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Pugh, Michael, ed. *Maritime Security and Peacekeeping: A Framework for United Nations Operations.* Manchester, UK and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994.

Michael Pugh and his colleagues have produced a timely and very thought -provoking collection of essays on multinational naval operations. It is not, how ever, a comprehensive discussion of seapower in the post-Cold War era. Rather, it is a more narrowly focused examination of UN-sponsored coalitions formed to conduct non-combat, "peacekeeping" operations at sea. As such, it naturally pays little attention to the traditional naval functions of deterrence, power projection, and sea control.[1] Although primarily intended as an explanation of an under -publicized aspect of global security, a lot of diagnosis and prescription is found in the various papers. Hence, several aspects of *Maritime Security and Peacekeeping* are controversial. This is good. We need to discuss and debate the nature of naval operations in the twenty-first century. We have come through a relatively long period where concepts of seapower were conditioned by one set of political circumstances. That era has gone, and in its place we have a rather confused international situation in which national and global security policies are predomi nantly reactive. This creates somewhat of a doctrinal vacuum for the military forces, navies in particular, and there are probably more questions than answers at the moment.[2] One of the issues, for instance, is whether new concepts of seapower are needed or should we return to some of the more traditional theories developed at the beginning of the twentieth century? In beginning to address this issue, Pugh and his colleagues boldly embark on a new path.

The basic premise of *Maritime Security and Peacekeeping* is that multinationalism at sea is the way of the future. As Pugh points out, this is not a particularly new trend for navies; the historical record of multinational naval operations is almost as old as the histories of the individual navies themselves. Similarly, the problems of multinational cooperation at sea are as old as history: who will command? how will we communicate? is there a common understand ing of the aim? from where will we receive support? The various papers attempt to provide answers to some of those questions in a new framework.

Any attempt to create a framework for multinational naval operations that does not rely on traditional concepts or US leadership always runs the risk that some of the tried and true concepts will be discarded too hastily. As compelling as the case for multilateralism at sea may be, it makes absolutely no sense to advocate multilateralism at any cost to the point of reducing the operational effectiveness or credibility of a naval force. To be useful, therefore, new frame works must have some linkage to practical considerations. Also, those frame works must be firmly anchored in solid theoretical ground.

This is where some of the views expressed in *Maritime Security and Peacekeeping* are likely to be controversial. For example, there will be disagreement with the opening premise that peacekeeping (defined quite narrowly) is now the raison d'etre for modern navies. And for good reason because this view could be seen as leading to a questionable assumption that governments maintain navies as contributions to collective security

rather than to support domestic policies. The "peacekeeping" model is in itself too narrow in overlooking the need for more assertive forms of crisis management. We have not yet reached the point where any assurance can be given that thugs, villains, and other predators will not threaten our way of life.[3]

The historical record, clearly laid out in the book, establishes that the inherent flexibility of naval forces makes them ideal instruments of crisis man agement: they can be deployed quickly, with little political risk, and can remain on task for long periods without ponderous logistic support systems. But those ships are invariably built and maintained to meet domestically-driven require ments rather than altruistic visions. The stateless society, devoid of national interests and concerns for domestic security, is still a very long way off. Until then, navies need to be versatile and able to handle the full spectrum of threats to national security and sovereignty as well as global stability.

In making the transition from theory to practice, the narrow peacekeeping model generates several unnecessary problems. For example, in attempting to rationalize the inherent ambiguity of warships (while they may often appear pacific and act in a non-threatening manner they have the potential to unleash considerable violence at very short notice), the book makes heavy weather of a warship's ability to shift tasks quickly. For some reason, the inherent ambiguity of a warship (and submarine), which has long been the foundation of gunboat diplomacy, is seen as something that should be curtailed. In the process, the authors create a needless dichotomy between the right of self-defence and the fear that commanders will use force indiscriminately.[4]

The Bedford Incident is a work of fiction. Tom Clancy also writes fiction. Discussions concerning naval operations should be founded on fact not conjec ture. The very simple fact the authors have missed is that professional naval commanders have been raised in a tradition that regards the use of force as a last resort, short of actual conflict of course. The principles for the use of force are, in the naval system, essential elements of naval doctrine.[5] In contrast, rules of engagement establish procedures for the command and control of naval forces. Moreover, the authors fail to appreciate that commanders have many tactical alternatives, not least of which is the ability of units to manoeuvre quickly to extricate themselves from a potential self-defence situation before having to use force. In non-conflict situations, the use of force is invariably political rather than tactical. On the other hand, if the intent is to make a naval operation unambigu ous, the whole concept of using traditional naval forces in politically sensitive situations should be reconsidered. For instance, if the aim is to merely exploit the symbolism of a multinational naval formation without engaging in any dip lomatic "signalling," then non-combatant vessels may be all that is needed. More significantly, it will be necessary for the providing governments to accept that those ships might be damaged with some loss of life. This raises an even more intricate issue.

