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MILITARY TASKS AND MULTILATERALISM

Iraq, Summer 2003

"I know this is a frustrating time for you and that the high crime rate makes everything worse," said L. Paul Bremer III, Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, in his weekly radio address on Aug. 3, 2003. "We understand the desire of you, the Iraqi people, to end your fear of both political oppression and the depredations of common criminals. We are going to remove that fear from your lives."[1] But it remained unclear how these brave words would be translated into practice.

Some 139,000 U.S. troops remained on the ground, three months after President George W. Bush declared an end to major hostilities in Iraq. They were joined by around 21,000 personnel deployed by other countries, for a total force of 160,000.[2] More than half of the non-U.S. troops (11,000) were British, mostly concentrated in the troubled city of Basra; the remaining forces were contributed in smaller numbers by 17 additional countries including Italy, the Netherlands, and Denmark. By the end of September, these forces were scheduled to be augmented by 9,000 troops from a variety of mostly East European and South American countries led, by Poland and significantly financed by the U.S. These new soldiers would be sent in with a clear peacekeeping mission.[3] But both France and India—countries who were large troop donors to many of the complex peacekeeping missions of the 1990s—had made very public declarations that they would not send their forces to Iraq in the absence of an explicit United Nations

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Security Council resolution to authorize their presence.[4] U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell had reportedly been mulling over UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's suggestion that the U.S. propose such a resolution to the UNSC,[5] but senior Bush officials were reluctant to go forward with this, fearing that it would sap Bremer's authority and require Washington to share the reconstruction contracts that had previously been distributed to American firms.[6] By mid-August, the Bush administration was reported to have "abandoned" the notion of a UNSC resolution.[7]

What this meant is that American taxpayers continued to bear the vast majority of the expenses for the Iraqi occupation, and American troops continued to shoulder by far the largest responsibility for keeping order—a task that most of the troops considered onerous and thought they were ill-prepared to accomplish.[8] Even the civil affairs soldiers who were trained for humanitarian relief operations believed they were not suited to the kind of long-term occupation roles they were forced to play.[9] By the end of the summer there were approximately 1,000 civilians working in the Coalition Provisional Authority, but in practice it was coalition military forces—primarily the Americans—who continued to deal with most policing duties as well as a great deal of the reconstruction work. Given the demands on the forces' time and resources, this meant that a lot of the reconstruction was not getting done very quickly.

Iraq continued to make the international headlines because of the instability that plagued the country. British troops in Basra faced days of violent rioting over fuel shortages, in a city whose university had earlier been looted of all its books, equipment and furniture while no one from the outside did anything to stop it.[10] Reconstruction efforts in many major cities were stymied, because the specialized materials, parts and tools used for rebuilding such things as electrical grids were constantly being stolen out of half-finished projects that no one was guarding.[11] Highway bandits and carjackers targeted everyone in sight, including NGO humanitarian relief workers.[12] The general sense of the population seemed to be that all those military troops standing around were not good for much; they couldn't make life more secure, and the ham-handed raids they carried out in their search for cronies of Saddam Hussein ended up humiliating, injuring, and sometimes killing innocent civilians.[13]

American troops in the Baghdad neighborhood known as Sadr City were attacked by residents after a low-flying helicopter hovering over a transmission tower appeared to be trying to rip a Shiite flag from its post atop the building.[14] Since a major irritant in Somalia ten years before had been low-flying U.S. helicopters hovering over residential areas in the capital

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city of Mogadishu (where residents believed they were being spied upon in the bath, and where women complained of having their robes torn open by the backwash of air from the copter blades[15]), one might have thought that U.S. soldiers sent on what amounted to a peacekeeping mission would have been forewarned about these perceptions. Given the U.S. military organization's reluctance to think about peacekeeping, however, it is not surprising that such a lesson was not learned.

How could order be restored in Iraq, as the U.S. had promised it would be? To do so meant relying on the military leadership of a country that did not want the job. Unilateralism—or the modified version of it that the U.S. practiced with its closest allies—made the prospect of achieving beneficial social and political change in the country difficult to imagine. The United States did not appear to have the political will needed to establish the "empire" that its critics accused it of seeking.

Yet for a long time the United States also resisted the idea of reaching out to other states for assistance, if that meant giving up control over military activity. In the previous chapters we have seen that the political goals of complex peacekeeping operations—gaining control over political developments in foreign societies, for the sake of self-interest intertwined with humanitarian impulses—have in some ways resembled the political goals of imperialism as practiced by liberal states a century ago. The example outlined above shows how hard it is to do these things well *unilaterally*, or at best with the support of a few well-chosen allies. What this chapter will concentrate on, however, is the flip side of the coin. The task of achieving control is made much more complex when it is attempted in *multilateral* operations, like those in the Balkans, where more than one state is attempting to exert its political vision over a piece of foreign territory. This difficulty was not faced by the old colonial empires, who kept guard over their national possessions and kept each other out of their territories. It is a problem that has plagued the multilateral peacekeeping operations of the 1990s, and made the problem of trying to establish control abroad much harder—perhaps contributing to the Bush administration's initial unwillingness to have outsiders involved.

The idea that putting multiple actors in charge of an operation makes cohesive action difficult is already well explored, to some extent, in the existing literature on peacekeeping. It is regularly argued that the number of players involved on a mission should be limited, to try to make sure that

they share common training and a common vision of what is needed. This is one reason why so-called coalitions of the willing seem to do a better job of restoring peace to war-torn societies than traditional UN-commanded operations. Traditional operations are too subject to the varying political whims of the large number of countries that donate troops to them, and also too dependent on forces that often have inconsistent expectations and differing qualities of skills and training. There is also now widespread recognition that private NGOs have different perspectives and interests from the states that send military forces to peacekeeping operations. A great deal of effort has been spent in the policy community in recent years to try to bridge the barriers between NGO and military leaders so that more unified operations can be put into place in the future.[16]

What has not been explored are the problems of achieving coordination even among close military allies, such as those in NATO, and between those military forces and their civilian counterparts who are linked by a supposedly common set of liberal western values. This chapter draws out these difficulties by looking at examples of coordination difficulties from the peacekeeping experiences in Bosnia and Kosovo, paying special attention to the interaction between military and civilian players in the international community and the roles played by NATO military personnel in these operations. While the international community in the Balkans has made a well intentioned and heavily funded effort to establish political control over societies torn by ethnic conflict, the means employed have not been sufficiently well coordinated to achieve these goals. Indeed the fact of multilateralism has often made cohesive actions impossible.

