The 1994 Haiti Intervention: A Unilateral Operation in Multilateral Clothes

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ABSTRACT Observers of United States (US) interventions have almost universally characterized the 1994 Haiti intervention as multilateral, a model for how international cooperation can achieve common security goals. A closer analysis of the intervention reveals that the planning and execution of the intervention were almost entirely unilateral and therefore cost the US few if any of the theoretical costs of coalition warfare, including interoperability and policy compromise. Mapped onto the unilateral strategy and operation of the intervention, however, was a multilateral diplomatic effort that secured United Nations Security Council authorization and provided a cover for an intervention that the US had already planned and intended to execute with or without that authorization. That the US sought a multilateral cover for an intervention that it could easily accomplish unilaterally shows the importance of two factors: A domestic audience that opposed unilateral peacekeeping but would accept using US resources as part of a broader multilateral operation, and a local population that would be more responsive to a multilateral coalition than a use of force that was perceived to be unilateral. The Haiti intervention shows that the determinants of success in operations other than war are as much political as military. When the US already has overwhelming military superiority vis-à-vis its adversary, building military coalitions becomes as much about enlisting political support as aggregating material capability.

KEY WORDS: Interventions, multilateralism, coalitions, international organizations

With the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States (US) emerged as a unipolar power without ‘peer competitors’ to challenge the projection of US power. Resisting possible temptations to wield its power unilaterally, President George H.W. Bush (Senior) declared the
emergence of a ‘new world order’ that represented ‘an historic period of cooperation’.\(^1\) He went on to build a ‘monument to multilateralism’,\(^2\) a robust multilateral force that pushed Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait in February 1991, producing a high water mark for both the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) specifically and multilateral cooperation in general. Since the force requirements of Operation ‘Desert Storm’ called for large numbers of troops, it is not surprising that the US sought to supplement its forces with those of other states. Moreover, local political sensitivities may have warranted the multinational (and multicultural) coalition. But subsequent interventions in the 1990s also proved to be more robustly multilateral than those of the Cold War, often in spite of the strategic (force-to-force) requirements.\(^3\) The degree to which the US sought to intervene multilaterally throughout the 1990s is therefore surprising both because preponderant American capabilities have created unilateral options but also because US adversaries in the immediate post-Cold War period tended be at an overwhelming military disadvantage.

The strategic puzzle is particularly evident in the case of the 1994 Haiti intervention in which the US recruited 19 allies – including Argentina, Australia, Israel, Bolivia, the Netherlands, and Britain – to

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\(^3\)Prior to the Gulf War, the only intervention that had been formally multilateral was the Korean War, which received UN authorization only because of a Soviet boycott of the Security Council on the day of the vote. Most other interventions during the Cold War took place outside the UN Security Council and usually according to a ‘sphere of influence’ modus operandi in which the great powers were at liberty to act unilaterally in pursuit of their interests. What emerged in the post-Cold War environment was a greater emphasis on multilateralism, both through the UNSC but in terms of representation from countries other than those with direct strategic interests. Countries such as Bangladesh and Pakistan, for example, became highly participatory in multilateral interventions even in regions in which they had an indirect interest (e.g., Pakistani participation in Somalia or Bangladeshi participation in Haiti). Increased multilateralism after the Cold War is well documented; Andrea Kathryn Talentino documents the post Cold War increase in multilateralism as 356 per cent compared to those during the Cold War. See *Military Intervention after the Cold War: The Evolution of Theory and Practice* (Athens, OH: Ohio UP 2005). Martha Finnemore also documents the post-Cold War proliferation of multilateralism compared to the ‘spheres of influence’ system in *The Purpose of Intervention* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP 2003).
participate in an intervention intended to remove the Haitian military from power. The relative strength of the two sides would suggest that the US could have expected a large victory in the conflict. Yet rather than undertaking the intervention independently, Washington sought a coalition of states for the intervention. This raises several questions: What did the most technologically advanced state gain and sacrifice from a coalition of states that is significantly less advanced than the US military? Was the value more political than military? That is, did Washington intervene with allies and UNSC authorization to accommodate American and foreign domestic preferences for multilateralism? How does the diplomatic multilateralism of the Security Council affect the strategic and operational level decisions of the US and its coalition partners?

This article seeks to address those questions and the general strategic question of why a unipolar power seeks allies to intervene multilaterally against a significantly weaker adversary. Specifically, however, since the 1994 Haiti intervention is a least likely case for multilateralism – given the United States’ historical unilateralism in the Western hemisphere and the lack of compelling strategic rationale for a large coalition – I employ it as a case study for explaining more generally why the US would seek allies to achieve operational objectives that it is capable of achieving alone. I find that although the Haiti intervention was multilateral in its authorization, it was largely unilateral in the strategic and operational dimensions. Haiti therefore represents a best case scenario for the US, which gains politically by appearing to intervene multilaterally but does not want the strategic and operational constraints that are often associated with multilateralism.

The Haiti intervention also highlights the interplay between domestic politics and military strategy that has always existed but became more dominant as the nature of interventions themselves changed after the Cold War. Interventions such as Haiti were emblematic of the shift from interventions about power politics to those of peacekeeping, which elicited higher levels of public skepticism and resistance than had many of the Cold War interventions. Military strategies took on a

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5Expected utility theory of international conflict assumes that ‘one nation’s probability of success in a contest with another nation (or coalition of nations) is a direct, positive function of each relevant nation’s power compared to that of each other relevant nation’. See Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, ‘An Expected Utility Theory of International Conflict’, *American Political Science Review* 74/4 (Dec. 1980), 917–31; 918.

6See Talentino, *Military Intervention after the Cold War*, 32.
flavor of multilateralism in part to decrease public opposition to the intervention, ultimately a successful strategy. Thus, although this paper focuses on military strategy surrounding the Haiti intervention, it necessarily addresses issues of domestic politics, as these were central to the way in which the US conducted the intervention.

