
NON-TRADITIONAL MISSIONS AND THE FUTURE OF THE U.S. MILITARY

— WILLIAM ROSENAU —

Almost continuously since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the armed forces of the United States have been deployed around the world — and at home — in a variety of missions that have been labeled “non-traditional.” U.S. forces have sheltered Kurds in northern Iraq, patrolled the skies over the Caribbean in search of drug traffickers, and worked to restore order in Somalia. Domestically, these missions have been just as diverse, ranging from patrolling riot-torn Los Angeles, to aiding victims of Hurricane Andrew, to cleaning up a World War I-era chemical research site in a Washington, D.C. residential area.

Such missions are non-traditional in the sense that they diverge from a widely shared assumption about the central purpose of the military. Samuel Huntington described this primary function nearly 40 years ago when he declared that the military is an organization that exists to apply violence.¹ Given this general understanding, it is not difficult to see why counterdrug operations, humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping, and other noncombat missions would be deemed non-traditional.

For a number of critics, these missions are more than non-traditional. At best, they are distractions better left to nonmilitary agencies and organizations; at worst, they threaten to diminish combat effectiveness and thrust the military into dangerously political realms. In the words of an outspoken opponent of non-traditional missions, loading these novel responsibilities onto the back of the armed forces could have the “perverse effect of diverting focus and resources from the military’s central mission of combat training and warfighting”; it could also inject the military into domestic politics to an unprecedented degree.²

This paper will argue that much of the criticism of non-traditional missions reflects a pinched and ahistorical understanding of America’s armed forces and

1. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1957): 11.

2. Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., “The Origins of the American Military Coup of 2012,” *Parameters* 22 (Winter 1992/1993): 4.

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the part they have played in the life of the nation. Throughout the country's history, the armed forces have organized, trained, and equipped themselves to fight and win wars. But before World War II, the military services — particularly the Army and the Marine Corps — saw themselves as having far broader responsibilities.

In Huntington's words, the Army developed an image of itself as an "obedient handyman," a "general servant"³ of the state that carried out a diverse set of highly demanding missions. Occupation duty, peace enforcement, and public works projects at home and abroad were key tasks assigned to the military by political leaders. In short, missions that are today labeled non-traditional are in fact very much a part of the American military experience.

An understanding of this history is particularly important with respect to the Army. As this paper will also argue, the Army, rather than resist non-traditional missions, should selectively embrace them. In the post-Cold War era, the Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps are struggling to protect budgets and force structure. The Army faces similar challenges, but now that its central organizing principle — the defense of Western Europe from conventional attack — has vanished, it is also struggling to create a new sense of purpose. Non-traditional missions could form the core of a new organizational vision for the Army as the nation's general military servant.

The Growth of Non-Traditional Missions

Preparing to fight and win the nation's wars remains the central activity of the American military. The Department of Defense (DoD) has not developed any systematic approach to thinking about or conducting noncombat, nonwar-fighting missions, and these operations have been conducted on a strictly ad hoc basis. Nevertheless, Congress, the military services, and civilian national security officials have come to view non-traditional missions as increasingly important activities for the armed forces. General Colin Powell, for example, has argued that "our armed forces must be capable of accomplishing a wide range of missions . . . peacekeeping and humanitarian operations are a given."⁴

American national interests, according to a recent defense policy document, may "require DoD to perform tasks not essentially military, such as those typically included in the term 'humanitarian assistance.'"⁵ In the post-Cold War world, according to this line of reasoning, noncombat elements of U.S. national power, properly applied, can help halt the erosion of U.S. security, and obviate the need to wage war later on.

Indeed, in the view of the Bush Administration, a strong American contribution to regional and United Nations "conflict prevention efforts, humanitarian

3. Huntington: 261.

4. Colin L. Powell, "U.S. Forces: Challenges Ahead," *Foreign Affairs* 72 (Winter 1992/1993): 36.

5. U.S. Department of Defense, "Peacetime Engagement: A Policy for the Environment Short of War," working paper prepared by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict), 10 February 1993: 26.

assistance and peacekeeping capabilities" could contribute to the "early attenuation of conflict, rather than allowing it to expand into a serious national threat."⁶ The Clinton Administration appears to share this judgment; as a senior Pentagon official testified to Congress last summer, "getting peacekeeping right is one of the most challenging and critical tasks facing our defense effort as we organize our nation's defenses for the post-Cold War world."⁷

The end of the Cold War is the explanation most often cited for the growing use of the military in U.S. humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping, and other non-traditional missions. With the superpower competition at an end, American and other Western military resources have been freed to perform additional tasks. Given their superb logistical and organizational skills, their rigorous training, and their ability to operate in austere environments for extended periods, it is only natural that the military would be seen by civilian policymakers as an ideal instrument for conducting these operations.