Since multilateralism is what legitimates these operations, it is politically unacceptable to suggest that a single, powerful entity (with the authority equivalent to an imperial state) ought to be in charge. Indeed in Iraq before it turned to the UN Security Council in October 2003, the U.S.-dominated coalition constantly faced accusations of imperialism. Without question that made the job of restoring order more difficult, because it emboldened the detractors of the occupation. Yet putting a single state in charge would seem to help ensure that the political aims sought have a chance of being coordinated with the use of military resources necessary to achieve them. (The more that is revealed in the press about the lack of coordination between the U.S. State Department and the Pentagon in planning for the Iraqi occupation,[17] however, the more any cohesive policy whatsoever seems doubtful, reinforcing the findings of the previous chapter.) In the Balkans there have been too many actors with competing values and interests who have tried to do what they believe is right in the peace operations, but have in the end created a muddled set of expectations

for the local population. The international community as a whole has been unable to communicate a clear message, and therefore unable to exercise the kind of control that would in theory be necessary to move a society from one political system to another.

But it is not necessary to give up in despair; there is a political choice available that combines the best aspects of unilateral control with multilateral support for peacekeeping operations. This chapter contrasts the Balkans cases with the experience of the Interfet operation led by Australia in East Timor beginning in Fall 1999. While it is true that long-term stability and economic development in East Timor remain uncertain, the Australian Defense Force's ability to manage the conduct of the initial UN-authorized multinational military operation there from September 1999 through February 2000 (and even on into the UNTAET area in the crucial western sector) ensured clarity and consistency in the establishment of security in the country. Rather than approaching East Timor as an alliance of equals, the Australians took charge unambiguously, seeking multilateral participation and feedback but keeping responsibility for decisions at a national level. Such a model would have worked better for the U.S. in Iraq than the initial attempt at what amounted to unilateralism—and indeed, it was this model that the Bush administration seemed to embrace by Fall 2003, when UN support was finally sought and achieved. The only question was whether Washington had waited too long and acted too presumptuously toward other states to obtain genuinely enthusiastic participation in the operations.

The following section details some of the military tasks carried out in the Balkans, and shows how similar they are to the actions carried out (sometimes successfully, sometimes with too much brutality) by military organizations during the imperial era. The chapter goes on, though, to show how these tasks have been complicated in the Balkans by the necessity of multilateral coordination across NATO members and other representatives of the western community. Multilateralism makes complex military activity more difficult. Finally the Australian leadership of the Interfet mission in East Timor is explored, to show that there is a compromise solution possible to the dilemma of multilateral effectiveness.

The Use of NATO Military Force in the Balkans

There is a striking resemblance between the tasks that military personnel have been asked to do during today's complex peace operations and the tasks many military personnel were asked to do in colonial empires. Military

troops serving on the NATO peacekeeping missions in Bosnia and Kosovo are routinely given duties that would be assigned to civilian police in calm and established societies. Military officers serving on these missions are also asked to coordinate humanitarian aid delivery in their areas of operation, working with NGOs and international aid agencies to select and prioritize funding for projects ranging from road reconstruction to small-business development. In other words, military personnel are being asked to take on responsibilities extending far beyond the standard tasks they are trained to do, and are being asked to do this in unstable foreign countries where the political consequences of their actions are uncertain.

There are four military tasks in particular in the Balkans that bear strong resemblance to colonial governorship activities, even though once again their goals and methods differ from what was practiced in the colonial era. First is riot control. The British army stationed in colonial India (where most officers were British, but most soldiers were Indian) was routinely asked to back up local police when riots occurred that challenged British rule.[18] One British general wrote an entire book on the subject in 1934, emphasizing the importance of limiting the use of force to the minimum amount necessary, since "the hostile forces are fellow citizens of the Empire, and . . . the military object is to re-establish the control of the civil power and secure its acceptance without an aftermath of bitterness."[19]

Similarly, in the SFOR operation in Bosnia in recent years, NATO military troops have often been asked to provide a "security ring" in areas where rioting is likely to occur. As in the colonial era, local police are usually given the responsibility for immediate control of the rioting itself. Military personnel, however, will guard the surrounding area to prevent outsiders from joining the melee, and to provide a sense of "presence" to try to deter violence. This was done, for example, by the Nordic/Polish brigade working with American troops to provide a safe and secure environment for a Croat religious pilgrimage to the Serbian-controlled town of Komusina in Aug. 2001;[20] by Spanish troops when rioting accompanied the attempt to reconstruct a destroyed Bosniac mosque in the Croatian-dominated town of Stolac in Dec. 2001;[21] and by British and Italian-led contingents working with Slovene, Czech, Portuguese, Dutch, and Canadian forces in Banja Luka throughout the early summer of 2001, when violent protests and counter-protests by both Serbian and Bosniac extremists repeatedly delayed the groundbreaking ceremonies for the reconstruction of the Ferhadija mosque destroyed in 1993 (at one point, visiting foreign dignitaries had to be evacuated by NATO troops from the site).[22]

British officers sometimes make the direct connection between their colonial experience and their approach to such peacekeeping activities

today, citing as lessons learned from that era the preference for minimal use of force and the need to win the hearts and minds of the population.[23] Obviously what constitutes minimal use of force has changed over time. Sometimes in the colonial era, as in Egypt in 1919, it simply meant showing the British flag in the harbors and deploying troops in the cities, to remind the local population of the potential for violence if order were not kept.[24] But often for the British, it meant something harsher: giving clear warning before opening fire, and then targeting only the violent leaders of mob action;[25] or sometimes merely firing weapons over the rioters' heads.[26] In NATO peacekeeping operations today, it means relying mostly on presence as a deterrent, and using only nonlethal weapons and good protective equipment so that any loss of life is avoided as much as possible—something, as noted in the previous chapter, which is not always done well. But the parallels are clear: NATO troops today engage in riot control in order to allow outside forces (i.e., the international community) to impose their own sovereign vision on political society in the Balkans.

The second unusual military activity that bears some resemblance to the colonial governorship era is the meting out of rewards to villages in the local population who cooperate with the mission, and sanctions against those who would harm it. In other words, military forces reward or punish collectivities for the actions of individuals. This time the methods used are vastly different between the two time periods. In the colonial era village sanctions were sometimes taken to violent extremes by American, British and French forces. If gentler means failed to win the support of the population, colonial forces would destroy their crops and livestock as punishment.[27] (It should be noted that such activities were allowed under international law up through the early twentieth century.[28]) U.S. forces in the Philippines a hundred years ago would reward those who collaborated with the occupation, encouraging American trade with cooperative local governments in the Muslim Moro region, and allowing them to manage their own affairs (including turning a blind eye to local slavery) and to practice their own religion; but they would destroy the political hubs of groups who did not cooperate, occasionally massacring large numbers of civilians in the process.[29] French forces in Indochina called their policy "progressive occupation," where military posts gave preferential prices to traders as a reward for cooperation.[30] Yet French officers in Algeria in the 1840s were known to retaliate against Arab raiders by using their own traditional local means of warfare against them, the *razzia*; analyst Douglas Porch writes, "Blackened fields, destroyed fruit orchards, and devastated villages soon marked the passage of French columns," in what he calls "an orgy of brutality and excess."[31] While British forces were supposed to be

trained to use restraint, by the 1920s future Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who then had responsibility for overseeing Britain's colonies, was championing the policy of "air control" (or aerial carpet bombing) against recalcitrant villages of the Iraqi Marsh Arabs in particular, who had declared a jihad against British occupation.[32] Clearly, that kind of violence is not practiced by NATO forces in the Balkans today (nor is it by American troops in post-Saddam Iraq).