Theoretical and Operational Considerations of Coalition Warfare

Before noting the coordination costs associated with coalition warfare, it is important to observe its potential strategic advantages. In the most traditional sense, alliances act as strategic tools for aggregating material capabilities and troop numbers. Clausewitz writes that ‘with a considerable superiority of numbers everything possible is to be effected…then it cannot fail that this clear conviction reacts on the preparations for the War, so as to make us appear in the field with as many troops as possible, and either to give us ourselves the superiority, or at least to guard against the enemy obtaining it.’ If, as Clausewitz suggests, superiority of numbers is one key determinant of victory, then allies may also be the means by which a state achieves a superiority of numbers and obtains a victorious outcome. To the extent that an intervening state can attract allies and increase the coalition’s numerical advantage over the adversary, it will be more successful in achieving its desired results.

Second, allies may be important on the basis of comparative advantage. The US, despite its preponderance of military power and technology, may lack the specialized advantages that other militaries possess. Other actors, for example, including North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union (EU), and the United Nations, have demonstrated a comparative advantage in post-combat peacekeeping skills, in part because of their relatively higher amount of ‘soft power’ that is particularly influential in nation-building enterprises.

Third, some locations require strategic assistance in the form of overflight or basing rights. Operation ‘Enduring Freedom’, for example, required basing assistance in the central Asian republics of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in part because Afghanistan lacked direct access to the sea.

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Last, multilateralism may lend a degree of legitimacy conferred by the moral sanction of other governments or international organization. Though the ultimate benefit of such legitimacy is uncertain with regard to operational objectives, it is thought to have political advantages that may maintain the US position of primacy in the international order. The legitimacy of multilateralism may also increase the degree to which the local population ultimately embraces the political objectives of an intervention rather than seeing it as an extension of imperialism.

On the other hand, coalition warfare may be fraught with coordination costs. In the multilateral context, ‘compromise becomes the normal state of affairs in every coalition and the issues can vary from chain of command in combat units to who sits where at a table’. Alliances may aggregate capabilities and allow for burden-sharing, but also ‘come at the political cost of moderating conflicting interests with the prospective ally’. In other words, alliances constrain decision-making autonomy of all parties in the alliance. States invariably seek to influence the alliance’s objectives and policies; if states’ preferences perfectly overlap, decision-making is straightforward, but ‘since the interests of allies and their notions of how to secure them are never identical . . . alliance strategies are always the product of compromise’.

Compromise then may lead to outcomes that are sub-optimal for a given state’s preferences. The US, for example, pursued compromise strategies in Bosnia when its NATO partners resisted American intervention preferences; rather than pursuing aggressive bombing strategies advocated by the US Congress, Washington agreed to a strategy of limited air strikes and aggressive diplomacy. In short,

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9On the legitimacy of multilateralism, see specifically Finnemore, *Purpose of Intervention*.
11In the context of Darfur, for example, a NATO peacekeeping mission may be considered a tool of neo-imperialism because of Africa’s colonial past. (See, e.g., Samantha Power, ‘The Void: Why the Movement Needs Help,’ *The New Republic*, (15 May 2006)). If this is the case, a UN peacekeeping mission may offer a more objective tool for peacekeeping than the largely Western-only force NATO can offer.
alliances may create a trade-off between the security enhancement they provide and the autonomy they cost.\textsuperscript{16}

What further complicates the theoretical cooperation calculations is the operational reality that the US military is significantly more advanced than its potential allies, creating a significant technology gap. In weighing the tradeoffs between arming and allying, James Morrow has indicated that the advantages of ‘arming’ rather than allying are even greater when military technology is advancing quickly and accrues more quickly to one state vis-à-vis the potential allies.\textsuperscript{17} Such is the case with the US and its allies; the US has gained a technological advantage that to some extent provides a disincentive for allied cooperation.

As a RAND report written in the wake of the 2001/2 war in Afghanistan notes, ‘difficult even in the best of circumstances, cooperability is virtually impossible between forces that have been transformed and those that have not…Afghanistan shows that even more capable US allies (Europeans) find it difficult to contribute to such advanced expeditionary warfare, while the US seems reluctant to integrate allied forces lest they complicate already difficult operations’.\textsuperscript{18} Other states have not modernized their militaries to the same extent as the US, creating significant barriers to interoperability, or seamless integration of ally forces into the US military infrastructure.\textsuperscript{19} Such a gap creates challenges to cooperation both at the operational and tactical levels of conflict. For interoperability to be effective, the various coalition members must have similar radios, computer networks, and hardware. Disparities in the level of technology of those components risks, as then Secretary of Defense Donald R. Rumsfeld noted, ‘dumb(ing) down everything to the lowest common denominator’.


\textsuperscript{17}Morrow, ‘Arms versus Allies’, 231.


something that a higher technology state might understandably be disinclined to do.\footnote{As a result of the capability gap between the US and its partners, Rumsfeld notes that ‘we did a couple of other things I think that were helpful. One was we said there’s not a single coalition. Had there been, that coalition, the first person that peeled off on something they wanted to do, we would have said it’s crumbling, it’s all over, we’ve lost the coalition. So we from the get-go said look, there are floating coalition, and the mission’s going to determine the coalition. The coalition is not going to determine the mission because it will dumb down everything to the lowest common denominator. So as people help in one way and not in another way we have been fortunate.’ See Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld news transcript (16 Nov. 2001) <www.dod.mil/transcripts/2001/t11212001_t1116sun.html>.
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Given these coordination costs and preponderant material capabilities, why and when might multilateralism – and by extension coalition warfare – ‘be preferred to an architecture where the hegemon could more directly exercise dominance’?\footnote{Lisa Martin, ‘Interests, Power, and Multilateralism’, \textit{International Organization} 46/4 (Autumn 1992), 765–92; 792.} In some cases, the strategic case for multilateralism has clearly outweighed coordination costs. In the case of the First Gulf War, for example, the US and its coalition partners faced the world’s fourth largest military and needed to mount an even more sizable force to push Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait; a large multilateral coalition made strategic sense. The circumstances were dramatically different three years later, however, when the US contemplated intervening in Haiti. The size of the Haitian military was estimated at 7,600 troops and described as a force that did not ‘have the skill and dedication to fight its way out of a retirement home’.\footnote{Philippe R. Girard, \textit{Clinton in Haiti} (New York, NY: Palgrave 2004), 75.} Such a military did not seem to present the US with a difficult challenge, whether in terms of numbers or capabilities. Thus, force-to-force requirements do not adequately explain American coalition-building behavior since there was already a huge disparity in numbers and capability.