Analysts cite two additional reasons for the increase in non-traditional missions: advances in military technology, which have made massive airlift and sealift operations possible, and developments in communications technology, such as worldwide television news services like the Cable News Network, which can quickly mobilize international public opinion.⁸

In the case of the United States, another factor has fueled a growing commitment to noncombat military missions. Almost as a matter of national character, Americans are committed to heroic measures to save the lives of (innocent) victims. This deeply idealistic strain spans the political spectrum. A politician as avowedly conservative as Ronald Reagan, for example, sounds positively Wilsonian in his idealistic call for "stricter humanitarian standards" of international conduct: "Isn't this a moral cause as profound as the struggle against totalitarianism?"⁹

On a more mundane level, the public is also demanding services from its government that only the armed forces will be able to provide. In the absence of the Soviet threat, it becomes easier to question military roles forged during the Cold War and to imagine employing the military to solve humanitarian and other noncombat related problems. During last summer's Mississippi flood, for example, one Marine officer who was preparing to begin military exercises in California told a reporter "we've got thousands of strong, young troops running

6. The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1993): 19.

7. Undersecretary of Defense Frank G. Wisner, testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 14 July 1993, reprinted as "U.S. Peacekeeping Operations: Why, When, How, How Long," *Defense Issues* 8 [1993]: 1. Defense Secretary Les Aspin's September 1993 "Bottom-Up Review" of the nation's military forces outlines how those forces must be shaped and sized to carry out peace enforcement operations.

8. Thomas G. Weiss and Kurt M. Campbell, "Military Humanitarianism," *Survival* 23 (September/October 1991): 453-454.

9. Ronald Reagan, "Cheers for the Army of Conscience," *Los Angeles Times* (Washington edition), 14 December 1992: 11. And as Les Aspin said last year, "Even the most anti-use-of-force liberal wants to use the military to help deliver aid to Somalia." Quoted in Richard H.P. Sia, "Small Wars to Shape U.S. Military," *Baltimore Sun*, 2 December 1992: 1.

up and down here at Camp Pendleton who could be filling sand bags."¹⁰

The following section outlines four non-traditional missions currently being conducted by U.S. military forces: counterdrug, domestic support, humanitarian assistance, and peacekeeping and peace enforcement.

Counterdrug Operations

Last year, DoD spent more than \$1.2 billion to reduce the flow of illegal drugs into the United States.¹¹ In the Andes, U.S. forces train "host nation" police and military units to destroy jungle laboratories; in the Caribbean, Naval reservists patrol in search of traffickers; and in Guatemala, U.S. personnel operate ground-based radar stations designed to detect drugs transported through Central America.¹²

At home, active and reserve forces train law enforcement personnel, assist in marijuana eradication, and provide air and ground transportation and other forms of support to civilian antidrug efforts. In fiscal year 1992, for example, U.S. Forces Command conducted 500 missions in support of civilian interdiction efforts on the southwestern border of the United States.¹³ However, the Clinton Administration recently conducted a high-level review of the military's role in the war on drugs, and according to press accounts, it may reduce the role the armed forces play in drug interdiction.¹⁴

Domestic Support Operations

Disaster relief, environmental assistance, law enforcement and public works projects carried out by the military within the United States are known collectively as domestic support operations. These activities, according to the new Army-Marine Corps doctrinal manual on the subject, are based on "a new awareness of the benefits of military assistance to improve the nation's physical and social infrastructure."¹⁵ The National Guard currently performs many of these functions, but active-duty and reserve forces have also been deployed in response to natural disasters and other emergencies. In the aftermath of Hurri-

10. David Evans, "Why is Our Military So Uninvolved in Our Domestic Crises?" *Chicago Tribune*, 6 August 1993: 19.

11. See, for example, U.S. Department of Defense, *The National Military Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 1992), *passim*. In September 1989, President George Bush declared that fighting illegal drugs was a "high priority national security mission" for the Defense Department.

12. For an official overview of the U.S. military's involvement in the drug war, see Assistant Secretary of Defense Stephen M. Duncan's testimony before the defense subcommittee of the U.S. House Appropriations Committee, 1 April 1992, reprinted as "DoD's Counterdrug Efforts," *Defense Issues* 7 (1992).

13. Testimony of Gen. Dennis J. Reimer before the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, 22 April 1993, reprinted as "Forces Command Meets New Challenges Head-On," *Defense Issues* 8 [1993]: 1.

14. Michael Isikoff, "U.S. Considers Shift in Drug War," *Washington Post*, 16 September 1993: A1.

15. U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps, *FM100-19/FM7-10 Domestic Support Operations*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, U.S. Marine Corps, 1 July 1993: 1-1.

cane Andrew in Florida and Hurricane Iniki in Hawaii, for example, Army units provided food, clothing, and shelter to populations ravaged by high winds and torrential rains.

Military personnel, as mentioned in the previous section, also participate in domestic law enforcement. This participation is sharply circumscribed by the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, which limits the use of federal troops to enforce public law. However, constitutional provisions and statutory exceptions do allow the military to support civilian authorities, particularly in the areas of drug interdiction and riot control.¹⁶

Humanitarian Assistance

As defined by the Army, humanitarian assistance and foreign disaster relief are the use of DoD personnel, equipment, and supplies "to promote human welfare, to reduce pain and suffering, [and] to prevent loss of life or destruction of property" following natural or manmade disasters abroad.¹⁷ During the past eight years, U.S. forces have provided disaster relief and other assistance to more than 100 countries, including Somalia (Operation RESTORE HOPE), Iraq (Operation PROVIDE COMFORT), and Bangladesh (Operation SEA ANGEL). American armed forces have also carried out much smaller, less publicized operations: Last February, for example, a task force from the 25th Infantry Division fed, clothed, and housed 535 Chinese nationals in the Marshall Islands who had attempted to enter the United States illegally.¹⁸ All told, the United States, through military airlift, sealift, and prepositioning, delivered more than 10,000 tons of emergency relief supplies outside the United States.¹⁹

Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping and peace enforcement are distinguished from each other by their respective levels of violence. Peacekeepers, at the request of the belligerents, supervise ceasefires; peace enforcers, on the other hand, use combat power to restore peace between armed groups. Peacekeeping is carried out

in an atmosphere where peace exists and where the former combatants universally prefer peace to continued war. Peace enforcement . . . entails the physical interposition of armed forces to separate ongoing combatants to create a ceasefire that does not exist.²⁰

16. *Ibid.*, 3-0 through 3-2.

