Soldiers and civil power: supporting or substituting civil authorities in peace operation during the 1990s

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INTRODUCTION

The adage that any military plan is only as good as the assumptions that underlie it is a central theme in this dissertation. During international interventions in civil wars in the 1990s in Cambodia, Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo, the reaction of warring parties and the local population to initial military success, or failure, often proved unpredictable. Intervening forces tended to fall victim to the law of unintended consequences, which during times of chaos operates at exponential levels. This study examines how the unintended consequences of the presence of a new source of power in a war-torn society placed high demands on the flexibility of military commanders on the ground. In each of these peace operations the mission they had set out to perform steadily shifted beyond its original parameters. In conventional war, waged by military adversaries with similar weapons and methods, the destruction of the main forces of the enemy has always been the ultimate and seemingly straightforward military goal. In this type of military operation, for which soldiers spent most of their time preparing, adaptability to the unexpected tactical move of the opposing forces on the battlefield has always been one of a field commander’s most valued skills. In the sort of military operations most Western soldiers found themselves during the 1990s, the next move of what could be considered the “enemies of the peace”, or anyone opposing the goals of the foreign presence, was most often in the civilian sphere. Moving into this murky arena has often been discarded as “mission creep”, the real or perceived progression of the military role beyond its original military parameters. However, in all its different manifestations throughout the 1990s “mission creep” came to be a requirement to reach any level of success rather than the doomsday scenario it was often made out to be by those supporting a strict separation of the military and the civilian spheres.

On 30 November 1942, while leading the Allied military forces in battle against the Axis in North Africa, General Dwight D. Eisenhower lamented in a letter to General George C. Marshall: “The sooner I can get rid of all these questions that are outside the military scope, the happier I will be! Sometimes think I live ten years each week, of which at least nine are absorbed in political and economic matters.”1 The responsibility for administrating conquered territory in North Africa had been delegated to a variety of American civilian governmental institutions that, troubled by bureaucratic infighting and unable to oversee and control the recalcitrant Vichy French colonial administration, had frustrated Eisenhower’s war effort. Consequently he was consumed by civilian matters that he sought to avoid. The Supreme Allied Commander’s complaints about the civilian responsibilities he wanted to discard, but which he nonetheless had to manage, were instrumental in convincing Franklin
D. Roosevelt to invest in the military commander full governmental responsibility over liberated and occupied territory for the remainder of the war. The U.S. President had until then been hesitant to allow soldiers to assume these civil powers, something he considered as conflicting with America's democratic standards, which prescribed keeping the military subservient to civilian rule. For the remainder of the war Eisenhower was enabled to delegate all civil authority to a specialized Civil Affairs organisation. The establishment of this separate organisation of many thousands of mainly American, British, and other Allied Civil Affairs personnel under Eisenhower's full command allowed him to control conquered territory. Officers and men with specific Civil Affairs training helped establish public order, managed the flow of refugees, prevented disease and exploited the host nation's logistical and infrastructural resources in support of the war effort. This enabled the commander and his combat units in Italy and North Western Europe to focus exclusively on the tasks that lay ahead of them and that were considered inside the military scope—fighting and defeating the enemy.

More than fifty years later, Eisenhower's complaints to Marshall resurfaced within NATO's military community. At the time, the military alliance was participating in a peace operation for the first time since the Cold War's end. In Bosnia, an impressive peacekeeping force of close to 60,000 heavily armed troops helped put an end to the war that had been raging in previous years in Bosnia by interposing themselves between the warring parties. Confronted with this new operational environment, the Atlantic Alliance started to seriously consider creating an operational capacity for Civil Affairs, or Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC), as the related concept was known during the years when NATO planned and trained exclusively for its own territorial defence against a possible Soviet invasion. While the American military had retained a Civil Affairs organisation of approximately 5,000 personnel since the Second World War, consisting mainly of Army reserves, European armies had no designated military capacity for CIMIC or Civil Affairs while they were preparing for conventional battle on the West-German plains. The potential civil problems likely to arise from manoeuvring with large armed formations were arranged through a series of formal agreements with the sovereign states of north-western Europe and with local governments particularly in Germany. No military occupation by NATO forces was anticipated. CIMIC was expected to present a primarily logistical challenge and its practical handling was delegated to military personnel that temporarily filled these posts and did not specialize for this as did their American colleagues.