What makes US multilateralism in Haiti more puzzling is that it parted with a century-old practice of unilateralism in that country specifically and the Western hemisphere more generally. Often the US had attempted to put a multilateral face on a unilateral intervention – as it did with the 1965 Dominican Republic and 1983 Grenada interventions – but typically the intervention was multilateral in name only. That is, it was declared ‘multilateral’ only by virtue of often tenuous connections with small regional organizations overwhelmingly dominated by US interests (e.g., the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, OECS, or the Organization of American States, OAS). The 1983 Grenada intervention is illustrative. Conducted without any UN
authorization by a force of 4,000 Americans and just 300 troops from eastern Caribbean states. Washington justified the intervention as multilateral on the basis of a request by the OECS. Such a justification was highly suspect, however, since the US was not a member of the OECS and because three of the seven members of the OECS had not been party to the decision to ‘invite’ the US to participate in the intervention. This was clearly a case – representative of the ‘long string of dubious US military interventions in the Caribbean basin during the past century’ – in which America operated under the guise of multilateralism but was clearly acting in a way that unilaterally advanced its own interests. With its history of regional unilateralism and the vast material disparity between it and the Haitian military, another unilateral intervention in the region might have seemed likely, and yet the US appeared to break with that tradition and operate multilaterally in the 1994 Haiti intervention.

The 1994 Haiti Intervention: Background

The 1823 Monroe Doctrine provided the seeds of what has since been a assertive set of policies in the Western hemisphere, largely manifested as a ‘closed door diplomacy’ in which the US ‘exercised sufficient military power to enforce its own absolute hegemony’ in the region. With regard to Haiti, this meant a major use of force and an occupation in the early part of the twentieth century, under the justification of making it ‘safe for democracy’ and indeed safe for American investment, but not at the behest of the Haitians themselves.

The US occupation that began in 1915 followed a period of unrest in which Haiti had seven presidents in a five-year period between 1911 and 1915. With growing violence and instability in Haiti, and an increasing mercantile interest in the state, US Marines intervened in July 1915, occupying the territory until 1933. Soon after the Haiti occupation, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the Good Neighbor Policy that moderated US intervention in the Western hemisphere, favoring cooperation and non-intervention rather than use of force to maintain stability. With the Good Neighbor Policy, FDR promised that ‘the definite policy of the United States from now on is one opposed to armed intervention’. Indeed, the policy held until the 1950s when the US informally re-instituted its historic policy of using force for stability in the hemisphere.

In spite of the dictatorial leaders of Haiti during the 1950s through 1980s – François Duvalier (‘Papa Doc’) in the 1950s and 1960s followed by his son Jean-Claude Duvalier (‘Baby Doc’) in the 1970s and 1980s – the US limited its pressure to economic and political attempts to institute reforms. To some extent, political reform came through in 1990, with the largely free and fair election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was overthrown by Colonel Raoul Cédras in a coup the following year and replaced with a military regime (a ‘junta’). Repression of human rights and a mass exodus of Haitians on ‘flotillas’ to the United States raised the country’s profile in the United States as well as among the international community, which proceeded to debate policy options for Haiti. The domestic debate on Haiti policy options grew particularly acrimonious after the Clinton administration instituted a repatriation policy, which Aristide referred to as a ‘floating Berlin Wall’ and prominent African-Americans decried as racist. With sanctions continuing to be ineffective, domestic pressure against the existing policies mounting, no indication that Cédras was intending to remain, and intelligence estimates that the intervention was politically and militarily ‘feasible’, the administration decided to

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Kumar, ‘Sustaining Peace in War-Torn Societies’, 110.

See the State Department’s statement on the Good Neighbor Policy available at <www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/id/17341.htm>.

Schmidt, US Occupation of Haiti, 6.


In particular, the Congressional Black Caucus applied the most political pressure on the Clinton administration, charging that the pre-intervention policies were tantamount to racism and a holocaust. See Girard, Clinton in Haiti, 91.

See ibid., 74.
undertake a military intervention to restore Aristide, and democracy, to power.

Since the US had previously operated with a ‘free hand in its own sphere of influence’, a similar unilateral approach was a logical expectation for the Haiti intervention that followed. Yet relative to previous hemispheric interventions, the US acted with unprecedented cooperation in the intervention, Operation ‘Uphold Democracy’. As opposed to previous hemispheric interventions that had the rather inconsequential stamp of approval from small regional organizations, the US obtained the United Nations imprimatur for the 1994 Haiti intervention. And whereas previous interventions may have had token participation from few and often small states in the region, the Haiti intervention had the appearance of having much more global interest and representation; Canada, Britain, and France all claimed to be stakeholders in a multilateral resolution of Haiti’s instability. A closer examination, however, reveals that operationally, the intervention was all but unilateral, requiring that Washington make few of the tradeoffs theoretically associated with multilateralism.

Planning for Intervention in Haiti: The Strategic and Operational Channels

Although Haiti is widely lauded as an example of the post-Cold War ‘new world order’ of cooperation largely because of the UNSC authorization it received, the plans and execution of the intervention were almost exclusively the product of American military and political inputs. US international cooperation with regards to Haiti should therefore be characterized as a two-level approach. At the diplomatic level, the US operated multilaterally, working with allies and international organizations to pass resolutions in favor of its Haiti agenda. But at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels, the US acted more unilaterally, undertaking the planning and execution phases almost entirely independently.