17. U.S. Army, *FM 100-5 Operations*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, 14 June 1993: 13-5. Technically, foreign disaster relief is a subset of humanitarian assistance. It is carried out exclusively in emergency situations, often in support of the State Department's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, which distinguishes it from humanitarian assistance.

18. U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps, *Domestic Support Operations*: 5-11.

19. Dick Cheney, *Annual Report [of the Secretary of Defense] to the President and Congress* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1993): 99.

20. Donald M. Snow, "Peacekeeping, Peacemaking and Peace-Enforcement: The U.S. Role in the New International Order," Strategic Studies Institute pamphlet, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., February 1993: 4.

The U.S. military has very little recent experience conducting either. Although U.S. troops have served in U.N. peacekeeping operations since 1948, American involvement has generally been limited to providing airlift and logistical support and a few officers as observers.²¹

But peacekeeping and peace enforcement are likely to become much more important activities in the years ahead. The military, Congress, and civilian national security officials are debating how the armed forces should be trained, equipped, and organized for these missions. The Clinton Administration has indicated that it is committed to having American troops serve as part of a North Atlantic Treaty Organization peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina,²² and 300 U.S. soldiers have already been deployed as border monitors in the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia. However, the administration has backed off from candidate Clinton's campaign pledge to contribute U.S. troops to a standing U.N. peacekeeping force. As U.N. Ambassador Madeleine Albright explained last September,

The U.N. decisionmaking process on peacekeeping must be overhauled. . . . [M]en and women should not be sent in harm's way without a clear mission, competent commanders, sensible rules of engagement, and the means required to get the job done.²³

The deaths of U.S. troops during the course of the U.N.-run operation in Somalia have apparently soured the Clinton Administration on the notion of contributing U.S. military personnel to a standing U.N. peacekeeping force.²⁴

Critiques of Non-Traditional Missions

General Powell, speaking at Harvard University's commencement last June, assured his audience that "nothing gives your warriors greater satisfaction than to use their skills not to destroy life but to relieve human suffering."²⁵ Other military officers, including the Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Southern Command, have embraced non-traditional missions as central to carrying out their theater strategies.²⁶

21. Barry M. Blechman et al., "Key West Revisited: Roles and Missions of the US Armed Forces in the Twenty-first Century," Report No. 8, The Henry L. Stimson Center, Washington, D.C., 12 March 1993. The participation of the U.S. Marines in the doomed multinational peacekeeping effort in Lebanon in the early 1980s is an important exception. It could also be argued that the U.N. operation in Somalia, which of course includes U.S. personnel, has evolved from a humanitarian assistance to a peace enforcement operation.

22. Craig R. Whitney, "NATO to Weigh 50,000 Troops for Bosnia Accord," *New York Times*, 19 September 1993: 18.

23. Quoted in "Four Characters in Search of a Doctrine," *The Economist*, 2-8 October 1993. The deaths of U.S. troops during the U.N.-run mission in Somalia have further reduced the administration's enthusiasm for U.S. participation in such a force.

24. See Carla Anne Robbins, "Clinton Rethinks U.S. Global Peacekeeping Role, Draws New Criteria for Joining U.N.-Led Missions," *Wall Street Journal*, 27 September 1993: A26.

25. Gen. Colin L. Powell, commencement speech at Harvard University, 10 June 1993.

26. See Gen. George A. Joulwon, testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 21 April

Support for these missions is far from universal, however. As the U.S. Marine officer who commanded the relief effort in Bangladesh has argued, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief "could become the most controversial foreign policy concept to face the Clinton Administration."²⁷ While that is unlikely, it is clear that non-traditional missions will continue to engender opposition within the American military establishment and the civilian policy community.

This is not to say that all critics are categorically opposed to the use of the military to ease human suffering or to perform other select noncombat missions. Rather, their criticism is based on concerns about the consequences of the *overuse* and *overcommitment* of the armed forces in these roles. The arguments against non-traditional military missions can be grouped into three broad categories: (1) they will erode combat effectiveness; (2) they are better performed by civilian organizations; and (3) they will lead to a dangerous level of military involvement in civilian affairs.²⁸

The demands of military training — an expensive and highly time-consuming set of activities — make extensive involvement in non-traditional missions a risky proposition for the U.S. armed forces and for the nation as a whole, according to critics. Colonel Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., the author of a widely discussed apocalyptic satire on the subject of non-traditional missions, argues that the armed forces' preoccupation with "peripheral" activities could render the military "unfit to engage an authentic military opponent." In Dunlap's satire, an officer awaiting execution tells a friend that

performing new missions sapped resources from what most experts agree was one of the vital ingredients to victory in the First Gulf War: training. Training is . . . a zero-sum game. Each moment spent performing a non-traditional mission is one unavailable for orthodox military exercises. We should have recognized this grave risk.²⁹

Other critics worry that the extensive use of the armed forces in humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and other "soft" missions will degrade the military's distinct organizational culture, which focuses on combat and the unnatural, highly stressful demands it places on individuals and groups. In the case of peacekeeping, for example, officers who have been trained for large-scale

1993, reprinted as "Continued Engagement Needed in Southern Command Region," *Defense Issues* 8 [1993]. Joulwon described Southcom's objectives as strengthening democratic institutions; promoting human rights; supporting economic and social development; and assisting host nations in defeating drug traffickers.

