Re-Examining the Canadian Commitment to Peacekeeping during the 20th Century

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Abstract: No universal definition of peacekeeping exists given the dynamic and contested evolution of this concept over the years. Still, no scholar or student of global affairs can deny that Canada has historically played an integral role in spearheading peacekeeping in various multilateral dimensions. The ‘peacekeeper’ quality has become a part of the country’s foreign policy narrative and national character despite a significant fluctuation of effectiveness over the 20th century. This paper will examine Canada’s commitment to global humanitarianism as a function of the operating global context during and post-Cold War. Specifically, favourable international conditions during the Cold War phase rendered ‘middle power’ peacekeeping to Canada’s advantage; and unfavourable international conditions during the post-Cold War phase exposed Canada’s limitations. Last, the author will briefly discuss Canadian humanitarianism as inseverable from its multilateral obligations. This thesis will be evaluated using a number of high-profile IGO peacekeeping missions from 1956 onwards; and is particularly telling if examining the role of the current Canadian government in peacekeeping affairs.

Introduction

While it was not envisioned in the United Nations (UN) Charter or any official political document before it, peacekeeping today has become a fundamental and high-profile component of UN operations.¹ The UN defines peacekeeping as “the deployment of international military

and civilian personnel to a conflict area with the consent of the parties to the conflict in order to: stop or contain hostilities or supervise the carrying out of a peace agreement.”\(^2\) However, no universal definition of peacekeeping exists given the dynamic and contested evolution of this concept over the years.\(^3\) Still, no scholar or student of global affairs can deny that Canada has historically played an integral role in spearheading peacekeeping on various multilateral dimensions. The ‘peacekeeper’ quality has become an irreversible part of the country’s narrative, legacy, and national character.

This paper will examine Canada’s commitment to global humanitarianism in the 20th century as a function of the operating global context during and post-Cold War. Specifically, favourable international conditions during the Cold War phase rendered ‘middle power’ peacekeeping to Canada’s advantage; and unfavourable international conditions during the post-Cold War phase exposed Canada’s limitations. This thesis will be primarily evaluated in the first two sections. The last section, titled “Cold War Multilateralism and Peacekeeping: Further Contextual Considerations,” will discuss Canadian peacekeeping during the Cold War as inseverable from its multilateral obligations and hence seeks to bring nuance to the central thesis. The author will marshal evidence from a number of peacekeeping case studies, including, but not limited to: the Suez Crisis of 1956 (UNEF I), the Arab-Israeli War of 1973 (UNEF II), the Cyprus Crisis of 1964 (UNFICYP), the Yugoslav Wars of 1991-2001 (UNPROFOR), and the Rwandan Genocide of 1994 (UNAMIR).

**Advantages of ‘Middle Power’ Status for Humanitarian Commitments**

The process of Cold War era decolonization rendered Canada as a ‘middle power’ suitable and well equipped to engage in global humanitarian commitments, specifically in the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I and UNEF II). The cascading of sovereignty and self-determination subsequently facilitated a global context favourable to UN intervention, mediation, and aid. Colonial powers were no longer able to resist calls of their colonies for independence amidst the emerging international norms of sovereignty and self-determination.\(^4\) However, the withdrawal of colonial authorities immediately—and ironically—precipitated

\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Ibid.
international interventions in order to assist in the peaceful transition of power.\textsuperscript{5} First-generation peacekeeping (1956-88) developed in a response to “breakaway group” mediation instead of as means to reinforce the traditional metropolitan or imperial power.\textsuperscript{6} As a result, newly-emergent countries in the Afro-Asian world were both chief beneficiaries of and enthusiastic to peacekeeping efforts.\textsuperscript{7} Disciplined national forces perceived external assistance to be both vital to state stability and a means to gain recognition and influence in international political forums.\textsuperscript{8} Thus, first-generation peacekeeping and global humanitarian initiatives of mediation and aid often developed in the post-conflict phase where belligerents pragmatically preferred peace to war.\textsuperscript{9}