Indeed much of the rewards and sanctions policy carried out by the international community in the Balkans in recent years has not been done through the use of force, but instead through the use of economic aid policy. The "Open Cities" program in Bosnia has already been discussed—a policy which targeted international reconstruction assistance to villages whose mayors expressed a willingness to allow and encourage refugee returns, and denied financial aid to those whose mayors opposed this goal, especially in areas where NATO peacekeepers were attacked by locals.[33] Military officers played a key role in this process, by talking to the local mayors as part of their regular patrols, and reporting their findings to the EU and UN coordinators.[34]

In some cases, military commanders have played an even more direct role in rewards and sanctions policy in the Balkans. This is because the military contingents, both through their own national means and through NATO civil-military coordination (CIMIC) programs, have aid funding at their disposal that they can disperse as they see fit. For example, a Canadian CIMIC team decided to cut off all SFOR-coordinated aid to the Bosnian town of Kotor Varos, because the town political leaders were unwilling to expend resources to help ensure the safety of returning refugees.[35]

There was at least one case in Kosovo where a sanctioning decision made by a NATO troop commander did have some unintended violent consequences, and where the victims were probably not the perpetrators of the original unrest. On July 1, 2000, the U.S. commander of KFOR Multinational Brigade East [MNB(E)], Brigadier General Randal Tieszen, suspended humanitarian assistance (except for emergency food and medical supplies) to the Serb population of the village of Strpce, after the UN civilian mission (UNMIK) building there was attacked by a mob who destroyed its facilities, stoned the police station, and stockpiled more rocks to throw at NATO troop patrols.[36] The mob was angry because a number of villagers had disappeared or been murdered while working in their fields, and they felt UNMIK and KFOR were not doing an adequate job of protecting them from Albanian retribution.

American forces placed simultaneous sanctions on the Albanian population in the town of Kamenica. In that town, villagers had insisted (despite

KFOR having denied them permission to do so) on adorning a new war memorial with an illegal symbol of the banned Kosovo Liberation Front paramilitary forces, who had been responsible for attacks carried out against Serb authorities. When Russian KFOR troops (deployed in the American-controlled sector) tried to intervene to remove the symbol, they were violently attacked by the Albanian crowd; the American sanctions were designed to punish that attack. This was perhaps an unusual incidence of U.S.-Russian cooperation in Kosovo; more often than not, American troops were suspicious of unauthorized Russian military activity in the American occupation sector.[37]

As part of the sanctions against Strpce, MNB(E) stopped providing the regular armed protection convoys it had previously given the ethnic Serb villagers, which had allowed them to cross Kosovar Albanian areas of Kosovo safely by bus and go into Serbia proper to shop, visit doctors, see family, or take school exams. Tieszen told a press conference, "You can't attack us and then put your hand out for support and aid."[38] On the day that the sanctions were imposed, a bus convoy of 300 villagers from Strpce was already in Serbia, and because of the new policy it was denied NATO protection for its return trip. These villagers decided to try to make it home anyway. Along the way they were blocked by ethnic Albanians, and the buses were stoned; three Serb villagers were injured. Within a week, the convoy service was restored, because the local government demonstrated good faith and support for UNMIK and KFOR.[39] In this case, the means used and the goals sought were significantly different from those of the colonial era; but a military commander used (in this case, by withdrawing) a tool of military force against a collective group in order to encourage cooperation with the political goals of an outside power.

The third unusual military activity which both colonialism and NATO peacekeeping in the Balkans share is the use of military force to support particular political figures over their detractors. In colonial times, military commanders would often forcibly replace particular local leaders with others more amenable to their control. For example, in Morocco, French General Louis-Hubert Lyautey had a powerful sultan replaced with his brother, a bookish man who happily withdrew to his study and allowed the French to run the country without much interference.[40] In the Philippines, American forces used divide-and-conquer tactics to reward elites who informed on each other, often by granting political offices to those who cooperated with them.[41]

An example from Bosnia shows that not that much has changed. In 1997, many in the international community believed that the success of the Dayton Accords hinged on the fate of one individual: the president of

Republica Srpska (the Serbian sector of Bosnia), Biljana Plavsic. Plavsic had originally been a hard-line Serbian nationalist, and she was later convicted of war crimes by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and sentenced to 11 years in prison. However in the late 1990s she had not yet been prosecuted. She in fact had been invited to a number of international conferences on foreign aid policy. Because she had been exposed through these conferences to the aid conditionality practices used by the international donor community as it made decisions about who was deserving of funds, she had become convinced by June 1997 that cooperation with the Office of the High Representative (OHR) for Bosnia and with NATO's SFOR was necessary for the economic well-being of BiH's Serbian population. As a result, on June 28 she fired her own interior minister, a strong supporter of the Serbian hard-line faction, on charges of corruption.

Immediately, her government rose up against her, calling her actions unconstitutional under republican law and charging that she was working with the international community to undermine Bosnian Serb independence.[42] In early July, Plavsic traveled to Great Britain and on her return was temporarily placed under house arrest by Republica Srpska authorities. When she was released, she ordered the dissolution of the republic's parliament and called for new elections in September, actions that her government did not recognize and that led it to call for her to step down. While this did not quite constitute a civil war, it was certainly a civil standoff, between the rest of the republic's government on one side and Plavsic on the other. She was immediately placed under the armed protection of British SFOR troops.[43] Over the next several weeks, SFOR troops took control over hard-line Serb-controlled television stations that were broadcasting propaganda and threats against Plavsic and SFOR, and raided a number of local police stations, finding significant arms caches that convinced the international community that a coup was being planned against Plavsic.

Plavsic's new position as what amounted to an ally of the West was complicated by another underlying issue: NATO's recent attempt to capture a different indicted Serbian war criminal on Bosnian territory, Simo Drljaca. This attempt had ended in a shoot-out with British troops, and Drljaca was killed instead of being captured for trial. Following this incident, Serbian hardliners depicted NATO British forces on television as the reincarnation of the pro-Nazi Croatian Ustase from the World War II era, and labeled Plavsic as their stooge.[44] In other words, NATO troops were clearly coming down on one side of a very heated and nasty political battle inside Bosnia.

