at CIMIC than other national contingents. They launched foot patrols in Pristina as soon as they arrived, preventing much of the destruction that occurred in other brigade areas. In the villages, they billeted soldiers with Serbians frightened of Albanian retaliation. They manned check points with an easy going, nonconfrontational style that defused tension. Several NGO/IO observers described them as "in a class by themselves" among the NATO peacekeepers.

BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The Kosovo intervention yields valuable lessons that can inform the conduct of future missions. For purpose of discussion, these lessons may be divided into strategic, operational, and tactical; however, this distinction blurs in the field. No past mission can provide a precise blueprint for any future one. Broad principles and general guidelines useful in planning and conducting peace operations can, however, be derived from careful study of pervious interventions. These lessons are particularly relevant for the U.S. Army.

Strategic Planning.

NATO had relatively little time to cobble together a multinational operations plan amid an escalating bombing campaign and a worsening refugee crisis. The plan envisioned three scenarios: a fighting entry into Kosovo, a peaceful handover from the retreating Yugoslav Army, and a hybrid situation somewhere between the two extremes. Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) drew up the CIMIC plan as part of the overall mission design.

On paper at least, the SHAPE CIMIC plan was comprehensive and flexible. It assumed that KFOR would provide "life saving" support in the first phase of the mission; that the international community would appoint a lead agency; and that only Britain and the United States would have CIMIC up and running from the start.[41] The plan outlined three broad CIMIC aims: "Provide CIMIC support to the force; provide temporary civil administration; maximize IO/NGO capabilities to assist Kosovars to establish a self-sustaining civil administration."[42] Specific tasks included the whole range of activities from rebuilding infrastructure to refugee return and democratization. The SHAPE plan envisioned interconnected CIMIC Centers at local, brigade, and province level.

Impressive as the plan looked on paper, it had several weaknesses that should be addressed in future missions. Of necessity, CIMIC units had to be created within each brigade area based on the capabilities and resources of troop contributing states. This approach meant that the quality of CIMIC operations would vary widely. Worse still, the absence of a full CIMIC headquarters unit inhibited coordination and consistency. As a result, national interests, such as the German desire to resettle Kosovar refugees from Germany, took precedence over strategic considerations. Furthermore, the lead agency, UNHCR, was not closely involved in planning, while most other humanitarian organizations were left out entirely.

Recommendation. Liaison between key international organizations (UNHCR, ICRC, major NGOs, etc.) needs to be strengthened at the planning stage. This requires developing permanent mechanisms for exchange of information and coordination of activities. While some improvements have been made, more needs to be done. One NATO officer has been designated to liaise with UNHCR and other

organizations, but given the resources of the alliance and the scope of complex emergencies, more assets could be devoted to this work. Troop-contributing nations should also seek out and institutionalize opportunities for information exchange, coordination, and planning *before* a mission occurs. Given its emphasis on task specialization and the consequent tendency of experience to become compartmentalized, the U.S. military in particular should create more opportunities for on-going cooperation.

Civil-Military Cooperation or Cooption?

The biggest challenge in bridging the gap between humanitarian and military actors in complex emergencies consists in reconciling differing perceptions of the mission and each other's role within it. Virtually every humanitarian organization harbors at least some unease about CIMIC, and more than a few remain outright hostile towards it. They see the entire concept as an effort to subordinate their activities to the military mission. NATO's frank admission that CIMIC is a "force multiplier" contributes to this unease. The soldiers have learned that dispensing humanitarian aid can improve their image with the population and make their other duties more palatable. An understandable human desire to help those in need further encourages this tendency.

The humanitarian community raises certain valid objections to soldiers doing relief work on their own. First, militaries generally lack experience with, and in some cases even an understanding of, the complexity of delivering aid. They may rush to meet a need in one location without considering whether the same quality of assistance can be delivered elsewhere and what such uneven delivery of services does to community relations. Because they see humanitarian aid as a tool to be used in furthering the military objective, soldiers may also wish to withhold relief supplies as punishment for some infraction or hostile act. Such an approach is antithetical to the mission of all humanitarian organizations and cannot be tolerated. In addition, military personnel tend to treat most problems as logistical. Asked to facilitate minority returns to Kosovo, they would determine the number of returnees, factor in the time frame for the operation, and then calculate the transportation

and escort needs to bring people back, ignoring the enormous social, economic, and psychological complexities of return. Finally, relief agencies feel that in delivering humanitarian aid, soldiers create an intolerable ambiguity in the minds of recipients. Is the soldier here to enforce the rules, if necessary at the point of a gun, or does he/she come to deliver food and clothing? Is the man or woman delivering supplies really from a relief agency, or is he/she a soldier in disguise?[43]

