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International Peacekeeping

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Diehl, Paul F. *International Peacekeeping*. Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1993. 211pp. \$36.50

It is difficult to define precisely international peacekeeping. Paul Diehl suggests that it is "the imposition of neutral and lightly armed interposition forces following a cessation of armed hostilities, and with the permission of the state on whose territory these forces are deployed, in order to discourage a renewal of military conflict and promote an environment under which the underlying dispute can be resolved." This definition is useful, but recent and various historical cases for peacekeeping do not conform to each of its prongs. Nonetheless, the definition serves as a conceptual cornerstone for thinking about peacekeeping, and Diehl's study contains a theoretical construct that fully develops it.

Diehl has centered his study around a comparative analysis of United Nations peacekeeping operations from World War II to 1992, stretching from efforts in the Suez to Yugoslavia. The bulk of the study, however, focuses more narrowly on six operations: the Suez crisis (UNEF I), the Yom Kippur War (UNEF II), and the operations in the Congo (ONUC), Cyprus (UNFICYP), Lebanon (UNIFIL), and Beirut (MNF)—a non-UN force consisting of Americans, British, French, and Italians. These cases were selected because they share certain similarities, notably the neutral interposition of forces on the territory of the consenting state, but significant operations were left out of the analysis. The discarded data includes Namibia (UNTAG), West New Guinea (UNSF), the Golan Heights (UNDOF),

and Cambodia (UNTAC). Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) and Somalia (UNOSOM II) were too recent to be included.

Diehl's goal was to identify empirical generalizations about peacekeeping operations, but the research is narrative and lacks the rigor or testability that could qualify the findings as empirical. Moreover, some of the findings are obvious, such as that "peacekeeping is most appropriate in an interstate conflict in which all parties are willing to halt hostilities and accept a peacekeeping force." There are some interesting results, however, such as that the geographic location of peacekeeping forces is critical to the success of the mission; forces that occupy relatively invulnerable positions with a wide view of observation enhance the likelihood of a successful outcome. This conclusion reflects the unfortunate lesson of the Marine barracks in Beirut. It is also interesting that the UNEF II, during the Yom Kippur War, was the only operation that culminated in a resolution of conflict—the Camp David Accords. Whether peacekeepers are highly successful in preventing combat between parties may be a controlling factor in whether or not there will be a subsequent treaty.

Diehl writes that the end of the Cold War has introduced an era in which the international system will rely heavily on peacekeeping operations to satisfy global peace and security. While this assertion may have had considerable basis in the early 1990s (when the United Nations peacekeeping budget exploded), the deterioration of the efforts in Somalia (UNITAF and UNOSOM

II) into intermittent combat has dampened the willingness of leaders to bind foreign policy too tightly to multilateral peacekeeping.

Although peacekeeping was a useful instrument in reversing animosities fueled by the Cold War (such as in Angola or Afghanistan), Diehl's claim that peacekeeping is becoming more important because "changes in the world over the past few years have lessened the intensity of regional conflicts" and because "disputants have become more amenable to intervention" is clearly wrong. On the contrary, the end of the Cold War has encouraged recalcitrant leaders to stake out nationalist, religious, and ethnic differences that superpower influence might once have contained.

In addition to United Nations peacekeeping, Diehl discusses institutional alternatives, such as a permanent multinational peacekeeping force, regional peacekeeping operations (e.g., the Dominican Republic), and multinational peacekeeping (MNF and MFO). The author suggests that the ad hoc method of United Nations peacekeeping has an edge over regional and multinational operations, but an analysis of each type identifies several advantages that regional and multinational operations have over the United Nations. Regional and multinational forces maintain a more cohesive view of the mission. The nations that field the troops are better able to undertake long-range planning, and they maintain a higher degree of autonomy in their operations. On the other hand, regional or multinational forces operate outside the neutral mantle of the United Nations.

The author also addresses the advent of naval peacekeeping roles. During the Iran-Iraq "tanker war," the United States unilaterally reflagged Kuwaiti oil tankers. In the future, designated naval assets may escort neutral shipping under the direction of the United Nations. Naval forces might also participate in arms limitation verification, such as monitoring the placement of chemical or nuclear weapons on the sea bed or verifying environmental compliance. The author omits mention of the most extensive, and still continuing, United Nations naval operation—policing the embargo against Iraq after Operation Desert Storm.

The strength of this book is in its research and its assimilation of historical peacekeeping cases into a common framework. Several lessons emerge. Peacekeeping operations may be most suitable for maintaining a nervous peace *after* an armed conflict rather than for imposing peace. Thus, successful operations are more often a result of the relevant political circumstances than the operational considerations on the ground. This inference highlights the need to understand the political basis for a particular conflict before introducing peacekeepers. The support or acquiescence of the warring parties, the absence of any significant civil conflict, and the perceived neutrality of the peacekeeping forces seem to be prerequisite political factors for fashioning a durable peace.

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