27. Lt. Gen. Henry C. Stackpole II and Col. Eric L. Chase, "Humanitarian Intervention and Disaster Relief: Projecting Military Strength Abroad to Save Lives," *Marine Corps Gazette* 77 (February 1993): 16.

28. An additional concern centers on the ambiguous nature of these operations, which take place in complex politico-military environments in which success — let alone victory — is difficult if not impossible to measure. In that respect, non-traditional missions resemble low-intensity conflict operations, and they have engendered much of the same criticism by the military.

29. Dunlap: 11. See also Seth Cropsey, "The Hard Truth About 'Soft Missions,'" *Wall Street Journal*, 19 January 1993: 14.

combat — and for “closing with and killing the enemy,” in military parlance — tend to view the mission

as a low form of soldiering. It unfastens the hard-won lessons of combat training from the young soldier and fills his head with sloppy ideas about ‘peace’ and neutrality which are totally contrary to the kill ethos on which his initial indoctrination is based.³⁰

Widespread participation in such noncombat activities, according to critics, could warp the military’s organizational culture to the point where “peacemakers” are promoted at the expense of “warfighters”:

If [these] missions become a major part of what the military does, people may be promoted and leaders selected because of their performance in these missions. The risk is that these people may be the wrong ones to lead in combat.³¹

Opponents of noncombat missions also charge that while the military is certainly capable of performing these tasks, the nation would be better served if they were conducted by civilian organizations. Dunlap, for instance, believes that armed forces ought to focus exclusively on preparing for combat and leave counterdrug operations, law enforcement, and humanitarian assistance to those civilian agencies that are trained to carry them out.³² Others argue that it might be more effective to train civilian units to serve under the State Department’s Office of Disaster Relief, or to make that mission a Peace Corps function.³³ One Marine officer, on his way to Mogadishu, summed up this thinking when he told a reporter, “I’d rather fund a government agency for relief. . . . Our mission shouldn’t be humanitarian.”³⁴

The third major criticism of non-traditional missions focuses on what their opponents believe is the potential for eroding the “Chinese wall” between the civilian world and the military. Internationally, the use of the U.S. armed forces in nation-building and civic action programs sends the wrong signal to foreign governments that are struggling to promote democracy and civilian control of the military. Using the armed forces to solve domestic U.S. law enforcement and infrastructure problems threatens to blur the sharp distinction between the

30. John Mackinlay, *The Peacekeepers: An Assessment of Peacekeeping Operations at the Arab-Israeli Interface* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989): 12. In Beirut, for example, U.S. Marines found themselves assigned a mission that became “antithetical to its stated doctrine, which is active rather than passive, aggressive rather than defensive.” Eric Hammel, *The Root: The Marines in Beirut, August 1982-February 1984* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1985): 53.

31. Lt. Col. Frank J. Cook III et al., “The Defense Department’s Role in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief,” unpublished paper, National Security Program, Harvard University, 1993: 15.

32. Dunlap: 12.

33. Benjamin C. Schwarz, “Peacetime Engagement and the Underdeveloped World: The U.S. Military’s ‘Nation Assistance’ Mission,” draft manuscript, Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, CA (1991): 41. See also Harry Summers, “Waging Peace,” *Washington Times*, 16 December 1992: F-3.

34. Quoted in Gellman: 34.

military and civilian government and erode and corrupt both institutions in the process.³⁵

Since colonial times, for example, the use of troops in occupation duty — with its potential for tyrannical rule — has been a painful subject for Americans. It has been widely felt that a democratic nation “is relying on a weak crutch when it charges its military establishment with major responsibilities for dealing with civilian populations.”³⁶ Such fears are reflected in a recent DoD policy paper, which warned that as “a matter of general principle . . . we ought to limit military influence in civilian affairs, both overseas and at home.”³⁷

Public Works and Peace Enforcement in U.S. History

Much of the criticism of non-traditional missions is based on the assumption that using the military in noncombat roles to address politico-military problems is somehow alien to the American military experience. In point of fact, the “tradition” of employing the military solely for warfighting is itself relatively new. During most of the Cold War period, when the United States faced an ideologically charged superpower equipped with a vast arsenal of nuclear and conventional weapons, the U.S. armed forces focused almost entirely on preparing for and waging war. As mentioned above, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, and other such operations were decidedly tertiary in importance.

Prior to World War II, however, the military was employed to carry out a variety of challenging, often highly political tasks that no other institutions in American society were capable of performing. From the earliest days of the republic, political leaders employed the armed forces to conduct land surveys, build roads and other public works, and suppress rebellion in the post-Civil War southern states. As the United States acquired possessions overseas, U.S. troops served both as colonial policemen and as agents of an enlightened effort to bring to those acquisitions the benefits of American democracy and progress. During the Great Depression, the Army organized one of the New Deal’s largest public relief efforts. Finally, in the aftermath of World War II, U.S. military governments in Japan and Germany administered sweeping economic, social, and political programs to reconstruct those nations as democracies.