Throughout the planning process, the US Commander-in-Chief (CINC) of the US Atlantic Command (USACOM), Admiral Paul David

37See, for example, Girard, Clinton in Haiti, 39. Girard writes of Clinton’s efforts to build on the ‘new world order’ spirit of his predecessor, President George H. W. Bush.
Miller, considered the asymmetries between US and Haitian power alone; capability contributions of allies were not a significant consideration in terms other than political, and even these considerations only entered once the plans were well underway. Not only were US capabilities considered in isolation, planning itself was not the product of coalition thinking. Though it was strong in terms of interagency coordination, the goals of ‘surprise, shock, and simultaneity in execution’ called for a planning process that limited inputs to a small group of military officers and civilians.\textsuperscript{38} As the following analysis discusses, initial phases of the intervention itself – both planning and execution – were unilaterally determined by US military and civilian personnel, followed only in the stabilization phases by personnel from other countries in the coalition.

Almost immediately following the 1991 coup, the US military began planning for possible action in Haiti. The 82nd Airborne Division unshelved a 1980s plan called Contingency Plan (CONPLAN) 2367 that called for a noncombatant evacuation operation (NEO) and USACOM in Norfolk, Virginia, developed a plan in which the Marines would deploy to the airfield in Guantanamo Bay and, from there, proceed to conduct the NEO in Haiti.\textsuperscript{39} The need for such contingency planning appeared to dissipate, particularly after the signing of the Governor’s Island (New York City) Agreement in July 1993 in which Cèdras, who had taken control of the government, agreed to cede control to the exiled Aristide.\textsuperscript{40} Conditions deteriorated soon thereafter, leading to a continuation of domestically controversial repatriation policies for Haitian refugees and prompting the formation of the Joint Task Force Haiti Assistance Group (JTF HAG), based at USACOM and comprised of special operations forces, planners from all services, and Haiti subject matter experts.\textsuperscript{41}

With increasing pressure from Congressional groups such as the Black Caucus and pro-Aristide lobbyists in America, as well as increasing indications that neither sanctions nor the Governor’s Island agreement were effectively stemming the unrest, the US military continued its planning for an NEO.\textsuperscript{42} Based on the continuing unrest in


\textsuperscript{39}Kretchik, Invasion, Intervention, ‘Intervasion’, Ch. 2.

\textsuperscript{40}Chetan Kumar and Elizabeth M. Cousens, ‘IPA Policy Briefing: Peacebuilding in Haiti’, <www.ipacademy.org/Publications/Reports/Research/PublRepoReseHaitPrint.htm>.

\textsuperscript{41}Kretchik, Invasion, Intervention, ‘Intervasion’, Ch. 2.

\textsuperscript{42}For a thorough analysis of the effect of domestic politics and lobbying on the decision to intervene, see Girard, Clinton in Haiti, 61–102.
Haiti and guidance from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), General John Shalikashvili, USACOM shifted from planning a peaceful-entry NEO to a forceful entry. Under the command of Lieutenant General William W. Hartzog, USACOM began ‘Jade Green’ which was largely a US Forces Command (FORSCOM) contingency plan and a political-military, interagency coordination plan that would submit recommendations to the National Security Council (NSC) Interagency Working Group for Haiti. The political-military plan, which focused on security of the island country, informed ‘Jade Green’ and became part of OPLAN (Operational Plan) 2370, invasion of Haiti by the 82nd Airborne Division, followed by the 10th Mountain Division and ultimately UN forces.43

A XVIII Airborne Corps planning cell at USACOM, operating under the name of Joint Task Force (JTF) 180 and commanded by Lieutenant General Hugh Shelton, began planning for invasion in earnest on 8 January 1994. The resulting concept of operations (CONOPS) called for a five phase, 24-day mission in which the US alone would handle the predeployment and initial deployment at all Haiti entry points, then would transfer responsibility to a multinational force (MNF) that the US would still likely dominate.

**Phase 1**: Predeployment-crisis action (D-4); activate JTF 180, establish support at Guantanamo, conduct initial force operations.

**Phase 2**: (deployment-combat operations); simultaneous airborne, sea, amphibious assaults to neutralize threat, produce security, restore order, begin forging internal defense.

**Phase 3**: (force buildup and initial civil-military operations); establish relations with local leaders, prepare to receive follow-on US or multinational force.

**Phase 4**: (civil-military operations); transition to follow-on multinational force.

**Phase 5**: (redeployment); final transfer of responsibility, redeployment of JTF 180.

Uncertain as to what the diplomatic process might yield, in May 1994 General Shalikashvili ordered USACOM (and by extension XVIII Airborne Corps) to develop an alternate plan, a peaceful rather than combat entry into Haiti. The new plan became OPLAN 2380 and was assigned to the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, New York state, under JTF 190. The phases would be similar to those of OPLAN 2370

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but were predicated on a permissive entry, relying on the light but combat-ready infantry from Fort Drum.

Only in July 1994 did commanders begin to consider multilateral involvement. The JCS ordered that J5 planners seek ‘as many flags as possible’ from the Caribbean countries. Soliciting this level of token support from small regional states, however, did not constitute broad multilateral approach. Rather, it was widely reminiscent of the way the US had approved the intervention in Grenada a decade earlier, which had been widely criticized as unilateral. That is to say, the US had sought nominal, even token, contributions from the small regional states in both cases. In terms of the Haiti intervention, Barbados, Belize, Jamaica and Trinidad provided just a couple of hundred troops to the significantly larger US contingent, prompting some critics to urge that this symbolic contribution by four ‘Lilliputian Caribbean armies’ not obscure the fact that the invasion and its terms were being dictated by the Clinton administration and that such a contribution from small regional states did not constitute regional, let alone international support for the intervention.