Traditional NATO CIMIC was thus geared strictly towards facilitating conventional military operations by clearing civilian "obstacles" such as refugees and by exploiting civilian resources for military purposes. The effort was supported by a number of dedicated logistical capabilities such as the European Central Pipeline System that provided for the modern armies' insatiable need for fuel. All this was possible because Europe's armies were not preparing to conquer and occupy foreign territory. The American Civil Affairs branch was also largely occupied by preparations for these CIMIC-type tasks in support of conven-
tional warfare in the defence of Europe and, while keeping its Civil Affairs organisational structure in place, disregarded much of its ability to perform military governance in occupied or liberated territory.

Interaction between soldiers and civilian was of course not limited to military operations as planned on the Cold War battlefield in Europe. In the course of the twentieth century, however, most western democracies and their military forces came to regard military support to, or substitution of civilian authorities not just an abnormality, but also highly undesirable. While military forces were never enthusiastic about their involvement in public security and mostly tried to stay away from duties supporting or substituting the police and civil administrations in establishing internal order, modern armies became almost completely dissociated from what can generically called “internal security operations.” This process took place at a far quicker pace in most armies’ home country, where police rapidly professionalized, than during military operations in colonies and other overseas interventions. Here, the European colonial powers and their military forces had all suffered the frustrating experience of wars of decolonisation in a highly unpredictable environment often with no clear dividing line either between soldiering and policing, or civilians and combatants. The only European power that reached a certain level of long-term success in fighting insurgencies in their former colonies was the United Kingdom. The British, with a long history in these “counterinsurgency” operations, had grown well aware that any level of success in these operations depended on close civil-military cooperation since military goals could not be isolated from those of the colonial administration and police. The U.S. military had had its own traumatizing experience in Vietnam that would continue to structurally influence its conduct of operations in the decades that followed.

The operational environment was well known to soldiers when they prepared for defending their own or allied land in a NATO role. Armies such as that of the Netherlands had trained to operate on a particular patch of German soil for decades, and the professional officers knew every road and tree they would encounter. Most of their professional careers were spent in barracks and on military practice grounds where no civilians would interfere. A soldier’s life within most Western military establishments in the 1970s and 1980s was relatively predictable and most the armed forces were very comfortable with this situation.

All this changed drastically at the Cold War’s end. The armed forces within NATO were suddenly confronted with rapidly rising demands to engage in expeditionary operations, now in a new role as peacekeepers. While the end to Superpower rivalry facilitated solutions to some long lasting civil wars, or “intra-state wars”, in countries such as Namibia, Mozambique, El Salvador and Cambodia, it had also unleashed other powers, mainly ethnic nationalism that would create new internal wars in the Balkans and elsewhere. In this new role, which was often accepted grudgingly, soldiers once again found themselves in unpredictable territory. The countries in which they operated all suffered from the devastating effects of war and were often devoid of properly functioning civil institutions and civil infrastructure.
The civilian population of the areas involved also proved unpredictable in their attitudes towards the foreign soldiers, in spite of the foreigner’s predominantly helpful intentions.

When the call was made to revive CIMIC from its dormant state in the Cold War years and create a specialized operational capability, those proposing the need for a dedicated capability selected Eisenhower’s words with clear purpose in mind. When proposing to have the civil-military interface managed by military professionals, “getting rid of questions outside the military scope” was presented to underline CIMIC’s direct support of military operations, both in combat operations and now in peace operations. In their enthusiasm the officers often wrongly ascribed to the Supreme Commander the lines: “[A]nd what a lot of headaches I found. Water supply shortage, no power, no fuel, and corpses all over town” These words were actually those of a junior Civil Affairs officer entering a Sicilian town in 1943. However, the quote had started to have a life of its own in military circles, because it suited the purposes of those enthusiastic about the creation of a CIMIC-capacity. In the previous decades, Eisenhower’s emphasis on the operational value of Civil Affairs had often been repeated by Civil Affairs officers in the United States for exactly this same reason. The Americans now transferred their knowledge to their Europeans partners on how to make a case within a combat oriented organisation that tended to look at this hybrid civil-military organisation with a certain degree suspicion.