This is not to say, however, that the military always embraced these missions enthusiastically. General William T. Sherman strongly objected to the post-Civil War use of the Army as a police force in the Southern states, arguing that it was “beneath a soldier’s vocation” to be used in such an unmilitary fashion. In terms reminiscent of the current debate over noncombat missions, Sherman argued that the Army must always be “organized and governed on true military principles” if it is to retain “the habits and usages of war.”³⁸

35. Cook et al.: 21.

36. Martin and Joan Kyre, *Military Occupation and National Security* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1968): 16.

37. Department of Defense, “Peacetime Engagement”: 26.

38. Quoted in Huntington: 231.

In the view of many of Sherman's fellow officers, occupation duty and other politico-military missions in the South were not only beneath the dignity of a professional fighting force, they also distracted the armed forces from more legitimate activities. According to this view, "military resources were needed west of the Mississippi where since the end of the war the Army had been struggling to establish order on the high plains and break the power of the Indians."³⁹

Early in 1933, Army leaders used similar language to fight off proposals by Congress to use troops to feed, clothe, and house the unemployed. Military leaders also resisted participation in Franklin Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps, arguing that it was an "inappropriate diversion of limited military manpower to civilian purposes."⁴⁰ But the size and urgency of the program, which was intended to quickly bring hundreds of thousands of men to rural work centers, required the Army's manpower, equipment, and experience, and Secretary of War George Dern eventually relented.⁴¹

The following section provides a brief overview of these domestic and international activities, which have been grouped into two very broad categories: public works and other forms of domestic assistance, and peace enforcement and military occupation.⁴²

Public Works

Secretary of War John C. Calhoun, in his famous December 1820 report to the U.S. House of Representatives, wrote that the principal task of the Army "ought to be to create and perpetuate military skill and experience."⁴³ Since early in the century, however, the Army had been undertaking distinctly nonmartial projects.⁴⁴ The U.S. Military Academy at West Point, founded in 1802, was created to supply the nation with officers capable of performing both military and civilian engineering tasks. As Russell Weigley has observed,

in a country not immediately imperiled by foreign enemies and jealous of standing armies, the academy had to justify itself by preparing officers who could do useful work in peace, so it became largely a school of civil engineering.⁴⁵

39. Jerry M. Cooper, "The Army's Search for a Mission," in Kenneth J. Hagan and William R. Roberts, eds., *Against All Enemies: Interpretations of American Military History from Colonial Times to the Present* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986): 178.

40. Michael W. Sherraden, "Military Participation in a Youth Employment Program," *Armed Forces & Society* 7 (Winter 1981): 230.

41. Charles W. Johnson, "The Army and the Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942," *Prologue* 4 (Fall 1972): 141-142.

42. The nature of these missions — establishing constabularies, supervising elections, building roads, and so on — explains why the Navy and Air Force historically have played a smaller role in non-combat activities.

43. Quoted in William B. Skelton, "The Army in the Age of the Common Man," in Hagan and Roberts, eds., *Against All Enemies*: 92.

44. In 1804, for example, Jefferson dispatched two Army officers, Lewis and Clark, to survey the land gained under the Louisiana Purchase.

45. Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy*

Shortly after the War of 1812, military engineers began conducting surveys for transportation routes, road programs, and other construction projects designed to serve both civilian and military goals. In 1824, Congress approved legislation authorizing the president to use military engineers on projects considered to be of vital national importance and within six years some 60 civil projects were under the supervision of the War Department. Military engineers also worked directly for private transportation firms until prohibited by Congress in 1838. Topographical surveys, canal and railroad building, and other projects were seen by the officer corps as distractions from the institution's central purpose. Nevertheless, "the construction of civil works became a permanent feature of the Army's peacetime role."⁴⁶

Toward the end of the century, other significant public works projects took place overseas, usually in the context of a post-war U.S. occupation and military government. Cuba, in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War, was the beneficiary of a particularly large effort to modernize its infrastructure and promote public health and safety. After providing food, clothing, and other forms of disaster relief, U.S. officers put Cubans to work cleaning streets and buildings, which war and Spanish colonial neglect had rendered highly unsanitary. General Leonard Wood, the military governor of the island, had been trained as a physician, and reducing disease by ending unsanitary conditions became a key priority. Army medical officers were highly successful. Yellow fever and malaria were significantly reduced: deaths per 1,000 plummeted from 91.3 to 20.63, placing Cuba on par with modern industrial nations of the time.⁴⁷

These public works projects were part of a broader U.S. effort to create conditions that would allow Cuba to flourish as an independent republic — a type of effort known today as "nation-assistance."⁴⁸ Post-World War I relief projects in Europe shared similar goals. Under the direction of Herbert Hoover, a U.S. government relief effort provided 33 million tons of food to populations devastated by four years of war. Although humanitarian concerns were the primary motivation behind the relief program, "American leaders also offered aid in an attempt to prevent civil disintegration, to preserve a liberal world order, and thereby to check the spread of Bolshevism."⁴⁹

Epidemic diseases were rampant in Central and Eastern Europe and in 1919, President Wilson, at Hoover's urging, agreed to send U.S. Army medical teams to Poland, where 230,000 people had been stricken with typhus. Colonel Harry

(Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973): 81.

46. Skelton: 105.

47. James H. Hitchman, "Unfinished Business: Public Works in Cuba, 1898-1902," *The Americas* 31 (1975): 354-355. See also Jack C. Lane, "Instrument for Empire: The American Military Government in Cuba, 1899-1902," *Science and Society* 36 (1972): 314-330.

