

1997

## Peace Operations: Developing an American Strategy

Jeff Kojac

Antonia Handler Chayes

George T. Raach

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

---

### Recommended Citation

Kojac, Jeff; Chayes, Antonia Handler; and Raach, George T. (1997) "Peace Operations: Developing an American Strategy," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 50 : No. 2 , Article 11.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol50/iss2/11>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu](mailto:repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu).

on the ability of the U.S. Navy to continue to meet its ever-increasing commitments—in the Persian Gulf, the Western Pacific, the Caribbean, and off the coasts of Africa and Bosnia—must be weighed very carefully.

Cooperation between the U.S. Navy and the Russian Navy is certainly a very good idea that should be pursued whenever it is in our interest to do so. However, with our global responsibilities, the United States simply cannot make a decision about U.S.-Russian naval arms limitations based solely on their impact on the bilateral relationship between our two countries and their navies.

In their introduction, the authors write that if their work stimulates new thought and perhaps a new policy direction, it will have served its purpose. This book should certainly prompt thoughtful analysis of the proposals put forward. It reinforces several of the bilateral exchanges currently ongoing. Whether it will contribute to a new policy direction will be decided by future civilian and naval leaders in both countries. Members of the national security community interested in naval issues and particularly naval arms limitations will find this a useful book.

Joseph C. Strasser  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy, Retired  
Pennsylvania State University

---

Chayes, Antonia Handler, and George T. Raach, eds. *Peace Operations: Developing an American Strategy*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense Univ. Press, 1995. 178pp. (No price given)

Because it is probable that the American military will frequently be committed to peace operations in the future, today's policymakers, commanders, and service members would be prudent to prepare for these missions. *Peace Operations* may assist them in their task by adding to the discussion of what concerns must be addressed when considering and participating in such interventions.

This short book of essays originated in the congressional Commission on the Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces. The editors and authors, many of whom were members of the commission, have

political, military, legal, and academic backgrounds; several have hands-on experience; and two have done important research on this topic at the Henry L. Stimson Center, a defense-oriented think tank in Washington, D.C.

This work counters the notion that Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) detract from the participating units' warfighting abilities. The authors point out that regardless of the strains and dangers of operational deployments, units are more likely to be at high levels of morale, cohesion, and discipline when they are doing something real than when they are in garrison. They assert that there are general points that account for the success or failure of a peace operation: the match between force capabilities and mission requirements; the force's ability

to anticipate (by understanding the other party's perspective, strengths, weaknesses, and concerns); adaptability (ability to deal with changes, failures, and exogenous events); and the consent of those involved in the conflict. (This view fits in with the observation that the rule to be learned from Somalia was categorically not to avoid "mission creep" but that failed states cannot be rebuilt when they are dominated by groups with self-serving, mutually destructive habits.)

The book emphasizes that peace operations that prevent or ameliorate crises are more fruitful than overlooking incipient state collapse and allowing matters to deteriorate into a Hobbesian reality. At the same time, *Peace Operations* acknowledges that even though the military can stabilize crises and separate warring parties, it cannot solve underlying political, social, or economic problems. Importantly, several of the essayists describe the requirements needed to prepare and educate our armed forces for peace operations: crowd control, negotiation, relations with UN civilian staff and nongovernment organizations (NGOs), and the employment of minimal force, *inter alia*.

Many Americans impatient with geopolitical nuances are uncomfortable with peace operations because the missions are often ambiguous and do not include victory as an objective, or even identify the enemy. This lack of democratic enthusiasm contributes to resistance on the part of the Pentagon wholeheartedly to accept MOOTW missions, preferring more traditional roles. In his chapter, A.J. Bacevich, of the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins, argues

that a desentimentalization of casualties is vital to the American military's acceptance of peace missions, be it interstate, intrastate peacekeeping, humanitarian, or peace enforcement. Because of its media-driven democracy, it is impossible for the United States to suffer or inflict casualties without internal political ramifications. Bacevich does well to note that "if policy makers expect the military to sign up for [peace] missions . . . then the death of American service members cannot be the basis for immediate and automatic recriminations directed at the services and their leaders, or for precipitous withdrawal that undermines the value of previous sacrifices." This is not to say that mass suffering and bloodletting is desirable or necessary, but that "the loss of a single rifleman does not constitute unacceptable calamity."

Although the book would have been strengthened by drawing on the expertise of Colonels Karl Farris and Mark Walsh at the U.S. Army Peacekeeping Institute, overall, *Peace Operations* is a valuable contribution that leads its readers to think about a topic which many of us perhaps unrealistically wish to avoid.

JEFF KOJAC

Captain, U.S. Marine Corps

---

Dycus, Stephen. *National Defense and the Environment*. Hanover, N.H.: Univ. Press of New England, 1996. 286pp. \$19.95

*National Defense and the Environment*, by Stephen Dycus of Vermont Law School, purports to offer a "new model for understanding the intersection of environmental and security priorities." As Dycus