If they had their druthers, most relief organizations would insist on as a clear a separation of military and humanitarian tasks as possible. They would prefer that soldiers stick to maintaining security and freedom of movement. Under certain circumstances, they would welcome the military lending its enormous resources as an "aid multiplier." A UNHCR protection officer frankly admitted that NATO forces in Macedonia saved thousands of lives by constructing, virtually overnight, refugee camps with adequate shelter and sanitation—a task beyond the capacity of any IO or NGO at the time.

Recommendation. Most soldiers and relief workers understand that they need one another. They have overlapping but not identical missions. The effectiveness of the overlap can, however, be increased and its value to both missions enhanced. CIMIC can function as both a "force multiplier" and an "aid multiplier." The goal should be synergy, making the mission, as a whole, more effective than any of its component parts. For both morale and community-relations purposes, soldiers need to be seen engaging in hands-on relief projects. They should, however, do so under the direction of the lead relief organization, usually UNHCR, or the NGO council/coordinating body.[44] Such coordination would hardly compromise the military mission but could maximize use of resources and ensure equitable distribution of aid. The military would need to relinquish strategic command of the relief project, and relief organizations would have to share some of their turf. Both, however, could benefit enormously from such cooperation. The military can lend its enormous logistical and engineering assets to an emergency relief effort, but it should do so with the cooperation and guidance of IOs with more humanitarian experience and a better understanding of exactly what is needed when and where.

Once again, planning and prepositioning of assets is crucial. The greatest coordination problems in Kosovo occurred during the first 6 months of the mission when the situation was most chaotic. Valuable time and energy were wasted in developing coordination on the ground, which should have been done prior to entering the province.

Bridging the Cultural Gap.

Improved cooperation depends on better understanding of and respect for one another's institutions. The vertical organizational structure of the military does not mesh well with the horizontal organizational structure of humanitarian organizations. Aid workers generally enjoy much greater latitude in the conduct of their duties than do their military counterparts. Soldiers prefer a clear objective and like to take decisive action to achieve it. Relief workers take a more nuanced approach to what they see as complex problems, preferring to go slowly.

While Kosovo and Bosnia have done much to build mutual respect, considerable misunderstanding still exists. Soldiers even accused UNHCR workers of being naïve about the dangers of a war zone. NGO/IO personnel, many of whom have worked in more dangerous environments than most soldiers, resented such paternalism. For their part, soldiers found the profoundly antimilitary attitudes of some relief workers offensive. Both partners were quite capable of jealously guarding their turf.

Information Sharing

Accurate information on the local situation is vital to the success of both humanitarian and military missions. Such information should be exchanged as freely as possible. However, many IOs/NGOs complain that security briefings often provide them with little useful information, and that when they request more detail, the military responds with, "That information is classified." Any military unit must at times withhold information for security reasons. However, soldiers almost automatically fall back on the "classified" rule, even when the information requested will not compromise security

or sources. Soldiers should also understand that, although IOs/NGOs desire to assist them, they cannot always reveal confidential information. This limitation is especially true for the International Committee of the Red Cross/Red Crescent, for whom the guarantee of confidentiality gains them access to prisons and detention centers around the world.

Recommendation. Regular and sustained interaction may be the only antidote for prejudice and misunderstanding. While some steps have been taken to improve cooperation through education, they remain limited and ad hoc. A very small percentage, particularly in the larger militaries, of soldiers likely to deploy on a peace operation will have had prolonged contact with humanitarian organizations. Given their size and specific humanitarian focus, most relief workers will have had at least some prolonged contact with at least one military unit in the field, although this experience will probably have been mixed.

Building a study unit on CIMIC into the Command and Staff College courses taken by captains and majors in virtually all armies could accomplish a great deal without placing inordinate demands on training time or resources. These units would be most effective if taught in part by NGO/IO personnel, who would at the same time gain first hand knowledge of military operations, culture, etc. Personnel exchanges in which members of these organizations and military officers attended each other's training course could further enhance communication and cooperation.