48. That is, "diplomatic, economic, information, and military cooperation between the US and the government of another nation, with objective of promoting internal development and the growth of sustainable institutions within that nation." *FM 100-5, Operations glossary*: 6. For a critique of such efforts, see David Tucker, "Facing the Facts: The Failure of Nation Assistance," *Parameters* 23 (Summer 1993): 34-40.

49. Gaines M. Foster, "Typhus Disaster in the Wake of War: The American-Polish Relief Expedition, 1919-1920," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 55 (1981): 221.

L. Gilchrist, who had participated in the Army's San Francisco relief effort following the 1906 earthquake, commanded what became known as the American-Polish Relief Expedition for the next two years. With his force of 500 enlisted volunteers and 30 officers, Gilchrist reorganized and modernized the Polish health service, and launched an all-out assault on lice, the vermin responsible for spreading typhus.⁵⁰ The results of the expedition were decidedly mixed. Problems with U.S. personnel and equipment, and the invading Russian Army, severely hampered Gilchrist's efforts. But as Secretary of War Newton D. Baker concluded, the Army Medical Department garnered "experience not otherwise to be secured in dealing with an epidemic disease."⁵¹

The Army also received benefits from its participation in organizing and administering the Civilian Conservation Corps (1933-1942), a major New Deal program to put thousands of unemployed men to work repairing roads, bridges, levees, and other parts of America's rural infrastructure.

The Army was responsible for supervising the camps and ensuring the welfare of the more than 3,000,000 men who participated in the CCC during its nine years of existence. Although military officers remained eager to return to traditional duties, many recognized the training benefits the Army had received from the program. Throughout the 1930s, the service remained severely underfinanced and undermanned, and the CCC "provided an alternative organization where staff and enrollees could gain experience relevant to military responsibilities."⁵² Regular officers serving at CCC camps reported that the duty provided troops with extremely valuable training,⁵³ and Secretary of War Dern told his fellow cabinet members early in the Roosevelt Administration that the CCC was the most valuable experience the Army ever had, adding that officers learned "to govern men by leadership, explanation, and diplomacy rather than discipline. That knowledge is priceless to the American Army."⁵⁴

Peace Enforcement

From 1802 until 1942, the U.S. armed forces participated in 44 military occupations, both overseas and within what are now the 50 American states.⁵⁵ The use of federal troops for occupation duty during the Civil War era was the U.S. Army's most significant occupation responsibility prior to 1945. These duties began early in the war. Beginning in 1862, for example, the Union Army administered the city of Nashville, Tennessee, albeit with a patina of local

50. For example, mobile field columns were deployed with all the equipment necessary to provide hot baths for the population — a key component in Gilchrist's offensive operations against the louse. But some Poles refused to participate. One old woman living in a filthy shack reportedly cried, "Death here in my hovel . . . rather than the torture of bathing." Quoted in Foster: 227.

51. Quoted in Foster: 229.

52. Sherraden: 240.

53. Johnson: 147.

54. Quoted in Carl M. Putnam, "The CCC Experience," *Military Review* 53 (September 1973): 58.

55. Ben Akzin, "Data on Military Government in Occupied Areas: With Special Reference to the United States and Great Britain," *Public Affairs Bulletin* No. 16, Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1942): 17-18, cited in Kyre, *Military Occupation and National Security*, Chap. 2 *passim*.

civilian political control. When Nashville politicians abandoned their responsibilities for municipal sanitation, fire and police protection, the Army reluctantly began performing these humble civic tasks.⁵⁶

In March 1865, Congress created the Bureau of Freedmen, Refugees and Abandoned Lands, a radically new organization that sought to use the power of the federal government to improve the lives of former slaves. General Oliver Otis Howard, a Civil War veteran, was named as commissioner. Congress, however, neglected to authorize funds for the Freedmen's Bureau, so Howard drew funds from the War Department and personnel from the Army. Its responsibilities were enormous:

They included introducing a workable system of free labor in the South, establishing schools for the freedmen, providing aid to the destitute, aged, ill and insane, adjudicating disputes among blacks and between the races, and attempting to secure for blacks and white Unionists equal justice from the state and local governments established during Presidential Reconstruction.⁵⁷

For the Army as a whole, its first post-war role was carrying out the occupation of the South and the administration of reconstruction. As political leaders discovered, the Army was the only agency capable of carrying out the policies of the federal government. "The Army alone, as a result of the war, provided a presence large enough and centralized enough to impose federal policy in the South."⁵⁸ At its peak in 1866, some 20,000 federal troops were serving in occupation and garrison duty in the 11 states of the former Confederacy. By 1870, when the last three states had gained readmittance to the Union, fully one third of the U.S. Army had served in the South.⁵⁹

The First Reconstruction Act gave the military tremendous responsibilities with respect to the former Confederate states. The region was divided into five military districts, each commanded by a general who governed under martial law. The Army had the authority to register voters, supervise courts, and reject proposed state constitutions. In General Ulysses S. Grant's view, military commanders had complete control over the activities of civilian governments.⁶⁰

By the turn of the century, U.S. armed forces had begun a long period of occupation duty in countries ranging from the Philippines and China to Haiti and Nicaragua. In the Philippines, following its acquisition by the United States in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War, U.S. troops built roads and

56. Peter Maslowski, *Treason Must Be Made Odious: Military Occupation and Wartime Reconstruction in Nashville, Tennessee, 1862-1865* (Millwood, N.Y.: KTO Press, 1978): 127-145.

57. Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988): 142-143.