American engagement with states outside the Caribbean was no more robust. In July 1994, the US State Department enlisted support from Argentina, France, Canada, and Caribbean states to participate in a multinational observer group (MOG) that would control the border of the Dominican Republic and Haiti, which the US suspected to be a smuggling route for the Cèdras group. The MOG became the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) 125 which ultimately served under JTF 120. Having obtained nominal allied contributions, the US continued its independent planning for two possible contingencies: Operation ‘Uphold Democracy’ (OPLAN 2380, permissive entry into Haiti) and Operation ‘Restore Democracy’ (OPLAN 2370, forced entry). Although both plans were developed in parallel, the former was more of a contingency to be executed in the event of a last-minute settlement that might enable a peaceful entry. The latter called for the ‘kick down the door’ entry in which the 82nd Airborne would enter Haiti and secure entry points for a follow-on force by the 10th Mountain Division.

With the hope of reaching an eleventh hour settlement, President Clinton sent a negotiating team to Haiti in September 1994. The team, which included former President Jimmy Carter and General Colin

44 Kretchik, Invasion, Intervention, ‘Intervasion’, Ch. 2.
47 Kretchik, Invasion, Intervention, ‘Intervasion’, Ch. 2.
Powell, met with the junta’s leader, Cédras; the meeting yielded unexpected acquiescence when Cédras agreed to transition power to Aristide, seemingly preempting the invasion. Based on the diplomatic successes, the US had to change its intervention plans, since the military no longer needed to execute a forced entry. At the same time, however, the security situation within Haiti was uncertain so discarding altogether the more aggressive plan might also be unwise.48

Rather than intervene with either OPLAN 2370 or 2380, General Shalikashvili ordered that the US execute a combination of the two. He called for a more robust version of OPLAN 2380 (called OPLAN 2380 Plus), a semi-peaceful landing in the spirit of the Carter negotiations instead of the forced entry of OPLAN 2370. On 19 September 1994, a combination of a Joint Special Operations Task Force, members from 10th Mountain Division, Marines with specialized air-ground expertise, and members of XVIII Corps headquarters landed in Haiti for Operation ‘Uphold Democracy’. The 10th Mountain Division and Marines secured urban centers and Special Forces secured the countryside.49 Of the 20,000 troops that participated in the initial intervention, almost all were American. Almost a month later, on 15 October 1994, 97 per cent of the troops in the area were still American as shown by Table 1.50

The high proportion of US troops is consistent with the fact that neither OPLANs 2370 nor 2380 included foreign troops at invasion points. Coalition troops that were later added to those plans operated under US military command (JTF 190 headquarters) and were instructed to guard the airport, conduct security operations in peripheral Haitian cities, and more generally operate in peacekeeping rather than combat operations. Only after the US had executed the initial phases of the intervention did the proportion of American to

Table 1. Distribution of multinational troops on 15 October 1994

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<tr>
<th>Personnel</th>
<th>Number of Troops</th>
<th>Percent of Total Force</th>
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<tr>
<td>US forces:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>16,253</td>
<td>95.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multinational force</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
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48 Haass, Intervention, 158.
50 See Figure 7, ‘Multinational Force, Haiti, October 15, 1994’, in Invasion, Intervention, ‘Intervasion’, Ch. 2.
multinational troops become more even. By 13 January 1995, many of the initial US combat troops had already evacuated Haiti and the coalition forces that had been enlisted to support peacekeeping operations had arrived as planned. The US officially transferred peacekeeping responsibilities to the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) on 31 March 1995\(^{51}\) to do the ‘nation-building equivalent of mopping up’.\(^{52}\) As Girard suggests, ‘until the UN took over in April 1995, US troops formed the bulk of, determined the policy of, and were virtually synonymous with, the MNF.’\(^{53}\) The planning process and the troop numbers support this characterization as shown by Table 2.

Although observers of interventions label Haiti as multilateral, this analysis of the strategic and operational aspects of the Haiti intervention suggests that at these levels, it more unilateral than is conventionally considered.\(^{54}\) Indeed, the US had periodically met with larger states such as France, Canada, Venezuela, and Argentina to consider potential actions regarding Haiti\(^{55}\) but engaging those states did not translate into appreciable changes to the course of action that the US military had already drawn. Washington did go on to obtain UN authorization for the intervention itself, but the degree of American unilateral planning suggests that the UN provided top cover so the US could appear to be playing by the ‘rules’ of the international system while actually pursuing its self-interest in an almost entirely unconstrained way.\(^{56}\)

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<tr>
<td>US forces:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>7,139</td>
<td>73.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multinational force</td>
<td>2,138</td>
<td>22%</td>
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\(^{51}\)See Table 4, ‘MNF, Haiti, January 13, 1995’ in Invasion, Intervention, ‘Intervasion’, Ch. 2.

\(^{52}\)Girard, Clinton in Haiti, 76.

\(^{53}\)Ibid., 206, note 1.

\(^{54}\)David Malone, for example, has argued that Haiti shows the value of taking a ‘multilateral route to promoting national interests’ in ‘Haiti and the International Community’, 126.

\(^{55}\)These states constituted the ‘Friends of the Secretary-General of Haiti’ or simply the ‘Friends of Haiti’ group that periodically convened to discuss potential actions regarding Haiti <www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/1982.htm>.

\(^{56}\)Talentino attributes the increase in post-Cold War multilateralism to self-interest cloaked in multilateral cover as a potential critique of her explanation but dismisses it.
Planning for Intervention: The Diplomatic Channels

In parallel with the US strategic and operational approaches to the Haiti intervention, the US acted aggressively on the diplomatic front, acting as the driving force behind efforts to authorize its Haiti agenda through a series of resolutions that would legitimate but not constrain its actions. The series of diplomatic overtures, selective adherence to UN measures it had sponsored, and bargaining in the Security Council help illustrate this argument.

As early as the George H.W. Bush presidency, the US (through Secretary of State James Baker) began advancing its agenda in multilateral organizations, both the OAS and the UNSC. The Organization of American States (OAS) authorized UNSC-supported sanctions in October 1992. Though the sanctions initially cut fuel supplies to Haiti, they were generally ineffective and particularly so once the US unilaterally withdrew from them under the pretense of humanitarian considerations but with the real motivation of protecting American industries in Haiti. In June 1993, the UN followed up on the OAS voluntary sanctions by passing UNSCR 841 demanding the restoration of rights in Haiti and authorizing an arms and fuel embargo against that republic.