By virtue of ‘middle power’ qualities unique to Canada within the context of the Cold War the country successfully pioneered and propagated peacekeeping initiatives through its involvement in UNEF I and UNEF II. The two main factors inhibiting UN superpowers from mounting decisive action on their own was the nuclear “balance of terror,” and the fact that successful peacekeeping could not be executed by those states with a history of colonial, military, or economic exploitation in the region of question.\textsuperscript{10} Canada’s advantageous qualities of being a developed country with peaceful traditions and a reputation for respect and impartiality allowed it to emerge as a ‘middle power’ able to carry out the otherwise hindered security function of the UN.\textsuperscript{11} For instance, Canadian Minister of External Affairs Lester B. Pearson’s successful creation of UNEF I in 1956, a innovatory emergency UN force, was contingent on convincing the Arabs of the Suez that the delegation was not acting as an agent of British imperialism.\textsuperscript{12} Moreover, the nature of Canadian involvement in UNEF II in 1973 reflected the Cold War context of having to balance out peacekeeping forces affiliated with the

\textsuperscript{6} Taylor and Cox, “Peacekeeping: International Challenge,” 36.
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{8} Taylor and Cox, “Peacekeeping: International Challenge,” 36.
\textsuperscript{10} Taylor and Cox, “Peacekeeping: International Challenge,” 38.
\textsuperscript{11} Legault and Tessier, “Canada and Peacekeeping,” 46.
\textsuperscript{12} Taylor and Cox, “Peacekeeping: International Challenge,” 36.
Communist bloc, such as Poland. Indeed, domestic attitudes reflected that of its allies in encouraging ‘middle power’ direction: Canadians in May of 1956 polled 58.1 percent in favour of having Canadian troops take part in U.N. forces to reconcile conflicts between Israelis and Arabs. The impetus for Canadian involvement in both UNEF I and UNEF II was therefore a response to the needs of UN diplomatic circles to preserve ‘middle power’ neutrality. After having justified its proactive humanitarianism both at home and abroad, Canada executed its arbitrating role in a noble manner albeit amidst a tense international atmosphere of antagonized Western and Eastern blocs.

A further advantage critical to Canada’s success as a first-generation peacekeeper was that it was one of the few technologically, economically, and militarily developed countries competent enough to undertake and fulfill UN mandates. While first-generation UN peacekeeping was not an activity that required superpower nuclear weapons, expensive equipment, or forces prepared for warlike scenarios, engagement in global humanitarian initiatives did require a threshold capacity. Canada’s Cold War rearmament quadrupled the size of infantry, engineers, officers, pilots, technicians, and logistical, air and sea troops within a few years of the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. The military sufficiency of Canada’s ‘middle power’ peacekeeping is apparent during the Suez Crisis when it was virtually alone in its ability to provide in a reasonably short time administrative units such as airlifts from Naples to Egypt. United States (U.S.) military personnel on the other hand, by virtue of being contingents of a superpower, were barred from entering the country.

Although Canada did not take the lead in establishing UNEF II its military involvement, similar to that of UNEF I, proved to be essential to the mandate’s effective operations. Canada contributed a contingent of 1,100 personnel consisting of logistics, signal,
and light aircraft.\textsuperscript{19} Indeed, aside from the superpowers, Canada was one of the few countries that could readily do so.\textsuperscript{20} In both instances, therefore, the pioneering and propagation by the Canadian government and personnel of humanitarian peacekeeping efforts showcased the country’s advantageous ‘middle power’ position. In retrospect, Canada emerged at the forefront of global humanitarianism because colonial powers were necessarily disengaged within a context of decolonization, and the U.S. and Soviet Union were gridlocked within a polarized UN. As the next section will illustrate, the end of the Cold War—and indeed, the recapturing of ‘intervention’ initiatives by multiple great powers—ultimately proved to be disillusionsing for the Canadian ‘golden age’ of peacekeeping.