NATO troops continued to protect Plavsic. Perhaps the most stunning use of military force on her behalf came in September. Hardliners in the town of Banja Luka, where Plavsic was based, planned a demonstration rally against her on September 8. SFOR got word that the rest of what had been the Bosnian Serb government, based in the town of Pale and no longer recognized by the OHR as legitimate, intended to send dozens of busloads of armed and drunk supporters into Banja Luka to join the rally. The rump government thought it could create a melee and bring Plavsic down. NATO had already set up a number of checkpoints on the roads connecting the two areas, and it now used them to delay the progress of the buses—verbally, by having checkpoint guards engage in intentionally confusing conversations with the drunk drivers of the convoy, and physically, by sending out slow-moving vehicles to block the progress of the buses on the roads (and according to one report, by throwing spikes on the road in front of the first bus in line to cause its tires to puncture).[45] The armed and drunk hardliners never made it to the rally, which fizzled into an embarrassment. The broadcast of these events by moderate local media sources boosted Plavsic's support in the election, and she won.

The goals of the international community in this case were consistent with their liberal vision for Bosnia's future. Blocking violent protesters who were attempting what amounted to a coup was certainly something that served electoral democracy, too. Yet by taking one side in a constitutional struggle, NATO and the OHR demonstrated their willingness to enforce an outside political agenda on BiH society. It was the use of outside force that tipped the election in Plavsic's favor—not the political resources that were internal to Bosnian society. What made this case particularly ironic was that Plavsic was later indicted for committing war crimes during the hostilities in Bosnia. She turned herself in to the International War Crimes Tribunal for Yugoslavia, and is now in prison. In other words, NATO exerted its military might in order to support what amounted to one war criminal over another, for the sake of furthering the political interests of the West in undermining Serbian hardliners.

The fourth at least passing similarity between colonialism and NATO operations in the Balkans is the use of force to encourage demographic change—in the case of the peacekeeping operations, to undo the effects of ethnic cleansing. Obviously once again the goals and means differ. In the colonial era, populations were sometimes relocated by force in order to separate armed insurgents from civilians who might otherwise support them, for example by providing them with food and shelter. The British did this in Malaya as late as the early 1950s,[46] following the example the French used against the Tokolor population in Sudan in the late nineteenth

century[47] and that the U.S. tried as a repeated temporary measure in the Philippines in the early twentieth century.[48] In the colonial era no one ever seemed to question the ethics of moving a population out of their current homes for a larger political end. If establishing stability required depriving rebel forces of their support base by forcible relocation, so be it.

In the Balkans, NATO military forces have certainly not forcibly relocated villages. In Bosnia, there is a process of ethnic eviction that usually must take place for displaced persons to return to the homes that they fled when ethnic cleansing was at its peak, since those houses are now occupied by families from ethnic groups whose paramilitaries drove out the original occupants during the war. But NATO has been very careful not to participate directly in that process. Instead, when SFOR troops hear about property claims during their routine patrols, they bring those claims to the attention of civilian authorities. SFOR also uses its mapping software to help in the process of verifying property claims, and it provides a presence that helps ensure security for returnees once they arrive.[49] Yet when an occupying family has to be evicted in order for an owner to return home, under the Displaced Persons Property Law Implementation Plan passed by the OHR in 1999, it is local police and local authorities who must manage the process, and SFOR will not intervene to make it happen.[50]

Yet in Kosovo American forces have been directly used to try to convince occupying Albanians to leave Serbian-owned homes, even though the U.S. troops say that they do not do evictions per se.[51] And certainly NATO troops have used force to try to convince hostile ethnic populations to *allow* minorities to return to their homes, after those minorities have been encouraged to return by UN authorities. Sometimes these NATO actions have aggravated violent clashes that NATO troops then have to control.

One of the best examples of this is the complex story of the divided city of Mitrovica in Kosovo. The last chapter talked about one incident from that case, but it is worth looking at as a whole in greater detail. Following the war and the major influx of refugee returns in Summer 1999, the northern half of the city remained almost completely ethnically Serbian, and the southern half became almost completely ethnically Albanian. A major bridge, heavily guarded by KFOR troops protected with barbed wire and other barricades, keeps a de facto demilitarized zone between the two sides—who each blame the other for wartime suffering.

In February 2000, a grenade was detonated inside a Serbian café in the north, and this provoked weeks of rioting by Serbs who blamed Albanians for the attack. Nine Mitrovica residents died in the riots. The immediate result was further ethnic separation, as 1,500 Albanians who had

remained in the north fled south to safety.[52] In an effort to control the rioting, KFOR decided to move more forces into the city. The French troops who normally patrolled the northern sector were bolstered by an American battalion, as described in the last chapter, but to no effect. The rioting got worse, and several NATO troops were injured.[53] The next day, Albanians on the southern side of the city who said they wanted to return to the north clashed with British troops who refused to allow them over the bridge. Although UN officials had shouted out to the Albanian crowd from the top floor of a nearby building that returns would soon be possible, Serbian hardliners who were self-appointed "bridge guardians" had earlier warned that any mass attempt by Albanians to cross the bridge would be met with deadly force. The Serb hardliners backed up this threat with a huge counter-demonstration on their side of the bridge.[54]

As the violence of the Serbian demonstrations escalated, U.S. troops once again entered the Serbian sector, this time swooping down by helicopter at dawn. They arrested eight Serbs who were ringleaders of the violence, and seized Serb weapons while the French (this time) provided a security cordon. KFOR announced that Albanians forced from the north would soon begin returning to their homes under NATO protection.[55] KFOR then built a special new bridge across the dividing line, very near the existing bridge but with one end leading directly to the former Albanian area in the north (known as Little Bosnia). It was hoped that this would give the returnees an extra sense of security.[56]

The returns process began, with Albanians crossing the bridge into Little Bosnia, but the violence didn't stop. In early March a street fight broke out in the north between ethnic Albanians and Serbs, when an Albanian used a crowbar to attack a Serb who was taunting and threatening him. Fellow Serbs surged out to defend their compatriot, and a second Albanian shot one of these Serbs dead.[57] The Serb mob grew larger and angrier in response, and apparently some Albanians lobbed grenades into the mob. Seventeen French soldiers who were trying to control the rioting (but whom the Albanians viewed as pro-Serb, because of their failure to stop the earlier anti-Albanian violence in the north) were injured by the grenades, apparently accidentally.[58]

The unrest and violence continued throughout 2001. Numerous press reports document rioting and ethnic attacks by each side against the other, with NATO troops often caught in the middle—first as they attempted to protect convoys of Albanian returnees to the north, and then as they tried to contain retribution violence led by the Albanian returnees against the Serb population. The situation in Mitrovica remained far from settled at the time this book went to press. It is a good example of how the international

community is continuing to use NATO troops to try to enforce an integrationist view for Kosovo—one that may not ultimately be sustainable in the absence of political will among its citizenry.