President Clinton continued the diplomatic and economic pressure on Haiti, issuing Executive Order No. 12853 in June 1993, which froze assets of Haitian nationals who were providing financial or material contributions to the regime. This US policy represented the domestic legislation of UNSCR 841, which imposed a fuel and arms embargo against Haiti and authorized a peacekeeping deployment to that state. Composed primarily of US troops and a handful of Canadian troops, the first UN deployment (UNMIH) set off for Haiti aboard the tank landing ship USS Harlan County, only to return unilaterally (and by connecting the US unilateral action to a broader multilateral process. By using Haiti as an example, I suggest that at least this intervention was indeed self-interest cloaked in the flag of an international organization. Talentino, Military Intervention after the Cold War, 29.

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58President Bush issued an Executive Order that would exempt US-effected industries from the embargo. See Malone, ‘Haiti and the International Community’, 129.
59Kumar, ‘Sustaining Peace in War-Torn Societies’, 115.
unceremoniously) because of a fear that US troops would experience a repeat of the week-earlier Somalia disaster. With little experience in low-intensity conflict or peacemaking operations, Somalia seemed to be a reasonable military analogy, causing the National Security Council to decide on a retreat by the peacekeeping mission. US troops were reluctant to compromise their safety for tasks that were considered ‘non-essential’ to their security, such as activities carried out under the UN flag. The retreat decision, however, signaled both to the local Haitian community and the international community in general that the US was indecisive and weak rather than committed to resolving the Haiti crisis.

Only once the MOG had stood up and US plans for intervention were well underway did the US persuade enough of the Security Council to pass UNSCR 940, with Brazil abstaining and non-members Mexico, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Cuba speaking out against the invasion. Nonetheless, the US had enough support to pass a resolution that called for ‘all necessary means’ and authorized the formation of a US-led MNF to restore Haiti’s democratic system. With this resolution, some critics argued that the US had ‘recklessly stretched the boundaries of what constitutes a threat to international peace and security under Chapter Seven of the UN Charter’, but it had nonetheless acquired authorization for its activities in Haiti.

Although the efforts to gain multilateral authorization for a democracy-restoring, stabilization intervention did break from the historical precedents of intervention, designating UNSCR 940 as a ‘watershed’ event for international cooperation is not entirely a fair portrayal. The main reason is that the character of the Security Council had dramatically changed in the years after the Cold War. While the first 40 years of the Security Council were marked by power politics and paralysis – such that no interventions other than the 1950 Korean War were formally authorized prior to the 1991 Gulf War – the

61 Ian Martin, ‘Haiti: Mangled Multilateralism,’ Foreign Policy 95 (Summer 1994), 72–89.
63 Kumar, ‘Sustaining Peace in War-Torn Societies’, 115.
65 Robert Pastor, for example, argues that UN authorization and international cooperation for a democracy mission was a unprecedented event for the UN and international cooperation in general. ‘See Restoring Democracy to Haiti’, in Dana Francis (ed.), Mediating Deadly Conflict: Lessons from Afghanistan, Burundi, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Haiti, Israel/Palestine, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Sri Lanka (Cambridge, MA: World Peace Foundation 1998), 6–20 (see 8).
end of the Cold War created unprecedented opportunities for great power cooperation.\footnote{Ruth Wedgwood makes a similar argument about power politics and UNSC paralysis in ‘Unilateral Action in a Multilateral World’, in Stewart Patrick and Shepard Forman, Multilateralism and US Foreign Policy (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner 2001), Ch. 7, 167–89.}

What that meant in practice, however, was that the United States de facto became the ‘Permanent One’ of the Security Council, acting as ‘the principal driver of the Council’s agenda and decisions, passively and actively’.\footnote{Malone, UN Security Council, 8.} In many cases, US power enabled it to put items on the Security Council agenda. Once actions were on the agenda then the US could use side payments to elicit formal cooperation on votes. This diplomatic quid pro quo is exactly what the US conducted in the case of Haiti. Needing the votes of Russia and China, the US offered substantial concessions – in the form of World Bank loans and support for the peacekeeping mission in Georgia – in exchange for Russian and Chinese acquiescence on the Security Council vote. In addition to, or coupled, with side payments, the US was also known to signal a willingness to act alone if necessary, which some analysts of international cooperation have shown created a larger incentive for the other members of the UNSC to reach a multilateral bargain authorizing intervention; the argument is that other members would prefer to have some agency over the intervention rather than none at all.\footnote{Through a formal model and theoretical logic, Erik Voeten has effectively shown that the combination of capability and a willingness to operate unilaterally actually creates more opportunities for multilateralism; other parties would prefer to have some rather than no influence over US behavior. See ‘Outside Options and the Logic of Security Council Action’, American Political Science Review, 95/4 (Dec., 2001), 845–8.} In light of the US power to influence outcomes both passively and actively in the Security Council, Haiti’s formal multilateralism does not seem as surprising. The US gained diplomatic and domestic political credit for its multilateral intervention without having to bear significant strategic or operational costs.