**Limitations of ‘Middle Power’ Status for Humanitarian Commitments**

The post-Cold War era exposed Canada’s limitations as a ‘middle power’ in two dimensions: Canada’s limitations within context of a fundamentally changed global context and Canada’s limitations given the functional deficiencies of the UN itself. First, the changing nature of conflict from interstate to intrastate and the correspondingly complex UN mandates exposed the insufficiencies of Canada’s material resources. From 1945 to the mid-1980s, missions cost 266 million dollars, a mere 0.4 percent of the Department of National Defense budget.\textsuperscript{21} Peacekeeping operations after the breakdown of the Soviet Union dealt with fracturing states with various sectarian rivalries, unclear boundaries between belligerents, irregular and uncooperative forces, a constant breakdown of ceasefires, and unrelenting rounds of violence.\textsuperscript{22} Engaged in, what was then coined second-generation peacekeeping (1988 – present), the Canadian government from 1984–93 reached a maximum limit of resources available for budgetary controls hence inevitably putting an overwhelming pressure on participation.\textsuperscript{23}

Canada thereafter sought to promote ‘middle power’ practicality by readjusting its commitment to global humanitarianism through various policy changes. For instance, given the exorbitant

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\textsuperscript{19} Horn, Bernd. The Canadian Way of War: Serving the National Interest. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2006. 303

\textsuperscript{20} “SECOND UNITED NATIONS EMERGENCY FORCE (UNEF II) - Background (Full Text).” UN News Center: Middle East UNEF II Background. Accessed March 26, 2016. \url{http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/unef2backgr2.html}

\textsuperscript{21} Legault and Tessier, “Canada and Peacekeeping,” 23.

\textsuperscript{22} Legault and Tessier, “Canada and Peacekeeping,” 25.

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
material cost of on-the-ground operations the government created a new framework of defense.\textsuperscript{24} As an attempt to reverse “military overstretch,” Prime Minister Brian Mulroney decided not to specialize its UN military personnel and thus avoided the challenge of having to maintain readiness of forces.\textsuperscript{25} Furthermore, a Special Joint Committee report in 1993 redefined Canadian foreign policies in several ways. Most notably, the report postulated Canada should only participate in those peacekeeping missions that meet “standards for success” and offer an opportunity to make a “significant contribution.”\textsuperscript{26} The various policy changes and accompanying rhetoric therefore illustrated a transforming reflex of the Canadian government in terms of humanitarian intervention.

The Yugoslav Wars illustrate the complexities of post-Cold War crises and the subsequent reluctance of the Canadian government to engage itself in humanitarian efforts through the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). For instance, due to the overextension of Canada’s military forces the government announced in 1995 it would only supply 1,000 soldiers to the Implementation Force (IFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina for a limited and definite period of one year.\textsuperscript{27} Second, proliferating violence exacerbated the stresses of military overstretch where the Canadian government \textit{did} engage itself. Particularly during the Yugoslav Wars, peacekeepers often suffered from being seized, physically threatened, and coerced.\textsuperscript{28} During the Visoko Bridge incident of December 1993, eleven Canadian peacekeepers were taken hostage, abused, and threatened with death by Bosnian Serb soldiers.\textsuperscript{29} In a stark contrast to low-risk first-generation operations, second-generation peacekeepers often resorted to the threat of force in order to protect themselves. Indeed, even at home, 57.5 percent of polled Canadians on January of 1994 voted to maintain the existing number of troops in Former Yugoslavia if not decrease the Canadian presence as compared to a meager 12.7 percent that voted to increase involvement.\textsuperscript{30} The safety of overstretched Canadian soldiers—almost a

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid, 28.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid, 29.
\textsuperscript{27} Legault and Tessier, “Canada and Peacekeeping,” 29.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid.
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quarter of Canada’s army was stationed in the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Cambodia, Cyprus, and the Middle East by 1992—became one of Parliament’s rallying points to disengage.\textsuperscript{31}