In the Balkans, only the U.S. Army was capable of deploying the hundreds of Civil Affairs personnel the force was believed to require for smoothing relations with the local population and local and international civilian institutions in order permit the military force to focus on separating the warring parties. As this proved a serious drain on their Army reserves, the Americans were the primary driving force behind the creation of a European CIMIC capacity within NATO. By and large, NATO member states went along with the view that there was a need for a specialised CIMIC capacity. The question now was what form it would take.

After peace agreements had been signed by the various warring factions in countries such as Cambodia and Bosnia, the responsibilities for overseeing governing structures, economic reconstruction, monitoring or reforming the local police, and holding elections, was delegated to international civilian agencies, often within the framework of the United Nations or other international governmental institutions. Meanwhile, a share of the humanitarian aid and reconstruction would be taken by non-governmental organisations, although their contribution to the grand total of aid provided has often been overestimated. The military mission in these “complex peace operations” was commonly planned as limited to keeping the warring parties in check by separating, and possibly disarming and demobilising them, thereby creating a safe environment in which the civilian organisations could perform their work.

In peace operations aimed at ending internal wars the overall intent was to keep the mission “purely military”, just as they had been in more traditional peacekeeping operations. Traditional UN peacekeeping during the Cold War years had mostly been limited to solving
conventional “inter-state wars”, by separating the armies of two sovereign nations along a status-quo line. However, the agencies designated to assume the civilian part of the mission in the new “second generation peacekeeping” operations, were often unable to deploy rapidly and in sufficient numbers. Whereas the military had rapidly deployable units, international civilian organisation had to draw personnel from all corners of the world and build up on the spot. In countries affected by gruelling civil wars, local government agencies responsible for administration and public services were in ruins, had fled or were simply dysfunctional, repressive and corrupt. The absence or malfunctioning of the public security triad of police, judicial and penal organisation was often a problem that particularly affected the work of the international soldiers on the ground. The absence, slow deployment, or insufficient capabilities of an international police force caused a “public security gap” to emerge, and frequently resulted in calls made on the military presence to support them, or even to step into the void by conducting law and order operations. Eight months after NATO’s military force had arrived in December 1995 in Bosnia, the unarmed UN civil police monitoring force was finally fully deployed. It faced a highly politicised police force that had swelled to three times its pre-war size by the war-hardened former combatants, clad in fatigues and armed with Kalashnikovs. Four years earlier in Cambodia many thousands of former combatants, often in possession of their arms, simply blended in with the local population and were even harder to control while they resorted to thievery and extortion to provide for their needs. In Somalia and Kosovo there was almost total anarchy with no police and no government institutions at all when the international military forces arrived.

As the division between civil and military responsibilities was rapidly becoming blurred in peace operations, a debate erupted within military circles and amongst policymakers about what was, and what was not, outside the scope of the military. Were soldiers, who had focussed on defending the Alliance’s territory and had—like their governments—perceived their job as proceeding in a purely military domain, to become involved in what was often called “nation building”? Would this entail the provision of the means of civil reconstruction and development, regardless of the needs of the military commander while performing his military mission? Should the envisaged segregation between the “military sphere” and the “civilian sphere” be lifted, and would soldiers be allowed to venture into the murky domain of public security? In the case of the American-led intervention in Bosnia, the answer to these questions was clearly negative.