The acceptance of risk is an enormously complex topic and one with which Canadian politicians have considerable difficulty, as evidence the Bosnia deploy ment. As Pugh points out, "... there is little doubt that the loss of a major (naval) unit, whether by accident or deliberate targeting, could have considerable reper cussions for the continued

exercise of the mandate." (p. 48)[6] There may well be circumstances in which a government might be willing to accept damage to one of its warships in carrying out a politically important task. This, however, will be a political decision and will take into account the full weight of the domestic implications. If the task is so politically important that the risk of damage and/or loss of life, and perhaps even some damage to national prestige, is acceptable, the government will direct the force commander accordingly. In turn, the commander, having presented his advice, will dutifully carry out the bidding of his political masters.

In a multinational situation the decision can only be made by the individual governments providing naval forces, and those governments always have the option of withdrawing their forces if they are not prepared to accept the risk. The point being that the political dimension of multinational naval operations warrants more attention, for if we do not fully understand that aspect then we cannot begin to deal with the more mechanical problems of multinational cooperation. This discussion also draws out the fact that naval forces cannot be examined under the same criteria as forces operating on land. Navies do different things under very different circumstances, and few, if any, valid comparisons with land-based forces exist at the operational level. Politically, however, there are some common features.

The chapter on a conceptual framework for UN naval operations is frankly confusing. The author gets off on the wrong foot by blandly stating that "[a]n adequate conceptual basis has yet to be established for United Nations maritime peace and security initiatives." (p. 55) This, of course, is completely wrong. Aside from debating the conditions that define *adequacy* and whether they be measured in theoretical, political, or operational terms, I must point out that a number of significant conceptional frameworks have been proposed over the years. Of these, the one offered by Jeffrey Sands at a 1994 Dalhousie University conference[7] is worth noting because it provides a simple basis for discussing the many tasks naval forces can undertake to support UN initiatives. For some reason, the author seems to believe that UN maritime operations are unique; worse he believes that naval operations can be pre-scripted and do not need to be tailored to meet specific situations. This belief is very misleading and is the greatest disconnect between theory and practice in the book. This is a pity because it detracts from the very many good features of *Maritime Security and Peacekeeping*.

The various chapters dealing with the technical aspects of UN naval (and Coast Guard) operations only scratch the surface of their respective topics. For instance, the chapter on maritime constabulary roles misses some of the tasks routinely undertaken by agencies such as the US Coast Guard in providing and maintaining secure waterways into and out of key ports. Maritime support operations of this type nearly came into prominence during the Somalia operation when it was thought that the Mogadishu port facilities would be needed for the relief operation. This is an aspect of multinational cooperation in dire need of more detailed examination, particularly in the broader sense of maritime security.

A prevailing and potentially annoying generalism is the belief that the present system for managing multinational naval operations does not work. This is a strange notion, especially where several recent operations have been remark ably successful. In some respects, there appears to be a desire, almost bureau cratic, to package the various types of naval operations into tidy compartments in which all the variables are controllable. In theory, this might make sense, and it would certainly echo the prevailing trend in developing large and very precise typologies of navies. In practice, however, each naval operation is unique and must be planned on the basis of the prevailing circumstances. Some readers may also take issue with the relative lack of interest in capitalizing on the experience gained over many years from the NATO Standing Naval Force Atlantic (SNFL). This is, after all, the one standing multinational naval force that has deployed operationally with great success for over 25 years, and under a wide range of operational conditions.

To the purist, and perhaps to the idealist, the NATO force is not a good role model. Its membership could be seen as elitist in only being drawn from a small number of traditional navies who have a common working language, hold the same values, have considerable commonality in equipment, and have developed a wide range of standard operating procedures. The fact that SNFL worked and has become the catalyst for extended cooperation at sea apparently does not count for much. The quest for something completely new, expressed so often in *Maritime Security and Peacekeeping*, often seems to come at the expense of the tried and true.

Yet, this apparent disdain for NATO's experience is moderated later in discussing the UN management of naval operations. Here, one is bluntly re minded that, unlike NATO, the UN has no mechanism to exercise control of even a small naval force and that without a dedicated military staff, the UN has to sub -contract the command of its forces. Rather than accept the status quo, which some believe works quite well, a new concept of controlling multinational naval forces is advocated. Fortunately, the idea of developing the necessary staff structure within the UN is discounted, and the notion of meshing the NATO and UN structures is also happily discarded. Both have the potential to create additional cumbersome bureaucracies. Another idea is to develop regional security struc tures, but this also fails to meet the ideal. Without saying it, one of the problems appears to be a dislike of US led coalitions. Yet, in the final analysis there are few alternatives.