One set of events demonstrates what happens when all four of these unusual military activities—riot control, community rewards and sanctions, the support of particular political factions, and efforts at demographic control—come together. That case involves the actions taken by NATO troops in response to activism by the Croatian independence movement inside BiH in spring and summer 2001. Croat nationalists were not happy with the Dayton division of the country, and began agitating for the right to have their territory annexed to the state of Croatia instead.

In March 2001, Ante Jelavic, head of the Croat Democratic Union (HDZ) party (and the Croatian member of the joint BiH presidency who had earlier been removed by the OHR, as discussed in chapter 2), publicly demanded ethnic Croatian autonomy inside Bosnia. He asked all ethnically Croatian soldiers and police officers to stop recognizing the Muslim/Croat Federation authorities, who until that point had been their commanders. Since moderates had been elected to all of the open state and federation offices that past November, Jelavic's move was widely seen as a far-fetched ploy to keep the HDZ in power without democratic support.[59] Yet most of the approximately 8,000 ethnically Croat military troops in the Federation army deserted their posts in a show of support for the HDZ,[60] and more than 20 high-ranking officers publicly refused to follow the orders of the Federation command[61] in what NATO termed an "organized mutiny."[62] Some of the military installations were then occupied by the deserters, or by veterans' groups who supported the nationalist cause. SFOR commander Lieutenant General Michael Dodson, using the language of the Dayton Accords that gave SFOR responsibility for oversight of Bosnian weapons storage facilities, ordered all munitions at Croat facilities to be seized and the barracks themselves to be put under SFOR control.[63]

Simultaneously, Bosnian High Representative Petritsch—the man who had earlier fired Jelavic from the presidency—took control over the national bank that was responsible for financing the Croatian separatists in Bosnia, the Bank Hercegovacka (including its 10 local branches). Working with NATO, he used SFOR troops to protect OHR officials and UN police who seized the bank's records; he then suspended the existing bank managers and replaced the staff with his own provisional appointees.[64] SFOR troops faced ethnic Croatian rioters at the main bank branch in Mostar and at several local branches when they first tried to take over the bank on April 6. The rioters, including members of the Croatian police and

army,[65] shouted "occupiers, occupiers" at those raiding the bank.[66] The international community representatives had to return to Mostar in the middle of the night two weeks later with 80 armored vehicles and 20 helicopters; British-led SFOR troops then blasted open the bank doors and vaults with explosives to achieve Petritsch's goals.[67] While this second operation was termed a successful use of SFOR force, it was widely criticized for being ham-handed and for aggravating ethnic tensions.

The Difficulty of Multilateralism

These cases demonstrate that while the goals of the international community were certainly not the same as those of earlier colonial governors, and while the means used to achieve those goals had been significantly moderated from that earlier point in history, there was still some degree of similarity in how military force was used in the two eras. But a closer examination of several of these examples indicates that the international community faces a problem in the Balkans that complicates the successful use of force for these purposes. While the international community would like, at least to some extent, to force the Balkans into a liberal democratic and ethnically integrated template of development, it is often impossible for various countries and nongovernmental actors, each operating under their own, independent set of liberal democratic norms, to force any consistent political vision on anyone else. In the above examples there were often too many liberal democratic players, each with their own set of deeply embedded philosophical norms (and organizational self-interests, which are often hard to disentangle from those norms) about how to do things to have a coherent outcome.

The players range from the individual NATO member states and their military organizations, who have different limiting rules about how their forces may be used abroad, to various UN agencies and NGOs who are naturally suspicious about the efforts of any military organizations to limit their activities. The result is that there is no way of establishing clear lines of control over what happens when. This multiplicity of operating procedures is not something that can be changed by clearer communication or better discussion; it is simply a fact of life in the liberal democratic international community.

Colonial occupations were also sometimes characterized by muddled lines of control. The French colonial army was notable for its tendency to ignore directives coming from Paris and to work around the titular local French civilian leaders on the ground. Officers in Africa acted without the

permission of civilian authorities and often without their knowledge, sometimes starting new wars that French leaders would have preferred to avoid. This was especially common in areas of the empire that were deemed less important by Paris, and that as a result received less ministerial oversight.[68] Over time, this meant that the arrival or departure of a particular military commander could have an unsettling impact on the colony, as individual philosophies about how to treat indigenous culture and indigenous political leaders clashed.[69] In the Philippines, too, the differing personalities of American military governors and commanders often sent conflicting messages to the population about American goals and intentions, with some officials practicing a live and let live policy while others, like Leonard Wood, engaged in almost constant warfare and were famed for their brutality.[70]

Yet despite the personal vicissitudes of colonial rulers, and despite battles over civilian versus military control of colonial activity, there were nonetheless clear national goals of territory and profit (and sometimes conversion to Christianity) motivating the actions taken by the representatives of each empire. There was also a consistent background threat communicated to the populations of the British, French, and American empires alike that failure to comply with colonial rules would be met with force. There was no need for multilateral or international cooperation, and little political space was given at home to debate over what military organizations should or should not be doing while abroad.

In contrast, several of the examples described above of NATO military activities in Bosnia and Kosovo were constrained or weakened either by national limitations on how force might be used or by the fact that no one body was ever in real control of the actions taken on the ground. Let us reexamine some of these cases.

Multilateralism and the Use of Troops for Policing

As was mentioned in chapter 2, IFOR (the original NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia) was criticized by the liberal international community for its failure to take action to ensure the safe integration of ethnic groups immediately following the Dayton Accords of 1995. The most glaring example of this was when military troops stood by as ethnic Serbs burned and looted apartments in the area surrounding the capital city of Sarajevo in early 1996.[71] The Dayton Accords stipulated that seven suburban municipalities, the scene of heavy fighting and ethnic cleansing during the civil war that were now occupied largely by ethnic Serbs, were to

be transferred to the political control of the Muslim-Croat Federation. The suburbs sat at a height above Sarajevo, and the primary reason for the transfer was reportedly to ensure the safety of Sarajevo proper from sniper attacks. The transfer was also designed to ensure that Muslims and Croats driven from their homes during the war could safely return. But fueled at least in part by intimidation from Serbian paramilitary groups, most of the Serbian population living in these suburbs—both those who had lived there continuously since before the war, back when the suburbs were ethnically integrated, and those who as displaced persons from elsewhere had occupied homes left vacant by the ethnic cleansing of non-Serbs—deserted the area and migrated into Republica Srpska. As they left, the residents stripped the homes of everything of value, including wiring and plumbing, and Serbian arsonists burned some neighborhoods to the ground.