Security, Law, and Order.

Despite SHAPE's three-option plan, KFOR entered Kosovo prepared for only two scenarios, neither of which occurred: a fighting entry to expel the Yugoslav army and paramilitaries, and a peaceful hand over of the province. Instead a power vacuum opened between the retreating army and the occupying force. Fleeing Serbian paramilitaries burned and looted Albanian homes before KFOR troops arrived or, in some cases, as they stood by and watched. A few months later, returning Albanians attacked Serbian and Roma property in retaliation. In some sectors soldiers again looked on and, in one case, remarked that retribution was inevitable.

The British managed to reduce such destruction in their brigade area by mounting foot patrols similar to those used in Northern Ireland from the outset of the their mission in Kosovo.

Recommendation. The mandate for any humanitarian intervention in a failed state should include police powers and require the intervening force to oppose lawlessness as well as maintain military security. Such powers should be of limited duration, lasting only until UN, civilian, and/or local police can assume responsibility for ordinary law enforcement. Following the British practice in Pristina, UN CIVPOL headquarters should be collocated with brigade headquarters or have some suitable mechanism to coordinate activities created.

Length of Deployment.

Few aspects of civil-military cooperation bother humanitarian organizations more than the short-term nature of military deployments. U.S. forces in Kosovo operate on a 6-month rotation; the French deploy for only 4 months. Most NGOs deploy personnel for at least a year, UNHCR for as many as 2 years in hazardous duty stations (with leave). The high turnover rate of military personnel causes no end of difficulty for their humanitarian counterparts. No sooner did a CIMIC officer become effective in his position than he left Kosovo and a replacement had to be familiarized with humanitarian work in the brigade area. Civil-military relations could go from good to poor in an instant because of personnel change. NGO/IO personnel tired of repeating the same briefings, answering the same questions, and rebuilding the same trust every couple of months.

The United States has improved the situation by overlapping the Civil Affairs battalion rotations by 1 week. The serving unit thus has a chance to share experience with its replacement. However, the CA officers consider this hand-off period too short to guarantee a smooth transition. Most of the other NATO units had no transition period at all.

Recommendation. Although NATO and its partners should be able to standardize troop rotations to 6 months, they will probably not agree to longer deployments. Member states point out that a

6-month deployment effectively removes a unit from other duties for an entire year: 3 months to train for the mission, 6 months in the field, and 3 months for leaves and retraining for other missions. The 6-month deployment could be made more effective by increasing the overlap period, at least for the CIMIC/CA battalion commander and his staff. Year-long deployments for key personnel might be made feasible by a more enlightened leave policy. With the number of military flights in and out of Kosovo and with most troop contributors 8 hours flying time or less away, monthly leaves should not be that difficult.

Implications for the U.S. Military.

The previous recommendations apply universally to all military units deploying for a humanitarian intervention. Because of its size and nature, the U.S. military faces additional challenges in conducting peace support operations.

1. *Over-emphasis on Force Protection*: The United States emphasizes force protection more than any other unit in Kosovo. As one senior member of an international organization observed at the start of the KFOR mission, the American military behaved "as though force protection was the mission" instead of a means of achieving it. Driven by domestic political considerations, which deem the loss of even one soldier in a peace operation unacceptable, force protection rules bear no meaningful relationship to the security environment in which soldiers operate.

Robust rules of engagement, over-emphasis on force protection, and the impatience of American culture have made U.S. soldiers more confrontational than they need to be for most peacekeeping situations. Relief workers and other civilians have repeatedly complained of GIs being brusque, rude, and, in many cases, outright abusive at checkpoints. One senior IO official noted astutely that even the way Americans carry their weapons intimidates people unnecessarily. While the British cradle their Armalites in a disarming manner that leaves them no less ready to respond, Americans carry rifles in the *engarde* position, treating every one they encounter as a potential threat.

In a peace operation this intimidating posture hinders development of good civil-military relations. People prefer to be trusted rather than threatened. Without putting the lives of American soldiers at risk, it might be possible to reassess the nature of force protection. Good community relations, which can lead to accurate information about the situation on the ground, may do more to keep soldiers safe than barbed wire, hardtop humvees, and heavy weapons.

2. *Better Integration of CIMIC/CA with the Military Missions*. The sheer size and complexity of the American armed forces presents further challenges to effective civil-military cooperation. Specialization, which may provide certain advantages in conventional war, becomes a disadvantage in peace operations. NGO/IO personnel note that the American Civil Affairs battalion seems detached from Task Force Falcon of which it is a part. As a result, CA officers cannot call upon the enormous resources at the disposal of the force commander. The Austrian CIMIC officer had only to stroll across the compound to get the well cleaning equipment he needed, but his American counterpart would have had to go through layers of bureaucracy even to request the use of such equipment. He would then probably have been told that the equipment could be used only for its strictly designated purpose: supporting the military mission. At the very least, the delay in getting a response discourages most aid workers from even asking for help.

Subcontracting of services to companies such as Kellogg Brown & Root further restricts the force commander and his CIMIC officers from employing equipment that could be used to aid in the relief and recovery mission.[45] They could not participate in the kind of joint project done in the French brigade area. After the Belgian Red Cross built a school in a village, French engineers used their equipment to construct a playground in front of the school. The project respected the IO's role, employed assets the Red Cross did not have and which otherwise sat idle, and improved relations between the community and the brigade. Everyone benefited.

3. *Decentralization of Command and Control*. The American military in peace operations tends to be rigidly hierarchical. Junior officers are allowed relatively little latitude in carrying out orders and few

opportunities for taking initiative. Routine requests for even minimal assistance often require asking up the chain of command with the inevitable delays and frequent denials. Since much cooperation occurs locally, junior officers should be permitted greater freedom of action within broad mission guidelines.

4. *Lack of Cultural Education*. American soldiers, like their civilian counterparts, belong to a low-context, can-do, take-charge, get-to-the point culture. We have little patience for relationship building, and our superpower status generally insulates us from having to negotiate on anyone else's terms. We trail most developed nations in the study of foreign languages. As a result, we do not travel well. While the military can hardly be expected to change engrained social habits, it can do a better job of educating soldiers about the history, culture, society, and politics of the lands it must enter. Foreign Area Officers (FAOs) represent a valuable and underutilized resource that can help to remedy this situation. Universities and think tanks across the country contain regional specialists, who could be employed on a temporary basis to prepare training materials and provide predeployment briefings. The strengthening of the FAO Program can further enhance CIMIC operations.

Conclusion: Iraq and Beyond.

Mounting casualties and spiraling costs in Iraq make the issues of civil-military cooperation timelier than ever. The best way to avoid getting bogged down in a costly and protracted nation-building operation is to do CIMIC well from the outset. Effective cooperation maximizes use of military and humanitarian assets, increases the security of the troops, and facilitates a more rapid transfer of responsibility to civilian authorities. Education and training are essential to producing unity of effort in the field. Personnel exchanges, joint courses, and combined planning can occur without compromising the integrity of either the military or humanitarian missions. Cooperation and liaison on a regular basis can maximize the effectiveness of humanitarian intervention while maintaining the essential distinction between military and civilian roles.

ENDNOTES

1. R. Janssens and H. Teitler, "CIMIC since 1945. Historical, Political, and Operational Contexts," *NL-Arms, Netherlands Annual Review of Military Studies 2002: Civil-Military Cooperation, a Marriage of Reason,* Breda: Royal Netherlands Military Academy (KMA), 2002, p. 13.

2. *AJP-9 NATO Civil-Military Co-operation Doctrine*, Brussels, Belgium, June 2003, p. 1-1.

3. *Ibid*., pp. 1.3-1.4.

4. *Joint Publication 3-57.1: Joint Doctrine for Civil Affairs,* Washington: Department of Defense, 2003, p. 1-3.

5. *Ibid*., p. 1-2.

6. This monograph will focus on the period from June 1999 to August 2002, when NATO reduced KFOR troop strength and consolidated brigade areas. For practical purposes, the humanitarian intervention can be deemed ended. The ongoing mission remains one of stabilization. Little more can be done until the final status of the province is resolved.

7. Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History*, New York: New York University Press, 1998, pp. 4-5.

8. *Kosovo Atlas*, Pristina, Kosovo: UNHCR, *et. al*., 2000, p. vi. Since many Albanians boycotted the census, their numbers had to be estimated by the Yugoslav Institute of Statistics.

9. Ivo Daalder and Michael O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's War to Save Kosovo*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000, p. 7.

10. For a detailed discussion of parallel structures, see Howard Clark, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo*, London: Pluto Press, 2000, pp. 95-121.

11. Miron Rezun, *Europe's Nightmare: The Struggle for Kosovo*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001, pp. 45-46.

12. *Ibid*., p. 40.

13. Daadler and O'Hanlon, p. 27.

14. Rezun, p. 44.

15. *Ibid*. The Jashari's became martyrs for the cause. I witnessed what amounted to pilgrimages to their home in Drecnica, which has been restored as a kind of national shrine.

16. In November 2002, MNB West was folded into MNB South, redesignated "MNB Southwest." MNB North became "MNB Northeast," reducing the number of brigade areas to four.

17. Description of CIMIC operations in the five brigade areas based in part on observations and interviews on the ground made in April 2002 and at UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva, August 2003.

18. OSCE, *Kosovo/Kosova: As Seen, as Told,* Vol. II, December 1999, p. xix.

19. *Ibid.*

20. Viet Cong units hung so close to American forces that close air support became very difficult without significant risk to frontline troops. Indeed, an inordinate number of U.S casualties in Vietnam were caused by friendly fire.

21. Walter Kretchik, "Armed for Peace: National Attitudes and Force Protection Posture in Bosnia, 1995-2001," (London: Frank Cass, forthcoming) provides empirical data on the rigidity of the U.S. approach to force protection. I observed the same attitudes during my visit to Kosovo.

22. Because I interviewed both military and NGO personnel, I managed to link the CA office with an NGO with money to dig wells.

23. Anthropologist Edward Hall first articulated the idea of low and high-context cultures. For a succinct explanation of key differences between the two and list of relevant works, see Sayed and Joyce Zafar, "Going Beyond Words," Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research, HYPERLINK "*http://www.sietarhouston.org/articles/articles4.htm*".

24. *Kosovo/Kosova: As Seen, as Told,* Vol. II, pp. 111-112.

25. The Russian unit had developed such poor relations with the local population that it had to be protected by German KFOR and was scheduled for withdrawal as of April 2002.

26. *Kosovo/Kosova: As Seen, as Told,* Vol. II, p. xix.

27. *Ibid*, pp. 111-112.

28. For details of Austrian CIMIC projects, see Dr. Link, MinR, *KOSOVO/ Bezirk und Stadt SUVA REKA: Zivil militarische Zusammenarbeit (CIMIC),* Vienna: Austrian Ministry of Defense, August 8, 2002.

29. *Kosovo Atlas*, p. v; *Kosovo/Kosova: As Seen, as Told,* Vol. II, p. 47.

30. *Ibid*., pp. 47-56.

31. *Kosovo/Kosova: As Seen, as Told,* Vol. II, p. xix.

32. Information provided by UNHCR official assigned to the brigade area.

33. KFOR official Website, information on force structure, *http://www.nato.int/ kfor/kfor/msu.htm*.

34. *Kosovo/Kosova: As Seen, as Told,* Vol. II, p. xix.

35. British KFOR CIMIC briefing given to the author, April 2002.

36. I argue this point extensively in *Peace Operations and Intrastate Conflict: The Sword or the Olive Branch?* Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999.

37. For discussion of the evolution of these principles and their application, see Thomas R. Mockaitis, *British Counterinsurgency, 1919-1960*, London: Macmillan, 1990; and *British Counterinsurgency in the Post-Imperial Era*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995.

38. *Ibid*.

39. British Brigade HQ Civil-Military Operations power point briefing, April 2002.

40. Office of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Pub 3-03.3, *Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Peace Operations*, Washington, DC: Joint Staff, February 12, 1999, pp. 1-17, holds the force commander responsible for setting reasonable force protection guidelines. My observations corroborated by the work of other researchers suggest a persistently rigid approach focused on physical security.

41. SHAPE CIMIC briefing, "CIMIC Planning Considerations for Operations in Kosovo."

42. *Ibid*.

43. This problem has been exacerbated by Special Forces units in Afghanistan engaging in relief work, armed but in civilian clothes.

44. HQ (6) KFOR Briefing, Naples, Italy, August 23, 2001.

45. CA officers I interviewed indicated that Kellogg, Brown & Root's contract for Kosovo did not allow use of its equipment for purely humanitarian projects.