58. William S. McFeely, *Grant: A Biography* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1981): 247.

59. Jerry M. Cooper, "The Army's Search for a Mission," in Hagan and Roberts, eds., *Against All Enemies*: 176.

60. Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: The Free Press, 1984): 243.

schools, carried out police work, strung telegraph lines, and reorganized the country's civilian government.⁶¹ In China during the American occupation of 1900-1901, the U.S. Army carried out a program of reform based on its successful experience in Cuba. Although ostensibly there to protect American lives and commercial access, troops were also used to provide relief, criminal justice, and public health programs as a graphic demonstration of "the progressive and benevolent nature of American influence."⁶² And in Veracruz in 1914, a U.S. military government collected taxes, vaccinated the population, and performed police, court, and other criminal justice functions.⁶³

Additional U.S. interventions and occupations in the Caribbean Basin, known collectively as the "Banana Wars," began shortly after the occupation of Mexico. In Haiti (1915-1934), Santo Domingo (1916-1924), and Nicaragua (1927-1932), U.S. forces were used to reestablish order and promote governments based on American democratic ideals. In all three cases, U.S. Marines landed in the midst of a civil war, restored order, and began a series of civic reforms intended to promote the development of democracy.

In Haiti, for example, Marines established an apolitical constabulary force made up primarily of local recruits that also included U.S. officers. Other Marine officers

became de facto town mayors, judges, public works officers, marriage counselors, and any number of other positions associated with maintaining tranquility in their districts The marines were expected to possess a level of political savvy not usually required of professional soldiers.⁶⁴

Indeed, the Marines were used so often in Latin America to administer local affairs, supervise elections, and establish post-conflict constabularies that they became known as "State Department troops."⁶⁵ Based on its experiences in the region, the Marine Corps developed an extensive doctrine for the conduct of "small wars" and other non-traditional missions. *The Small Wars Manual* (1940), for example, offers detailed military, legal, and political advice on creating "armed native organizations,"⁶⁶ voter registration, civil-military relations, and the disarmament of populations.

The occupations of Japan (1945-1952) and Germany (1945-1953) were the largest efforts of their kind in the history of the American military. In Japan,

61. Flint: 146.

62. Michael H. Hunt, "The Forgotten Occupation: Peking 1900-1901," *Pacific Historical Review*, 48 (1979): 516.

63. See Merlin H. Foster, "US Intervention in Mexico: The 1914 Occupation of Veracruz," *Military Review* 57 (August 1977): 93-94.

64. R. Scott Moore, "Small War Lessons Learned," *Marine Corps Gazette* 77 (February 1993): 33.

65. Michael D. Weltsch, "Nationbuilding and the Marine Corps," *Marine Corps Gazette* 77 (February 1993): 32.

66. U.S. Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1940): 12-3. U.S. Marines supervised elections in "neighboring republics" on 12 different occasions. *Small Wars Manual*: 14-1.

General Douglas MacArthur, the supreme commander of the allied powers, established a broad program of demilitarization and democratization. In October 1945, MacArthur instructed Japan's newly appointed civilian prime minister to begin five major reforms: granting women the right to vote, allowing labor unions to organize, liberalizing education, abolishing repressive institutions, and democratizing the economy. During the next three months, MacArthur also began the process of establishing free speech and land reform, and by February 1946, his staff had drafted a new constitution, a document that remains essentially unchanged to this day.⁶⁷

In post-war Germany, as in Japan, establishing security and preparing the nation for self-sufficiency were the Allies' central goals. Millions of people displaced by the war needed to be fed, clothed, and sheltered. The economy was shattered, local markets and transportation had been badly disrupted by the war, and shortages of fuel and food were widespread:

Vestiges of the Nazi regime had to be eradicated, whole populations had to be reunited or resettled and economies rejuvenated. Civil government and the rule of law had to be established and entire civil administrations restructured.⁶⁸

Private relief organizations were inadequate to the task, the League of Nations had not survived the war, and the United Nations remained a nascent entity. The U.S. military, however, had the logistical skills, surplus supplies, and other resources at hand, so it was only natural that American leaders should turn to it to carry out humanitarian missions in Germany. The Army established camps and provided food, clothing, and blankets and other forms of temporary assistance.⁶⁹

The Army also had the responsibility of ensuring security in Germany and so, as it had done in Latin America earlier in the century, it established a constabulary system. A small but highly mobile security force, backed by a combat division, was created to cope with subversion, pilfering, and border violations. The Army also developed programs to address the problem of juvenile delinquency, which evolved into a major concern for the occupying powers. Beginning in 1946, the Army-run Assistance to German Youth Activities program used U.S. personnel to organize picnics, movies, and other diversions for thousands of German children.⁷⁰

67. Ikuhiko Hatu, "The Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952," in *The American Military and the Far East: 1945-1952*, 96-97. MacArthur, operating as a proconsul, used Japanese civilian institutions to carry out the liberalization efforts deemed necessary to modernize the nation. For an overview of the occupation and these reforms, see Kazuo Kawai, *Japan's American Interlude* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).

68. Frederick C. Cuny, "Dilemmas of Military Involvement in Humanitarian Relief," in Leon Gordenker and Thomas G. Weiss, eds., *Soldiers, Peacekeepers and Disasters* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991): 53. The occupation of Germany involved direct military rule by the allies, and hence was far stricter than the Japanese occupation.

