

reluctant to share this information because of the potential danger to the pilots. But Lekic contended that UNHCR and the people who were to receive the aid were in more danger because they did not know when and where the huge bundles would fall.

Who owns the roads? Bijleveld expressed concern over establishing priorities for road use in the winter, when fewer roads are passable. He pointed to the need to coordinate the humanitarian convoys with the NATO troops' need to use the roads to enter and patrol the area. He commented that he hoped the situation in Bosnia would be calm so that aid could take priority and the forces could concentrate on assisting with security. But he added that he was not counting on this outcome.

Mandates for peacekeeping or peace enforcement? War?

Panelists disagreed about the wisdom of the mandates given UNPROFOR and UNHCR.

Thomas asserted that "Either you're operating in a permissive environment that allows the UNHCR to do its job the way it is supposed to be done," or you respond to a dangerous situation by "turning the task over to UNPROFOR and having them do it...with the force necessary to carry out their mission."



Ms. Candace Lekic

MacInnis and Lekic countered that UNHCR is the lead agency for humanitarian relief, and must retain that role. MacInnis protested that "to turn around and say that humanitarian aid can be used as a weapon...is entirely wrong...." Covault concluded that "The United Nations, with blue helmets and white vehicles, cannot be successful in an active multi-sided hot war environment." UN forces work in traditional peacekeeping operations, such as that in the Sinai. MacInnis added that "the humanitarian solution will not solve the crisis in Bosnia."

The UN and NATO: competing credibility and incongruent mission creep

MacInnis described the "NATO-UNPROFOR condominium" as an uneasy partnership, plagued by "competing credibility between an organization designed to fight a war and another attempting to make and maintain peace." Each organization was plagued by a variety of suspicions and misperceptions regarding the other.

"For NATO, read U.S." The UN staffs tended to see NATO as a simple extension of U.S. power. The publicly stated U.S. intent to carry out air strikes in August 1993 "upset the alliance and strained it severely." But the "odious" dual-key decision-making process, a memorandum of understanding that both Covault and MacInnis helped to draft, actually did help to ease those strains. Still, in both UNHCR and UNPROFOR, the non-U.S. (including the French) "simply did not

understand the checks and balances...in NATO's political makeup.... (W)henever Mr. Christopher talked tough, they became agitated, and assumed that NATO would react to the American pleasure."

"NATO is not the sub-contractor of the UN."² NATO leaders were uncomfortable acting as a regional organization under the aegis of the UN. This type of arrangement is a post-Cold War concept by which the international community can respond to civic and internal conflicts. In theory, the UN lends its legitimacy to an intervention by passing Security Council resolutions that a regional organization, such as NATO,³ is mandated to carry out.

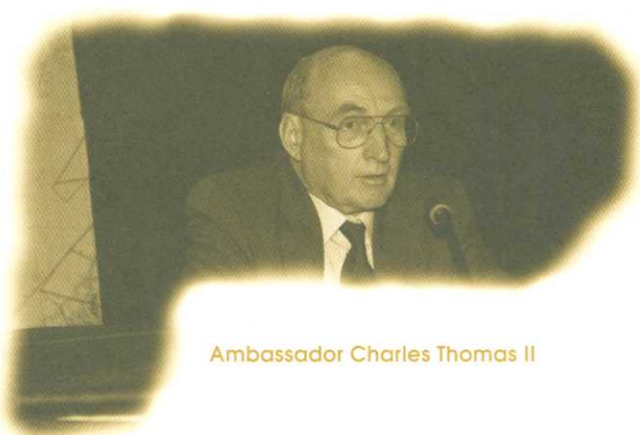
In this case, matters were complicated because NATO did not originally provide the forces on the ground. When NATO finally put forces on the ground, the NATO RRF supported UNPROFOR as it carried out its mandate. The UNPROFOR mandate was altered and broadened with each new Security Council resolution, including a resolution under Chapter VII that included the right for UNPROFOR to "act in self-defense."

Yet none of the member states with troops on the ground with UNPROFOR would allow those troops into combat. Therefore, UNPROFOR's right of self-defense was empty. MacInnis remarked that at the time he "was sure that Britain and France were both in advanced stages of schizophrenia."

Reacting to the increasingly dangerous situation on the ground, the NATO forces twice declared weapons exclusion zones without specific Security Council authorization. UNPROFOR then helped to maintain those zones. The proliferation of Security Council resolutions and UNPROFOR's inability to respond to a deteriorating security situation took the two military organizations down paths they had not foreseen—and resulted in "incongruent mission creep" that was symptomatic of the gulfs and incongruities between the Security Council and UNPROFOR, and between the NATO and UNPROFOR mandates.

"The Pernicious Doctrine of Proportional Force"

Ambassador Thomas asserted that UNPROFOR's inability to reconcile its two missions—to protect itself and to protect the relief convoys—as the environment grew more hostile led to "reverse mission creep." The aid effort slowed down and danger to the troops increased. He agreed with negotiator Herb Okun's statement that "diplomacy without force is like baseball without a bat."