Second, the breakdown of the bipolar Cold War context and the emergence of a multipolar system with several great power states further reinforced the inconsequential position of Canada as a ‘middle power.’ As argued previously, the early efforts of skilled diplomats such as Lester B. Pearson habituated Canada into peacekeeping prominence and in doing so, strengthened the country’s influence on the UN agenda. However post-Soviet breakdown and as a response to a growth in intrastate crises, major powers—the permanent members of the UN Security Council, now unbarred from participating—began to champion influence in conflict-containment initiatives.\textsuperscript{32} For example, Canadians held some of the most important posts in UNPROFOR and carried out operations in the most sensitive areas of Bosnia and Croatia\textsuperscript{33}, yet the U.S. and European powers reserved most decision-making to themselves.\textsuperscript{34} Canada was not consulted for input and often forced to accept terms against its better judgment, such as when the UN authorized air strikes on various regions of Yugoslavia.\textsuperscript{35} The diminished importance of a ‘middle power’ in mitigating conflict is therefore apparent vis-à-vis the complexities of second-generation peacekeeping and the novel engagement of major powers at the forefront of global humanitarianism. The vitality of Canadian peacekeeping was only exceptional within a global environment that had facilitated it, now fleeting.

On a second dimension, functional deficiencies of the UN itself also posed limitations on the ability of Canadian peacekeepers to carry out their commitments. First, the limited use of force, rendered the peacekeepers’ purpose impractical during proliferating crises. Traditionally, peacekeepers’ mandates were to carry out humanitarian tasks as non-combatants and observe events for the UN’s information—in other words, ‘keep the peace.’\textsuperscript{36} Second-generation peacekeepers, however, experienced sectarian forces firing at and preventing them from

\textsuperscript{31} Bratt, “Niche-making,” 78.
\textsuperscript{32} Bratt, “Niche-making,” 78.
\textsuperscript{33} Farrow, Moira. “The New World of Peacekeeping: The Innocent Days Are Gone. Canada’s Troops Now Face Real War Conditions.” The Vancouver Sun (Vancouver), April 02, 1994.
\textsuperscript{34} Ehrhart, “The New Peacekeeping,” 16.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid, 17.
executing duties.\textsuperscript{37} Still, formal restrictions often disallowed them from operating lethal weaponries and potentially exacerbating crises.\textsuperscript{38} For instance, in 1964 Canadian peacekeeping troops were warmly welcomed by parading Cypriot schoolchildren.\textsuperscript{39} Meanwhile, hundreds of the same Canadian peacekeepers had been killed or injured by belligerents in Former Yugoslavia before UNPROFOR even had their first dozen briefings.\textsuperscript{40} The UN flag—indeed, their most potent ‘weapon’—had no inhibiting effect on belligerent warring factions contending for power.\textsuperscript{41} Ultimately, this reality exposed the peacekeepers’ obsolete functionality, for there was no peace to ‘keep’—in effect, the UN operated in war zones where they could very well be perceived as the enemy.

Second, the failure of decision-makers within the UN to deliver coordinated strategic and political direction to Canadian contingents, particularly in the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) and UNPROFOR exacerbated their incapacity for self and civilian protection. For instance, despite the steady flow of credible reports as forwarded by UNAMIR’s Major-General Romeo Dallaire the UN refused to interpret the events in Rwanda as genocide and hence sidestepped obligations to provide more aid and troops.\textsuperscript{42} The Guardian in November of 1995 reported senior officials at the UN were warned by secret cable three months before the Hutu extremists carried out their extermination of minority Tutsis.\textsuperscript{43} General Dallaire recalled the UN’s moral failure in a later interview: “We needed to shame the big five in the Security Council – particularly the Americans, the British, and the French – to actually do something.”\textsuperscript{44} Yet, the U.S. and the United Kingdom (U.K.) repeatedly opposed a robust mandate as recommended by General Dallaire and instead, took measures to withdraw

\textsuperscript{38} Taylor and Cox, “Peacekeeping: International Challenge,” 48.
\textsuperscript{40} Farrow, Moira. “The New World of Peacekeeping: The Innocent Days Are Gone. Canada’s Troops Now Face Real War Conditions.” The Vancouver Sun (Vancouver), April 02, 1994.
\textsuperscript{41} Granatstein and Bercuson., “War and Peacekeeping,” 29.
\textsuperscript{43} Hilsum, Lindsey. “UN Suppressed Warning of Rwanda Genocide Plan Massacre Details Were Revealed Three Months in Advance.” The Guardian (Manchester), November 26, 1995.
\textsuperscript{44} Dallaire, Romeo. “Lost Mission to Rwanda: An Interview with General Romeo Dallaire.” Interview by Michael Enright. Queen’s Quarterly, Fall 2000.
peacekeeping forces because it was getting “expensive.” Without a clear authority to deploy fully-equipped soldiers to forcibly stop killings General Dallaire and his small force were ultimately left to the mercy of “marauding Rwandans.”