One of the main points coming out of this prolonged analysis (covering nine chapters and about 200 pages) is that there is no easy path to any new structure if indeed one is needed. Progress will be made one step at a time. In this, there is a particularly useful quote from Rear-Admiral Jeremy Blackham of the Royal Navy: "The continued value of multinational exercises perhaps in group ings which we have not imagined before, and the value of Commanders knowing both each other and their respective units cannot be overstated." [8] Without trying to dash cold water on a good idea, this is not exactly original thinking. Navies have exercised together for many decades and in many cases the links between them have grown quite strong. Also, one has to consider the slow but steady progress being made in fostering confidence at sea between former and potential adversaries in the Middle East and in Southeast Asia.

The book comes to a close with some proposals for a new UN maritime regime. For the most part these all derive from earlier discussions. An inter national concept of maritime operations is suggested, on the basis of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. This would be a daunting task that would surely require support funding of a level that would exceed the GDP of most member states. Unless, of course, universal agreement could be found for the work being done on multinational naval doctrine in the United States. The call for greater political representation on naval command staffs is also unlikely to receive much support from the major maritime powers. Of the other organiza tional suggestions, the idea of adopting some of NATO's naval procedures is a step in the right direction in capitalizing on proven success. Other recommen dations concern enhancing professional knowledge levels and seem to be directed at eventually increasing the size of the family of navies able to work effectively together.

There is, however, a recurring concern that the authors may be advocating change for change's sake. They apparently do not subscribe to the view that the end of the Cold War merely brought one period of seapower to an end and did not automatically start a new period for which completely new concepts had to be devised. Many of the traditional concepts of seapower are still applicable and merely need to be adapted for use in the present era.

Overall, it is an interesting collection of papers, offering a unique perspec tive of the way UN naval operations at sea should be conducted. Because it is idealistic in many places, it is controversial. In some respects, it is anti-status quo which also makes it controversial. The papers are largely written from a theoretical perspective, and the absence of practical input in several places weakens some arguments. Nevertheless, it is all food for thought.

Maritime Security and Peacekeeping is not the definitive work on seapower after the Cold War. It is, however, a very readable and thought-provoking contribution to the necessary debate on the functions of naval forces in a new and, as yet, uncertain multipolar world. As such, it is an eminently useful book, for which the authors and editor should be congratulated.

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Endnotes

1. In some writings, the principal "functions" of naval forces traditionally deterrence, power projection, sea control, and naval presence/diplomacy, but often sub-divided and to which law enforcement is now frequently added are referred to as *missions*. See VAdm Stansfield Turner, "Missions of the U.S. Navy," *Naval War College Review*, XXVI, no. 5 (March-April 1974), pp. 2-17; and Harold John Kearsley, "Rethinking Maritime Power Theory," *Comparative Strategy*, 11 (1992), pp. 195-211. However, this definition is now somewhat misleading, particularly in Canadian usage where a mission has a broad meaning, such as "defend Canada against military threats from the sea," or in

organizational terms "maintain balanced, combat-capable maritime forces ..." The basic naval functions are, in fact, collective capabilities (or even capability envelopes) which enable a mission or part of it to be executed. These functions differ from tasks in that they are neither time nor geographically specific.

2. The work being done in the US Navy's Doctrine Command and at the Center for Naval Analyses should do much to resolve this problem. For instance, see James J. Tritten, "Development Issues for Multinational Navy Doctrine," and Michael T. Johnson, "An Analytical Framework for a Handbook on Multinational Maritime Operations," papers presented at the Dalhousie University Centre for Foreign Policy Studies July 1995 workshop "Multinational Naval Cooperation: Moving from Theory to Practice" (proceedings forthcoming March 1996).

3. This view, more realistic than realist, is explained in detail in Colin Gray's *Canadians in a Dangerous World* (Toronto: Atlantic Council of Canada, 1994).

4. The notion of "rogue" commanders waging their own wars is also discounted as a strategic factor by James Cable in "Naval Strategy in an Altered World," *Defense Analysis*, 8, no. 3, p. 237.

5. See James J. Tritten, "Naval Perspectives on Military Doctrine," *Naval War College Review*, XLVIII, no. 2 (Spring 1995), pp. 22-38.

6. Although not completely relevant to this topic, Colonel Sean Henry's editorial, "Is Canada's military in for a bad year?," *Globe and Mail* , 5 January 1996, p. A19, raises this very point.

7. From Jeffrey Sands, "W(h)ither the Maritime Agenda for Peace?," in Ann L. Griffiths and Peter T. Haydon, eds., *Maritime Forces in Global Security* (Halifax, NS: Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, 1995), p. 41. My own paper on naval peacekeeping (Peter Haydon, "Naval Peacekeep ing: Multinational Considerations," in Alex Morrison, ed., *The New Peacekeeping Partnership* [Clementsport, NS: The Lester B. Pearson Canadian International Peacekeeping Training Centre, 1995] pp. 105-24), deals with the practical aspects of conceptual frameworks for this type of operation.

8. From Rear-Admiral J.J. Blackham, "Maritime Peacekeeping," *RUSI Journal*, (August 1993), p. 23. Quoted in *Maritime Security and Peacekeeping*, p. 185.