After earlier debacles in Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia, the early successes of NATO’s Implementation Force (IFOR) in Bosnia had a profound influence on the perception throughout the military ranks and in policymaking circles about the future of peace operations. By taking the political and military lead in the Balkans, and by deploying with overwhelming force to successfully separate the warring parties, the Americans helped restore the thoroughly battered confidence of the Europeans in peacekeeping. Within the U.S. military, the operation played an important role in overcoming the trauma it suffered as a result of their own intervention in Somalia. It was no coincidence that the protagonists of a CIMIC
capacity referred to the words of the American IFOR Force Commander, Admiral Leighton Smith, to underline that, like Eisenhower, contemporary force commanders saw the need for this organisation. Smith admitted when addressing personnel of the specialized CIMIC Task Force in Bosnia in April 1996 that the previous November, “we had never heard of CIMIC, we had no idea what you did.” He proceeded by emphasizing that “now we can’t live without you.”

Despite the Force Commander’s enthusiasm for Civil-Military Cooperation as a specialized function, cooperation between the military and the main international civilian branches in Bosnia has nonetheless been considered the weakest link in the combined effort to bring a lasting peace in the ethnically divided Balkan state. The problematic civil-military relationship contributed substantially to the early stagnation of the peace process. Three years later in Kosovo, the Atlantic Alliance found itself yet again deploying an impressive military force with the intent of solving another ethnic conflict. This time, British Lieutenant General Sir Mike Jackson was at the helm of the military component of a combined civil-military effort to control and stabilize this province where the challenges looming in the civilian power vacuum far exceeded those in Bosnia. Yet, whereas NATO had started to develop new CIMIC doctrine and a capacity in the preceding years, the British commander did not opt for the establishment of a designated CIMIC Task Force to manage the problems that were likely to arise in the civilian sphere. Civil-military cooperation has nevertheless been regarded as far more successful in Kosovo than in Bosnia. During the United Nations mission in Cambodia earlier in the decade there had been no “CIMIC” but gradually soldiers and civilians reached levels of cooperation that exceeded that of most other operations during the 1990s. Without a special Civil Affairs capability, some military contingents came close to governing parts of Somalia in 1993. Different attitudes towards the civil-military relationship in military operations far exceeded the influence of formal arrangements on the approaches taken by soldiers.

Although initiated as research into Civil-Military Cooperation, this historical study is therefore not primarily concerned with the concepts of CIMIC and Civil Affairs. Instead, it is about missions and the changing roles of military forces in the early phase of operations, when the methods to reach objectives tend to be ill-defined as a result of political and military leaders’ inclination in the 1990s to treat the military and civilian spheres in peace operations as distinct and separate, while in reality, they overlapped and merged. The desire to segregate “military security”, the separation of warring parties, from “public security”, the protection of the population from aggression other than direct military violence, often resulted in a large gap between the originally assigned mission and the actual challenges faced by tactical units on the ground. This gap, and the predominantly improvised process of bridging it, is analyzed in detail in three case studies into the endeavours of individual battalions on the ground in Cambodia, Somalia and Kosovo. The dissertation explores the choices and responses of battalion commanders and the seven to nine hundred soldiers under their com-
mand. It also looks at the interaction between the tactical commander and the force commander at the operational levels of command. Larger questions of strategy and policy are discussed only as they affect operations in the field.

From these three cases at the tactical level, a series of questions arise: What drove local commanders to assume ever more responsibilities on the borders, or maybe even beyond the parameters of the original mission? What caused this expansion of the mission to be feared by political and military leaders, and often discarded as “mission creep”, while the tactical commanders who flexibly interpreted their mission were often very successful? In each of the operations, military tasks moved beyond cooperation and even past support to civilian actors, often to a point where soldiers were substituting for civilian authorities or organisations. Did soldiers assume the role of policemen? To what extend did soldiers become governors by default in Somalia and Kosovo? Why did different commanders interpret the same mission differently?