The traditional peacekeeping role for which UNPROFOR in Former Yugoslavia was organized and equipped is that of managing a ceasefire, but similar to that of UNAMIR, the role nudged—in vain—to one of direct intervention. Frustrated by Canada’s overextension by the 1990s, a military expert at Canada’s UN mission in New York spoke to the Toronto Star: “No other country in the world faces such an extensive commitment of its military resources to UN needs, in proportion to its other obligations.” The result is most obvious in Srebrenica, where despite temporarily managing to make a “safe area” under Lieutenant-General Philippe Morillon, 150 Canadian peacekeepers were pulled out in March of 1994. Cited was a failure of the UN to address their vulnerability as peacekeepers and provide more UN troops. The functional deficiencies of the UN and its direct impact on operating peacekeeping troops ultimately culminated in the Rwandan genocide in April of 1994 and Srebrenica massacre in July of 1995. A familiar scenario in the post-Cold War world of conflict, the vulnerability of peacekeepers and relentless civilian terror is a testament to the unwillingness of UN members to allocate the necessary resources to match their—complicated to begin with—mandates.

Cold War Multilateralism and Peacekeeping: Further Contextual Considerations

As argued under “Advantages of ‘Middle Power’ Status on Humanitarian Commitments,” peacekeeping efforts indeed served as a vehicle for Canada to craft a distinct national character on various occasions during the Cold War. Being acutely aware Canada is not destined to become a great power, peacekeeping as a multilateral enterprise allowed Canada to acquire an influence and national ego amongst the Western ‘family of nations.’ For instance, mitigation of the Suez Crisis allowed Canada a special recognition in the form of a

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47 “UN’s Rising Peacekeeping Needs Called beyond Canada’s Means.” Toronto Star (Toronto), September 15, 1992.
49 Ibid.
Nobel Prize for Lester B. Pearson’s proposal and endorsement of an innovatory “police force.” Canadian Diplomat Geoffrey Murray who had participated in the establishment of UNEF recounted in 1991: “Pearson was looked to by other members of the U.N. – and not only the great powers but the whole membership – for initiative, for advice, for leadership, for action.”

His diplomatic skill with the United States, the Soviet Union, Israel, Egypt, France, Great Britain, and other countries culminated in a unique legacy of proactive foreign policy and humanitarian leadership during the Cold War.

In another instance, and paralleling Pearson’s diplomatic effectiveness, Paul Martin as Secretary of State for External Affairs “put his personal imprint” on the Cyprus Crisis and played a notable part in kick-starting the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). The Washington Post in May of 1965 reported Martin was able to wring a promise out of Nordic countries to establish UN stand-by units when the NATO alliance was in jeopardy vis-à-vis war over Cyprus. The immediate deployment of the Canadian unit amongst Finnish and Swedish units was one of the factors that enabled UNFICYP to be declared operational. In retrospect, engaging in humanitarianism by multilateral means allowed for Canadians to flourish as peacekeepers amongst Western nations who undeniably accorded them respect for their many successes.

Notwithstanding the previous argument, Western-oriented affiliations and obligations profoundly directed Canada’s commitment to and execution of peacekeeping during the Cold War. First, Canada’s various multilateral links with the West determined the biased nature of its peacekeeping commitments. The East-West divide could not be more apparent as NATO published a series of policy papers tracking Soviet economic moves, including its involvements in the Middle East. For instance, the Suez Crisis was of great distress to Canada in light of its

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51 Ibid, 63.
55 James, “Canada and Cyprus,” 430.
historical connection to Great Britain and its membership in the Commonwealth.\textsuperscript{57} The impetus of Canadian officials to engage in mediation efforts through UNEF I was motivated by the potentially adverse economic and political effects of the crisis on the Commonwealth, the UN, and most importantly, upon relations between the U.S. and Great Britain.\textsuperscript{58} In particular, Canada equated its own national survival to Anglo-American cooperation within NATO\textsuperscript{59} hence illustrating the degree to which it associated its national interest with the interest of the West.