A Continuation of Politics by Political Means

In the end, coalition-building strategies were about achieving political ends as much through political as military means. Certainly, the US needed some baseline level of military capability, a threshold which it alone readily crossed \textit{vis-à-vis} the Haitian military. But what it needed more was a multilateral face, both in terms of the US and local

\textbf{\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{466}Sarah E. Kreps}}
(Haitian) domestic audiences. That the emphasis would be on the political as much as military strategies came into view during the planning phases. Early in the planning process, XVIII Airborne Corps made the determination that US public support and the political leadership’s resolve represented the strategic center of gravity in the context of invasion. In other words, maintaining domestic support for the intervention was as important to the eventual success as securing the capital.\(^{69}\) The influence appropriated to the public support surrounding the Haiti operation stands in contrast to previous regional interventions such as Panama (1989), in which public reaction was either a non-factor or if anything considered to be a positive.\(^{70}\)

At least one important factor that intervened between Panama and Haiti, however, was the conspicuous media influence of both ‘Desert Storm’ and Somalia. In both cases, the media acted as a multiplier effect for the progress of the intervention. In the case of ‘Desert Storm’, the media brought the successes of precision weapons and stealth technology to the attention of the public, dramatically increasing the public’s support. For Somalia, however, which was more recent in the minds of planners for Haiti, the media effect of the Battle of Mogadishu was thought to be detrimental, bringing the fate of 19 soldiers to the attention of the American public and fast-tracking the withdrawal of US troops.\(^{71}\) Planners of the Haiti intervention were mindful of the media’s effect on public support, and the effect of public support on the options available to policymakers.

Perhaps the only way that the Clinton administration could execute the Haiti mission and not be punished by its domestic political audience was to conduct the mission multilaterally. At the root of the problem was that the intervention’s strategic objective – to change Haiti’s political regime – fitted squarely in the category of intervention least favored by the public: internal political change (IPC). Compared with other types of intervention, including humanitarian and the use of force to restrain aggressive states (foreign policy restraint or FPR),\(^{72}\) IPC

\(^{69}\)Kretchik, *Invasion, Intervention, ‘Intervasion’*, Ch. 2.


\(^{71}\)Steven Livingston, *Clarifying the CNN Effect* (Cambridge, MA: John F. Kennedy School of Government 1997), 4.

\(^{72}\)Foreign policy restraint is defined as the use of force to coerce an aggressive state; internal political change is defined as changing the political regime within another state via the use of force; humanitarian intervention is the use of military power to assist in providing relief in cases of famine (e.g., Somalia); these categories rest on the argument that the principle policy objective (PPO) of an intervention affects the degree of public support. See both of the following: Bruce W. Jentleson, ‘The Pretty Prudent Public; Post Post-Vietnam American Opinion on the Use of Military Force’, *International Studies Quarterly* 36/1 (March 1992), 49–73; Bruce Jentleson and Rebecca Britton, ‘Still Pretty
typically elicits the lowest level of support from the public (36 percent compared to 64 percent for humanitarian interventions (HI) and 55 percent for FRP. The only factor that can mitigate otherwise low support for IPC is to conduct the intervention multilaterally.

Whereas the effect of multilaterally-conducted operations on other types of interventions – HI and FRP – appears to be mixed, the effect on IPCs is clear: public support for IPC type interventions conducted multilaterally is significantly higher than IPCs conducted alone. One reason is that the public tends to associate higher degrees of challenges with conducting IPC interventions and is more willing to take on those challenges if it can expect to share the burden with other states. Another is that IPCs appeal neither to the survival instinct to protect vital interests even unilaterally as necessary, nor to the magnanimous sense that the US public seems to associate with assisting other states for humanitarian reasons.

Public opinion data on Haiti supports the correlation between the IPC principle policy objective and low support for the intervention, as well as the public’s preference for multilateralism in IPC interventions. Support for the use of force in Haiti measured only 37 percent, which was among the lowest support for any use of force since 1980 and significantly lower than the use of force against Iraq (1991, 1992–2003), Somalia, and Kosovo. Other polls showed support even lower, from 10 percent to the mid-teens. The only polls that showed a majority support were those in which the question explicitly noted that the US would intervene ‘along with troops from other countries’. Thus, while ‘public support for the intervention was never impressive, it mattered a great deal to the administration to have an international blessing’. A multilateral coalition gave the administration a way to legitimate the intervention to a public with low interest in the principles.


74For interventions in which the US expects its vital interests are targeted, preferences for unilateralism versus multilateralism are virtually indistinguishable. See Jentleson and Britton, ‘Still Pretty Prudent’, 406–7.


76For an excellent treatment of public support for the Haiti intervention, see Kenneth Schultz, esp. Fig. 2 (multilateralism and support for the Haiti operation, 1994), 122. ‘Tying Hands and Washing Hands’, in Daniel Drezner (ed.), *Locating the Proper Authorities: The Interaction of Domestic and International Institutions*, Ann Arbor, MI: Univ. of Michigan Press 2003), 121.
of the Haiti intervention. Given the large disparity between support for unilateral and multilateral operations in that Caribbean state, conducting the intervention multilaterally carried with it commensurate political, and given the strategic center of gravity, military advantages.

Insufficient public support may not have precluded the Haiti intervention from going forward, as other unpopular interventions have been carried out in spite of low public opinion. But to the extent that ‘an unfavorable public opinion environment ultimately constrains the range of politically acceptable policies for successfully concluding a military operation’, then having the public on board with the intervention would be important. The consequences of not having public support had been evident in Vietnam and more recently Somalia. By claiming multilateralism, the administration could thereby defuse any political or military missteps, asserting that the US was merely acting as part of a broader multilateral, UN-authorized intervention. As the Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, pointed out in congressional testimony:

We must also remember that Operation Uphold Democracy is a truly multinational effort, with participation from 30 other nations. In this regard, I particularly want to say a few words about the contributions of the 11 nations of the Caribbean Community. Haiti’s CARICOM neighbors took an international leadership role by calling for forceful action to remove the coup leaders, and each of these 11 states has matched its words with deeds, by contributing soldiers or police, or both, to the multinational force.

77Tony Lake, the National Security Advisor to President Clinton, suggests that multilateralism offered domestic legitimacy in the US and offered a way to gain the US public’s advocacy; personal interview with Prof. Lake on 30 May 2006.
78Kenneth Schultz neatly captures the distinction between unilateral and multilateral support for the Haiti intervention in ‘Tying Hands, Washing Hands, and Dragging Feet’, 122.
79In Eichenberg, ‘Victory has many friends,’ the level of public support for various interventions is compared in Table 2. The Lebanon intervention of 1982–84, for example, had a low level of support, 40 percent, but was undertaken in spite of this. It should be noted, however, that after the attacks on the Marine barracks in 1983, the US quickly withdrew the troops, in large part because of low levels of public support.
What Talbott brackets, however, is the very thinly multilateral nature of this coalition; the participating states did not influence combat plans, contributed few of the initial combat troops, and were largely incorporated for their political rather than strategic value. Nonetheless, with a continued emphasis on the ‘truly multilateral effort’, the Clinton administration was able to gain political support from a domestic audience that was generally averse to an intervention that it considered peripheral to its strategic interest but was more willing to countenance the intervention if it thought the US were sharing the burden with other countries.

