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The Limits of Military Intervention

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Stern, Ellen, ed. *The Limits of Military Intervention*. Beverly Hills/London: Sage, 1977. 399pp.

Conventional wisdom holds that America's ability to employ military forces abroad now and in the years ahead is strongly influenced by the "Vietnam legacy." Yet the recent spate of books on Vietnam—although they have added much to our understanding of how American involvement came about—have failed to consider in any systematic way the implications of Vietnam for future foreign and defense policies. For the most part we are offered one of two quite superficial perspectives: the "never again" approach that ignores the possibility that the United States may have important interests and obligations abroad; and the "do it better next time" school that seems to accept uncritically the assumptions that led to American involvement in Vietnam some 30 years ago.

The Limits of Military Intervention, the 12th in a series of studies sponsored by the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society, is a collection of 18 essays dealing with the issue of military intervention. The Vietnam experience, the authors suggest, is only one of a number of emerging limitations on the use of military force abroad. Other recent and ongoing developments—changes in the international system, new weapons technologies, the shrinking of America's overseas base systems, the shift to an all-volunteer force, and changes in congressional and public attitudes (partly the consequence of Vietnam)—also serve, individually and collectively, to impose restrictions on the use of military forces abroad. The conclusion, in the words of Ellen Stern, the editor, is that

The limits on . . . military intervention are real. The clearest and notably obvious conclusion . . . is that they are increasing. But the reality of the constraints does not negate the likelihood of particu-

larized military intervention. Crisis situations will arise where a military answer is deemed proper; but the decision makers will have to operate within a narrow scope and delimited time frame.

The essays in this book are uniformly excellent. The papers by Roger Hamburg, Davis B. Bobrow, and Caesar D. Sereseres are valuable in that they deal with subjects, such as command and control, that have not received a great deal of recent attention. Joseph J. Krugel's chapter, "Military Alerts and Diplomatic Signals," and Paul R. Schratz' essay, "National Decision Making and Military Intervention," provide particularly useful perspectives on policymaking and crisis management. Service readers concerned with carrying out military operations will find much of interest in the essays by John R. Pickett, Michael McCgwire, and Lewis S. Sorley. Sam C. Sarkesian's chapter, "Professional Problems and Adaptations," and John E. Mueller's essay, "Changes in American Public Attitudes toward International Involvement," offer especially good insights into changing professional and public perspectives on military intervention. Finally, Ellen Stern deserves special praise for keeping a diverse group of authors within a coherent framework of analysis and for her stimulating prologue to the book.

This book is exceptionally useful in helping to define the changing dimensions and limitations on military intervention. It fills an important gap in the literature and deserves the widest possible audience among those concerned with foreign and defense policies.

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Strack, Harry R. *Sanctions: The Case of Rhodesia*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1978. 296pp.

Sanctions have not compelled white Rhodesians to end their rule. It has been