In 1964, Canada participated in UNFICYP once again motivated by potentially adverse effects of two NATO partners, Turkey and Greece, in conflict over Cyprus.\textsuperscript{60} Cyprus was important to the West for air bases that it offered for striking at the Soviet Union and intercepting electronic conversations of the Warsaw Pact.\textsuperscript{61} On April 13, 1987 a number of academics, military, and foreign affairs professionals participated in a workshop on Canada and peacekeeping at York University, citing the East-West dimension of the Cyprus crisis as most provocative to international stability.\textsuperscript{62} They argued if Canada were to abandon its commitment to peacekeeping, intensification of conflict could bring superpower intervention. The intervention would inevitably involve and endanger Canada by virtue of its NATO obligations.\textsuperscript{63} Thus, peacekeeping in the interest of the West, while having no direct impact on Canadian security, was nevertheless perceived to foster international stability from which Canadians benefitted. These two instances illustrated a profound dichotomy of Canadian interest: on one hand, interest in pursuing an independent and neutral ‘peacekeeper’ identity; and on the other hand, interest determined by an Anglo-centric worldview.

Second, Canada’s consistent identification with the West on occasion adversely affected its peacekeeping reputation. For instance, although the Egyptians during the Suez Crisis allowed UNEF I entry, they did so reluctantly and after having raised suspicion about the

\textsuperscript{57} Taylor and Cox, “Peacekeeping: International Challenge,” 42.
\textsuperscript{58} Taylor and Cox, “Peacekeeping: International Challenge,” 42.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid, 43.
\textsuperscript{61} Conrad, “Scarce Heard,” 57.
\textsuperscript{62} Bricker, “Canada Reserves,” 92.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid.
Canadian infantry battalion Queen’s Own Rifles (QOR). The suspicion stemmed from Canada’s potentially ulterior motives in Egypt, including fears of Canada reverting back to the British position given its historical link with the imperial power. Canada’s involvement in Operation des Nations unies au Congo (ONUC) during the Congo Crisis of 1960 further illustrated sentiments of resentment to imperial affiliations. Mistaking them for Belgian paratroops, the Armee Nationale Congolaise (ANC) molested, beat, and humiliated a contingent of Canadian officers upon their arrival.

Furthermore, the contradiction of the Canadian desire to be both an independent ‘middle power’ and also align with the West vis-à-vis the Cold War influenced its execution of humanitarian initiatives. The escalation of the Vietnam War, effectively a proxy war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, placed the Canadian contingents on the International Commission for Supervision and Control (ICSC) in an increasingly uncomfortable position after 1963. The ICSC was to oversee the implementation of the Geneva Accords of 1954, which became nearly impossible once the United States began bombing the North, violating agreements, and escalating military support of the South, with the Soviet Union taking parallel actions. By virtue of its membership in the Western bloc, the Canadian government and its contingents were compelled to keep the State Department of the U.S. government privately informed of on-the-ground events—an undertaking that rendered the role of the ICSC pointless. RCAF Squadron Leader Hugh Campbell bluntly admitted Canadians thwarted investigations of U.S. violations of arms provisions.

The pragmatism of never formally declaring opposition to aggressive American policy, such as during the Vietnam War, was decisively linked to preserving Canadian national interest on a bilateral and multilateral dimension. Lester B. Pearson in an issue of Foreign Affairs declared: “We are the neighbours and friends of the U.S.A. and our relations are closer than