From an analysis of a fourth case, NATO’s operation in Bosnia, which focuses on the operational level, the question emerges as to why an attempt was made to deliberately segregate the civilian and military spheres in peace operations. How did the American military paradigms and traditions influence the overall military approach to the civil-military interface, on both sides of the Atlantic? What was the primary cause of the incongruity between the professionalism of the Civil Affairs branch within American military and the actual handling by the U.S. military forces of civil-military operations once deployed in overseas operations? Was there a fundamentally different British approach to civil-military interaction in peace operations and can its sources be traced to sustained experience in counterinsurgency operations? Analysed chronologically, these four military operations allow us to discern some key aspects of the rapid development of peace operations as a practise in the course of the 1990s. The overarching question that emerges from the cases examined is why the military roles that had been planned as separate support functions in the margins of military operations came to assume a central and pivotal position during the execution of these missions.

The reason for the scrutiny of such recent military history stems from the prevailing perceptions of this problem in policy, military and academic circles. The practical problems emerging on the threshold of the military and civilian spheres during peace operations in the 1990s appeared new and alien to the Dutch, as well as to most other Western military establishments. This study originates in the requirement to place the subject, which had grown to some prominence when it began in the year 2000, in a broader historical context in order to grasp its significance. Perceptions of CIMIC as a concept and capability in the Netherlands, as in other NATO countries, tended to be rather ambivalent. On the one hand, the Dutch armed forces had taken a leading role in creating an elaborate CIMIC framework within NATO with hundreds of specialist functions that was modelled to a large extent on the American Civil Affairs organisation. As in conventional warfare, its purpose was presented
within the military by emphasizing the traditional operational use to the field commander while performing his military mission. On the other hand, the way in which CIMIC has been portrayed by policymakers as well as researchers in the Netherlands has been to emphasize the role soldiers played in supporting or directly performing humanitarian work and reconstruction in countries affected by war. Doing small scale reconstruction projects became the focal point in the representation of CIMIC as it was the most tangible, and as I will argue, most welcome image for most politicians and generals. A third and important argument embraced by both policymakers and the military leaders was the value of such aid projects to “force protection”, by creating favourable attitudes towards the force from the local population. I argue that each of these three point of departure, that of CIMIC clearing obstacles for the commander, that of the soldiers as humanitarians, and the argument related to force protection, have contributed to a marginalizing of a subject that had much broader implications for soldiers while performing internal security operations.

The interaction of soldiers and their civilian environment during peace operations has attracted substantial attention in academic circles, mainly from political scientists and other social scientists. Also here, the focus has to a large extent been on military involvement in the humanitarian sphere, with a particular emphasis on the troubled relationship between the military and NGOs in peace operations. Rhetoric such as “strange bedfellows”, “a marriage of reason”, “worlds apart” and “living apart together”, has been used in publicized titles in order to emphasize the cultural divide between the two parties that are compelled to cooperate. The theme of “the soldier as humanitarian” is captured by photos of husky soldiers in a war zone with small local children on their arms, which have often filled covers of relevant publications. This relationship between the military and the humanitarian community has been analysed in many important scholarly publications. However, this humanitarian focus has distracted attention from the even more thorny issue of soldiers assuming various degrees of civil authority, most often by default, as an integral part of their overall security operation.

The more general argument that civil and military goals in modern peace operations and other forms of outside intervention have become entangled is of course no virgin territory. Several valuable studies have addressed this subject, often with the specific aim of providing a framework or guidelines for policy decisions and future military operations. For the specific American military vantage point on civil-military operations, U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel John T. Fishel wrote an important book in 1997 about the American interventions in Panama, Iraq, Somalia, and Haiti and the cooperation between soldiers and particularly American civilian agencies. In an early phase of my research I was influenced by his statement that “the purely military does not exist”, but that the notion that political rather than military objectives dominate had “only been accepted grudgingly, if at all, by the American military.” Fishel, however, focuses on the inseparability between America’s strategic-political goals and military objectives on the operational level, and emphasizes the specific value of Civil Affairs for the longer term reconstruction and stability of these countries. Much scholarly interest is also focussed on the merits and dangers of the use of military
force for the sake of democracy. A recent study by RAND Corporation called "Nation Building: The Inevitable Role of The World's Only Superpower" has made an important attempt to convince American policymakers that, if the political decision is made to intervene militarily, politicians had better contemplate the long term consequences: a lot of military manpower, many resources, and patience in order to stabilize and reconstruct what has been upset. Most of the existing academic research, however, takes the strategic and operational levels as a starting point and tends to distil the examples from the technical level, that of the soldiers on the ground, to underline the value or dangers of the choices made. This historical narrative, in contrast, seeks to reconstruct three operations in Cambodia, Somalia and Kosovo primarily at the battalion level. There is little empirical research into this tactical level of operations and few studies have combined different missions in order to draw generalizable conclusions on changes and continuity in the nature of soldiering as a result of the converging civil and military spheres.