The perception of a multilateral intervention had the added benefit of playing to the political sensitivities of the local Haitian audience. Just as the ‘friendly’ center of gravity was other than military, the ‘enemy’ center of gravity was also as much about politics as force. For Haiti, the strategic center of gravity was the politico-military leadership structure, the operational center of gravity was the Haitian armed forces themselves.82 While the strategic goal of the Haiti intervention was internal political change, the way it would achieve those objectives was through a military operation other than war (MOOTW). With a focus on humanitarian, peacekeeping, and stabilization efforts, MOOTW required a different, unconventional type of strength. As the MOOTW doctrine points out:

All military operations are driven by political considerations. However, MOOTW are more sensitive to such considerations due to the overriding goal to prevent, preempt, or limit potential hostilities. In MOOTW, political considerations permeate all levels and the military may not be the primary player.83

Given that the Haiti intervention was an operation other than war, political sensitivities were as important as military technology. The US was clearly more advanced and more numerous than the Haitian military but recognized that the political sanctioning by the local and international community was of paramount importance to the overall success of the intervention.84 Putting an international face on the intervention was more likely to gain acceptance from the local domestic

82 Kretchik, Invasion, Intervention, ‘Intervasion’, Ch. 2.
83 J-7 ‘Operational Plans and Interoperability Directorate, Military Operations other than War’, 3.
84 As recently as the year before, the US had experienced the consequences of not being accepted by the local community. In Mogadishu, the locals had viewed the Americans as invaders rather than liberators, thus reducing their willingness to accept US/Coalition stabilization efforts.
audience than a US-only intervention. 85 Thus, generating even the patina of UN legitimacy and coalition support for a largely US operation was useful for justifying the intervention to the local and international communities.

The Strategic Implications of the Haiti Intervention

The Haiti intervention was emblematic of several broader strategic trends. First, it was part of a series of post-Cold War interventions characterized by an intention to alter another state’s domestic policies or politics, relieve human suffering, or change a country’s leadership in favor of democracy. 86 What the military calls MOOTW had been relatively dormant or nonexistent during the Cold War but had emerged as one of the ways that the US would increasingly use its military in the post-Cold War security environment.

Second, with the goals (i.e., ends) of this new type of intervention being something other than military, the means of achieving those goals were therefore changed. Overwhelming the adversary with military force was no longer the most effective strategy for achieving political success. Standard force-on-force ratio calculations in an intervention such as Haiti were less relevant than for a more conventional military attack such as ‘Desert Storm’ a few years earlier. Allies, therefore, were less meaningful for the material capabilities that they provided but rather for their political value. Appearing to intervene multilaterally yielded political support from the US domestic audience that did not support humanitarian intervention in general but was willing to support it if it was conducted multilaterally. An intervention perceived to be multilateral also generated political support from the local audience. The US was more likely to achieve political success in Haiti if it did not appear imperialistic; intervening multilaterally conveyed the perception that an international consensus had formed around the principles of the intervention, not that the intervention was the act of one state.

Third, the Haiti intervention showed the possibility of dichotomous military and diplomatic channels, one that was essentially unilateral and the other that was multilateral. The US would independently plan the intervention through its own interagency planning process, seek state ‘flags’ that would provide nominal military contributions, but

85 Tony Lake cites the need for an ‘international face’ on the intervention as a way to increase the likelihood of acceptance by the local government. Personal interview, 30 May 2006.
86 Richard Haass discusses some of these trends in Intervention, 12.
then execute the intervention with predominantly US military personnel.\textsuperscript{87} In parallel, US diplomats would seek UNSC authorization for an intervention that Washington was prepared to undertake without authorization but would prefer to take multilaterally. With the end of the Cold War, power politics no longer paralyzed the Security Council and the US had a preponderance of power with which to persuade other members of the Security Council to place US items on the agenda. For the case of Haiti, it appears that unrivaled American strength enabled it to negotiate a favorable multilateral outcome in the UNSC, putting a multilateral cover on what was otherwise a unilateral projection of force.

Last, though this case study illustrates the experiences of Haiti, its observations are more broadly applicable and shed light on how allies can assume a level of importance beyond the conventional assumption that they are tools for material aggregation. In operations other than war, allies are valuable for different functions. Their importance does not necessarily derive from the soldiers or hardware they provide but from the political cover they lend to an operation. They help maintain the support for a domestic audience that prefers the burden-sharing aspects of multilateralism, and help gain the political support of local audiences that may be more responsive to a multilateral coalition than what otherwise might be seen as a unilateral imposition. Thus, allies are politically and strategically important even to a state that has the material power to intervene alone; winning any operation, but certainly an ‘operation other than war’ is not just about winning militarily but about winning politically – as one Marine colonel in Iraq noted, ‘that’s where wars are won and lost’.\textsuperscript{88}

\textbf{Acknowledgements}

I would like to thank Richard Betts, Stephen Biddle, Daniel Byman, Gustavo Flores, Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Walter Kretchik, Tony Lake, Alexander Lennon, and Thomas Mahnken for their comments on this research. Any errors or shortcomings are my responsibility.

\textsuperscript{87}This finding confirms the speculation of Ruth Wedgwood, who suggests that ‘there is a potential difference between operations and authorization. The military execution of multilateral mandates may have a single country at its center’ yet the overall intervention may be authorized by a multilateral organization. The Haiti example confirms Wedgwood’s hypothesis, 175.

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