69. Cuny: 53-54.

70. Oliver J. Frederiksen, *The American Military Occupation of Germany 1945-1953* (Headquarters,

Non-Traditional Missions: A New Organizational Vision

From the preceding discussion it is clear that the American military has been used throughout its history in a large variety of highly political and demanding noncombat roles, both domestically and abroad. Counterdrug operations may have no antecedent in that history, but with respect to the other missions described above — peacekeeping and peace enforcement, domestic support, and humanitarian assistance — the term “non-traditional” is a misnomer. The historical record also suggests that the distinction between purely war-fighting and strictly civilian activities has been far fuzzier than the critics of non-traditional missions have admitted. (Indeed, the Army and the Joint Chiefs of Staff have adopted the term “operations short of war” to describe the spectrum of noncombat activities engaged in by the military).

Rather than continue to resist these missions, the armed forces should embrace them, albeit selectively. Of course, the military should not drop its commitment to preparing for war and reduce itself to an international relief agency. Applying combat power on the battlefield has been, and must remain, the primary responsibility of the armed forces. However, providing for the common defense has never been limited solely to the battlefield; and the armed forces need to face their enduring responsibilities and apply their talents and training as their military ancestors did prior to World War II.

This is particularly important with respect to the Army, an organization that is struggling to define itself now that the Cold War has vanished. The service, in short, is seeking a new organizational vision, defined by the Rand Corporation’s John K. Setear as a sense of “identity and purpose widely shared among members of an organization”⁷¹ — a central component of all high-performing institutions.

The Army’s triumphs on the European battlefields of World War II — the service’s finest martial hours — “made an impression that has persisted with remarkable tenacity and effect right down to the present.”⁷² From those experiences, an institutional vision of the Army as the “instantly ready armored defender of Central Europe”⁷³ was forged. During the Cold War, when NATO forces faced thousands of Soviet tanks, such a vision helped justify resources and motivate thousands of men and women to excel in the demanding task of providing for the nation’s defense.

The service is well aware of its need for a redefined vision. Senior Army leaders have advanced the concepts of power projection and crisis response as the Army’s new central organizational principles:

United States Army, Europe, Historical Division, 1953): 61-65.

71. John K. Setear, et al., *The Army in a Changing World: The Role of Organizational Vision* (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corporation, June 1990), R-3882-A: 67.

72. Carl H. Builder, *The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989): 186.

73. Setear: 25.

A highly balanced force is emerging, ready for immediate crisis response, alone or together with allies, with a massive force generation capability in reserve. . . . The United States Army is a power force ready to defend America's interests worldwide.⁷⁴

Such a vision, however, lacks the simplicity and directness of its predecessor; it is too diffuse and too nonspecific to serve as an institutional guidepost. Instead, the Army should look to its own history for guidance. As this paper has argued, the service's history was dominated by a role as the "obedient handyman" of the state. It prepared for and waged war, but it also dutifully (if sometimes reluctantly) carried out other demanding missions in service to the nation.

A new organizational vision based on a paradigm of the "general servant" of the nation would focus on the Army as both warrior and peacemaker — as an institution of politico-military problem solvers whose organizational skills, manpower, and other resources allow it to operate in remote, dangerous environments for extended periods. As the nation's dutiful military servant, the service would still prepare for large-scale combat. But soldiers could also be deployed to halt large-scale illegal immigration, dismantle weapons of mass destruction, or verify arms control agreements.

The Army's utility, of course, will continue only to the extent that the organization remains military. Its organization, discipline, and training separate it from any civilian enterprise. But its ability to wage war and operations short of war will disappear if civilian leaders come to view the service as nothing more than a pool of manpower to be siphoned off for whatever tasks are at hand.

Accordingly, national security policymakers need to map out well-defined criteria for employing the military in noncombat roles. Exploring such criteria in detail is beyond the scope of this paper. But one could begin to develop a set of standards by asking the following questions when evaluating a potential mission: Does it serve the national interest? If it does, are there civilian institutions that are just as capable of performing it? Does the mission offer training benefits? And finally, is there an "exit strategy" so that U.S. forces are not perpetually committed?

The Army, then, should resist calls by politicians and the press to employ its extremely attractive but extremely expensive skills and resources to solve domestic and international woes better addressed by civilian organizations. Using Army Special Forces personnel, for example, to teach in crime-infested inner city schools, would be a waste of a force designed and trained to carry out missions in the world's most demanding and hostile environments. The Army needs to articulate to the American people that it is eager to serve the nation. But the service also needs to communicate that the institution is, in a sense, a

74. Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan, "Ready for Action — The New United States Army," *NATO's Sixteen Nations* 38 (1993): 1.

fragile one, and that the force, if it is to serve the nation on and off the battlefield, needs to be protected from misuse.

Finally, the Army needs to address questions about how its forces will be prepared for noncombat missions. Are "general purpose" forces, for example, sufficient for carrying out peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance, or does the Army need "dedicated" units specially trained and equipped for non-traditional functions? And if dedicated units are deemed necessary, will this hamper the Army's ability to conduct its traditional war-fighting missions?

The service will also have to make a case for greater resources. As it now stands, readiness funds meant to prepare U.S. forces for combat are being used to pay for peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance operations, and it is unlikely that the armed forces will ever be repaid for those expenses.⁷⁵ Simultaneously preparing for war while "waging peace" in places like Somalia is costly, and if the Army is to do both effectively, Congress and the American people must be persuaded that they are worth paying for.

75. Senator John McCain, "Going Hollow: The Warnings of Our Chiefs of Staff," Washington, D.C., July 1993.