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64 Taylor and Cox, “Peacekeeping: International Challenge,” 45.
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid.
67 Ibid, 49.
68 Ibid.
69 Granatstein and Bercuson, “War and Peacekeeping,” 37.
70 Granatstein and Bercuson, “War and Peacekeeping,” 37.
71 Ibid, 38.
those between any two free countries in the world…in the economic sphere, when you have 60 percent or so of your trade with one country, you are in a position of considerable economic dependence.” The fear of economic retaliation by the strongest nation in NATO shaped Canadian rhetoric and action in a clear bias towards propagating Western interest and ideology abroad. Hence, while the Cold War was an era favourable for Canadians to venture into global humanitarian initiatives, it is equally important to identify and analyze the various historical and political pressures operating on Canada as it spearheaded peacekeeping.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper analyzed Canada’s commitment to global humanitarianism in the 20th century as a function of the operating global context during and post-Cold War. Specifically, favourable international conditions during the Cold War phase rendered ‘middle power’ peacekeeping to Canada’s advantage; and unfavourable international conditions during the post-Cold War phase exposed Canada’s limitations. Lastly, the author contextualized Canadian peacekeeping during the Cold War as inseverable from its multilateral obligations and therefore sought to bring nuance to the central thesis. The paper integrated a number of peacekeeping case studies, including, but not limited to: the Suez Crisis of 1956 (UNEF I), the Arab-Israeli War of 1973 (UNEF II), the Cyprus Crisis of 1964 (UNFICYP), the Yugoslav Wars of 1991-2001 (UNPROFOR), and the Rwandan Genocide of 1994 (UNAMIR). At the present moment, the extent of Canadian contributions to peacekeeping personnel is on a clear decline.

The constantly-changing international atmosphere has compelled the UN and its members to correspondingly adapt its mandates and match its resources to the conflict it addresses. The conflict is no longer simply interstate, for which peacekeeping was initially developed, but something more complex: intrastate, cross-border, belligerent, and subject to external political and economic manipulation. If it fails to do so, history is testament to the destruction it causes entire peoples. Yet despite the many challenges facing global

humanitarian initiatives today, the UN alongside non-UN regional and multinational forces continue to intervene, send aid, mediate, and save lives.

Despite the conclusions of this paper, however, is erroneous to equate Canada’s subsided role as a champion of peacekeeping to one of insignificance. Currently, Canada has the 2nd highest peacekeeping fatality in the world.\footnote{Ibid, 10.} Indeed, while not at the forefront and facing considerable domestic and international constraints, Canadians have often left a positive and inspirational imprint on their various missions. Whether it is Major Dallaire refusing to abandon his post during the Rwandan Genocide despite a dead mandate\footnote{Dallaire, “Lost Mission to Rwanda.”} or a truce signed by Croats and Serbs at the exact area dwindling Canadian troops risked their lives for months\footnote{Farrow, Moira. “The New World of Peacekeeping: The Innocent Days Are Gone. Canada’s Troops Now Face Real War Conditions.” The Vancouver Sun [Vancouver], April 02, 1994.}, Canadian peacekeepers wherever deployed have given the nation a reason to be proud of its Pearsonian legacy. Moreover, current elect Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has also articulated a reinvigorated agenda of promoting international peace and security by way of contributing Canadian personnel and monetary assistance to UN peacekeeping missions.\footnote{Smith, Joanna. “UN Peacekeeping Mission Hot Topic as Trudeau Returns to Ottawa from Africa.” The Toronto Star [Toronto], November 28, 2016.}

The exorbitant material costs of on-the-ground operations coupled with low success potential has deterred even the most ‘benevolent’ of humanitarian countries from engaging peacekeepers too closely in conflict and post-conflict states—and Canada, too, is no exception. The question becomes: how can one reverse peacekeeping’s course from one of narrow functionality? The formal success of a peacekeeping mission is measured as whether it achieved its mandate. The answer perhaps lies in innovation within these mandates and an expansion of a peacekeeper’s role to reflect on-the-ground challenges in a robust but responsible manner. Fundamentally, however, the peacekeeper depends on boosted resources, aid, and troops backed by the UN in order to achieve its goals. The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations is simultaneously underfunded and overwhelmed in its numerous mandates. A critical addressing of the crippling institutional rules, dirty politics, and great funding disparities that limit humanitarian efforts within the framework of the UN Security Council—hardly a neutral entity—is key if Canada is to drive peacekeeping higher onto the global agenda. “…the United
Nations ‘peacekeeping’ really is the cornerstone of our foreign policy,” said Brig. Gen. E.L.M. Burns as former commander of UNEF in the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula over five decades ago.\textsuperscript{78} The extent to which Canada’s commitments to global humanitarianism will be sustained or increased over the next few decades remains to be seen.

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