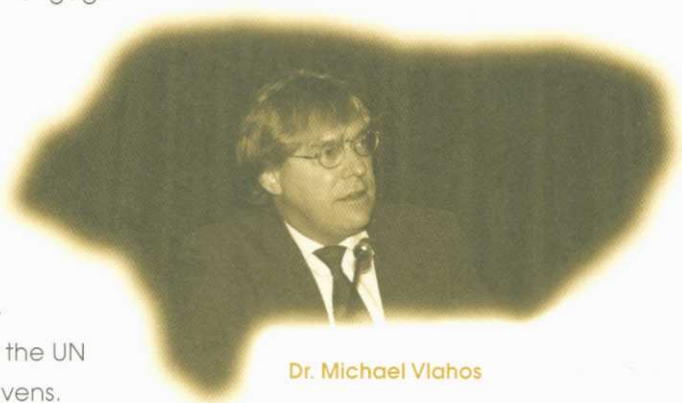


Ambassador Charles Thomas II

² A statement by former NATO chief Klaus.

³ Or in theory, organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Organization for African Unity (OAU), and the Organization of American States (OAS).

A paper tiger gets burned. The UNPROFOR rules of engagement were very conservative, providing only for “proportional” self-defense under attack. Thomas believed that those rules of engagement led warring parties, particularly “the poly-Serbs, ...the most vicious aggressors,” to believe that force was unlikely to be used. Therefore, the Serbs had little incentive to negotiate, and presented a greater threat to the UN aid convoys to the safe havens.



Dr. Michael Vlahos

“The failure of the great powers to allow UNPROFOR to carry out its missions in Bosnia had a series of unfortunate consequences: it endangered future peacekeeping operations, it prolonged the fighting with the loss of additional lives, and it may have destroyed the possibility of a multi-ethnic Sarajevo. But the most damaging outcome of the failure to backstop UNPROFOR was its...effect on the peace negotiations.”

School yard bullies. Thomas expressed serious doubt that the negotiations leading to the Dayton peace accord would have taken place without the NATO air strikes, the establishment of the RRF, and “the demonstrated readiness to use it.” He was adamant that “(I)n former Yugoslavia, you are dealing with school yard bullies. With school yard bullies, the only effective response is to bloody their nose with swift and disproportionate use of force.”

Yet the discussion among the panelists revealed a clear dilemma for humanitarian organizations and military forces. While, as Thomas contended, the credibility of a military force often depends upon its ability and willingness to use force when challenged, the credibility of the humanitarian organizations is based on their ability to maintain a relationship with the bully. This ability derives from the neutral stance that most relief organizations, including UNHCR, have traditionally held as a basic principle.

Impartiality vs. even-handedness. Panelists drew a distinction between two forms of neutrality. The first, practiced by UNHCR in its delivery of humanitarian assistance, is impartiality in carrying out a mandate. You get aid to whomever you can, wherever you can, without using force against any party. The second is even-handedness—treating all parties equally, in reacting to obstructionism or aggression and in apportioning relief to each group.

The Conditions for Success

Covault expressed concern that the NATO mission in Bosnia might fail if the political leadership did not allow the military to create vital “conditions for success” on the ground prior to deployment of the force. Covault stressed the importance of battlefield preparation in a standard operation. He focused particularly on the need to set up a communications network and an information campaign, to both gather intelligence and spread the word about the force and its intent:

- **Communications.** A network of sophisticated and interoperable equipment must connect all the participating forces and their command structures, from top to bottom. The system should be set up and tested.
- **Intelligence gathering.** "You need to have in place on the ground a contact at every military and political level. *In place. At every political level.*"
- **Information dissemination.** Covault believed that it is important to have access to and, if necessary, control of the television and radio stations and the newspapers to send the force's message to the local populace.

Back to the Future: The World Concert (U.S.A., Conductor?)

The panel proposed some possible measures to cope with the command confusion and the cultural gulfs that are bound to exist in complex humanitarian emergencies. On the ground, a theater commander is needed to integrate the effort. Liaisons and exchanges between different organizations foster greater understanding. But ultimately, the panelists concluded that the world will continue to navigate these operations with the kind of "creative *ad hocery*" that has been both frustrating and flexible in Bosnia. And, at least for now, the U.S. will remain at the helm.

"Do something, General, now!" Panelists concluded that there must be someone in charge of an integrated effort on the ground—a theater commander. But who will he be? Who chooses him? One panelist said that it could be "U.S., NATO, the UN, or God Almighty." Panelists suggested that the leading Western nations would take the lead in many instances, or that regional organizations—for which NATO must serve as the example—would take the lead under a UN umbrella. Within NATO, the U.S. is likely to continue to play a leading role. Covault commented that "some Europeans had been waiting, some patiently and others less so, for the U.S. to write the plan of action for Bosnia."

Cross-cultural tours of duty. Options for bridging the cultural gap between the military and the humanitarian organizations included the UNHCR's current efforts to hire former military officers. Humanitarian organizations have also begun to send representatives to teach at military academies. On the ground, dialogues between relief organizations and military forces, such as weekly planning meetings, are growing more common, in part due to experience in Bosnia.

There are no neat or comprehensive answers or structures that integrate cultures instantly or comprehensively. Creative *ad hocery* is as orderly as it gets in this part of the new world. Maybe that's not so bad in operations in which flexibility is paramount.