The book's structure relies on four sections. Part one analyses how during and immediately after the Second World War, and during counterinsurgency campaigns, military forces addressed the interaction with their civilian environment in relation to their military operations. Its purpose is to provide a frame of reference for the analysis of peace operations in the 1990s and to underline continuity in the challenges military forces found in supporting and substituting civil authorities. Chapter one traces Civil Affairs and Military Government as practised by the Western Allies in the European theatre of war during the Second World War. It highlights the practical choices made concerning the employment of Civil Affairs units and traces the shift from a primarily supportive function, to a more central position for Military Government once the Allied forces became essentially an internal security force. Chapter two analyses how in the colonial context, military forces adapted to insurgencies and focuses on the emergence of a distinct British approach to counterinsurgency, in which civil-military cooperation assumed a pivotal position down to the lowest levels of command. It further examines how, for various reasons, American forces were employed differently in Vietnam and proceeds to explain how after these wars, while preparing for conventional battle in Europe, the Western military came to perceive their role as taking place in an exclusively military sphere during the remainder of the Cold War era.

Part two concerns the United Nations operation in Cambodia in 1992-1993 and investigates the early development of complex peacekeeping, which combined military and civil components. It reviews how the realities on the ground forced the military and civilian branches to ever further integrate their activities, even though they had been planned as operating along largely separate lines. The three chapters on Cambodia analyse in detail how a battalion of Dutch Marines, caught between four parties to a conflict that had not yet come to an end, adapted their operations to the unexpected and how they were confronted with early examples of the thorny problems involved in providing some level of public security,
partly in cooperation with local authorities. Part two concludes with an investigation into the steady expansion of the military role in facilitating the embattled elections in Cambodia.

Part three focuses on the profound impact on both sides of the Atlantic of the leading American role in military operations in Somalia and Bosnia. The two chapters dealing with Somalia review how the multinational military force, without a parallel civilian organisation, struggled to establish some degree of security in a country with no government or functioning institutions. By analysing in detail how the Australian battalion in Somalia approached this challenge, it portrays how—seemingly unhampered by some of the restraints placed on the American military—the Australians conducted their operation successfully by displaying a high degree of flexibility and originality in the methods applied. The chapter on Bosnia describes the troubled civil-military relationship and the military’s initial refusal to assume a substantial role in bridging the “public security gap” seriously contributed to the stagnation of the peace process. It also traces the early developments of NATO CIMIC.

Part four analyses NATO’s mission in Kosovo, a mission that, as in Somalia, took place in a power vacuum. The absence of a functioning local government placed extremely high demands on the ingenuity of the soldiers involved. It establishes how NATO came woefully unprepared, reached uneven levels of success in filling the vacuum, but established an overall successful working relationship with the parallel civilian UN mission. The five chapters on Kosovo centre on the role played by a Dutch artillery battalion, which came to perform de facto military governance during the early months of the mission in order to establish the necessary security in a town divided by ethnic hatred.

The motive for choosing these case studies is threefold. First, I selected the cases because of their relevance to the main theme of this study. However, a substantial number of other military operations during the 1990s would have qualified on this basis. Supporting and substituting local authorities or international organisations played a pivotal role in reaching any level of success in for instance Kurdish Northern Iraq in 1991, Haiti in 1994, Eastern-Slavonia in 1996, and in East-Timor in 1999. A second criterion that helped to narrow down the wider selection of potential cases was a mission’s exemplary function and overall impact on the stormy development of peace operations as a concept and practise. A third deciding factor in the choice of the cases was related to the availability of source material that enabled me to reconstruct these military operations on the tactical level and provide the reader with insights the forces driving commanders to assume ever more civilian responsibilities. In doing so, I have attempted to present each case as an original historical narrative on itself.

For two out of the three tactical cases, Cambodia and Kosovo, I have had the privilege to do extensive research in Dutch military archives. Most of these are still closed to researchers as they contain a substantial amount of classified material. I thank Lieutenant General John M. Sanderson for allowing me to be the first to access his personal archive from his period as the Force Commander of the UN operation in Cambodia. For my research into tactical level operations in Somalia, I had access to the excellent field history by Robert Breen, that has long been out of print and appears to be unknown outside Australia. In addi-
tion I used various other sources such as Michael J. Kelly’s important legal treatise on the Australian experience in Baidoa and several ego-documents from the Australian War Memorial Archive in Canberra. In order to supplement archival research and the vast body of literature on peace operations I conducted several interviews with key players, both military and civilian.

As this dissertation is primarily focussed on the first phase of interventions, varying from six months to a year, it avoids entering the debate about the merits or impossibilities of “nation building”, “peace building”, or “state building”. These terms have been used by commentators, often interchangeably, to describe the specific longer term efforts to establish a lasting peace and most often democracy. The term “nation building” is used specifically to point to the discussion on the role of the U.S. military during the Bill Clinton presidency. “Nation building” is a distinctly American term that, while on the one hand evoking proud memories from the post-war efforts to rebuild Germany and Japan after their defeat in 1945, on the other hand became laden with a negative connotation in the United States as a result of its association with the war in Vietnam. To those opposed to the Clinton’s foreign policy and the mainstream of the U.S. military, “nation building” came to represent everything they were opposed to, because it diverged from what they had come to consider the proper military role, or what Eisenhower had called “all problems other than purely military.” Karin von Hippel has correctly argued that “state building” is the more proper term, since the efforts to reconstruct concern state structures rather than the creation of a nation, inhabited by peoples of the same collective identity. State building will be used in this book when necessary, although “institution building” is the more specific term preferred for the reconstruction and reform of organisations such as police, the judiciary, and administrative structures. “Peace building” is a generic term used by the United Nations in similar activities and will be used in that context.

During the 1990s the very definition of peacekeeping has been in a constant state of transition. By the year 2000, the Brazilian international relations professor Domício Proença Junior concluded that, after some ten years of muddling through, “[t]he original clarity of what Peace Keeping Operations (PKOs) are supposed to be no longer exists,” adding the crucial qualifier “if it ever did.” He continued stating that “PKOs in their various denominations and qualified variants have become, increasingly, whatever peace forces are called to do, in spite of various attempts by UN Secretaries-General, official and scholars to pin down that their various types are supposed to be.” I have avoided becoming entangled in the discussion about the legal and theoretical standing of peace operations and their categorisation and have generally used the comprehensive term peace operations for a variety of missions that have been categorised by the United Nations as peacekeeping, peacemaking, peace enforcing and (post-conflict) peace building. When conducting historical research into contemporary military operations the definitions provided by conceptual thinkers as well as the military tend to be obstacles rather than of much assistance. This is not to say that they are of no use for other purposes. However, when examining the tasks soldiers actually came to
perform on the lower level of operations the definitions tend to be to rigid as they tend take the desired mission as a point of departure, which proved to be problematic throughout the 1990s as tasks and objectives in missions often changed.
1 The citation was first reproduced in the introduction to Harry L. Coles and Albert G. Weinberg, Civil-Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors (Washington D.C. 1964) 3, 45.

2 Eisenhower’s remark can be found in the presentations, pamphlets and brochures of the Dutch/German-led NATO CIMIC Group North. It is also reproduced in: Lieutenant Colonel Mark Rollo-Walker, SHAPE, Chief CIMIC Section End of Tour Report (23 August 1999). This SHAPE document is in author’s possession. See also H. Rappard, “An Active Dutch CIMIC Policy Is Not A Bridge Too Far”, in: M.T.I. Bollen, R.V.A. Janssens, H.F.M. Kirkels, J.L.M. Soeters (eds.), Civil-Military Cooperation: A Marriage of Reason, NL Arms 2002 (Alblasserdam 2002) 77.

3 The quote by the U.S. Civil Affairs major entering a Sicilian town can be found in: Coles and Weinberg, Soldiers Become Governors, 3, 45. The misquote occurs in each of the sources mentioned in footnote 2. Eisenhower’s words can also be found in and article on developments in Civil Affairs from the Second World War to the early 1980s: William R. Swarm, “Impact of the Proconsular Experience on Civil Affairs Organisation”, in: Robert Wolfe (ed.), Americans as Proconsul: United States Military Government in Germany and Japan, 1944-1952 (Carbondale 1984) 400.


5 Figures provided by Peter Leentjes indicate that eighty percent of all (non-bilateral) aid in the 1990s was provided through the United Nations and its subsidiary organisations such as WFP, UNICEF, FAO and the ICRC. The remaining twenty percent was provided by the NGO community. There were an estimated 20,000 NGOs active in the world, and of those 7,500 were registered with the United Nations. Of the twenty percent of the aid provided by the NGOs, ninety percent is provided by thirty major NGOs such as CARE, Oxfam, World Vision, MSF, and CRS. Peter Leentjes, “Interagency Cooperation in Peace Operations,” Center of Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, Hawaii (no date. Available online at http://coe-dmha.org/TAPpdfs/19-InteragencyCoordination.pdf). Leentjes, who died in 2004, was a retired Canadian Army Colonel and former Chief of the Peacekeeping Training Unit at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

6 The term “second generation peacekeeping” was launched to set this practise apart from “first generation peacekeeping.” However, the term traditional peacekeeping is more apt, since this form of peace operations continues to be practised.


8 The acronym CIMIC will only be used when it specifically the NATO concept of Civil-Military Cooperation and NATO’s designated capability. The definition for CIMIC NATO agreed upon in 1997 was “[t]he resources and arrangements which support the relationship between NATO commanders and the national authorities, civil and military, and civil populations in an area where NATO military forces are or plan to be employed.” In August 2001 CIMIC was officially redefined as: “The coordination and cooperation, in support of the mission, between the NATO commander and civil populations and local authorities, as well as international, national and non-governmental organisations and agencies.”

9 Military battalions normally vary in size from 600 to 800 soldiers, brigades from roughly 2,000 to 6,000, and divisions 10,000-18,000. In peace operations battalions are often strengthened by troop contributing nations in order to function autonomously, resulting in battalion group’s of up to one thousand soldiers.
For an elaboration of the development of a Dutch CIMIC capacity within NATO framework see H. Rappard, “An Active Dutch CIMIC Policy Is Not A Bridge Too Far.”


A broader perspective on civil-military cooperation primarily on the strategic and operational levels is presented in Michael C. Williams, Civil-Military Relations and Peacekeeping, (IISS Adelphi Paper No. 321; Oxford en New York 1998); Bruce Pirnie, Civilian and Soldiers: Achieving better Coordination (RAND publications MR-1026-SRF, 1998); Dick Zandee, Building Blocks for Peace: Civil-Military Interaction in Restoring Fractured Societies (Clingendael Study no. 4; The Hague 1998); John T. Fishel, Civil – Military Operations in the New World (Westport 1997)


Karin von Hippel, Democracy by Force: U.S. Military Interventions in the Post-Cold War World (Cambridge 2000); On popular support for wars fought for the sake of democracy see Philip Everts, Democracy and Military Force (Basingstroke etc. 2002).


Coles and Weinberg, Soldiers Become Governors, 3.

Von Hippel, Democracy by Force, ln2. According to Von Hippel the term “nation” is used because the term “state” in the United States gets confused with the fifty states that comprise the USA.