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LEARNING THROUGH EXPERIENCE:
The United Nations Secretaries-General
and the Evolution of Peacekeeping

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Résumé

La capacité d'apprendre des organisations -- décrite comme le processus par lequel les individus apprennent directement de leurs expériences et utilisent cet apprentissage dans la doctrine et la mémoire organisationnelle -- détermine largement les politiques d'une organisation, ainsi que les résultats de celles-ci. Une série d'hypothèses inspirées par la recherche en psychologie politique, les études de l'apprentissage, et la théorie des organisations, sont utilisées pour évaluer comment une organisation internationale, les Nations-Unies (ONU), réussit à apprendre sur la base de ses expériences en matière d'opérations de maintien de la paix. Cette capacité d'apprendre est retracée à travers la pensée et les actes de cinq Secrétaires généraux de l'ONU. Un modèle conceptuel reliant les processus d'apprentissage institutionnel, les caractéristiques personnelles des individus, et la nature du système international est présenté et opérationalisé. Sur la base de recherches antérieures sur l'apprentissage dans les relations internationales, la variable de la personnalité, et le changement organisationnel, cette étude illustre comment l'apprentissage institutionnel se manifeste, quels sont les facteurs nécessaires à son existence, et sous quelles conditions celui-ci peut-il donner lieu à des changements en matière de politiques. Ce mémoire apporte une contribution à la littérature en utilisant les résultats de la recherche dans ces différents champs pour cerner la question des organisations internationales, en testant les théories de l'apprentissage institutionnel à travers une étude de cas détaillée des Secrétaires généraux et de l'évolution du maintien de la paix à l'ONU, et en fournissant des angles nouveaux d'analyse de la nature de l'apprentissage institutionnel et du changement en matière de politiques au niveau international.

Abstract

The ability of organizations to learn - - the process by which individuals learn from direct experience and translate that learning into organizational doctrine and memory - - largely determines the course and outcomes of organizational policymaking. A set of hypotheses derived from research in political psychology, learning studies, and organization theory are employed to assess the ability of one international organization, the United Nations, to learn from its history of peacekeeping operations, as manifested in the thinking and behaviour of five Secretaries-General. A conceptual model linking processes of organizational learning, individual personality characteristics, and the nature of the international system is developed and operationalized. On the basis of earlier research on learning in international relations, personality, and organizational change, this study illustrates how organizational learning takes place, what factors are necessary for it to occur, and under what conditions it is translated into policy change. This thesis contributes to the literature by applying research in these distinct fields to international organization, by testing organizational theories of learning in a detailed case study of the Secretaries-General and the evolution of U.N. peacekeeping, and by providing new insights into the nature of international organizational learning and policy change.

KEY WORDS: organizational learning; organizational memory; trial-and-error experimentation; failure; personality; U.N. Secretaries-General; United Nations peace efforts

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CONTENTS

Introduction

Since its inception more than a half-century ago, the United Nations has organized and deployed over fifty peacekeeping operations in response to crises throughout the world. In establishing and managing these operations, the United Nations has demonstrated striking institutional innovation and political resilience, developing a wide range of institutions, structures, functions, and procedures to overcome obstacles in the Security Council and tackle the diverse causes and multifaceted nature of inter-state and intra-state conflict. Nowhere in the United Nations Charter, however, is there an explicit legal framework authorizing the undertaking of these peacekeeping operations, but rather an ambiguous and ambitious program for coercive collective security - - one which was never realized. Indeed, the United Nations has never used military force in the manner for which it was intended or designed.

As the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter were never fulfilled, the Secretary-General, the Secretariat, and the Security Council were forced to use, in the words of one scholar, "creative interpretation and ingenious improvisation"[1] in responding to international crises. This improvisation permeated all aspects of United Nations peacekeeping operations and came to define its approach to managing their formation, deployment, and direction. And it is this flexible improvisation - - defined by an ability to learn from prior experience, experiment, and create innovative solutions to conflicts in the form of new practices and procedures - - that has been for the last fifty years, the most important strength of United Nations peacekeeping.

The United Nations Charter declares the primary purpose of the Organization as the maintenance of international peace and security, in the hope of preventing the

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[1] Adam Roberts, "From San Francisco to Sarajevo: The UN and the Use of Force," *Survival*, vol. 37, no. 4, (Winter 1995-1996), p. 8.

devastation of another world war. It specifies two principal means to this end: Chapter VI, entitled "The Pacific Settlement of Disputes," and Chapter VII, entitled "Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression." Chapter VI outlines how the United Nations may contribute to the peaceful resolution of conflict, either formally or informally, through negotiation, inquiry and investigation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, or other peaceful means of settling international disputes that endanger international peace and security. Although Chapter VI makes no reference at all to military operations and in no way provides any clear and effective political or strategic guidance to conduct even low-level observation missions, the vast majority of United Nations peacekeeping operations, have in fact been justified as "Chapter VI Operations." The United Nations, through improvisation, broadly interpreted these Charter provisions to fit its aims, developing a consensus that Chapter VI provides an acceptable legal and political foundation for observation and peacekeeping missions.

In contrast to the vaguely-worded provisions of Chapter VI, Chapter VII of the Charter was specifically intended, as outlined in Articles 39-43, to provide a policy framework for United Nations military operations in the form of collective security. Article 39 gives the Security Council the power to identify threats to the peace or acts of aggression, while Article 40 empowers the Security Council to "call upon the parties concerned to comply with such provisional measures as it deems necessary or desirable." Article 41 provides the Security Council with the power to impose economic, political, technical, and diplomatic sanctions on transgressors of the peace. Should these measure fail to bring about a solution to the conflict, the Security Council can invoke powers under Article 42 allowing it to "take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security." Although exactly what those actions should entail is not specified, Article 42 provides wide latitude for the conduct of a whole range of U.N. military activities with an emphasis on actively coercive operations. Finally, Article 43 of the Charter requests the Member states to make some of their armed forces and

facilities "available to the Security Council, on its call and in accordance with a special agreement or agreements."[2]

Such "special agreement or agreements" called for in Article 43 would conceivably have provided the United Nations a greater authority to mobilize and manage armed forces in its military operations - - including those alluded to in Article 42. However, no such agreements have ever been concluded.[3] The breakdown of the Second World War alliance and the souring of relations between the former Soviet Union and the Western powers destroyed any chance for agreement among the Security Council members on issues pertaining to international security. Adam Roberts has noted that

> the most obvious reason for the failure to implement the Charter provisions in the early years of the UN was the inability of the permanent members of the Security Council to reach agreement across the Cold War divide. However, there also appears to have been an underlying reluctance on the part of all states to see their forces committed in advance to participate in what might prove to be distant, controversial, and risky military operations without their express consent.[4]

The reality of the Cold War, remarked Ramesh Thakur, "registered profound, irreconcilable and transcendental differences between the two blocs, producing a frequent resort to the veto clause by whichever permanent member saw its or its clients' interests under threat from an assertive majority coalition."[5] The

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[2] *Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice*, Department of Public Information, (New York: United Nations, 1991). Many U.N. scholars have observed that no explicit connection between these Articles of the Charter has ever been specified, and agreements under Article 43 are not a necessary prerequisite to military activities as alluded to in Article 42. See Rosalyn Higgins, "The New United Nations and Former Yugoslavia," *International Affairs*, vol. 69, no. 3, (1993), p. 471. This essay is not intended to provide a legal examination of the political or military capabilities of the United Nations, U.N. Charter, or other U.N. Organs. There are several such studies, most notable among them: D.W. Bowett, *United Nations Forces: A Legal Study of United Nations Practice*, (London, 1964); Finn Seyersted, *United Nations Forces in the Law of Peace and War*, (Leiden: Netherlands, 1966); Rosalyn Higgins, *United Nations Peacekeeping: Documents and Commentary*, vols. 1-4 (Oxford, 1969,1970,1980,1981); Frederic Kirgis, *International Organizations in their Legal Setting*, 2nd ed., (St.Paul, Minn, 1993); and Bruno Simma, Hermann Mosler, Helmut Brokelman, and Chritstian Rohde, eds., *The Charter of the United Nations: A Commentary*, (Oxford, 1994).

[3] John Hillen, *Blue Helmets: The Strategy of UN Military Operations*, (London: Brassey's, 1998), pp. 9-11. (Hereafter *Blue Helmets*)

[4] Roberts, "From San Francisco to Sarajevo," p. 9. Many U.N. observers and scholars have traced the incipient nature of the United Nations' collective security capability to the lack of Article 43-type agreements and forces. See for example Brian Urquhart, "Security after the Cold War," in Adam Roberts and Benedict Kingsbury, eds., *United Nations, Divided World*, 2nd. Ed., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

[5] Ramesh Thakur, "UN Peacekeeping in the New World Order," in Ramesh Thakur and Carlyle A. Thayer, eds., *A Crisis of Expectations: UN Peacekeeping in the 1990s*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995), p. 4.

international community thus failed to realize a system of collective security centered on the United Nations.

It was the failure of collective security and the inadequacy of peace observation that, through improvisation and experimentation, led to the concept and practice of United Nations peacekeeping as a more limited and impartial collective measure to respond to threats to and breaches of international peace and security. Former U.N. Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld referred to this practice of peacekeeping as Chapter "Six and a Half," by virtue of the fact that, as the United Nations itself noted, observation and peacekeeping missions "fall short of the provisions of Chapter VII [but] at the same time they go beyond purely diplomatic means or those described in Chapter VI of the Charter."[6] The first of these formal peacekeeping operations, the United Nations Emergency Force in the Middle East, was agreed to by the Security Council under the explicit consensus that peacekeepers would not have the obligation, the forces, or the equipment to engage violators in hostilities. By adhering to such principles of a passive use of force, UNEF I successively managed to thwart a potentially explosive situation in the Suez crisis, and provided the United Nations with an ability to fulfil its role in maintaining international peace and security.

Peacekeeping quickly became the most pragmatic instrument at the disposal of the United Nations in its efforts to preserve or restore international peace. Each successive operation provided new opportunities to test new procedures and put new concepts and lessons learned from previous experience into practice. Over time, despite the absence of a clear Charter basis to peacekeeping, a consistent body of practice and doctrine evolved as a result of this process of trial-and-error experimentation and learning.[7]

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[6] *The Blue Helmets: A Review of United Nations Peace-keeping*, United Nations Department of Public Information, 2nd. ed., (New York: United Nations, 1990), p. 5.

[7] U.N. legal scholar Philippe Kirsch has argued that this absence of a legal framework for the past fifty years of peacekeeping has actually been one of its greatest strengths. Peacekeepers functioned on ad hoc "common understandings," as states were prepared to "accept in practice what they could not accept in principle", such as the interference to some extent in their internal affairs by the United Nations. See Philippe Kirsch, "The Legal Basis for Peacekeeping," *Canadian Defence Quarterly*, vol. 23, no. 1, (September 1993). See also Philippe Kirsch, "Legal Aspects of Peacekeeping," in *Peacekeeping: Norms,*

The concept of United Nations peacekeeping (Chapter "Six and a Half") has since progressed into a much broader strategy which encompasses peaceful conflict resolution means (Chapter VI) as well as more limited elements of peace enforcement (Chapter VII). In particular, U.N. peacekeeping has developed incrementally from a minor peace observation function to what is now considered an extensive array of innovative peacekeeping instruments and practices for coping with armed conflicts in the 1990s. See Appendix A.

United Nations peacekeeping currently comprises a broad strategic concept for preventing the outbreak of conflict and transforming existing conflicts from a violent interchange that postpones the resolution of underlying issues to a peaceful process of change that allows parties to a conflict to begin to address these issues. Former peacekeeper and Military Advisor to the Secretary-General, Indar J. Rikhye, has defined this expanded concept as

> the prevention, containment, moderation, and termination of hostilities between and within states, through the medium of third party intervention organised and directed internationally, and employing multinational forces of military, police, and civilian personnel to restore international peace and security.[8]

The components of United Nations peacekeeping missions in the 1990s accordingly are multifaceted and complex, consisting of the following four integrally related main functions: preventive action, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peace-building. Peacekeeping is thus a subset of a much larger spectrum of operations and activities that the United Nations might undertake to sustain or restore peace and security under the terms of its Charter.[9] These broad functions are defined by former U.N. Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali and accepted by the United Nations as:

Policy and Process, Proceedings of 1993 Peacekeeping Symposium (Toronto: Centre for International and Strategic Studies, York University, 1993), pp. 63-70.

[8] General Indar Jit Rikhye, Former President, International Peace Academy, as cited in Allen G. Sens, *Somalia and the Changing Nature of Peacekeeping*, (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1997),

[9] To distinguish between the broad, all-encompassing strategic concept of peacekeeping and the more narrow category of peacekeeping which constitutes one of the four functions of the former concept, this essay will employ the term "United Nations peace efforts" to refer to this holistic conceptual approach on the part of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security.

- Preventive Action (formerly preventive diplomacy): *action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur.*

Considered the most desirable and efficient employment of diplomacy, the aim of preventive action, according to Boutros-Ghali,

> is to ease tensions before they result in conflict - or, if conflict breaks out, to act swiftly to contain it and resolve its underlying causes. Preventive diplomacy may be performed by the Secretary-General personally or through senior staff or specialized agencies and programmes, by the Security Council or the General Assembly, and by regional organizations in cooperation with the United Nations.[10]

Preventive action traditionally involves the use of diplomatic means to prevent the outbreak of hostilities between two potential adversarial parties through such methods as the provision of early warning based on information gathering and informal or formal fact-finding. Although such forms of diplomacy are a well-established means of preventing conflict, United Nations experience in recent years has shown that there are several other forms of action that can have a useful preventive effect. These may include:

- the preventive deployment of a military unit and establishment of demilitarized zones, whereby peacekeepers are stationed between combatants to discourage hostilities and deter the onset of war

- the preventive disarmament of warring parties

- preventive humanitarian action

- and preventive peace-building through measures to build confidence such as the monitoring of regional arms agreements, arrangements for the free flow of information, or the exchange of military missions.

These latter tasks require the consent of the Government or Governments concerned, and can involve a wide range of actions in the fields of good governance, human rights and economic and social development. For this reason, the current Secretary-General Kofi Annan has described such activities as "preventive action," as opposed to

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[10] Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking, and Peacekeeping,* (New York: United Nations, 1992), para. 23. (Hereafter *An Agenda for Peace*)

"preventive diplomacy," the outdated phrase used by his predecessor, Boutros-Ghali.[11] Preventive action is particularly favoured by Member states as a means of preventing human suffering and as an alternative to costly politico-military operations to resolve conflicts after they have broken out.

- Peacemaking: *action to bring hostile parties to agreement, essentially through such peaceful means as those foreseen in Chapter VI of the Charter.*

Situated between the tasks of preventive diplomacy and peacekeeping lies the task of peacemaking, which refers to the use of diplomatic means to persuade parties in conflict to cease hostilities and to negotiate a peaceful settlement of their dispute. As with preventive action, the United Nations can play a role only if the parties to the dispute agree that it should do so. The United Nations therefore currently considers peacemaking as excluding the use of force against one of the parties to enforce an end to hostilities - - an activity referred to as peace enforcement.[12] Peacemaking can involve instruments of mediation and negotiation whereby disputing parties may elect to negotiate between themselves, either formally or informally, or choose to accept mediation by a third party. Peacemaking can additionally involve the use of the world court to resolve a dispute, efforts to ameliorate the conditions that have contributed to the dispute or conflict

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[11] Department of Political Affairs, *Preventive Action and Peacemaking*, United Nations, 1998, available from http://www.un.org/peacemak.htm; Internet.

[12] While the use of force was previously considered by former Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali as falling under the category of peacemaking, as a last resort measure, recent experience of limited peace enforcement tasks in Somalia and Bosnia has illustrated the dangerous repercussions of this strategy, and thus the Organization has since returned to its prior conception of peace enforcement as distinct from United Nations peace efforts. Accordingly, this essay does not undertake any analysis of the two U.S. – led collective security, or enforcement missions in the 1950 Korean War and in the 1990-1991Gulf War. The return to this view is likely to please many scholars who considered the incorporation of peace enforcement under the broader function of peacemaking as argued in Boutros-Ghali's *An Agenda for Peace*, as having "muddied the conceptual waters" of the U.N.'s military role. See Alan James, "The History of Peacekeeping: An Analytical Perspective," *Canadian Defence Quarterly*, vol. 23, no. 1 (special no. 2), (September 1993), p. 17. Despite this distinction, however, as John Hillen contends, "there is a clear line of continuity between the management challenges of military operations as the United Nations progresses from observation to enforcement missions. The limited enforcement measures, complex tasks, and belligerent environments of some larger second-generation peacekeeping missions accurately presage some of the challenges of managing large-scale enforcement missions." See Hillen, *Blue Helmets*, p. 29.

through social, political, or economic assistance, and the imposition of economic sanctions as authorized by the Security Council or General Assembly.[13]

- Peacekeeping: *the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, hitherto with the consent of all the parties concerned, normally involving United Nations military and/or police personnel and frequently civilians as well. Peacekeeping is a technique that expands the possibilities for both the prevention of conflict and the making of peace.*

The aim of traditional peacekeeping missions is not to terminate armed conflict by coercion, but rather to create a peaceful environment so that parties to a conflict could address the underlying differences to their dispute through political negotiations. These missions comprised the establishment of a small, lightly armed force typically deployed in an interpositional buffer zone to separate warring parties and monitor cease-fires. As noted, such action is predicated on a passive military role intended to preserve the impartial standing of the peacekeeping force and is entirely dependent on the consent and cooperation of the belligerents. Forces for traditional peacekeeping missions are most often drawn from the so-called "Middle powers" of Canada, Sweden, Austria, Ireland, Norway, and other smaller states such as Fiji. This practice of traditional peacekeeping has successfully managed to bring stability to numerous areas of tension around the world.

In the early 1990s, much of this traditional passive and cooperative peacekeeping doctrine was transformed to include larger, more complex and more dangerous tasks in less supportive environments, where factions were often still at war. In such environments, U.N. forces have attempted to monitor violations of human rights, disarm and demobilize combatants, protect designated safe areas, borders and guaranteed rights of passage, and enforce "no fly" and weapons-exclusion zones. In addition to the above

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[13] For a detailed definition of these tasks listed in all four broader mandates, see Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace;* and Paul F. Diehl, Daniel Druckman, and James Wall, "International Peacekeeping and Conflict Resolution: A Taxonomic Analysis with Implications," *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* vol. 42, no. 1, (February 1998), pp. 33-55.

functions, these Second-Generation peacekeeping operations have encompassed peace observation, traditional peacekeeping functions, and peace-building activities.

• Peace-building: *action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict.*

In broad terms, post-conflict peace-building involves the practical implementation of peaceful social change through socio-economic reconstruction and development, and is typically applied to intra-state disputes following civil war. Post-conflict peace-building is dependent upon the success of peacemaking and peacekeeping. As Boutros-Ghali argued, these latter functions "to be truly successful, must come to include comprehensive efforts to identify and support structures which will tend to consolidate peace and advance a sense of confidence and well-being among people." Following agreements ending civil strife, such nation-building efforts may include the restoration of law and order in the absence of government authority, the custody and possible destruction of weapons, the repatriation of refugees, and the reconstruction of infrastructure and training of security forces. Peacebuilding also entails efforts to advance the protection of human rights, the promotion of political participation, facilitation of a transfer of power from an interim authority to an indigenous government, and the reform or strengthening of governmental institutions.

Boutros-Ghali further noted that in the aftermath of a civil war, peace-building "may take the form of concrete cooperative projects which link two or more countries in a mutually beneficial undertaking that can not only contribute to economic and social development but also enhance the confidence that is fundamental to peace."[14] These may include, for instance, joint projects to develop agriculture and improve transportation, and cultural exchanges and mutually beneficial youth and educational projects to reduce cultural and national tensions. Peace-building as the construction of a new environment can accordingly be considered the counterpart of preventive action.

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[14] Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace*, para. 56.

These four integrally related elements of what I have termed "United Nations peace efforts" represent a holistic contribution towards preserving or restoring international peace and security. As Boutros-Ghali affirmed, preventive action seeks to

> resolve disputes before violence breaks out; peacemaking and peacekeeping are required to halt conflicts and preserve peace once it is attained. If successful, they strengthen the opportunity for post-conflict peace-building, which can prevent the recurrence of violence among nations and peoples.[15]

Current Second-Generation peacekeeping operations may encompass any or all of these broad mandates and the more specific tasks encompassed within, either simultaneously or sequentially. For example, while peacemaking is a prelude to peacekeeping, when a conflict breaks out, the two approaches can be launched simultaneously, thus mutually reinforcing one another. Such mixing of missions or rapid mission change is furthermore often not envisioned or anticipated at the outset or even during the course of a mission.

The evolution of this concept and phenomenon of United Nations peacekeeping in the larger conceptual framework that I have referred to as U.N. peace efforts comprise the broad focus of this study.[16] A key question generated by examining this evolution and wider conceptual approach is whether this process of growth is the result of simple organizational *adaptation*, or rather, *active learning* from each peacekeeping mission on the part of the United Nations. More precisely, has the United Nations demonstrated an ability to learn from its long history of peacekeeping operations and to implement effective policy changes, or rather, has the organization merely adapted to outward changes in the global environment, repeating the same errors in peacekeeping conception and implementation?

This particular question constitutes the specific focus of this study. In examining the question, this study will draw on the theoretical insights of learning theorists and

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[15] Ibid., para. 21.

[16] This study does not attempt to provide a comprehensive analysis of the evolution of United Nations peace efforts, but rather examines this evolution as the related result of the specific focus of the study. Nor does it seek to assess the effectiveness of these efforts on the part of the United Nations. There is an enormous literature that examines in detail this evolution and offers critical analysis of U.N. peacekeeping. The best among these studies include the following: *The United Nations and the Maintenance of International peace and Security, United Nations Institute for Training and Research*, (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987); Alan James, *Peacekeeping in International Politics*, (London: Macmillan, 1990); William J. Durch, ed., *The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping: Case Studies and Comparative Analysis*, (New York: St. Martin's

scholars of political psychology to probe the extent of learning on the part of the United Nations with respect to U.N. peace efforts. As organizations learn only through its individual members, this study will more specifically analyse the ability of the United Nations to learn from experience as manifested by the senior most public servant in the international system, the Secretary-General of the United Nations. To assess the ability of the United Nations to learn over the course of its history, I will probe the extent of learning of *five* Secretaries-General in relation to U.N. peace efforts, comparing and ranking them, illustrating the factors that mitigated or impeded learning, and accounting for the occasions when learning did not translate into policy change.

I argue that the changes to the nature, function, and scope of peacekeeping throughout its evolution are the result not only of adaptation to environmental variables, but are due in large measure to the ability of United Nations Secretaries-General to learn from past experience. The primary hypothesis of this thesis, therefore, is that, through trial-and-error or *experiential learning stimulated by failure*, United Nations Secretaries-General often implemented both minor and fundamental policy changes in the conception and exercise of United Nations peace efforts.

Together with this primary hypothesis, two additional secondary hypotheses will also be tested in this case study of the U.N. Secretaries-General. The first, more general theoretical hypothesis, widely recognized in the literature on learning and foreign policy, is that failure and/or severe crises provoke learning and subsequent policy change whereas success prompts policy continuation. The second hypothesis actually comprises two sub-hypotheses. The first of these is partly based on research by political psychologists on the role of personality and its impact on decision-making.[17] It consists of the notion that individuals who demonstrate high levels of cognitive complexity are more likely to learn from prior experience than those individuals whose thinking reflects less cognitive complexity. The second sub-hypothesis, based upon research by learning theorists, involves the notion that individuals who exhibit a strong willingness to test, or

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Press, 1993); Paul F. Diehl, *International Peacekeeping*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); and Hillen, *Blue Helmets*, (1998).

[17] "Partly" is used here as instead of analysing the impact of personality variables on *decision-making style*, this study employs such character traits as determinants of individual's ability to *learn*.

experiment, with new ideas, are more likely to learn from prior experience than their more cautious counterparts.

My dependent variables consist of a) *learning on behalf of U.N. Secretaries-General* (more broadly, of the United Nations itself as organizations learn only through individuals but in a somewhat different manner), and b) *willingness to apply learning to policy change*. My independent variables primarily comprise two sets of factors. The first involves the *personality/leadership style* of each Secretary-General. Individual personality comprises many traits - - two of which play key roles for the Secretary-General - - cognitive complexity (causal) and willingness to experiment (facilitating). The second set relates to the state of international relations and consists of a) the systemic constraints placed upon the ability of the Secretary-General to act by the Security Council (facilitating/constraining variable) and b) the conditions of major power interests (facilitating/constraining variable). These variables are defined in greater detail in later sections, and a graphic representation of this broad process of Secretaries-General' learning and policy change in regard to United Nations peace efforts is located on page 51 of this study.

In assessing the extent of learning by Secretaries-General of the United Nations, several research questions will also be examined in addition to the above stated hypotheses:

(1) Did the Secretaries-General exhibit belief change and behaviour consistent with the definitions of learning processes, and not adaptation?

(2) What forms did learning take? More efficient matching of means to ends and reevaluation of strategies (simple learning)? Reevaluation of basic assumptions and fundamental goals (complex learning)?

(3) Under what conditions did these changes result in policy change? If they did not, what constraints prevented policy change?

(4) Did they learn to the same extent? At the same rate? If not, which among them exhibited the highest degree of learning?

(5) Were the lessons learned by a Secretary-General passed on to his successors?

Learning in Context

At first glance, the notion of learning may strike scholars of international relations as platitudinous, and irrelevant to their field of study. However, the questions of whether state-level policy-makers learn from historical experience or simply adapt to changes by relying on standard operating procedures and historical analogies that often do not apply to current circumstances, and whether that learning affects the course of subsequent preferences and policy-making decisions, have been intensely debated among learning theorists, and are of central importance to the study of international relations. It might appear that the ability to learn is straightforward and can be readily assumed. However, as scholars of cognition argue, it is by no means clear that state decision-makers learn from historical experience, and even if they do, that learning does not necessarily affect the course of subsequent preferences and policy-making decisions, given many potential environmental constraints.[18]

Decision-makers are confronted with a complex, highly uncertain, and constantly changing international environment. This environment makes it very

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[18] See for example, I.L. Janis and L. Mann, *Decision making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, (New York: Free Press, 1977); Daniel Kahneman, Paul Slovic, and Amos Tversky, eds., *Judgment Under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982); and Yaacov Y.I. Vertzberger, *The World in their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition and Perception in Foreign Policy Decisionmaking* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990). These notable studies form part of an extensive literature on the subject of how individuals reason and make decisions. For additional reading, see J. Bieri, "Cognitive Complexity and Personality Development" in O.J. Harvey, *Experience, Structure and Adaptability*, (New York: Springer, 1966);
H. Schroder, M. Driver, and S. Steufert, *Human Information Processing*, (London: Sage, 1967); G.T. Allison, *Essence of Decision*, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971); R.V. Nydegger, "Information Processing Complexity and Leadership Status," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 11 (1975), pp. 317-328; P. Suedfield and A. Rank, "Revolutionary Leaders: Long-term Success as a Function in Conceptual Complexity," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 34, (1976), pp. 168-178; P. Suedfield and P. Tetlock, "Integrative Complexity of Communication in International Crises," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 21 (1977), pp. 169-184; Alex Roberto Hybel, *How Leaders Reason: U.S. Intervention in the Caribbean Basin and Latin America*, (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1990); Robin Hogarth and William Goldstein, eds., *Judgment and Decision Making: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1996); and Robyn Dawes, "Judgment and Choice" in Daniel Gilbert, Susan Fiske, and G. Lindzey, eds., *Handbook of Social Psychology*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998).

difficult for them to perceive the real causes of events or trends. Moreover, cognition theorists underscore that policy-makers are, as human beings, limited-capacity information processors who can cope with only so much information at a time.[19] As such, they tend to rely upon simplifying guidelines and cognitive shortcuts to *adapt* passively to changes in their environment rather than *learn* actively from experience.

These constraints on learning are even more prevalent in organizations where standard operating procedures and established bureaucracy limit the potential of individuals to learn from direct experience and transform those lessons into effective changes. In the realm of international security, understanding how the processes of learning and policy change occur in an organizational setting is of pivotal importance and holds broad ramifications for future policy-makers and change in the international system.

Although there exists a substantial body of literature on learning, there is no unified theory of learning, and analysts have only recently begun to investigate important questions concerning the nature and conditions of learning in a rigorous and systematic way. Admittedly, the concept of learning is, in the words of one scholar, "difficult to define, isolate, measure, and apply empirically."[20] Despite this difficulty, while many theories of learning have been developed by scholars of social psychology, management studies, and organization theory, very few scholars have sought to integrate these theories and clarify the myriad of important methodological and conceptual problems arising from these different studies. There have been even fewer attempts to examine the processes and dynamics of learning by individuals in international organizations. This general neglect of learning processes in international organizations, particularly in the realm of international security where crises occur frequently, is both surprising and disquieting. For learning theorists, international organizations are of interest because they are live collectivities interacting with broad-based and even global environments, and because it is within their realm that the individual and bureaucratic levels of analysis meet. Much

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[19] See for example, Vertzberger, *The World in their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition and Perception in Foreign Policy Decisionmaking*, (1990).
[20] Jack S. Levy, "Learning and Foreign Policy: Sweeping a Conceptual Minefield," *International Organization* 48, 2, (Spring 1994), p. 280.

can be learned from studying these interaction effects among individuals and organizations.

For scholars of international security, international organizations represent important forces that help states shape and coordinate their interests. Defined broadly by proponents of liberal institutionalism as sets "of rules that stipulate the ways in which states should cooperate and compete with each other... [International institutions] prescribe acceptable forms of state behaviour and proscribe unacceptable behaviour."[21] International organization therefore represents an important means for arranging the functioning of the state-based international system more satisfactorily. As such, if, as some argue, international institutionalization will become a predominant feature of the international system in the next century, it is necessary to acquire a more informed understanding of how individual learning within these organizations occurs and leads to innovation and change.

Among these institutions, perhaps none is more important to the future of global security than the United Nations. With a global membership and general purposes, no other international body better represents the interests of the international community. In few other environments is the role of learning more important to the improvement of the organization and more broadly to the stability of the state system and the future of international peace and security. Furthermore, in no other field in international relations do we hear of "learning" as much as we do in relation to United Nations peacekeeping. Each peacekeeping operation yields "lessons" which both scholars and policy-makers

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[21] John Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994-1995) as cited by Lisa H. Martin, "International Organizations" in John A. Hall and T.V. Paul, eds., *International Order in the Twenty-first Century*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). Along with these two analyses, there is a large body of literature on the subject of international organization. See, for example, Karl W. Deutsch, et al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the light of Historical Experience*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957); Inis L. Claude, Jr., *Swords into Plowshares: The Problems and Process of International Organization*, 4th ed., (New York: Random House, 1971); Paul Taylor and A.J.R. Groom, eds., *International Organization*, (London: Pinter, 1978); esp. article by Leon Gordenker and Paul R. Saunders, "Organization Theory and International Organization"; A. Leroy Bennett, *International Organizations: Principles and Issues*, 5th ed., (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1991); and Bob Reinalda and Bertjan Verbeek, eds., *Autonomous Policy-Making by International Organisations*, (New York:, Routledge, 1998). For an understanding of the role of international organization and conflict resolution, see Ernst Haas, Robert Buttersworth, and Joseph Nye, *Conflict Management by International Organizations*, (Morristown, NJ: General Learning Corp, 1972); and Robert Buttersworth, *Moderation from Management: International Organization and Peace*, (Pittsburgh: University Center for International Studies, 1978).

seek to examine with the aim of avoiding the same difficulties in the future. The United Nations has even established a "Lessons Learned Unit" working toward this goal.

If the 1990s are to be a predictor of the twenty-first century, the prevalence of large-scale, violent intra-state conflicts that threaten the stability of regional systems will be a crucial feature of international relations. In such a scenario, the capacity of the United Nations to preserve or restore peace will be virtually indispensable. For these reasons, it is all the more surprising that learning theorists have not devoted any attention to the role of learning in the evolution of United Nations peacekeeping.

Understanding the interactive processes by which the United Nations learns from its past experiences is critical for the future of international peace and security and holds important ramifications for international organizations in many different fields. However, scholars of the United Nations have thus far failed to examine the underlying conceptions and causal conditions of the "lessons" about which they so often write.[22] As there have not been any previous attempts to apply learning theory to the evolution of United Nations peace efforts, this study will yield some new insights into the relationship between learning and international security organizations, and the role of individuals within those organizations.

As stated in the hypothesis, the primary aim of this study is to discover if learning from experience occurs in the United Nations and whether it accounts for policy change in the evolution of United Nations peace efforts. Along with this focus, a broader aim of this study of learning in international organizations as reflected in the thinking and behaviour of United Nations Secretaries-General with respect to U.N. peace efforts, is to

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[22] Ernst Haas has briefly conjectured that U.N. peacekeeping conforms to an "incremental growth pattern" of adaptation, and not learning. See "The Collective Management of International Conflict, 1945-1984," *The United Nations and International Security*, (UNITAR, Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987), pp. 3 –70; and *When Knowledge is Power*, (1990), p. 5. Reginald Austin has similarly argued that there "has been a notable absence of rigorous post-mission analysis and evaluation or, when this has happened, of readiness to publish and learn from experience", a general lack of a culture of learning. See Reginald H.F. Austin, "The Future of UN Peacekeeping Operations: Cosmetic or Comprehensive?" in Ramesh Thakur, ed., *The United Nations at Fifty*, (New Zealand: University of Otago Press, 1995), p. 96. James Rosenau has also made reference to learning in the United Nations, noting in contrast that the organization is an active entity that relies on previous situations, learns, and sets precedents. See James N. Rosenau, *The United Nations in a Turbulent World*, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992), p. 39. Apart from these brief references, there are to my knowledge, no developed or other form of analyses of individual or organizational learning with respect to United Nations peace efforts. In contrast to Haas and Austin moreover, I argue that both active learning and adaptation characterize U.N. peacekeeping, and result in policy change.

specify when actors are most likely to learn, the types of lessons they learn, and the conditions under which this learning results in policy change. The ability and propensity of policy-makers and organizations in general to learn from experience and to apply those lessons of history is of fundamental importance to the study of international relations. If we are able to understand the manner in which decision-makers process information and better understand what factors facilitate or impede that process of learning, it may be possible in the future to prevent the repetition of errors in foreign policy and institutional decision-making. Awareness of the dynamics of learning processes will allow policy-makers to create more effective strategies in response to crises.

In the realm of international security, understanding how these general processes of learning and policy change occur in an organizational setting is of central importance and holds sweeping ramifications for future policy-makers and change in the international system. This study promises to further the development of the existing theoretical literature on learning by illustrating the interaction effects and processes of learning as related to United Nations peace efforts. By incorporating learning models into analyses of institutional international decision-making, we can significantly enhance our understanding of world politics.

Theories of Learning in International Politics

The concept of learning, long a key element in the fields of experimental psychology and behavioural science, has increasingly come to occupy an important role in current international relations theories of state behaviour and foreign policy-making. Considered as a central concept in social psychology, management, and organization theories since the 1950s, interest in learning-related research on the part of scholars of sociology, political psychology, international relations, international political economy, and comparative politics has, in recent years, begun to flourish.

Why is this learning and lack of learning important to the study of international security? Since the early groundbreaking work of Robert Jervis on perception and

misperception in international politics, scholars of international relations have increasingly come to realize that learning plays a highly consequential role in the formulation of foreign policy.[23] Drawing upon the theoretical insights of learning-related research from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives, these authors have demonstrated that by incorporating learning models into analyses of foreign policy decision-making we can acquire a more complete understanding of world politics that incorporates individual, bureaucratic, and systemic levels of analysis. To cite but one example, in his pioneering study of U.S. foreign policy in Latin America, Lloyd Etheredge illustrated that blocked governmental learning led to three processes of stagnation that plagued the U.S. government for three decades by impeding the achievement of its foreign policy objectives in Latin America. These included the adoption of similar policies across historical encounters, the repetition of collectively self-blocking behaviour within the national security decision process, and the repetition of a common syndrome or errors in judgment and perception.[24] If we are able to understand the manner in which as decision-makers, we process information by relying upon less-than-perfect simplifying mechanisms, perhaps it is possible in the future to avoid these cognitive traps and prevent the repetition of errors in foreign policy decision-making.

In addition to the work of Etheredge, there are numerous other studies on the role of learning in international relations that, taken together, comprise a very substantial body of literature.[25] One notable early subset of this research consists of efforts by scholars drawing upon social psychology to examine the impact of certain momentous historical events on the formulation of future foreign policy decision-making. There have been, for example, several studies of the "lessons of Munich", and their influence on subsequent decision-making in Korea, Suez, the Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf

[23] Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976).

[24] Lloyd S. Etheredge, *Can Governments Learn? American Foreign Policy and Central American Revolutions* (New York, NY: Pergamon Press, 1985), p. viii.

[25] For a comprehensive review of studies that incorporate concepts of learning in international relations, see the following excellent analyses: William W. Jarosz with Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "The Shadow of the Past: Learning from History in National Security Decision Making," in Philip E. Tetlock et al., eds, *Behaviour,*

war. Much attention has also been devoted to assessing the impact of the "lessons of Korea", which swayed American debates about Indochina, and especially of the "lessons of Vietnam" which were frequently invoked by U.S. policy-makers in the Gulf War and in Bosnia.

These studies demonstrate that decision-makers often invoke "lessons" of the past to help them cope with uncertainty and make difficult choices. The "lessons" of past experience are therefore sometimes employed as a cognitive shortcut, or prescriptive guideline, that facilitates the formulation of foreign policy for the decision-maker in a different and complex new situation, rather than in an actual attempt to avoid repeating the same errors of the past.[26] These findings confirm that decision-makers rarely learn, even when applying "lessons" of the past.

While these studies on the "lessons" of history were among the first to apply learning to the arena of international relations, there is a long-standing general literature on learning in social psychology from which these studies has drawn.[27] Since the emergence of these studies on the "lessons" of history, there has been a recent resurgence of interest in learning and foreign policy, especially in relation to the end of the Cold War. Scholars such as George Breslauer, Philip Tetlock, and Janice Gross Stein,

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Society, and International Conflict, vol. 3 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); and Jack S. Levy, "Learning and Foreign Policy: Sweeping a Conceptual Minefield."

[26] See Ernest R. May, *"Lessons" of the Past*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973); Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* , chap. 6; Earl C. Ravenal, *Never Again: Learning from America's Foreign Policy Failures* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978); Ole R. Holsti and James N. Rosenau, *American Leadership in World Affairs* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1984); Bernice Lott and Albert J. Lott, "Learning Theory in Contemporary Social Psychology," in Gardner Lindzey and Elliot Aronson, eds., *Handbook of Social Psychology*, vol.1 (New York: Random House, 1985), pp.109-35;Yuen Foong Khong, *Analogies at War: Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992); David Patrick Houghton, "The Role of Analogical Reasoning in Novel Foreign Policy Situations," *British Journal of Political Science*, 26, 1996, pp. 523-552; David Patrick Houghton, "Historical Analogies and the Cognitive Dimension of Domestic Policymaking," *Political Psychology*, vol. 19, no. 2, (1998), pp. 279-303; and Philip Tetlock, "Theory-Driven Reasoning about Plausible Pasts and Probable Futures in World Politics: Are We Prisoners of Our Preconceptions?," *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 43, no. 2, (April 1999), pp. 335-366.

[27] For general works on learning in social psychology, see Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*; Donald A. Sylvan and Steve Chan, eds., *Foreign Policy Decision Making* (New York:, Praeger, 1984); Yaacov Y.I. Vertzberger, "Foreign Policy Decision-makers as Practical-Intuitive Historians: Applied History and its Shortcomings, " *International Studies Quarterly* 30 (June 1986); Vertzberger, *The World in their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition and Perception in Foreign Policy Decisionmaking* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990); Ernst B. Haas, *When Knowledge is Power*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Khong, *Analogies at War* (1992); and C.J.

unsatisfied with the inability of structural models to fully explain the end of the Cold War and other important instances of foreign policy change, have applied learning models to account for the sweeping changes in Soviet foreign policy initiated under Mikhail Gorbachev in the late 1980s.[28]

Along with this research on Soviet foreign policy change, there have been case studies on the role of learning in U.S.- Soviet cooperation during the Cold War, nuclear weapons policy, U.S. military intervention, imperial overextension, and East Asia during the Gorbachev era. There have also been several quantitative empirical studies on the role of historical learning in crisis bargaining behaviour, deterrence, and alliance formation.[29]

Bennett and M. Howlett, "The Lessons of Learning: Reconciling Theories of Policy Learning and Policy Change," *Policy Sciences* 25, (1992), pp. 275-294.

[28] See George W. Breslauer, "Ideology and Learning in Soviet Third World Policy," *World Politics* 39 (April 1987), pp. 429-48; Andrew Owen Bennett, "Theories of Individual, Organizational, and Governmental Learning and the Rise and Fall of Soviet Military Interventionism 1973-1983," Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1990); Breslauer and Philip E. Tetlock, eds., *Learning in U.S. and Soviet Foreign Policy*, (Boulder, CO:, Westview press, 1991); Matthew Evangelista, "Sources of Moderation in Soviet Security Policy," in Philip E. Tetlock et al., *Behaviour, Society, and Nuclear War*, 3 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 254-354; George W. Breslauer, "Explaining Soviet Policy Changes: Politics, Ideology, and Learning," in Breslauer, ed., *Soviet Policy in Africa: From the Old to the New Thinking* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 196-216; Andrew Owen Bennett, "Patterns of Soviet Military Interventionism 1975-1990," in William Zimmerman, ed., *Beyond the Soviet Threat: American Security Policy in a New Era* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992); Celeste Wallander, "Opportunity, Incrementalism, and Learning in the Extension and Retraction Of Soviet Global Commitments," *Security Studies* 1 (Spring 1992), pp.514-42; Sarah E. Mendelson, "Internal Battles and External Wars: Politics, Learning, and the Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan," *World Politics* 45 (April 1993), pp. 327-60; and Janice Gross Stein, "Political Learning by Doing: Gorbachev as Uncommitted Thinker and Motivated Learner," *International Organization* 48, 2, (Spring 1994), pp. 155-183.

[29] See Russell J. Leng, "When Will They Ever Learn? Coercive Bargaining in Recurrent Crises," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 27 (September 1983), pp.379-419; John P. Lovell, "Lessons of U.S. Military Involvement: Preliminary Conceptualization," in Sylvan and Chan (1984); Paul Huth and Bruce Russett, "What Makes Deterrence Work? Cases from 1900 to 1980," *World Politics* 36 (July 1984), pp.496-526; Leng, "Crisis Learning Games," *American Political Science Review* 82 (March 1986), pp. 179-94; Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Nuclear Learning and U.S.-Soviet Security Regimes," *International Organization* 41 (Summer 1987), pp. 371-402; Alexander L. George, Philip J. Farley, and Alexander Dallin, eds., *U.S.-Soviet Security Cooperation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); R. Harrison Wagner, "Uncertainty, Rational Learning, and Bargaining in the Cuban Missile Crisis," in Peter C. Ordershook, ed., *Models of Strategic Choice in Politics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989), pp. 177-205; Robert Powell, *Nuclear Deterrence Theory: The Search for Credibility* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Khong, *Analogies at War*; Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991); Scott D. Sagan, *The Limits of Safety: Organizations, Accidents, and Nuclear Weapons* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Charles E. Ziegler, *Foreign Policy and East Asia; Learning and Adaptation in the Gorbachev Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Jack S. Levy, Learning from Experience in U.S. and Soviet Foreign Policy," in Manus I. Midlarsky, John A. Vasquez, and Peter Gladkov, eds., *From Rivalry to Cooperation*, (New York:

Whereas these studies have analysed the role of learning among individual foreign policy makers and national leaders, other analysts have examined the influence of epistemic communities on policy formulation by shaping political leaders' knowledge of cause-effect relations and definitions of national interest. Jack Levy has noted that these groups of knowledge-based experts, who operate with "shared paradigms within transnational or domestic networks," may facilitate learning by "providing new information, changing belief systems, creating focal points, and coordinating expectations."[30] Along with these studies of the role of learning and foreign policy-making, there have been several recent studies involving the application of learning to the fields of game theory, international political economy, and evolutionary change and progress.[31]

Such academic studies on learning and international affairs are based in large measure upon the theoretical concepts and analytical techniques of social psychology. And while these foundations of social psychology illuminate the manner in which decision-makers interpret information, cope with uncertainty, and make policy decisions, they are insufficient to provide a complete understanding of interactive learning processes, and the role of learning in the realms of foreign policy and international security. As noted above, the majority of the literature on learning and foreign policy draws not only upon the principles of social psychology, but also relies heavily upon the

Harper Collins, 1994), pp. 56-86; and Dan Reiter, "Learning, Realism, and Alliances," *World Politics* 46 (July 1994), pp. 490-526.

[30] See for example, Haas, *When Knowledge is Power*; Peter M. Haas, ed., "Knowledge, Power, and International Policy Coordination," special issue of *International Organization* 46 (Winter 1992); and Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, eds., *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993).

[31] On learning and game theory, see Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation* (New York: Basic Books, 1984). On learning and foreign economic policy, see for example, John S. Odell, *U.S. Monetary Policy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1982); P.Hall, "Policy paradigms, Social learning and the state: The case of economic policy-making in Britain," *Comparative Politics*, 25, (1993), pp. 275-296; and Rachel Van Elkan, "Catching Up and Slowing Down: Learning and Growth Patterns in an Open Economy," *Journal of International Economics*, 41 (August 1996), pp. 95-111. On learning and economics more generally, see Tilman Borgers, "On the Relevance of Learning and Evolution to Economic Theory," *Economic Journal*, v. 106, (Sept. 1996), pp. 1374-1385; and Matthew Rabin, "Psychology and Economics," *Journal of Economic Literature* 36, no. 1 (March 1998), pp. 11-46. For an understanding of the role of learning in evolutionary change and progress, see J.M Dutton, and A. Thomas, "Relating technological change and learning by doing," in *Research on Technological Innovation, Management, and Policy*, R.S. Rosenbloom, ed., (Greenwich, CT: JAI, 1985), pp. 187-224; George Modelski, "Evolutionary

research of organization theory. Organization theorists have come to understand that, as Dan Reiter remarked, "state action is the product both of individuals acting on the basis of their own beliefs and of organizations acting within the larger framework of the state and society."[32]

As in the field of social psychology, there is an extensive literature on organizational learning by sociologists and management theorists.[33] And case studies of

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Paradigm for Global Politics," *International Studies Quarterly* 40 (Sept. 1996), pp. 321-42; and Ernst B. Haas, *Nationalism, Liberalism, and Progress* vol.1 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

[32] Reiter, "Learning, Realism, and Alliances: The Weight of the Shadow of the Past," (1994), p. 492.

[33] There is a vast body of literature on learning in organization theory. See for example, V.E. Cangelosi, and R. W. Dill, "Organizational learning: observations toward a theory," *Administration Science Quarterly*, v. 10, 1965, pp. 175-203; John D. Steinbruner, *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974); J.G. March and J.P. Olsen, "The uncertainty of the past: organizational learning under ambiguity," *European Journal of Political Research*, vol. 3, (1975), pp. 147-171; Olsen, "The process of interpreting organizational history," in *Ambiguity and Choice in Organizations*, March and Olsen, eds., (Bergen, Norway: Universitetsforlaget, 1976), pp. 338-50; Philip H. Mirvis and David N. Berg, eds., *Failures in Organization Development and Change: Cases and Essays for Learning*, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1977); Chris Argyris and Donald A. Schon, *Organizational Learning: A Theory of Action Perspective*, (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1978); R. Duncan and A. Weiss, "Organizational learning: implications for organizational design," in *Research in Organizational Behaviour*, B.M Staw, ed., (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1979), pp. 75-123; Bo Hedberg, "How Organizations Learn and Unlearn," in Paul C. Nystrom and William H. Starbuck, eds., *Handbook of Organizational Design*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), pp. 3-27; J.M. Beyer, "Ideologies, values, and decision making in organizations," in Nystrom and Starbuck, (1981), pp. 166-202; B.M. Staw and L.L. Cummings, eds., *Research in Organizational Behaviour*, (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1984); R.L. Daft and K.E. Weick, "Toward a model of organizations as interpretation systems," *Academic Management Review*, vol. 9, (1984), pp. 284-295; M.T. Hannan, and J. Freeman, "Structural inertia and organizational change," *American Sociological Review*, vol. 49, (1984), pp. 149-164; C.M. Fiol, and M. A. Lyles, "Organizational learning," *Academic Management Review*, vol. 10, (1985), pp. 803-13; Jack S. Levy, "Organizational routines and the causes of war," *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 30, (1986), pp. 193-222; W.W. Powell, "How the past informs the present: the uses and liabilities of organizational memory." Paper presented at the Conference on Communication and Collective Memory, Anneberg School, University of Southern California, 1986; R.J. House, and J.V. Singh, "Organizational behaviour: some new directions for i/o psychology," *Annual Review of Psychology*, vol. 38, (1987), pp. 669-718; Barbara Levitt and James G. March, "Organizational Learning," *Annual Review of Sociology* 14 (1988), pp. 324-34; James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The Uncertainty of the Past: Organizational Learning Under Ambiguity," in James G. March, *Decisions and Organizations* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988), pp. 335-58; George P. Huber, "Organizational Learning: The Contributing Processes and the Literatures," *Organization Science* 2 (February 1991), pp. 88-115; R. Scott, *Institutions and Organizations*, (London: Sage, 1993); Argyris and Schon, *Organizational Learning II: Theory, Method, and Practice* (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1996); Mirvis, "Historical Foundations of Organizational Learning," *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 9, 1 (1996); Johan Stein, "How Institutions Learn: a Socio-Cognitive Perspective," *Journal of Economic Issues*, v. 37, (Sept. 1997), pp. 729-40; Mark Easterby-Smith, "Disciplines of Organizational Learning: Contributions and Critiques," *Human Relations*, v. 50 (Sept. 1997), pp. 1085-1113.

For insight into the role of individuals in organizations and group settings, see for example, Zeev Maoz, "Framing the National Interest: The Manipulation of Foreign Policy Decisions in Group Settings," *World Politics*, 43, (1989), pp. 77-111; R.J. House, "Power and Personality in Complex Organizations," in B.M. Staw and L.L. Cummings, eds., *Personality and*

organizational learning are slowly beginning to emerge.[34] Since social psychology scholars and organization theorists have been unable to agree upon a concise *definition* of learning in their respective fields, it is not surprising that there has not been an attempt to establish a unified theory of learning between the two strands of research. Very few scholars have sought to integrate the two theories of learning into their own research.[35] Instead, the literature on learning is characterized by a myriad of definitions, forms, theories, and conceptions of learning throughout not only the various disciplines, but also among scholars within the same discipline.

Much of the literature on the role of learning in the formulation of foreign policy and international security is furthermore limited to discerning whether or not learning occurs in these realms. Relatively little, or only scattered attention, has been devoted to answering such questions as *how* learning occurs at the individual, organizational, and governmental levels?, what forms does this learning take?, and under what conditions do policy makers' beliefs change? Furthermore, much of this research has not attempted to discern *when* these cognitive changes overcome institutional and domestic political impediments to be translated into policy?, or at what point these changes result in a more efficient matching of means and ends in the formulation of future policies?

Many such aspects of this process of learning therefore remain highly puzzling and demand better explanation and integration into more unified theoretical frameworks. For the most part, however, international relations scholars continue to neglect such questions by framing the subject of learning as a dichotomous problem: does learning occur or not? Turning our attention to examining the additional question of *how* learning affects policy formulation, and under what conditions, promises substantial theoretical, empirical, and practical payoffs.

Organizational Influence, (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1990), pp. 181-233; and D. Welch, "The Organizational Process and Bureaucratic Politics Paradigms: Retrospect and Prospect," *International Security*, 17, (1992), pp. 112-146.

[34] See for example, Ann Kent, "China, International Organizations and Regimes: the ILO as a Case Study in Organizational Learning", *Pacific Affairs*, 70, no. 4 (Winter 1997-1998), pp. 517-532.

[35] Among the works that provide a more integrated perspective, see Haas, *When Knowledge is Power*, and Haas, "Collective Learning: Some Theoretical Speculations," in Breslauer and Tetlock; Reiter, "Learning, Realism, and Alliances"; and Levy, "Learning and Foreign Policy."

To give adequate attention to the most critical issues, and most relevant ones to the aims of this study, I must limit the scope of this review to studies of learning in foreign policy and organization theory. Moreover, in regards to these two areas of scholarship, this study emphasizes the applications in the realm of international security. Although I draw on the theoretical insights of social and cognitive psychology in relation to learning, I do not attempt to provide a comprehensive analysis of the mental structures and processes that govern learning. Furthermore, I do not examine the nature of deductive learning, or its relationship to experiential learning, instead focusing exclusively on experiential learning.

Definitions of Learning

Early conceptions of learning were first put forward by theorists in the field of experimental psychology who have long relied on a behavioural definition which corresponds in logic to the classic stimulus-response example of a child burning his hand on a hot stove.[36] As George Breslauer and Philip Tetlock have illustrated, the child learned to avoid burning his hand by "improving his understanding of when the stove was hot or by developing ways of avoiding the stove altogether or by wearing special protective garments when using the stove." Learning in this sense thus constitutes a change in the probability of a category of response as a result of experience.[37]

When applied to the realm of interpersonal and international relations, this definition of trial-and-error learning corresponds to a form of learning that Tetlock has characterized as the neorealist approach. This view holds that when previous behaviours or policies are found to be not 'working' in advancing the goals that drove them, a change in those behaviours or policies will likely result.[38] Breslauer and Tetlock argue, however, that when a policy maker learns in this minimalist fashion, "he has not necessarily learned anything deeper about how the world works or about how to advance his goals. He has only learned that the previous policy was not 'working.'" This approach thereby considers learning as comprising the rational adjustment of policy in

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[36] George W. Breslauer and Philip E. Tetlock, *Learning in U.S.-Soviet Foreign Policy*, p. 8.
[37] Ibid.

response to the reward and punishment contingencies of the international environment.[39] Janice Stein has similarly observed that these learning theorists in experimental and educational psychology can accordingly be considered as "associationist." Such psychological theories of learning are thus not very useful in specifying the dynamics of learning in part because they analyse learning within highly structured environments, and are consequently not helpful in an environment where appropriate responses are unknown or disputed.[40]

Together with this experimental psychology approach, Tetlock identifies four other forms of learning. Two of these approaches are based on the definition of learning employed by cognitive theorists. In contrast to the behavioural conception of learning, cognitive learning entails increased differentiation and integration of mental structures (schemata). Breslauer and Tetlock contend that "people working in this tradition pay little attention to the underlying external reality, much less to determining whether increased complexity of thought necessarily makes an individual more knowledgeable about the environment."[41]

The first of these cognitive approaches, the belief system approach, depicts learning as comprising a change in the cognitive content of one's image of the international environment and of the best ways to cope with that environment.[42] This definition, however, neglects whether increased complexity results in behavioural patterns that improve performance in pursuit of goals. As such, cognitive theorists are not focusing on learning but rather on changes in the content and structure of beliefs.[43] Breslauer and Tetlock have noted that this definition of belief system change narrows the focus to a restricted subset of change: to the level of the individual; to changes in cognition (beliefs and preferences), not changes in behaviour; and to changes that do not

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[38] Tetlock, "Learning in U.S. and Soviet Foreign Policy: In Search of an Elusive Concept," in Breslauer and Tetlock, p. 22.
[39] Breslauer and Tetlock, *Learning in U.S.-Soviet Foreign Policy*, p. 8.
[40] Stein, "Political Learning by Doing," p. 170.
[41] Breslauer and Tetlock, *Learning in U.S-Soviet Foreign Policy*, p. 8.
[42] Tetlock, "Learning in U.S. and Soviet Foreign Policy," p. 22.
[43] Breslauer and Tetlock, *Learning in U.S.-Soviet Foreign Policy*, p. 9.

require a judgement about correspondence with reality or improvements of performance.[44]

As distinct from the belief system approach, Tetlock examines the cognitive structuralist approach to learning. Citing the work of Etheredge, he notes that belief systems vary not only in content, but also in structure, and hence emphasizes the importance of defining learning in terms of thought and increased capacity for self-reflection. These forms of learning are also similarly restricted to the level of the individual.

In conjunction with the behaviouralist and cognitive conceptions of learning, Tetlock examines two other forms of learning: the organizational and political cultural approach, and the efficiency approach. In contrast to the previous definitions of learning, which are all intra-psychic in focus (and as such make no assumptions about the relative efficacy of different policies) other learning theorists focus on learning at the level of organizations, governments, and political cultures. This perspective holds that learning involves change in the institutional procedures or cultural norms that shape how governments respond to international events.[45] The second approach, learning in the efficiency sense, builds upon the organizational and cultural definition in that it also allows for the assessment of whether organizations and governments become more adept at realizing the goals they value. In particular, this view of learning necessitates the acquiring of the ability to match means and ends more effectively than one could in the past, either by employing more appropriate means or by pursuing more realistic goals.[46]

These five categories of learning are not mutually exclusive, but rather are often interrelated.[47] As learning is a very difficult concept to measure, however, assessing whether learning in any of these senses has occurred, much less to specify these causal inter-relationships, is a task fraught with analytical hazards and empirical difficulties. The task would be even more complicated if, as some scholars have done, we define the concept of learning sufficiently broadly to incorporate *all* the previously discussed definitions - - thereby reducing learning to any policy initiative or attempt by an

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[44] Breslauer and Tetlock, *Learning in U.S.-Soviet Foreign Policy*, p. 10.
[45] Tetlock, "Learning in U.S.-Soviet Foreign Policy," p. 22.
[46] Ibid., p. 35.

organization or government to cope with changing circumstances. Such all-encompassing definitions of learning sacrifice any explanatory power, and serve to muddy the conceptual waters by failing to distinguish between learning, adaptation, and other processes of change.

In an effort to arrive at a more discriminating definition of learning, some scholars have undertaken to examine the analytical difficulties generated by the diverse scholarship on learning. Jack Levy, in particular, identified a host of unanswered issues in the literature - - problems which impede the understanding of the role of learning in foreign policy and prevent progress in the theoretical construction and empirical testing of models of learning. As outlined by Levy, these analytical traps to which many learning scholars have fallen prey are plentiful. They include 1) the tendency to equate learning - - at a psychological or organizational level - - with policy change; 2) the failure to differentiate learning from alternative sources of policy change (such as structural adjustment, evolutionary selection, and political change) or to specify the interaction effects among these variables; 3) the restriction of learning to empirically correct or normatively desirable lessons as defined by the authors' own analytic or normative biases; 4) the failure to conceptualize collective learning in a way that acknowledges the differences between individual and collective learning and that might facilitate the analysis of relationships between learning at the individual, organizational, and governmental levels; and 5), the failure to differentiate between genuine learning and the rhetorical or strategic use of historical lessons to advance current preferences.[48]

The first point deserving emphasis is that learning is clearly not necessary for policy change. States often alter their foreign policies for a variety of reasons, of which learning is only one. Ernst Haas argues, for instance, that governments often change course in response to changes in the external environment in a mechanistic or cybernetic fashion, with little or no reassessment of basic beliefs and goals. Haas defines this process as adaptation, and not learning. The behavioural reward-punishment and trial-and-error approaches to learning identified by Tetlock fall into this category of adaptation.

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[47] For more on this point, see Tetlock, "Learning in U.S.-Soviet Foreign Policy."

Similarly, Richard Anderson suggests that governments often change course as a result of shifting coalitional patterns at the bureaucratic or societal levels that reflect who is "in" or "out" - - dynamics which have little or nothing to do with the changes in the international environment. This process is referred to by some scholars as evolutionary selection, and also applies to generational change, or turnover. James March has observed that governments often simply patch polices together in a "garbage can" fashion.[49] As these varying processes throughout the literature on learning illustrate, different authors emphasize different alternatives to learning and draw the line between learning and other processes at different places.[50]

As previously noted, learning also cannot be considered commensurate with the "lessons of history" or historical analogies. Levy affirms that

> although drawing lessons from key events or historical analogies is an important form of learning, particularly given the psychological tendency for people to overweight dramatic events and underweight statistical averages in their assessments of frequency and probability, learning can also involve probability updating, learning new skills or procedures, or the incremental change of beliefs over time as a result of the gradual cumulation of experience.[51]

Levy furthermore contends that learning is "not a passive activity in which historical events generate their own lessons that actors then absorb", but rather an *active* analytic construction as "people interpret historical experience through the lens of their own analytical assumptions and worldviews."[52] Accordingly, as Levitt and March similarly illustrated, what an actor learns may be influenced "less by history than by the frames applied to that history."[53]

Having succeeded in addressing some of the problems generated by these previous studies, Levy then arrives at his own conception of experiential learning in foreign policy. He argues that actors actively search "for the information they believe is necessary for a valid interpretation of historical experience", and that they "conduct

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[48] Levy, Learning and Foreign Policy, p. 282.
[49] March, as cited in Breslauer and Tetlock, p. 9.
[50] See for example, James G. March, *Decisions and Organizations* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988); Haas, *When Knowledge is Power*; Richard D. Anderson, Jr., "Why Competitive Politics Inhibits Learning in Soviet Foreign Policy," in Breslauer and Tetlock, *Learning in U.S.-Soviet Foreign Policy*; and Levy, "Learning in Foreign Policy."
[51] Levy, "Learning in Foreign Policy," p. 287.
[52] Ibid., p. 283.
[53] See Levitt and March, "Organizational Learning," p. 324.

experiments to 'test' their assumptions, they implement small policy changes, observe their effects, learn through trial and error, and proceed incrementally." This experiential learning thereby involves "a change of beliefs (or the degree of confidence in one's beliefs) or the development of new beliefs, skills, or procedures as a result of the observation and interpretation of experience."[54]

This very broad definition learning is similar to the two-stage process or causal chain conceived by Jervis, in which 1) the observation and interpretation of experience lead to a change in individual beliefs and 2) belief change influences subsequent behaviour.[55] The principal benefit of Levy's broad definition is that it avoids the pitfalls of previous conceptions of learning which maintain that learning must result in policy change, an improved understanding of the world, or an increasingly complex cognitive structure.

By itself, however, this definition of learning does not tell us very much about the structure and content of belief changes, under what precise conditions these belief changes occur, and what forms they take. Nor does it describe how belief changes are translated into policy, when they move policy toward more efficient strategies, and how collective learning occurs. As Levy admits, this definition is limited to the individual cognitive level. He argues however, that this is justified as collective, or organizational learning, can only occur through the individual. Citing various organization theorists, he notes that "organizations learn only through individuals who serve in those organizations, by encoding individually learned inferences from experience into organizational routines."[56] For example, Argyris and Schon have remarked that, "organizations do not literally remember, think, or learn...Organizational learning is a metaphor."[57] Bo Hedberg similarly suggests that "it is individuals who act and learn from acting; organizations are the stages where acting takes place."[58]

These scholars furthermore assert that individual learning is necessary but not sufficient for organizational learning since not all organizational change is derived from

[54] Levy, "Learning in Foreign Policy," p. 283.
[55] Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, p. 222.
[56] Levy, "Learning in Foreign Policy," p. 288.
[57] Argyris and Schon, *Organizational Learning*, passim.
[58] Bo Hedberg, "How Organizations Learn and Unlearn," p. 3.

learning. "The process involves learning only if it includes individual cognitive change and only if individuals' inferences from experience become embedded in organizational memory and procedures."[59] March and Olsen have conceptualized this organizational learning as a multistage process, or a stimulus-response system in which environmental feedback prompts individual learning, potentially leading to action to change organizational procedures. This latter action, in turn, leads to a change in organizational behaviour.[60] This process of organizational learning can be blocked at any point in the cycle:

> Individuals may fail to learn from the environment. They may learn but be deterred from attempting to institutionalize their new ideas. They may try but politically fail to change organizational procedures. They may effect organizational change but (in rare cases) such changes might not lead to a change in organizational behaviour if those procedures are circumvented by organizational leaders in the future.[61]

While there is general acceptance in these studies that organizational learning cannot take place without individual learning, the two levels of learning, however, are not commensurate. Although organizational learning occurs through individuals, it is, in the words of Hedberg, "a mistake to conclude that organizational learning is nothing but the cumulative result of their member's learning." While organizations "do not have brains", they are equipped with cognitive systems and memories, which preserve certain behaviours, mental maps, norms, and values over time, long after individuals and leaderships have changed. In particular, as "individuals develop their personalities, personal habits, and beliefs over time, organizations develop world views and ideologies." Standard operating procedures are one such example of behaviour repertoires which persist over time and are frequently inherited between office holders.[62] When they are seen to be not working in a given situation, this learning may result in new strategies.

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[59] Levy, "Learning in Foreign Policy," p. 288.

[60] March and Olsen, as cited in Hedberg, "How Organizations Learn and Unlearn, "p. 3.

[61] Levy, "Learning and Foreign Policy," pp. 288-289. As an illustration, Levy cites Etheredge, who argues that one of the reasons the U.S. government did not learn from the Bay of Pigs fiasco was that "subordinates were at personal risk if they told the truth." See *Can Governments Learn*, p. 100.

[62] Hedberg, "How Organizations Learn and Unlearn," p. 5.

Organizations learn from experience, observed Lovell, as "policy experiences become assimilated into organizational doctrine, structures, decision-making procedures, personnel systems, and organizational commitments."[63] Hence organizations learn when individuals' beliefs change in response to direct experience (trial-and-error experimentation which provides feedback) and become embedded in organizational memory and procedures.

A central feature of this learning process is organizational memory. Experiential knowledge, whether in tacit form or in formal rules, is recorded in organizational memory: in documents, accounts, files, standard operating procedures, and other guidelines. Levitt and March have noted that inferences drawn from experience are also encoded in "the social and physical geography of organizational structures and relationships; in standards of good professional practice; in the culture of organizational stories; and in shared perceptions of 'the way things are done around here.'" These authors further argue that "such organizational instruments not only record history but shape its future path, and the details of that path depend significantly on the processes by which the memory is maintained and consulted."[64]

Other organization theorists have found that organizations vary in the emphasis placed on formal routines. While bureaucracies tend to heavily favour rigid and formal routines, craft-based and organizations facing complex uncertainties (such as the United Nations in the realm of peacekeeping) rely on informally shared understandings more than organizations dealing with simpler, more stable environments.[65] There is also variation within organizations, as higher level managers have been found to rely more on ambiguous information than do lower level managers.[66] Accordingly, it can be argued that higher level managers who rely more on new and ambiguous information open to

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[63] John P. Lovell, " 'Lessons' of U.S. Military Involvement: Preliminary Conceptualization," in Sylvan and Chan, eds., *Foreign Policy Decision Making*, p. 135, as cited in Levy, "Learning and Foreign Policy," p. 288.

[64] Levitt and March, "Organizational learning," pp. 326-327.

[65] See for example, W.G. Ouchi, "Market, bureaucracies and clans," *Administration Science Quarterly*, vol.25, (1980), pp. 129-141; and H.S. Becker, *Art Worlds*, (Berkeley, CA: Univ. Calif. Press, 1982).

[66] R.L. Daft, and R. H. Lengel, "Information richness: a new approach to managerial behaviour and organizational design" in B.M. Staw and L.L. Cummings, eds., *Research in Organizational Behaviour*, pp. 191-223.

interpretation learn more than lower level individuals who are confronted with formal rules.

Organizational memories are important in shaping decision-making only if they can be readily accessed and are used. Levitt and March have affirmed that the "unless the implications of experience can be transferred from those who experienced it to those who did not, the lessons of history are likely to be lost through turnover of personnel." Organization theorists have illustrated that while the transfer of tradition is relatively straightforward and organizational experience is usually substantially conserved, under other circumstances, organizational experience may not be conserved, and knowledge will disappear from an organization's active memory. Such circumstances may include limits on time and conflict with new or other decision making bodies from different well-organized professions with distinct normative orders. In addition to the conservation of experience, there are also constraints on the retrieval of that experience. Even when a consistent and accepted body of practice and set of rules exist, only part of an organization's memory is likely to be evoked at a particular time, or in a particular part of the organization. Moreover, some parts of organizational memory are more available for retrieval than others. Availability is dependent on the frequency of use of a practice or routine, the recency of its use, and its organizational proximity.[67]

In addition to accessing organizational memory, scholars of organization theory have discovered that organizations also learn through the process of organizational search. This process occurs when individuals take action to improve organizational routines and behaviour, such as the quality of information search and analysis; to enhance organizational memory; to incorporate new decision rules or analytical techniques; and to draw upon the technical expertise of epistemic communities.[68] In addition, as Hedberg observed, organizations also unlearn when knowledge becomes obsolete as reality and environments change: "understanding involves both learning new knowledge and discarding obsolete and misleading knowledge." Hedberg identifies slow unlearning as a "crucial weakness" of many organizations.[69] Critical issues raised by these studies of

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[67] Levitt and March, "Organizational learning," p. 328.
[68] Levitt and March, "Organizational Learning."
[69] Hedberg, "How Organizations learn and Unlearn," p. 3.

organizational learning - - largely neglected in the literature - - involve an examination of the interactions between learning individuals and learning organizations; the processes by which experience and knowledge is accumulated into routines, practices, precedents and stored into organizational memories; and what measures can be taken to enhance collective consciousness and memory to facilitate learning and enable individual to learn how to learn.

Organizational learning, as conceptualized by these theorists who emphasize individual cognitive belief change in response to experience, which may then become embedded in organizational memory, structures, and behavior (as opposed to more cybernetic approaches which involve preprogrammed responses, rather than "outcome calculations and the evolutionary selection of routines that work") is also distinct from learning at the governmental level. Levy, for instance, conceives of governmental learning in terms of "individually or collectively learned inferences from experience that get encoded into governmental institutions and decision-making procedures." It is even less likely that learning will occur at this level since it involves the "aggregation of learning by multiple organizations and by multiple individuals acting either through organizations or independently of them."[70]

This definition of learning, as conceived by Levy, is therefore best suited to the analysis of individual cognitive learning. And to the extent that foreign policy making occurs in isolation from societal and bureaucratic pressures (an important question also largely neglected in the literature), this definition provides some currency in our understanding of learning and foreign policy. While Levy succeeds in integrating the definitions of individual learning provided by Breslauer and Tetlock, he does not provide an equally thorough analysis of the nuances of organizational learning, and the interaction effects among the different levels (although he recognizes the importance of doing so in future research). Assessing the role of learning by individuals in international organizations for example, clearly requires a more comprehensive conception of learning which specifies how individual learning affects organizational change and at what point in that cycle learning gets blocked.

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[70] Levy, "Learning and Foreign Policy," p. 289.

With explicit reference to international organizations, Ernst Haas provides a more nuanced definition of collective learning in attempting to discern what is being learned, how cognitive processes are reorganized, and what institutional and political factors impede the development of learning. Learning, affirms Haas, can be viewed as the

> process by which consensual knowledge is used to specify causal relationships in new ways so that the result affects the content of public policy. Learning in and by an international organization implies that the organization's members are induced to question earlier beliefs about the appropriateness of ends of action and to think about the selection of new ones, to "revalue" themselves...And as the members of the organization go through the learning process, it is likely that they will arrive at a common understanding of what causes the particular problems of concern. A common understanding of causes is likely to trigger a shared understanding of solutions, and the new chain implies a set of larger meanings about life and nature not previously held in common by the participating members.[71]

Haas thus holds that learning involves the elaboration of new cause-effect chains more (or less) elaborate than the ones being questioned and replaced, which result in policy change.

This conception of organizational learning contrasts with that of Levy in several important respects: 1) it limits learning to a change in behaviour as a result of a change in perception about *how to solve a problem*, as opposed to defining learning only as a change in beliefs; 2) it specifies who learns - - not individuals, entire governments, organizations, or blocs, but small clusters of units within governments and organizations - - emphasizing the consensual aspect of learning: the *sharing* of larger meanings among those who learn; 3) consequently, it provides a distinction between individual and organizational learning that most other scholars do not - - that organizations do not learn as individuals do, even though they are composed of individuals. In particular, Haas notes that institutional routines interfere with learning, and that "lessons learned by one bureaucrat do not necessarily become the collective wisdom of his or her unit."[72]

This definition is also far more stringent than the broad conceptions of learning employed by Tetlock and others in that it considers learning only when it involves a reassessment of *fundamental* beliefs and values that draws on the consensual knowledge of an epistemic community. In particular, Haas distinguishes between the more common and broad process of adaptation and the rare and very narrow phenomenon of learning,

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[71] Haas, *When Knowledge is Power*, pp. 23-24.

noting that the two processes co-exist within the same organization and among organizations. Haas views many of Tetlock's forms of learning as manifestations of adaptation. This process of adaptation for Haas, comprises changes in behaviour in the sense that actors add new activities (or drop old ones) without examining the implicit theories underlying their programs. Neither the underlying values nor the ultimate purpose of the organization are questioned. The emphasis is on altering means of action, and not ends. Here, new ends (purposes) may be added, but are done so without worrying about how they cohere with existing ones.[73] In marked contrast to Haas's restrictive conception of learning, Tetlock, Levy, and most social psychologists, argue that this process in which new information leads to a better adjustment in means but not in ends, *does* constitute learning - - what they define as *simple learning.* Moreover, they recognize that learning can involve not only new ways to solve a problem, but also unlearning previous behaviours, probability updating, and learning new skills and functions.

Political psychologists distinguish between this simple form of learning and *complex learning.* Complex learning, affirms Janice Stein, occurs "when a person develops a more differentiated schema and when this schema is integrated into a higher-order structure that highlights difficult trade-offs."[74] Complex learning includes the development of more complex structures as well as changes in content. At its highest level, complex learning may lead to a reordering or a redefinition of goals. This distinction between simple and complex learning is widely recognized and has been developed extensively in the literature since first being postulated by Karl Deutsch and Joseph Nye.[75]

Haas's conception of learning is restricted exclusively to complex learning at this higher level. It specifically involves far-reaching changes in behaviour as actors question original implicit theories underlying organizational programs and examine their basic values. In this view, learning (complex) involves the redefining of the ultimate purpose

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[72] Ibid., p. 26
[73] Haas, *Reason and Change in International Life*, p. 17.
[74] Stein, "Political Learning by Doing," p. 171.
[75] See Karl Deutsch, *The Nerves of Government*, (London: Free Press, 1963), p. 92; and Nye, Jr., "Nuclear Learning in U.S.-Soviet Regimes," p. 380.

and goals of the organization as a result of a recognition of conflicts among values, as ends as well as means are questioned. All other forms of learning are viewed by Haas as mere adaptation (although many of them conform to processes of simple learning and lower-level complex learning).

This definition of learning may be more stringent than those of other learning theorists, but, it does provide a more operational definition and more comprehensive understanding of *how* learning occurs at the organizational level. In addition to specifying what is learned, by whom, how it results in policy at the organizational level, and how it is impeded, Haas contributes to our understanding of learning by suggesting that there are also varying rates of learning among individuals, as well as different incentives to learn.[76] And when combined with an emphasis on trial-and-error experimentation, this definition provides a solid understanding of the role of learning in organizations and policy change. In particular, instead of focusing on an evaluation of the structure and content of cognitive change - - judgments that can be essentially contested - - Haas focuses on the solution of ill-structured problems.

Forms of learning

In contrast to Haas's limited emphasis on causal learning (analysis of causal paths), some scholars maintain that "the analysis of costs and benefits of alternative policies requires both causal laws and *initial conditions*, [or diagnostic learning,] and people learn about both." Hence in addition to the levels and rates of learning, there are also different types. Levy for example, distinguishes between causal learning, which refers to "changing beliefs about the laws (hypotheses) of cause and effect, the consequences of actions, and the optimal strategies under various conditions," and diagnostic learning, which refers to "changes in belief about the definition of the situation or the preferences, intentions, or relative capabilities of others."[77]

For instance, Levy states that the 'Munich analogy' is an example of causal learning about the likely consequences of appeasing an aggressor, whereas "observation of the adversary's actions may lead to diagnostic learning about that adversary's

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[76] Haas, *When Knowledge is Power*, p. 26.

preferences and intentions." Levy furthermore adds to the conceptions of learning in the literature by noting that both causal and diagnostic learning can be "probabilistic as well as deterministic, and this implies that learning can involve changes in the degree of confidence in one's beliefs about causal relationships or initial conditions."[78]

Other scholars such as Argyris and Schon and Bennett have noted that in addition to these forms of learning about causal laws and initial conditions, individuals also learn how to learn. Specifically, they learn "new decision rules, judgmental heuristics, procedures, and skills that facilitate their ability to learn from subsequent experience."[79] This form of learning, referred to by Argyris and Schon as "deutero learning", occurs when individuals:

> reflect on and inquire into previous contexts for learning...[and] discover what they did that facilitated or inhibited learning, they invent new strategies for learning, they produce these strategies, and they evaluate and generalize what they have produced. The results become encoded in individual images and maps and are reflected in organizational learning practice.[80]

These concepts of learning are useful in explaining changes in a leader's schema that then shape new directions in policy, but as Levy observed, by themselves do not provide a distinction between learning and other sources of policy change. Accordingly, explanations of learning in foreign policy-making must take care to distinguish between adaptation and actual learning.

Sources of learning

Learning, as these theorists have demonstrated, is a rare and far more complex phenomenon than at first conceived by most scholars - - a process that involves several different forms and occurs in different ways at different levels. Having provided a brief overview of the various definitions of learning to be found in the literature, it is necessary to examine how this learning is instigated, or put differently, what are the sources or catalysts for learning? As noted in the definitions above, learning involves the observation and interpretation of experience and feedback. It is generally accepted

[77] Levy, "Learning and Foreign Policy," p. 285.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid., p. 286
[80] Argyris and Schon, *Organizational Learning*, pp. 26-28.

among learning theorists that external events are the primary source of learning about international politics. Not all external events however, stimulate learning. In fact, there is wide agreement in the literature that instances of *failure* in particular, or dramatic and unexpected events of great consequence, are more likely to lead to learning and policy innovation, whereas success, or routine and less dramatic events, will likely result in policy continuation.

Organizations are most likely to change prior beliefs and behaviour following failures as they both spur action and provide a rich source of information for determining how to improve operations. When failure challenges the status quo, it can draw attention to problems and stimulate the search for solutions. Successes, on the other hand, provide information and often the resources necessary to conduct searches for improvements in strategy, but also tend to produce complacency and stifle the drive to innovate.[81] Not all failures promote learning however. As Stein affirmed, "highly predictable failures provide no new information, but unanticipated failures that challenge old way of representing problems are more likely to stimulate new formulations."[82]

Both cognitive and organization theorists have found that belief systems generate inertia, which makes learning relatively infrequent. As Reiter noted, "individuals' knowledge structures tend to acquire inertia, such that beliefs tend to persevere through reception of new, discrepant information." And at the organizational level, institutions "tend to develop collective interpretations of history, which acquire the status of myth within the organization and can be very resistant to change."[83] For both individuals and organizations then, it is often only a crisis or failure of highly significant proportions - - usually one that is directly experienced and threatens individual values or organizational goals - - that is able to dislodge prior beliefs, overcome inertia and stimulate new thinking and behaviour.

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[81] See Philip Mirvis and David Berg, eds., *Failures in Organization Development and Change* (New York: Wiley, 1977); Hedberg, *How Organizations Learn and Unlearn*; and Sim B. Sitkin, "Learning through Failure: The Strategy of Small Losses," in Barry M. Staw and L. L. Cummings, eds., *Research in Organizational Behaviour* 14 (Greenwich, Conn: JAI Press, 1992).
[82] Stein, "Political Learning by Doing," p. 172.
[83] Reiter, "Learning, Realism, and Alliances," p. 494.

Given these tendencies, Haas has conceived of three environmental conditions in particular that most likely lead to organizational learning. These include 1) the desirability of finding new cause-effect chains, 2) the possibility of finding them, and 3) the urgency for finding them. Accordingly, at the organizational level, decision-makers will most likely learn when new information is highly desirable, such as in a crisis situation of high value threat or issue salience. They will also learn when locating new information and the means to do so previously not available are reasonably possible, such as in a crisis where bureaucratic routines and constraints can be ignored and there is enough time to do so. And thirdly, they will most likely learn when doing so is highly urgent, such as in a crisis with great time pressure. The latter is significant also as it affects the rate of learning: the more urgent, the more rapidly learning will occur.[84]

Only when definitions of learning are elaborated to specify not only how but also what people learn, at what level, and under what conditions, can one gain a more informed understanding of the role of learning in foreign policy formulation and international security. With these considerations taken into account, we can conceive of political learning as a process in which crises and failure stimulate a search for new solutions to these ill-defined problems, which are then tested though trial-and-error experimentation. This experimentation in turn leads to either complex or simple learning about how to solve the original problem. Within organizations, we must also specify how this process leads to organizational learning, and under what conditions that learning either results in policy change or at what stage is blocked.

This study on the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the evolution of U.N. peace efforts relies on many of the above concepts to elucidate how individual learning occurs in an international organizational setting, and how that learning becomes institutionalized within that environment to subsequently shape future policy. Specifically, by employing the definition of organizational learning developed by Ernst Haas, and the interactive models of how organizational learn as conceived by Bo Hedberg, Barbara Levitt, James March, and J.P. Olsen, this study will elucidate how learning processes govern policy change in the conception and practice of United Nations

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[84] Haas, *When Knowledge is Power*, pp. 27-28.

peace efforts. This application of learning theories to the international organizational level will thereby fill a gap in this literature on learning and furnish new insights into the generalizability and effectiveness of such concepts of learning. Before turning, however, to an examination of the ability to learn from experience on the part of the Secretaries-General, a few words concerning research design are in order. This in turn is followed by two sections prefacing the findings: an analysis of what personality traits of Secretaries-General shape their learning, and a brief review of how the role of the Secretary-General is inherently conducive to, or further impels learning.

Research Approach

As noted above, there is no unified theory of learning, and concepts are open to multiple interpretations and measures. Recent scholarship emphasizing the need to study presidential leaders using only systematically collected data and explicit methodologies to test theoretical propositions has argued that such emphasis on methodological considerations is especially critical for studies focused on the role played by personality (or other leader-based variables) in leadership style.[85] Thomas Preston and Paul 't Hart for instance have noted that this is largely attributable to the "long-standing criticism of such research as being composed primarily of descriptive case studies, in which the leadership style variables identified by authors were left unoperationalized, untested, or unsystematically studied."[86]

This study has been influenced by this scholarship. In particular, Margaret Hermann's Personality Assessment-at-a-Distance (PAD) technique is one such design that provides a more empirically justifiable measure of individual leaders' characteristics than do other potential approaches. By using content analysis of spontaneous interview

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[85] See for example, G. King, R. O. Keohane, and S. Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); G.C. Edwards, J. H. Kessel, and B. A. Rockman, *Researching the Presidency: Vital Questions, New Approaches*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993); and Alexander George, *Case Studies and Theory Development*, Paper presented to the 2nd Annual Symposium on Information Processing in Organizations, Carnegie-Mellon University, 1982.
[86] Thomas Preston and Paul 't Hart, "Understanding and Evaluating Bureaucratic Politics," *Political Psychology*, Vol. 20, No. 1, (1999), p. 64.

responses by political leaders across differing time periods, audiences, and substantive topic areas, this method allows scholars to construct detailed personality profiles of individuals according to several different character traits. These include an individual's need for power, need for affiliation, ethnocentrism, locus of control, complexity, self-confidence, distrust of others, and task/interpersonal emphasis.[87] Additional measures employed in the literature to gauge leaders' policy experience and expertise consist of the degree to which leaders focused on specific policy areas, and the extent to which they had previous policy experience. Hermann's PAD technique has been used by numerous scholars to construct detailed profiles of more than 100 political leaders in more than 40 different countries. This substantial data allows investigators to determine the range of each characteristic, and thereby demonstrate what constitutes high and low scores for leaders and compare empirically and interpret the scores for leaders across these character traits.[88]

Due to the specified nature of this study, however, the adoption of Hermann's PAD approach is unfeasible. In particular, the focus of this essay is on the personal characteristics of the Secretaries-General of one international organization and the impact of these variables on *learning* in one particular field (U.N. peace efforts), how that learning did or did not become translated into policy change, and not on general leadership behaviour. Many of Hermann's variables are not applicable as causal factors generating learning, or play weaker facilitating roles in the process of learning. As for future research, however, scholars wishing to construct general personality profiles of United Nations' Secretaries-General across the range of policy areas would do well to employ Hermann's PAD technique and potentially elucidate interesting differences in leadership styles and decision-making attributes between state-level leaders and leaders of international organizations.

Although I am unable to fully employ such research techniques in this study, I mention them because I do draw upon them partially, and attempt to emulate such scholarship in an effort to employ a more rigorous research approach than the simple

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[87] Margaret Hermann, *Handbook for Assessing Personal Characteristics of Political Leaders*, Occasional Paper, (Columbus, OH: Mershon Center, 1983).
[88] Preston and 't Hart, "Understanding and Evaluating Bureaucratic Politics," p. 64.

usage of descriptive case studies. Accordingly, my research design consists of a detailed historical explanatory case study, where the personality characteristics/leadership style and operational environments of five Secretaries-General are assessed, compared, and analysed for patterns of experimentation, learning, and policy change. In so doing, this thesis will propose new theories, test both new and existing theories, and review and assess the literature on the subject of learning in international relations.

The research for this case study on the Secretaries-General was based primarily upon statements in memoirs, biographies, public addresses, U.N. documents, and annual Reports of the Secretaries-General, in which evidence of learning was recorded and evaluated. As stated in the introduction, while the primary focus of this study is an analysis of the United Nations' ability to learn, as manifested by the Secretaries-General, a related subsidiary focus - - though more broad - - is to illustrate how U.N. peace efforts evolved and organizational policy change occurred. As a result of having this subsidiary focus, the study has provided more examples of instances of learning from the application of these strategies and tactics and has gone into slightly greater detail on these examples than perhaps would have been necessary if an assessment of strictly the Secretaries-General' ability to learn was its only objective.

In conducting the analysis of the five Secretaries-General' learning processes, Alexander George's controlled comparison case study approach was used to enable consistent and systematic comparison of the Secretaries-General across certain key personality traits. Process-tracing methods were also employed to test the validity of hypotheses, analyse the causal and facilitating/constraining factors in the learning process, and account for how learning was or was not translated into policy change.

To corroborate statements and actions on the part of the Secretaries-General, several detailed reviews of certain critical crises in the evolution of peacekeeping, (such as the Congo, Somalia, and Bosnia) were also conducted. Falsifiability of the hypothesis would be demonstrated if statements of learning were not supported by behaviour, or corroborated in the literature on U.N. peacekeeping. Particular attention has been given to those sources written by former United Nations commanders and former advisors to the Secretaries-General. Given the imprecise nature of the concept of learning, and the

difficulty in measuring it, an examination of autobiographical and public statements represents the best feasible approach – short of interviews – to probe the nature and extent of learning on the part of United Nations Secretaries-General.

While it would be advantageous to examine also the role of learning at the level of advisors to the Secretary-General, and field commanders in charge of peacekeeping operations, I must, in order to give depth to the requisite analysis, limit the scope of this study to the examination of learning with respect to peacekeeping by U.N. Secretaries-General. The role of advisors and field commanders in creating and institutionalizing learning may perhaps be the subject of future research. And among the Secretaries-General, only five out of seven United Nations Secretaries-General are studied: the first three and the last two.

I omit the Secretary-Generalships of Kurt Waldheim and Javier Perez de Cuellar for several reasons. First, to include all the Secretaries-General would constitute an enormous task, well outside the scope of this essay. The Secretary-Generalships of the five individuals examined here provided an overwhelming amount of relevant materials and evidence of learning, much of which could not be used in this essay. Consequently, no further case studies were needed to fill any relative absence of evidence. Furthermore, as my focus is on the personal characteristics and their impact on learning, what was required were Secretaries-General who varied from one another in theoretically significant ways in their personal characteristics, and the five individuals selected represent more than enough variance and comprise more than sufficient cases for comparison.

The five individuals studied here additionally comprise the Secretaries-General about whom there is the greatest amount of relevant data. Very little has been about Kurt Waldheim, and although Javier Perez de Cuellar published a rather large volume of his memoirs, data relating to his Secretary-Generalship and personal character is sparse in comparison with the five individuals selected. Lastly, the tenures of these two Secretaries-General were relatively uneventful in comparison with the tenures of the other Secretaries-General, and did not represent critical junctures in the evolution of peacekeeping.

In examining the ability of United Nations Secretaries-General to learn from experience in the realm of U.N. peace efforts, and to implement that learning into policy change, this essay draws on the theoretical insights of several different bodies of literature, including social and political psychology, organization theory, bureaucratic politics, and international security. Before proceeding with the body of this study - - the analysis of the process of learning on the part of the U.N. Secretaries-General in relation to the evolution of U.N. peace efforts, it is necessary to first outline the factors that determine how individual Secretaries-General learn.research. This is followed by a brief review of the role of the U.N. Secretary-General, before turning to the empirical findings.

Learning and the Secretaries-General of the United Nations

As noted in the introduction to this study, although some studies recognize the differences in learning at the individual and collective levels, the majority of the literature on learning and foreign policy is very much centered upon individual foreign policy makers and national leaders of states. Moreover, within these studies, attention has been focused in large measure on certain individuals such as former U.S. presidents, their close advisors, and former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.[89] Similarly, although there have

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[89] There is an extensive literature on the role of U.S. Presidents and other national or public leaders. See R.E. Donley and D. Winter, "Measuring the Motives of Public Officials at a Distance: An Exploratory Study of American Presidents," *Behavioural Science*, 15, (1970), pp. 227-236; J.D. Barber, *The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House*, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1972); A. L. George, *Presidential Decisionmaking in Foreign Policy: The Effective Use of Information and Advice*, (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1980); C. B. Crabb, Jr., and K.V. Mulcahy, *Presidents and Foreign Policy Making: From FDR to Reagan*, (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1986); D.G. Winter, M.G. Hermann, W. Weintraub, and S.G. Walker, "The Personalities of Bush and Gorbachev Measured at a Distance: Procedures, Portraits, and Policy," *Political Psychology*, 12 (1991), pp. 215-248; J.P. Burke and F.I Greenstein, *How Presidents Test Reality: Decisions on Vietnam, 1954 and 1965*, (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1991); T.M. Moe, "Presidents, Institutions, and Theory" in G. Edwards, J. Kessel, and B. Rockman, eds., *Researching the Presidency: Vital Questions, New Approaches* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993), pp. 337-385; M.G. Hermann and T. Preston, "Presidents, Advisers, and Foreign Policy: The Effect of Leadership Style on Executive Arrangements," *Political Psychology* 15, (1994), pp. 75-96; M. Lyons, "Presidential Character Revisited," *Political Psychology*, 18 (1997), pp. 791-811; T. Preston, "Following the Leader: The Impact of U.S. Presidential Style upon

been a few excellent studies of governmental learning in the realm of international security, among the literature on learning at the organizational level, most scholars have tended to concentrate upon domestic organizations. In fact, only a handful of international relations scholars have attempted to apply individual and organizational models of learning to international organizations.[90]

This present essay is designed to fill a lacuna in the scholarly literature on organizational learning and international security. The ability of individual Secretaries-General to learn is largely the result of personality/leadership style. There is a wealth of research regarding the individual characteristics (or traits) of leaders and how these shape (both with and outside groups) their styles of decision-making, interpersonal interaction, information processing, and management in office.[91] Although these studies focus on the ability of individual decision- makers - - particularly U.S. presidents - - to make decisions, many of the findings on personality characteristics are applicable to individual leaders more generally and to the study of learning.

Recent archival research has found that three individual characteristics in particular - - need for power, cognitive complexity (subsumes need for information/sensitivity to context), and prior policy experience - - play a critical role in

Advisory Group Dynamics, Structure, and Decision" in P. 't Hart, E. Stern, and B. Sundelius, eds., *Beyond Groupthink : Political Group Dynamics and Foreign Policymaking*, (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1997), pp. 191-248; and T. Preston, "The President's Inner circle: Personality and Leadership Style in Foreign Policy Decision Making" in R. Shapiro, M. Kumar, and L. Jacobs, eds., *Presidential Power: Forging the Presidency for the 21st Century*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

[90] See Karl Deutsh, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in Light of Historical Experience*; Leon Gordenker and Paul R. Saunders, "Organization Theory and International Organization," in Paul Taylor and A.J.R. Groom, *International Organization*, (London: Frances Pinter, Ltd., 1978); and Haas, *When Knowledge is Power*.

[91] In addition to the studies noted in fn. 89, there is a large body of more general research on individual leaders and the role of personality in foreign policy decision making. See for example, T.W. Adorno, E. Frenkel-Brunswick, D.J. Levinson, and R.N. Sanford, *The Authoritarian Personality*, (New York: Harper, 1950); and R. P. Browning and H. Jacob, "Power Motivation and the Political Personality," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 28 (1964), pp. 75-90; L. S. Etheredge, *A World of Men*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1978); M.G. Hermann, "Explaining Foreign Policy Behaviour Using Personal Characteristics of Political Leaders," *International Studies Quarterly*, 24, (1980), pp. 7- 46; Hermann, *Handbook for Assessing Personal Characteristics and Foreign Policy Orientations of Political Leaders*, Occasional Paper, (Columbus, OH: Mershon Center, 1983); Hermann, "Personality and Foreign Policy Decision Making: A Study of 53 heads of Government," in Sylvan and Chan, eds., *Foreign Policy Decision Making*, pp. 53-80; Hermann, "Leaders' Foreign Policy Orientations and the Quality of Foreign Policy Decisions," in S. Walker, ed., *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1987), pp. 123-140; and M. G.

shaping leadership style.[92] This analysis of U.N. Secretaries-General incorporates this research and builds on these findings, illustrating that personality traits of leaders and leadership style also shape the form and extent of their learning. Due to the different focus on learning, and not general leadership style, this study places greater/lesser emphasis upon the three personality variables, focusing upon the role played by cognitive complexity and an additional variable, the willingness to experiment.

The most important personality trait that determines the form, rate, and extent of learning is the degree of cognitive and conceptual complexity. Cognitive complexity is defined in the literature as a measure of individuals' "general, cognitive need for information and the degree to which they differentiate their surrounding environment."[93] It does not relate to general intelligence or to overall political sophistication. This complexity, notes Janice Stein, can be assessed along two dimensions: "differentiation, or the number of logically distinct arguments that are considered, and integration among idea elements within a schema, or the development of principles for coping with trade-offs."[94] For the purposes of this analysis, assessing the relationship between cognitive and conceptual complexity and learning is achieved by comparing a Secretary-General's thinking about a central concept in the evolution of peacekeeping to that of a predecessor regarding the same concept who exhibited little propensity for cognitive change and learning.

Scholars in political psychology have long argued that the cognitive complexity of decision-makers is an "individual characteristic that has an important impact on the nature of decision-making, style of leadership, assessment of risk, and character of general information-processing within decision groups."[95] Janice Stein has explicitly noted that cognitive belief change, or learning, is partly the result of the rate at which discrepant information occurs and its diagnosticity, and partly a function of cognitive

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Hermann, T. Preston, and M.D. Young, *Who Leads Matters: Individuals and Foreign Policy*, (Unpublished Manuscript, 1998).

[92] Preston and 't Hart, "Understanding and Evaluating Bureaucratic Politics," p. 60.

[93] Ibid., p. 63.

[94] Stein, "Political learning By Doing," p. 167.

[95] Preston and 't Hart, "Understanding and Evaluating Bureaucratic Politics," citing such works as P. Suedfield and A. Rank, "Revolutionary Leaders: Long-term Success as a Function in Conceptual

complexity.[96] Accordingly, as the review of U.N. Secretaries-General in this study will illustrate, we can extrapolate that the greater the degree of cognitive complexity, the greater the extent of learning. For instance, Yaacov Vertzberger, among others, has found that as the cognitive complexity of individual decision-makers rises, they become more capable of dealing with complex decision environments and information that may demand new or subtle distinctions.[97] Being able to cope with complex decision environments and interpret complex information on different levels are decisive determinants of learning, and hence cognitively complex leaders learn more from their environments.

This scholarship furthermore illustrates that when making decisions, cognitively complex individuals tend to have greater cognitive need for and are more attentive to, incoming information, prefer systematic over heuristic processing, and are much more capable of dealing with information overload better than are their less complex counterparts.[98] In regards to interactions with advisers and the acceptance of critical feedback, several studies have demonstrated that cognitively complex individuals are also far more interested in receiving negative feedback from others, and are more likely to incorporate constructive criticism into their own decision-making than those who are less complex.[99] In light of these findings, as greater information search, critical feedback from, and debate among advisers for input are clear factors that enhance the learning process, individuals with high cognitive complexity are thus more likely to learn more broadly and to greater depths than those who are less complex.

Political psychology scholars have also linked cognitive complexity to how attentive leaders are to information from their surrounding political or policy environments, and how sensitive they are to the nuances within their external policy contexts. Hermann for example, has found that the more sensitive the leader is to

Complexity," 1976; P. Suedfield and P. Tetlock, "Integrative Complexity of Communication in International Crises," as cited in Ibid., p. 61; and Stein, "Political learning By Doing," pp. 163-165.
[96] Stein, Political Learning by Doing," pp. 164-165.
[97] Vertzberger, The World in their Minds.
[98], R. V. Nydegger, "Information Processing Complexity and Leadership Status," as cited in Preston and 't Hart, Understanding and Evaluating Bureaucratic Politics," p. 62.

information from the decision making environment, the more receptive he or she is to information regarding the views of colleagues, constituents, or outside actors, and appreciative of the general value of alternative viewpoints and discrepant information.[100] Similarly, Preston has noted that highly complex leaders tend to conduct broad information search routines, and are more sensitive to their environments and to the existence of multiple policy dimensions or perspectives on issues.[101]

Conversely, these studies affirm that leaders with a low sensitivity to contextual information are less receptive to information from the outside environment, tending to operate from a previously established and strongly held set of beliefs. Moreover, individuals who exhibit little cognitive complexity will selectively perceive and process incoming information within the confines of prior frameworks, and will be "unreceptive or closed-minded toward alternative viewpoints and discrepant information." Preston and 't Hart have noted that, along with this reduced capacity for openness and hence learning, low-complexity individuals also tend to exhibit "symptoms of dogmatism, view and judge issues in black and white terms, rely on simple analogies, conduct limited information searches, ignore information threatening to their existing closed belief systems, and have limited ability to adjust their beliefs to new information."[102] Applying this research to the Secretaries-General, it can be argued that cognitively complex Secretaries-General have open and discriminating belief systems, are very sensitive to their external contexts, pay more attention to information, actively search for new information, and thus are able to learn more from their policy experiences and surrounding environments.

Along with cognitive complexity, the willingness to experiment is pivotal in stimulating learning for the Secretaries-General. Experimentation is an important

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[99] See M.G. Hermann, "Personality and Foreign Policy Decision Making" in Sylvan and Chan, eds., *Foreign Policy Decision Making*; and R. V. Nydegger, "Information Processing Complexity and Leadership Status."

[100] Hermann, "Personality and Foreign Policy Decision Making."

[101] Preston, *The President and his Inner Circle: Leadership style and the advisory process in foreign policy making*, 1996. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Ohio State University, as cited in Preston and 't Hart, "Evaluating and Understanding Bureaucratic Politics," p. 62.

[102] Preston and 't Hart, in ibid.

facilitating factor credited by learning theorists in accounting for how learning occurs.[103] Trial-and-error experimentation is critical for the development of solutions to ill-structured problems (failures), and in turn policy change. In particular, when a Secretary-General learns from experience in the field that a policy or task was ill-suited to a particular mission for instance, if he is unable to rectify the problem immediately, he has only learned that such policy was not working - - what can interpreted as negative learning. For him to learn what policy would work better - - positive learning, and replace the previous policy with a more effective one, he must first experiment by testing new ideas and evaluating them. In this context, we can thus conceive of learning as a two-stage process amidst a broader process beginning with environmental change and, if successively implemented, concluding with organizational change.

As a personality trait, however, what deserves emphasis is an individual's *willingness* to experiment with new ideas. This willingness relates to other traits such as cautiousness, individuality, and leadership. This aspect of an individual's personality is especially pertinent for the role of Secretary-General, which, unlike the presidency, is substantially more limited given the restrictions placed on the incumbent by the major powers within the Security Council. Accordingly, a Secretary-General's ability or willingness to push the limits to what he can and cannot undertake, extend those boundaries and redefine his own role constitutes a great personal attribute in fostering learning. This study will illustrate that Secretaries-General who were willing to reinterpret their role as set forth in the U.N. Charter, disregard or overcome through new policies the limits imposed on their action by the Security Council, and act without fear of upsetting any of the major powers, learned to greater extents, were more innovative, and effected greater change than their more cautious counterparts.

Cognitively complex Secretaries-General who demonstrate a willingness to experiment will therefore likely learn in significantly complex and multidimensional ways, as they tend to personally involve themselves in the search for solutions and are able to discriminate between important and irrelevant information. They are furthermore far less likely to rely on the views of advisers or to use simplistic stereotypes or analogies

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[103] Levy, "Learning and Foreign Policy," and Stein, "Political Learning by Doing."

to understand policy situations and make decisions, than are more cautious and less cognitively complex Secretaries-General. Whereas reliance on previous frameworks, analogies, and other heuristics promote passive adaptation and not learning, cognitively complex leaders are interested in gathering detailed information from the policy environment and use a more deliberate decision process than do their less experienced counterparts,[104] and thereby promote active learning and interactive, organizational dynamism.

Having reviewed the theories and concepts of individual and organizational learning, as well as the relevant political psychology scholarship on the role of personality, we can now conceive of the process by which United Nations Secretaries-General learn from experience and implement effective policy change accordingly. In particular, by incorporating Haas's definition of learning, the model of organizational learning conceived by Hedberg, Levitt and March, and Olsen, and the research on the role of personality as applied to learning, we can arrive at a model of learning and change in United Nations peace efforts. See figure 1.1 on the following page.

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[104] Preston and 't Hart, "Evaluating and Understanding Bureaucratic Politics," p. 63, citing Preston, *The President and his Inner Circle.*

Fig. 1.1
Model of learning and change in U.N. Peacekeeping

Systemic constraints

Stimulating
Variables

Impelling
Ind. Variable
(Idiosyncratic)

Facilitating
Variable

Dependent
Variable

No Policy
Change –
Stymied by Cold
War divisions

Crisis

S - G Personality/
Leadership style:
Cognitive
Complexity,
Willingness to
Experiment

New Ideas

Shared
Understandings

Policy Failure

Trial-and-error
Experimentation

S-G Learning

Policy change

Security Council
Agreement

Or

Policy Success

Adaptation and policy continuation

Domestic constraints

No Policy
Change –
Stymied by
Major power
Interests

Note: Systemic and/or domestic constraints act at two different stages in the process: 1) preventing the Secretary-General from developing ideas and experimenting, or testing them, and 2) once the Secretary-General has learned, preventing that learning from being translated into effective policy change. Also, new ideas originate in 3 ways: 1) from field commanders to Secretary-General, or 2) from expert analysts to Seccretary-General, or 3) directly from experience to Secretary-General.

The Role of the Secretary-General

In addition to briefly accounting for what personality characteristics determine the extent and depth of learning for *individual* Secretaries-General, it is also necessary to acquire an understanding of how the nature of the role of the Secretary-General impels *organizational* learning, or more precisely how individual learning becomes translated into organizational learning. In an organization with wide-ranging purposes and a global membership, the Secretary-General holds an office unique among international bodies. It has no precise contemporary or lasting historical counterpart. At any point, a major crisis could erupt forcing the Security Council to authorize wide-ranging measures to deal with conflict that the Secretary-General must implement.

In stark contrast to bureaucratic decision making environments where guidelines to behaviour are formal and rigid, actors rarely directly determine policy, and have little contact with primary actors, U.N. Secretaries-General act within highly flexible and dynamic environments, and through ad hoc procedures. Moreover, as opposed to closed and distant policy making structures, Secretaries-General are frequently in direct contact with parties to a conflict in personally seeking to mediate and negotiate a settlement to a dispute.

There are several notable studies of how the Secretary-General fits into the context of international politics and influences its course and that of the United Nations, and there is no need here to review in a comprehensive manner the role of the U.N. Secretary-General.[105] Nor is it necessary to completely examine how each Secretary-General

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[105] There are numerous studies of the role of United Nations Secretaries-General. The best include: Stephen M. Schwebel, *The Secretary-General of the United Nations: His Political Powers and Practice*, (Boston, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952); Leon Gordenker, *The UN Secretary-General and the Maintenance of Peace*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967); Arthur W. Rovine, *The First Fifty Years: The Secretary-General in World Politics 1920-1970*, (Leyden: A.W. Sijthoff, 1970); Diego Cordovez, "Strengthening United Nations Diplomacy for Peace: The Role of the Secretary-General," and Nabil Elaraby, "The Office of the Secretary-General and the Maintenance of International Peace and Security," both in *The United Nations and the Maintenance of International Peace and Security*, UNITAR; Thomas E. Boudreau, *Sheathing the Sword: The UN Secretary-General and the Prevention of International Conflict*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991); Benjamin Rivlin and Leon Gordenker, eds., *The Challenging Role of the UN Secretary-General*, (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 1993); and Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary-General, United Nations, 1982-1991, "The Role of the UN Secretary-General," in Adam Roberts and Benedict Kingsbury, eds., *United Nations, Divided World: The UN's Roles in International Relations*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

developed his powers and office, or assess the limits and potential of his role. As noted, my focus is limited to analysing if they learned and, if so, how that learning on the part of the Secretaries-General defined and shaped the evolution of peacekeeping.

The Secretary-General is described in Chapter XV, Article 97 of the Charter as "the chief administrative officer of the organization." He is further empowered by Article 99 of the Charter to "bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security." Thereafter, the Secretary-General's role in these matters is not defined in the Charter. Consequently, the Secretary-General's role, being ill-defined in the Charter, had to be improvised, created, and learned through experimentation. John Hillen has observed that

> it is indeed extraordinary that this important figure does not appear in the Charter until after a discussion of the UN Secretariat, and even then is cast in a rather mundane role. This a reflection of the fact that the critical role of the secretary-general in UN military operations was not intended, but rather evolved as a result of the failure of the collective security system envisaged by the Charter.[106]

Accordingly, in addition to his own role, the Secretary-General was also forced to improvise and experiment to arrive at an eventual system for managing peacekeeping operations. As Adam Roberts affirmed, it was a situation where "the gaps and inadequacies of the Charter system have been filled by creative interpretation and ingenious improvisation."[107]

In light of the failure of the principal U.N. political organs to function as originally envisaged and the absence also in the Charter of workable provisions for the establishment and management of peacekeeping missions, a disproportionate burden was placed on the shoulders of the Secretary-General. As a result, the office became one with little power but considerable influence. Former Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar stated that "the way [the political function] is used depends on the state of international relations at the time and also on the political character of the Secretary-General – on his (or, one day, perhaps, her) courage, prudence, and fidelity to the aims of the Charter."[108] This latter factor – the personality/leadership style of the Secretary-General – determines

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[106] Hillen, *Blue Helmets*, p. 14.
[107] Roberts, "From San Francisco to Sarajevo," p. 8.
[108] Javier Perez de Cuellar, "The Role of the Secretary-General," in Roberts and Kingsbury, *United Nations, Divided World*, pp. 125-142.

the extent of learning from experience, while the former factor – the state of international relations – determines whether learning becomes translated into effective policy change and the direction and scope of that change.

Studies on the role of the Secretary-General have generally reached similar conclusions as to the limits of the Secretary-General's powers. Leon Gordenker, for instance, affirmed that the Secretary-General can act within narrow but undefined and shifting limits, and his independent actions influence the course of international politics but never at a constant level:

> The configuration of international politics always modulates his actions and influence. So do his character, energy, intelligence, and style. His independent actions may generate precedents that have dual results. In similar circumstances he may attempt similar actions and achieve equal or even greater influence. Or he may reach a limit which can provoke attack from opponents who might derive other conclusions from the precedents.[109]

Depending on several factors then, the Secretary-General's influence varies greatly.

Gordenker's summary does not, however, tell us very much about how this influence manifests itself. As noted in the definition of complex learning provided by Haas, fundamental policy change occurs through consensual knowledge-based coordinative leadership. The Secretary-General is crucial in stimulating such consensual knowledge and providing coordinative leadership. As a Panel Report by the United Nations Association-United States of America (UNA-USA) argued, the "emergence of a compelling and common vision of the United Nations' role requires the Secretary-General to serve as a catalyst."[110] Lawrence Finkelstein has also affirmed that the historical record makes it abundantly clear that only when the Secretary-General is involved in this conception of coordination does meaningful action occur, even if great doubt remains as to its likelihood of success.[111] And Ramesh Thakur has furthermore noted that as

> the chief executive of the organisation came to symbolise as well as represent the United Nations...this [influence] enhanced the importance of the qualities required by the Secretary-General: integrity, independence of mind and the ability and willingness to set the collective interests of the United Nations above the partisan interests of member-states. The Secretary-

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[109] Gordenker, *The UN Secretary-General and the Maintenance of Peace*, p. xiii.
[110] *Leadership at the United Nations: The Roles of the Secretary-General and the Member States, UN Management and Decision-Making Project*: First Panel Report, December 1986, p. 2.
[111] Lawrence S. Finkelstein, "The Coordinative Function of the UN Secretary-General," in Rivlin and Gordenker, eds., *The Challenging Role of the UN Secretary-General*, p. 73.

General is looked to provide intellectual leadership, managerial ability, negotiating skill and, in an age of mass communications, the ability to establish a rapport with an international audience. He or she must know when to take the initiative in order to force an issue and when to maintain a tactful silence; when courage is required and when discretion is advised; and when commitment to the UN vision must be balanced by a sense of proportion and humour.[112]

These studies testify to the critical importance of the role of individual personality attributes on the part of the Secretary-General in creating effective organizational policy change in the realm of U.N. peace efforts.

In particular, while certain attributes such as cognitive complexity, and the willingness to experiment are crucial factors in determining the extent to which an *individual* Secretary-General learns, these other personal attributes such as leadership, managerial skills, and the ability to coordinate and establish a common rapport, are equally important in transforming individual learning into *organizational* learning and affecting policy change in an international organizational setting. It is these attributes that are required in order to arrive at a "compelling and common vision" of more strategies and goals.

Such a "common vision" refers to the idea of consensual knowledge, as elucidated by Haas: "generally accepted understandings about cause-effect linkages about any set of phenomena considered important by society." This "common understanding of causes is likely to trigger a shared understanding of solutions." It is such shared understandings, argues Finkelstein, that are sometimes "sought as the basis of government commitments to policy guidelines and provision of support needed to effectuate them."[113] Accordingly, fundamental policy change thus occurs when the Secretary-General is able to persuasively create shared understandings of cause-effect linkages about certain phenomena.

The ability to create shared cooperative understandings is profoundly important for the Secretary-General as it is such consensus on the Security Council that allows for U.N. peacekeeping missions to be authorized and flexibly managed at the Secretaries-General' discretion. The Secretary-General is instrumental in developing this consensus through his ability to report and bring matters to the attention of the Security Council. It is

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[112] Thakur, "UN Peacekeeping in the New World Order," Thakur and Thayer, eds., *A Crisis of Expectations*, p. 16.

important to recall that although the Security Council can revise the mandate of a U.N. military operation or terminate its mission, the functional authority of the Security Council is restricted to the political level. The actual direction of the peacekeeping operation is the responsibility of the Secretary-General, whose staff in the Secretariat forms and organizes the forces and sees to their administration and provision. The field commander conducts operations and answers to the Secretary-General, who then reports to the Security Council. As John Hillen observed, "the sharing of political and military responsibilities between the Security Council, the Secretary-General/Secretariat, and the U.N. military commander in the field ensures that strategy – the matching of military means to political ends – is in the hands of several different bodies."[114] As such, it is necessary for the Secretary-General to be an effective hub of shared understanding for effective peacekeeping strategy to be implemented.

As a result of this necessity, ideas, or the power of persuasion, constitute power for the Secretary-General, a commodity not otherwise possessed in great measure. Leadership by the Secretary-General can accordingly be conceived of as a "legitimate, cooperative relationship", linked to a common purpose, consisting of "projecting values, policies, and procedural approaches...stimulating, overseeing, and sometimes directing the execution of adopted policies"[115] to mobilize other actors to engage in a certain common behaviour. Similarly, as Janis has stated:

> [top-level leaders in organizations] function as crisis managers. That is, when situations arise in which the well-being and integrity of the system (or organization) as a whole are at stake, top executives are called upon to respond. Their response in such cases involves decisions that define policy, initiate a chain of implementing decisions and actions, and thus shape the future of the system, nation, or organization.[116]

A clear implication is that the Secretary-General can, and often does, act as a catalyst of ideas about the problems of peacekeeping, and oversees the strategies to resolve them successfully.

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[113] Finkelstein, "The Coordinative Function of the UN Secretary-General," in Rivlin and Gordenker, p. 73.
[114] Hillen, *Blue Helmets*, p. 13.
[115] Gordenker, "The UN Secretary-Generalship: Limits, Potentials, and Leadership" in Rivlin and Gordenker, eds., *The Challenging Role of the UN Secretary-General* , p. 268.
[116] Irving L. Janis, "Reducing Avoidable Errors", in Robert L. Kahn and Meyer N. Zald, eds., *Organizations and Nation-States*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1990), as cited in Rivlin and Gordenker, *The Challenging Role of the UN Secretary-General*, p. 267.

While this power of ideas alone is usually not enough to overcome the political resistance to needed change, the Secretary-General can, under certain circumstances, achieve significant policy change. For effective policy change in the United Nations to occur and become institutionalized, however, the state of international relations must also be conducive to such change. If not, individual and especially organizational learning will likely be stymied. As Janice Stein noted:

> no explanation of individual learning, even by a senior leader in a hierarchical system, can explain foreign policy change. Institutional and political processes must intervene to build the political support to transform individual learning into changes in foreign policy behaviour[117]

However, such instances where learning succeeds in translating into fundamental changes are rare in the history of U.N. peacekeeping. These major changes depend on a convergence of agreement in the Security Council, international conditions, as well as active and dynamic leadership on the part of the Secretary-General. As Inis Claude has stated, "the history of the Secretariat has been in large degree a process of correcting imbalances, rationalizing procedures, eliminating misfits, and reorganizing the structure for long-term operations." These actions are more consistent with adaptation and simple learning than fundamental complex learning.[118]

The Secretary-General can, however, especially in peacekeeping operations, (crises where the integrity of the organization is often at stake and involve failures consistent with stimuli for learning), exercise great influence in initiating and directing peacekeeping operations, and sometimes effectuate fundamental policy change. His role though, is limited by the scope of the tasks he may undertake and in the constancy of influence he may exert in forming policies to carry out his mandate. As Gordenker observed, his "influence reflects changes in policy by the host government and by influential members of the organization. Since these changes sometimes result from his decisions, the Secretary-General can help to some extent to widen or restrict the limits of his own influence."[119] The influence of the Secretary-General in matters of peace and

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[117] Stein, "Political Learning By Doing," p. 180.
[118] Inis L. Claude, Jr., *Swords in Plowshares*, p. 195.
[119] Gordenker, *The UN Secretary-General and the Maintenance of Peace*, p. 319.

security is a fluctuating and often unpredictable factor in the processes of United Nations decision-making.

Acting as a catalyst for consensual knowledge contributes to the explanation of how learning becomes institutionalized, and possessing certain attributes is essential in determining learning, but these elements alone do not explain fundamentally *how the Secretary-General* learns. This occurs when he responds to failure, and learns through experimentation. Janice Stein has argued that

> Learning through failure can provoke a series of sequential experiments that generate quick feedback and allow for a new round of trial-and-error experimentation. This kind of trial-and-error model of learning captures the dynamics of social cognition far more effectively than the statics of schema theory where the perceiver is a "passive onlooker, who...doesn't do anything – doesn't mix it up with the folks he's watching, never tests his judgments in action or interaction." It does not represent learning as a neat linear process with clear causal antecedents but as a messy, dynamic, interactive process.[120]

The Secretary-General is frequently faced with situations of failure and opportunities for trial-and-error experimentation in the form of peacekeeping missions. Peacekeeping operations provide a great amount of direct experiences from which to learn, and each operation tends to extend the limits within which the Secretary-General's influence may operate[121] (the repercussions of recent operations in Somalia and Bosnia have, however, proven the opposite to occur, resulting in a very significant reduction of influence and scope of action on behalf of the Secretary-General). Gordenker has stated that "from the time a peacekeeping force takes up its positions, the Secretary-General must adapt its work to changes in its political and military environment." Such changes "have created great difficulties for the Secretary-General and even extreme diminution of his influence. They have also offered opportunities for exerting influence."[122]

These conditions represent strong stimuli for learning. Indeed, by their very nature, peacekeeping experiences imply changes and lessons from which to learn and potentially employ in the formulation of future policy. As Gordenker further affirmed, "the presence of a peacekeeping force induces changes. No matter how nonpartisan its

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[120] Stein, "Political learning by Doing," p. 173.
[121] Gordenker, *The UN Secretary-General and the Maintenance of Peace*, p. 332.
[122] Ibid. p. 271.

instructions may be, it has an immediate military effect, for it reduces or halts any fighting and leaves clashing armies suspended in their positions."[123]

Other changes are imposed on the peacekeeping forces. The host government may alter policies that originally favored active employment of the peacekeeping force, revoke its welcome, obstruct the operation of a force, or violate its cease-fire undertaking. In addition, warring factions may impede the work of United Nations peacekeeping forces, and contributing governments may unilaterally withdraw their soldiers due to disagreements with policies or dissatisfaction over developments in the host country. Thus the inherent nature of peacekeeping implies active, dynamic, and constant change, requiring rapid searches for new responses and not static continuation of policies: an environment highly conducive to learning.

Furthermore, peacekeeping operations in response to conflicts are consistent with the definition of an "ill-structured problem." The goals of a mission are often multiple and vaguely defined and execution is constrained by the practice of having to rely upon a politically divided Security Council. Information about the nature of the conflict is also ambiguous and incomplete as the United Nations has no independent source of information-gathering. With no prior direct experience and a lack of information, little is known about the solution to a conflict in a new and uncertain environment. This situation necessitates a search for new information and responses to the conflict.

These responses to such changing conditions may take many forms, depending on the situation and how the Secretary-General responds to it. Gordenker has listed several possible responses:

> He may seek new – or reaffirmation of – previous instructions from the deliberative organ which is responsible for the peacekeeping force, or he may ask for guidance from another organ. He may develop new interpretations of his mandate, either on his own responsibility or after discussions with interested governments or with any consultative organs which may have been established. He may seek additional material support from governments. Or he may urge that his mandate be ended and take actions to support such a step. Much of the record of the Secretary-General 's management of peacekeeping forces consists of attempts to adapt missions to new conditions, which differ vastly in character and cause.[124]

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[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid., p. 272

Each of these processes can result in learning for the Secretary-General as he draws conclusions from the successes or failures of his experimentation in new conditions, enabling him to innovate new responses or techniques and apply these lessons to future practice. While the majority of these lessons consist of examples of simple learning – which are more likely to result in minor policy changes – the Secretary-General does at times engage in complex learning, which can result in major policy change.

The Secretaries-General

TRYGVE LIE

As the first Secretary-General of the United Nations, Trygve Lie had few precedents to help him define his role and only the limited experience of the League of Nations to provide direction with respect to matters of peace and international security. Having no precise notion of how his role should be developed, nor a theory of his Office and its relationships with Member Nations and other United Nations organs, he accordingly exercised caution in developing his new position. Lie affirmed early on that the Secretary-General "is not called upon to formulate the policy of the United Nations...The lines of that policy are laid down in the Charter and determined by decisions of the different relevant organs of the United Nations. The task of the Secretariat will be to assist all those organs."[125] This statement reflected the generally accepted view of the great powers of what the Secretary-General's role should entail, and was in accord with the conception of executive responsibility as outlined in the League of Nations Covenant.

While Lie never wholly changed his conviction in this belief, as he became more involved in international politics he gained an understanding that the Secretary-General should be able to accomplish more, and thus sought to expand his role. This learning

process as to his role is one which all Secretaries-General would undergo, frequently resulting in the expansion of the powers and functions of the Office. In these early days of his tenure, every move made by Lie served as precedent for further development and indicated future directions for his Office. Arthur Rovine noted that

> his emphasis certainly broadened the scope of his initial understanding, and grew far more positive in tone. Indeed, Lie quickly came to understand the Secretary-General not as a formulator of policy, but rather one who deeply influenced the decision-making process and helped shape UN policy through independent investigation and mediation attempts, including countless discussions with state representatives and delegates.[126]

Although Lie wanted to expand upon the administrative conception of the Secretaries-General of the League of Nations, he was "very much aware of the limitations imposed his Office by the realities of world politics and the weakness of international organizations." As Lie would later state:

> The Secretary-General, it was said, should be more the general than the secretary – but where were his divisions? Thus I inclined, from the beginning, toward a middle-way – a pragmatic and open-minded approach. I would listen to all my advisors and be directed by none. I had no calculated plan for developing the political powers of the office of the Secretary-General, but I was determined that the Secretary-General should be a force for peace. How that force would be applied I would find out – in the light of developments.[127]

This pragmatic, realistic, "middle-way" approach would characterize Lie's leadership style throughout his term as Secretary-General, allowing him to construct a more involved and powerful Office that could no longer be ignored by the Security Council. Such statements furthermore convey Lie's 'uncommitted' and open thinking towards his own role, and more broadly toward United Nations' efforts to maintain international peace and security. At times Lie even interpreted Article 99 of the Charter liberally, demonstrating a capacity for innovation and cognitive complexity and on occasion managing to expand the role and powers of his Office as the result of learning from his experiences as a mediator. For the most part, however, he was cautious to extend the limits of his powers. He did not shy away from attempting to implement such changes, yet more often than not, stopped short of displeasing the Security Council.

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[125] Trygve Lie, *General Assembly Official Records*, (hereafter GAOR), First Session, Part I, Plenary, 22nd mtg., 2 February, 1946, as cited in Rovine, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 257.
[126] Rovine, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 257.

Lie's personality traits are evident in his memoirs and his more lengthy and thoughtful introductions to the Annual Report of the Secretary-General, a practice he initiated. Rovine has observed that

> Lie's introductions were at a generally higher level than [his] public speeches (directed as they were to mass opinion), but still there was very little of a theoretical or doctrinal nature. In this respect, he was not of a cast of mind that found such pronouncements desirable, and of course he found it congenial to follow the practice of his League predecessors.[128]

Such relative lack of conceptual innovation and occasional reliance on the established norms of the League conforms to adaptation and policy continuation. This is not to imply that Lie was a mild or reserved leader. In fact, Lie was not at all hesitant to express his political views in the strongest terms, even on the most controversial of international issues. This very significant departure form League practice substantially helped politicize the Office, legitimate its political functions, and combined with Lie's active role as negotiator and mediator in several disputes, constituted a substantial enlargement of the powers of the Secretary-General.[129]

Lie's record demonstrates his willingness to take strong positions and to speak his mind in defense of the United Nations. Lie also registered many significant achievements in developing various functions of mediation and more generally, the role of his Office. On the whole, however, Lie's record reveals only a moderate capacity to experiment and learn from his experiences in mediation and peace observation. The evidence suggests that Lie very rarely learned in the complex sense, and was largely unable to implement the lessons he had learned in relation to his Office. Indeed, Lie did not meet with success in his independent initiatives. This is due to both the state of international relations at the time, and Lie's moderate efficacy as a diplomatic agent. Furthermore, Lie enunciated few meaningful statements regarding the powers of his Office, and while there exist some scattered references to his thoughts throughout the body of the public statements, these in no

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[127] Trygve Lie, *In the Cause of Peace*, (New York: Macmillan, 1954), p. 42.
[128] Rovine, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 257.
[129] Ibid.

way form a cohesive analysis, and it is only by inference from actions in particular cases that one is able to construct a notion of Lie's perspective on the Office.[130]

Over the course of his term, Lie made several important contributions to his Office, succeeding in establishing a firm procedural base for an active political role for the Secretary-General. In particular, Lie secured the right to report to the Security Council on matters relating to global peace and security and, despite strong initial opposition from Great Britain and the United States, to intervene at all meetings of the U.N.'s political organs. He also enhanced his ability to gather information and developed his role as mediator, legitimizing the Secretary-General's right to take a position and help decide and shape policy affecting global political issues and generally establishing a solid foundation for his Office's participation in General Assembly and Security Council proceedings. Most significantly, Lie had taken the Office of the Secretary-General far beyond the tradition established in the League.

In building a foundation for U.N. participation in world politics, Lie did not however, attempt to delineate a clearly defined theory of the Secretary-General's role or for the practice of conflict intervention (later to be called peacekeeping), preferring instead to respond to each new situation through a case-by-case approach. In terms of the these responses to international disputes, Rovine has noted that the overall framework for action that evolved in the beginning of Lie's tenure

> was essentially the result of free accommodation and flexible maneuver, a process not as likely to have been successful within a rigid and a priori framework. Lie was obligated to find his way, so to speak, and procedures of trial and error were crucial. The general thrust was always in the direction of expanding his power, much as it was under Hammarskjöld, the efforts being rewarded on some occasions and disputed and frustrated on others. [131]

Through this process of trial-and-error experimentation in a flexible and unprecedented environment, Lie was able to search for new information and procedures, and test new ideas and solutions in response to crises.

It was in this ambiguous environment that many of Lie's pioneer actions and initiatives were taken, from which he learned, and came to grow more comfortable in his position. With respect to issues of international peace and security, Lie learned

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[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid., p. 260.

from the experiences of the early United Nations peace observation missions. These included the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans (UNSCOB) 1946-1949, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in and around Palestine (UNTSO) 1948-Present, and the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) 1949-Present. These peace observation missions (not defined as peacekeeping until the concept was formally recognized in 1956) arose out of the necessity of filling the void left by the failure of collective security.

As noted in the introductory section of the essay, the United Nations was unable to fulfill its role as guarantor of collective security as a result of the Cold War divisions among the five permanent Members in the Security Council and their frequent resort to the veto clause. The adversarial relations between the Soviet Union and the Western powers condemned the Security Council not to "complete inaction, but to collective action only on a limited number of issues where the permanent five could agree." The rapid escalation of the Cold War, further noted Paul Diehl, increasingly polarized the international system, and "even in the set of minor power disputes, the veto proved a strong impediment to action."[132] Under Lie's direction, the United Nations was thus obliged to seek other ways in which to fulfill its role in maintaining global security. He focused on Chapter VI of the Charter, the pacific settlement of disputes, particularly looking to learn from the previous experience of the League of Nations in peace observation and inquiry. As a result, he continued this tradition of peace observation in the wake of the breakdown of a new and more effective system of collective security. Due to the limited military role and hence risk involved in observation, such operations provided a suitable way to contribute to this goal.

These peace observation missions yielded a mixed record of success, but provided the new organization with experience in conflict intervention and, in a few instances, generated important new lessons that would be adopted under peacekeeping. Paul Diehl contends that

> despite their alleged differences, the League and the United Nations shared a number of fundamental similarities and, not surprisingly, passed through several of the same learning

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[132] Diehl, *International Peacekeeping*, p. 24

phases (albeit more quickly in the case of the United Nations) in their strategies for dealing with threats to international peace and security.[133]

The accumulated experience, or lessons, of the League would come to form part of United Nations procedures concerning international intervention, attesting to the importance of lessons and their ability to move from one individual to the next and one organization to another. The lessons of peace observation from prior League experience include:

- the recognition that intervention is most successful when the major powers are not directly involved

- that success is most likely to be achieved when hostilities have not reached full-scale war

- that the support of the disputants is critical to the mission and acceptance of its recommendations

- and that it is often useful to establish a neutral zone to separate combatants.

These League lessons served to shape early U.N. experience in peace observation and later peacekeeping, and were relearned by the United Nations,[134] illustrating how in addition to learning from individuals within and outside experts, organizations also learn from the experience of other organizations. The practice of these limited peace observation missions in providing a role for the United Nations generated shared understandings and in this manner became institutionalized, forming an important part of current U.N. peace efforts.

Lie drew upon these League lessons to help him develop and refine ideas for U.N. peace observation. Since Lie had little experience upon which to base his actions, he was also more open to new solutions in responding to crises, and thus learned from the early U.N. experience in peace observation. Such lessons centered on how best to achieve better strategies for conflict intervention (simple learning), and eventually how, in the absence of collective security, the United Nations could

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[133] Ibid., p. 22.
[134] Ibid., pp. 20-21.

better serve the cause of international peace and security through these functions - - thus redefining the fundamental goal of the organization (complex learning).

Observation missions account for the majority of all U.N. military operations. John Hillen has stated that there are several pragmatic reasons for this:

> they had unambitious and limited political mandates...[were] less politically contentious than a larger peacekeeping or enforcement mission...because of that restricted mandate, the missions were small. Relatively inexpensive, and had a modest operational profile that generally did not excite controversy.[135]

In learning from and building upon the early experience of the League in observation missions, Lie was careful not to arouse controversy in the Security Council and consequently did not extend the concept of observation to include any element of active peace enforcement or military strength as originally envisioned in the U.N. Charter. As a result, recognizing from this past experience of the League that support from the disputing groups is critical, belligerent parties under U.N. observation had the power of veto over force composition and methods of operation. These missions, and their success, were consequently completely reliant on the consent and cooperation of the parties to the conflict. "Observation missions were a self-help technique, and the belligerents provided the bulk of the 'help.'"[136]

The first of these missions in the Balkans, UNSCOB, yielded a host of important lessons for Lie that would shape future peacekeeping operations:

- the recognition that peace observers could function in a Cold War dispute, and when stationed on only one side of a border

- the necessity for participating members to be from impartial countries

- the importance of clearly defining the status of observers

- the necessity of independent logistical support so as not to have to rely upon the disputing parties for transportation

- the importance of being able to prevent hostilities by being armed and able to act as an interposition force

- the importance of having a clearly defined mandate

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[135] Hillen, *Blue Helmets*, p. 33.
[136] Ibid., p. 19.

- the necessity of obtaining consent from all parties to a dispute

Although some of these problems continue to plague peacekeeping operations today, many others have since been resolved and encoded in organizational doctrine and memory. These operational weaknesses forced Lie recognize the need for change. It would not however, be until the Suez crisis that such changes would be instituted.

This form of simple learning about how to better implement the practice of peace observation, based on experience, or experiential learning, accounts largely for the evolution of peacekeeping until the late 1980s. While Ernst Haas considers this pattern of incremental growth in peacekeeping, or any form of simple learning, as adaptation, most other learning and organization theorists view this pattern of change based on experience as learning. Also in contrast to the view expressed by Haas, these early missions generated not only simple learning, but at times, complex learning as well. The experiences obtained from these early missions, along with the inaction and frustration produced by having to rely upon a Security Council often in deadlock, for example, led Lie to the conclusion - - eight years before a United Nations Emergency Force would be created in the Suez invasion - - that an effective way to overcome the difficulties would be the formation of a United Nations Guard Force. As Lie wrote in his memoirs:

> I cast about with my advisers for a new approach that might provide the Security Council with some sort of armed force. The outbreak of hostilities in Palestine gave urgency to such thinking and, after much consideration, I decided on at least floating a trial balloon for the idea of a small internationally recruited force which could be placed by the Secretary-General at the disposal of the Security Council.[137]

Rovine affirmed that the "position of Secretary-General Lie in the events surrounding the establishment of Israel in 1948 indicated perfectly the failure of the U.N.'s collective security system and near impotence of an international civil service working alone without the assistance of an international armed force."[138] Appreciating the fact that a robust force could make a substantial difference in the

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[137] Lie, *In the Cause of Peace*, p. 98.
[138] Rovine, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 217.

Middle East, Lie publicly proposed his idea at the Harvard Commencement in 1948. He stated that:

> The undeniable fact that the United Nations has done well in many matters, that it has important accomplishments to its credit in many fields, has not offset in the minds the equally undeniable fact that the nations have not yet succeeded in making the organization work in regard to other very important matters...There are however, possibilities for developing the power and influence of the United Nations as it now exists and even in the presence of this Great Power conflict.[139]

Lie again stressed his conviction that attacks by the Arab states were, as Rovine stated, "no less than violations of the United Nations Charter and attacks on the Organization itself."[140] Writing in his memoirs in 1954, Lie affirmed, "I am proud of the United Nations' role in the establishment of Israel...but I could be far prouder. The decision for partition, once taken by the United Nations, should have been resolutely upheld not only by some governments and the Secretary-General, but by all Members of the Organization."[141] Recognizing the failure of the great powers to agree in 1947 on the details of the provision of armed forces by the Member Nations as outlined in Article 43 of the Charter, Lie declared that:

> It is possible that a beginning could be made now through the establishment of a comparatively small guard force, as distinct from a striking force. Such a force could be recruited by the Secretary-General and placed at the disposal of the Security Council. Such a force would have been extremely valuable to us in the past and it would undoubtedly be very valuable in the future. Even a small United Nations force would command respect...I do not think of a single case that has been dealt with by the Security Council so far in which a large force would have been needed to act for the United Nations, provided that a small United Nations guard force of some kind had been available for immediate duty at the proper time. I include Palestine.[142]

Lie's message was that the primary function of the United Nations was something different from the collective security system outlined in the Charter, and that the Organization's political influence depended upon such a small force of neutral contingents acting to separate combatants. This conception is similar to the notion of "preventive diplomacy" that was articulated by Hammarskjöld years later.

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[139] Lie, Commencement Address at Harvard University in June, 1948, as cited by Cordier and Foote, *Public Papers of the Secretary-General of the United Nations: Vol. I, Trygve Lie 1946-1953.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), pp. 134-135.
[140] Rovine, The First Fifty Years, p. 223.
[141] Lie, *In the Cause of Peace*, p. 194.

These statements clearly reflect a process of simple and complex learning: stimulated by the failure of collective security (policy that Lie recognized as not working) and the difficulties experienced in Palestine (considered by the Secretary-General as a challenge to the integrity of the Organization). Lie consequently sought out new policies and a new role for the organization in the form of a Guard Force based on this experience. The elements of this force were not clearly defined by Lie, and his attempts to convince the great powers of its benefits and create shared understandings, would lead to severe opposition from the Soviet Union, and thus this instance of learning would not at this stage result in policy change.

Instead of resigning himself to the status quo of the failure of collective security, and the failure of establishing a U.N. Guard Force, Lie actively continued to seek out new methods of conflict management. The fact that Lie was the first Secretary-General with little guidance as to his role during the formative years of an organization seeking its role among the international community stimulated much learning for Lie as these failures further strengthened his commitment to fundamental change.

Lie not only demonstrated an ability to learn from early U.N. experience in peace observation and conflict intervention, but in doing so significantly expanded his powers and enhanced the Office of the Secretary-General, providing him with more scope to experiment and learn. Lie's work on the Palestine issue, for instance, was not only in defense of the new state and the Organization, but also served to strengthen his Office. Rovine has noted that

> Without troops his activity was necessarily marginal, but given the constraints of an international intermediary, Lie made the most of his opportunities for mediation, persuasion, and good offices functions. The steps taken to strengthen his role were clearly important for the development of global institutions. For the Secretary-General, having earlier established essential procedural prerogatives and taken strong positions on critical substantive issues, was here demonstrating the capacity to act even in the midst of crisis, and on an issue of interest to both superpowers.[143]

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[142] Lie, Commencement Address at Harvard University in June, 1948, as cited by Cordier and Foote, *Public Papers of the Secretary-General of the United Nations: Vol. I, Trygve Lie 1946-1953*, pp. 134-135.

[143] Rovine, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 223.

While his proposal for a U.N. Guard Force would not be implemented under his tenure, Lie's successful development of the functions of mediation and good offices would continue to serve the Organization for decades to come. He also ensured continued U.N. involvement in the Middle East through his efficient work in dispatching U.N. personnel and by the success of his cooperative relationship as a mediator. Lie was quick to take advantage of the opportunity to develop his Office that the Palestine issue afforded, and his skilful actions in developing these functions and learning from their successes reflected both a willingness to experiment and cognitive complexity. Over the course of his administration, Lie could proudly cite the successes in conciliation and mediation achieved in the Balkans, Berlin, Palestine, Kashmir, Indonesia, and Korea, and the value of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security.

Lie learned not only what actions were effective in peace observation from these experiences but also gained a greater understanding of his role. