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## Blue Helmets: The Strategy of UN Military Operations

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makes reading this work informative and thought provoking. A related strength lies in the intellectual nudging provided by the notes in each chapter. A quick search on the internet spurred by an intriguing note or cited source can reveal a previously unknown body of thought and become a catalyst for further interest and reading.

In addition to having ready access to the internet, potential readers would be well advised to keep a good dictionary nearby, since the book is replete with words that fall outside common usage. If a tendency for verbal complexity can be considered a drawback, a related complaint is that many will find portions of the book very dry. These two factors will probably keep those outside its target audience from reading the book. This would be a shame, because this work rewards the reader handsomely for the time and trouble required.

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Hillen, John. *Blue Helmets: The Strategy of UN Military Operations*. Dulles, Va.: Brassey's, 1998. 305pp. \$26.95  
 This book undertakes a rigorous examination of the military aspects of UN peacekeeping missions and offers a persuasive analysis of why some succeeded while others failed. For this task the author is highly qualified. John Hillen fought as a U.S. Army officer in the Persian Gulf War and studied as a Fulbright scholar in England, receiving his doctorate from Oxford in international relations. He is currently the

Olin fellow for national security at the Council on Foreign Relations.

The author groups UN missions into four general types: observation, traditional peacekeeping, second-generation peacekeeping, and enforcement. Using the "prisms" of force structure, command and control, and military objectives, Hillen analyses each type both generically and through detailed case studies, supplementing published accounts and documentary sources with interviews of prominent participants. At the price of some repetitiveness, he builds a convincing edifice of evidence and logic.

The main conclusions may be summarized in a few sentences. Despite the UN's lack of authority or well developed structures for planning and executing missions, it has succeeded when its objectives have been predominantly political, when the scale of operations has been relatively small, and when indigenous elements have cooperated—conditions generally characterizing the first two types of operation listed above. The UN has also "succeeded" when it has "contracted out" to a powerful nation (the United States) or a tested coalition (Nato) the conduct of operations whose objectives were largely military, that required large, heavily armed forces, and that faced violent opposition—conditions generally prevailing in the latter two types of missions. The UN has failed, sometimes catastrophically, when it has undertaken such missions itself, as in the Congo in the early 1960s, the concluding phase of operations in Somalia, and the United Nations Protection Force experience in Yugoslavia. In cases like these, shortcomings in command and

control, inconsistencies and turbulence in force structure, and disparity between objectives and means have proven fatal to success.

Hillen generally avoids political issues and normative judgments, but he is bluntly critical of nations on the Security Council, including the United States, for succumbing to political expedience and passing the buck to the United Nations to conduct operations they are unwilling to undertake themselves. He also makes clear his belief that the capacity of the UN to conduct large, complex operations in hostile environments will not improve significantly whatever reforms it may undertake, because the ultimate cause of failure stems from a lack of sovereign authority, which will continue to reside in the nation-state.

Hillen's analysis should be of interest to a broad spectrum of theorists and practitioners. While the realism he exemplifies may be anathema to some utopians, if it saves the UN from being tasked with operations that can only result in failure, it may ultimately serve to strengthen the organization.

LAWRENCE E. MODISSETT  
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These two books, although dissimilar in size and scope, are vitally connected to an understanding of long-term strategic stability in the post-Cold War world. The titles of both books derive from Adam Smith's 1776 classic *The Wealth of Nations*.

David S. Landes is an economic historian at Harvard University. He reviews the standard geographic explanations for the disparities in wealth and in relative levels of industrialization. He then affirms that it is the relationship between secular and religious authority, the willingness of government to protect rather than impinge upon private property rights, and the cultural work ethic that, in sum, determine which nation shall be rich and which shall be poor.

Landes then tests his hypothesis with elegantly written historical case studies on such modern overseas empires as Spanish colonial America, British colonial Africa, the Europeanized rim of modern Asia, and Japan's regional empire projects in Asia, to name a few. Using the very best of historical sources and highly sophisticated interpretation, Landes horsewhips virtually every buzzword theory of economic development. For example, Landes shows that the Spaniards really did exterminate huge segments of indigenous people in the Western Hemisphere, that Spanish economic organization and technological knowledge were necessary to jump-start modernization, that the Spanish monarchy stifled much of the resultant economic growth, and that Latin America is nevertheless far better off today for the Spaniards having colonized it long ago. In the powerful telling of this process, Landes

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Landes, David. *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor*. New York: Norton, 1998. 650pp. \$30

Cohen, Daniel. *The Wealth of the World and the Poverty of Nations*. Translated by Jacqueline Lindenfield. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1998. 152pp. \$27.50