There was an International Police Task Force (IPTF) on the ground at that time as part of the Dayton Accords, under the control of the United Nations. But the IPTF was unarmed and was only mandated to provide supervision and oversight to local police forces, not to take any police actions itself—probably because the international community did not wish to take actions that might be seen as neocolonial. The local police forces, however, were dominated by ethnic nationalists who did not wish to see integration happen. The IPTF had no enforcement power, even though its Commissioner's Guidance Notes stated that the local police "must realign their missions from the protection of the state to the protection of citizen's rights."[72] Meanwhile NATO member states were unwilling to let IFOR military troops use force for anything except the military purposes outlined in the Dayton Accords. As a result, the international community was unable to accomplish the forcible integration it intended.

With the change of mandate that was associated with the transition between IFOR and SFOR, and also with the appointment of General Wesley K. Clark as the new commander of NATO (SACEUR),[73] this situation began to change. Yet both in SFOR and later in KFOR, military forces have been reluctant to intervene in untraditional ways, even when not doing so threatens the success of the NATO mission. Furthermore, military and civilian actions have not always been well coordinated. This lack of cohesion has been clear, for example, in response to ethnic rioting. In the case of the cornerstone laying at the Ferhadija mosque in Banja Luka in early May 2001, discussed above, a mob of several thousand protestors broke through the local police cordon and threatened members of the international community who were there to witness the celebration. The mob effectively imprisoned the American head of the Bosnian UN mission

and the Austrian and British ambassadors to Bosnia (among others) in the nearby Islamic community building. High Representative Petritsch said that the violence was the fault of the Republica Srpska authorities, and wrote, "I am shocked that the Republika Srpska still appears to be a place with no rule of law, no civilized behavior, and no religious freedom."[74]

It would be surprising if he were truly shocked, however, and the international community should have been better prepared for violence. SFOR spokesperson (and Canadian Captain) Andrew Coxhead defended the British and Italian troops who helped evacuate the dignitaries but did not intervene in the rioting, saying, "It would be inappropriate for us to not allow the police to fulfill their duties. . . . SFOR intervention only would have occurred if the police had completely failed to resolve the situation."[75] Yet inaction here undermined the deterrent effect that the presence of those troops was supposed to have. Granting ownership of the peace process to the same Serb hardliners who had destroyed the mosque exactly eight years before was not an effective tactic to take.

When the ceremony was tried again weeks later, it succeeded. This time, the OHR used its appointments leverage to compel local authorities to deploy a more convincing police presence; under the threat of removing people from office, the OHR ensured that the police were instructed to defend whoever might be harmed. Perhaps more important, SFOR district commander General Rick Hillier (a Canadian) gave "Person Designated with a Special Status" standing to the Bosniac officials attending the ceremony, which legally allowed "SFOR to intervene, where and when it needs to, to protect people without waiting for any request of local authorities or the International Community."[76] In other words, the NATO deterrent was given teeth. When the international community really wanted to accomplish a political goal in Bosnia it could do so, but not always the first time around—and not without emphasizing that it would impose a political vision on the region with or without local consensus.

A similarly uncoordinated situation had actually been faced by the international community in the Croatian bank takeover crisis a month earlier. (Learning has not been a strength of the Bosnian peace mission.) According to one knowledgeable NATO official, the rules of engagement that were specified for the initial bank takeover effort were insufficient to allow SFOR to react as strongly as it might have once the rioting broke out. Each SFOR member state has the ability to "flash their red card," or to declare that a particular military order coming from the top is politically unacceptable for them to carry out. This NATO official said that when the rioting broke out, the Spanish contingent guarding the bank takeover flashed its red card, because Spanish military troops are not allowed to

engage in riot-control activities. As a result the SFOR contingent assigned to the event was forced to withdraw.[77] A second NATO official confirmed that there was insufficient coordination among the various actors to craft an appropriate contingency plan in anticipation of the rioting, and also confirmed that Spain would not allow its troops to be used for riot control.[78] A Spanish military officer explained that Spain divides security activities into "blue box" and "green box" activities, and that while military troops may be used to provide perimeter security (the green box), they may not be used for immediate police actions (the blue box). He argues that SFOR lacked a good understanding of the real situation in Mostar, and that Spanish forces should never have been assigned to guard the bank takeover given the political situation there, since the SFOR command knew about the Spanish red card.[79]

Spanish troops were also reported to have loosely interpreted their orders at that time to intervene in the simultaneous Croatian barracks mutiny. They sent an unarmed contingent to one arms depot and simply watched as the rebel Croat forces operated there. French commanders, too, were reportedly reluctant to follow the orders of the American NATO commander. Major General Robert Meille said at a press conference, "They are rebels. But this is the problem of the government. It is not my problem."[80] The same French reluctance to follow the general NATO plan of operations has been noted in Mitrovica, Kosovo, where the French are known not to favor the ethnic reintegration plan that NATO and the UN are following.[81]

A different form of uncoordinated military activity might have hampered the actions taken on behalf of Plavsic in 1997. In that case, it was U.S. policy, particularly the "force protection" policy described in chapter 4—protecting the safety of U.S. troops in the field—that challenged the cohesion of the international community. As was noted in the previous chapter, U.S. policymakers widely believe that the American public will not tolerate casualties on peacekeeping missions. To respond to this democratic imperative, the notion goes, U.S. forces on such missions must be kept safe. In this case, U.S. troops who had been raiding the police stations that were suspected of stockpiling weapons for an anti-Plavsic coup withdrew after they were stoned and firebombed by a mob. The directive apparently came down from Washington that U.S. forces were not to risk casualties over an internal Bosnian political dispute.[82]

Later in that same set of incidents, U.S. troops confronted Serbian hardliners over control of a television station in the town of Bijeljina that was broadcasting attacks against NATO. But the deputy UN official in charge of the Bosnian mission, American diplomat Jacques Klein, negotiated a

separate deal with the Serbian hardliners in an effort to stave off violence, apparently without the approval of the then-High Representative Carl Westendorp. On orders from Washington, the American troops turned over the station to the hardliners it had been confronting, despite the anger that this provoked in the OHR.[83] These actions did not seem, in the end, to undercut the effectiveness of the international community's pro-Plavsic efforts. They do, though, highlight the limits of liberal coalition cooperation when military activities become messy.

Multilateralism and Humanitarian Aid Decisions

It is not only police actions that reveal the limits of multilateralism. Efforts to direct humanitarian aid delivery, in order to reward or sanction local community behavior, also come up against limits on cohesive interpretation of how to express liberal values. The announcement of aid conditionality may have some effect on the behavior of those supposedly affected by it. Yet there are real limits to how well the diverse international community is able to coordinate who gets what aid. For example, the "Open Cities" conditional aid program in Bosnia is widely perceived by NATO officials to have been a failure. This is because once particular Bosnian mayors had convinced EU and UN donors that they embraced the Dayton Accords, little coordinated monitoring of their later actions proved feasible. There is much suspicion that the aid community was suckered into continuing to fund hard-line nationalists.[84]

In the case of military sanctioning, even if the CIMIC (Civil-Military Cooperation) aid that is under the control of SFOR or KFOR military troops is withheld, humanitarian NGOs are free to give independent help to whomever they like. Military contingents usually lack the authority to restrict their movements, because to limit participation in humanitarian aid delivery goes against UN principles. In the Bosnian example of Kotor Varos cited above, where the Canadian SFOR contingent attempted to sanction the town for its noncompliance with the Dayton Accords, "The team's efforts were undermined several days later when an NGO announced a major donation to the town. . . . With this NGO's money the mayor was able to ignore pressure to accept minority returns."[85]

In the American KFOR contingent's sanctioning of the Kosovo town of Strpce in July 2000, a number of NGOs were asked to withhold their aid and were denied U.S. CIMIC support for projects in that locale for the several days that the sanctions lasted. The NGOs were reportedly quite angry

and made their views known in Washington.[86] Even the United Nations authorities who had been physically attacked in Strpce publicly distanced themselves from U.S. sanctions; the local UN administrator, a French citizen, "called the punishment 'politically stupid' and resigned."[87] In what may have been a delayed show of unity with the rest of the international community, a year later the new American commander of MNB(E), Brigadier General Bill David, presented the town of Strpce with gifts of a fire truck and a garbage truck in "a sign that the town was cooperating well with KFOR and UNMIK" and "to aid with cooperation in the future."[88]

The press reports of disagreements over targeted aid policy tend to portray them as philosophical debates over what the mandate of the international community should be. The question at the heart of these divides seems to be whether the international community should punish ordinary citizens for the ethnic intolerance of their representative officials, or whether aid should be given to everyone equally regardless of local political behavior. But private conversations with a variety of NATO civilian and military officials hint at a darker picture, revealing that some national military contingents have developed bad reputations for using aid to serve national commercial interests rather than shared humanitarian goals. No one wants to say which states are the culprits. In the words of British Colonel John Rollins, Deputy Director of CIMIC at SHAPE, however, "Bilateralism—even unilateralism—by national military contingents in theater is rife. This has been particularly true in Kosovo. . . . This undermines trust between the military and the humanitarian community on the ground."[89]

When all of these examples are put together, the picture that emerges is quite a bit different from the one presented at first, where the western international community was seen to be imposing a particular political future on the Balkans by force. What we see instead is a variety of national and nongovernmental actors trying their best—but often failing—to present a coherent message to the involved populations about what is expected of them. Peace operations in the Balkans may be an attempt to move those societies in a liberal democratic direction, but by their very nature such multilateral efforts cannot control social or political sovereignty very effectively. The inconsistencies of the international community provide loopholes for the opponents of the peace process to jump through, and leave local populations confused about what the international community is really trying to do. The mixed messages that the international military forces send about democracy versus fiat and about encouragement versus blackmail may indeed harm the long-term reputation of both the United Nations and NATO in the region.

Australia in Interfet

There is a counter-example of a multilateral peace enforcement mission, authorized by the UN Security Council and designed to impose a particular political outcome on a society, that worked well, at least in its initial stages. That is the Australian-led military mission in East Timor, which was deployed for six months in response to the violence that accompanied the country's independence referendum in Sept. 1999.

In one sense the Interfet operation impinged less on local sovereignty than did the peace enforcement missions in Bosnia and Kosovo, because a 78 percent vote in favor of independent statehood made the preferences of the East Timorese population clear. Most Timorese welcomed Interfet's presence.[90] Interfet was designed primarily to remove an occupying force that otherwise might not leave quickly, namely the Indonesians; it supported a political outcome that most Timorese preferred on their own. Yet much of the violence resulting from the ballot, and especially the continuing threats of retribution faced by the East Timorese, came not only (and perhaps not even primarily) from the outside Indonesian forces. Instead the violence was caused by local soldiers who were serving in the Indonesian military (the so-called "territorials" recruited from within East Timor itself), and from paramilitary militias whose political and economic interests were harmed by the Indonesian withdrawal.[91] Later, territorials and militia members who attempted to return home to East Timor also risked retaliatory lynching by the pro-independence parties, and had to be protected by outside military forces. In the absence of Interfet, locally motivated mob violence may very well have left East Timor permanently unstable and depopulated. In this sense, then, Interfet was also designed to impose a particular political outcome—independence and peaceful cohabitation, if not liberal democracy—on a society that would not have reached it on its own.

Two things set the well coordinated Interfet operation apart from the NATO operations in Bosnia and Kosovo. First, as Australian army analyst Alan Ryan demonstrates, Australia managed to keep centralized control over operational planning. Interfet did not suffer from the lack of cohesion found in the Balkans peace operations. Yet Interfet was a truly multinational operation. A great deal of negotiation by Australian authorities (both civilian diplomats and military attachés) was required in order to get other countries to contribute troops to Interfet, especially the members of ASEAN (the Association of South East Asian Nations) who were reluctant to take actions that might be seen as intervening in the internal affairs of Indonesia.[92] What this meant was that the roles taken by each of the force

contributors on the ground had to be painstakingly designed to mesh, and then negotiated with the relevant foreign authorities, by the Interfet force commander, Australian Major General Peter Cosgrove.[93]

Australia was recognized unquestionably as the preponderant military power in the region, and therefore as the appropriate lead nation for the mission. When this fact was combined with the longstanding cooperative security arrangement that Australia had with New Zealand and Great Britain, which led to common doctrinal practices and understandings among those three countries (easing the process of joint, mission-specific contingency planning),[94] it meant that Australian military planners had the ability to make key decisions on their own, and then oversee their implementation through well coordinated negotiations with other forces.[95] One particular benefit of this system was that Australia was able to place well prepared and equipped combat forces in the most dangerous areas of East Timor, while ensuring that countries who were less willing to risk violence had their soldiers assigned to the humanitarian aid activities at which they excelled.[96] Australia thus sidestepped one of the most common difficulties of multilateral peacekeeping missions that are commanded by the UN, where troops are sometimes deployed into situations they are not equipped to handle.

Australia's leadership of the entire peacekeeping operation was also, ironically, made easier by the level of destruction that permeated the East Timorese countryside. Because East Timor was perceived to be a dangerous place, plagued not only by violence but also by poor roads, poor sanitation, and rampant disease that could harm the unprotected, the support of core combat forces was necessary in order for humanitarian aid to be delivered to outlying areas. Especially given the destruction of East Timor's infrastructure in the days following the ballot, humanitarian NGOs needed military backing to do their work. This meant that there was little opportunity for inconsistencies to arise in the approaches taken to the mission, since the military could effectively control where aid workers went. (In this sense, Interfet resembled the UNTAES mission described in chapter 2, where Special Representative Jacques Klein could veto the participation of certain NGOs in the work in Eastern Slavonia.)

The second factor which set Interfet apart from the Balkans was that the core combat forces who were involved in Interfet—the Australians, New Zealanders and British—were all prepared and trained to engage in a wide variety of atypical military activities on the ground, especially activities that blur the line between military and police action and humanitarianism. Each of these military forces pride themselves on their flexibility. The British (as noted above) see this as part of their colonial heritage. Many

Australian officers trace their own institutional preparedness in this regard to the fact that their military doctrine was originally borrowed from the British model. They especially credit Australian participation in the British counterinsurgency campaign in Malaya in the 1950s.[97] Brigadier Mark Evans, commander of the Australian army brigade (3RAR) that led Interfet into East Timor in Sept. 1999, had himself served earlier as an officer for the British army in Northern Ireland.[98] Particularly important in this tradition is the notion that if the troops are able to win the hearts and minds of the local population, they then receive information from the locals that enhances their ability to fulfill their missions successfully.

The Australian forces were particularly well prepared for the kinds of activities that peacekeeping entails. In the 1980s and 1990s, as the threats associated with the cold war declined, Australian tactical flexibility was reinforced by the fact that commanders were planning for the possibility of low-level counterinsurgency operations. In particular, they thought it was likely that at some point the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) would be called on to defend Australia from harassment or sabotage arising from instability in the South Pacific.[99] One senior Australian officer said that as a result, the ADF trains extensively in activities like disarmament and detention of hostile individuals and small groups.[100] Another pointed out that the ADF emphasizes training in what is called "services-protected personnel evacuation," or cases where Australian diplomats and other civilians need emergency evacuation from a hostile political environment abroad. This officer argued that complex humanitarian missions are in many ways similar to evacuation missions: in both cases forces need to establish an entry point and then extend their control to additional preselected areas; in evacuation missions this system brings people out, and in complex humanitarian missions it brings relief supplies and troops in.[101]

Furthermore, the ADF had previous experience on peace operations to use in its Interfet preparations. The Chief of the Australian General Staff in the mid-1990s, Lieutenant General John Sanderson, had commanded the military component of the UN peacekeeping mission in Cambodia (UNTAC), whose mission changed midstream to include guarding refugees, arresting and detaining human rights violators, and securing the safety of the electoral process and of unarmed UN personnel.[102] Sanderson stressed in Cambodia the importance of keeping negotiation channels open with forces who might be hostile to mission success, and his advice was actively sought and applied as the ADF was putting together the Interfet mission. Beyond UNTAC, several senior ADF officers who trained and led some of the contingents going into East Timor had earlier served on the United States–commanded UNITAF mission in Somalia. The Australian

component on that UNITAF mission was proud of its success in winning the hearts and minds of both the local Somali population and the NGO community in its area of operations,[103] and this helped cement the lessons of the British model. Australia learned a different set of lessons from Somalia than the Americans had.

This combination of resources held by the ADF—centralized control over mission planning and execution, and the willingness of the core combat forces to engage in flexible military action—meant that Interfet was able to send a clear and coherent message to the local population, one that integrated its various components. It went in to East Timor prepared for battle if necessary, with an all-encompassing UN mandate backed by a tough deterrent force, but it preferred to avoid bloodshed if possible and its personnel were sympathetic to the concerns of the local population. The ADF would take whatever actions were necessary to restore a sense of security among the East Timorese, including police actions if required, and the brunt of any hostility would be faced by forces prepared to take casualties.

Of course, the Interfet mission was temporary. It ended in February 2000, when the more complex and multifaceted UN mission to East Timor, UNTAET, was deployed. There was a high degree of continuity in the military personnel used in the two missions—over 70 percent of the soldiers on the final rotation of Interfet stayed for the first rotation of UNTAET,[104] and Australia and New Zealand remained the dominant forces in the volatile Western sector of East Timor. But the transfer to UN authority significantly expanded the purposes of the mission to include democratization, civil society, and economic development tasks, and at that point the variety of international organizations descending on East Timor exploded. UN personnel on the mission were harshly criticized for their obvious displays of wealth on the ground, their lack of organization, their wastage of resources, and the slow pace of the inclusion of local East Timorese in civil management activities.[105] Once the goals of the international community became more complex, the ability to maintain cohesion over operations was lost. As previous chapters have noted, it is not clear at this point that the attempt to create a functioning, independent, liberal democratic state in East Timor will work over the long term.

The Dilemmas of Liberal Democratic Intervention

Today's acceptance of multilateralism as a badge of legitimacy could be seen as presenting a conundrum. On the one hand, peacekeeping missions cannot afford to be exclusionary. The goal of imposing a particular form of

political sovereignty on a troubled society is a controversial one, and this means that the international community, if it seeks that goal, cannot afford to have prominent countries be told that their troops aren't wanted on the mission. Nor can it tell those countries that their national command authority will be usurped. NGOs will certainly not allow themselves to be subjected to control by military forces whose motives they suspect. (Not surprisingly, they complained about the control that Australian forces exerted over their activities during Interfet, even as they expressed appreciation for the ADF's assistance in getting them where they needed to go.) It is already hard enough to garner sufficient political will to put well designed complex peace missions together. If important actors are not given a voice in such missions, then those missions will be hampered by inadequate resources—as the United States discovered in its postwar occupation of Iraq.

Even if an actor with an abundance of national resources had sufficient interest to lead a mission alone, accusations of old-fashioned colonial intentions would taint the operation and ultimately play into the hands of the local opposition. Again, Washington discovered this in the early months of the Iraqi occupation. Liberal democratic actors tend not to trust the motives of unilateralists. Indeed, one of the reasons that Australia was so keen to create an ASEAN-supported multinational coalition from the start of Interfet was to preempt the accusations of ethnic European colonialism that later arose in both Indonesia and Malaysia.

When all the voices that want a say in mission design and execution are heard, however, the result is a cacophony of competing norms and interests that often undermines operational coherence. The result can be a security quagmire, where too many opportunities are created for revisionists to subvert the international community's goals while seeking their own ends. NATO is widely perceived to be a more effective military actor than the UN is in general, but even NATO does not function as a consistent force on peace missions. A liberal democratic style of complex intervention results in messy outcomes.

The Australian lead role in Interfet provides a hybrid model of how this can be done better. The goal was simple: to restore order. The technique, which necessitated a great deal of cooperation between Australian military commanders and diplomats, was clever: keep control of the mission, while encouraging others to participate in ways appropriate to their resources. The outcome was a multilaterally supported operation that retained its coherence remarkably well, and is cited as one of the few unquestioned successes of UN peacekeeping. It is time that the United States, when it intervenes in places like Afghanistan and Iraq, learns from the Australian experience on Interfet. Multilateralism is manageable, if it is done right.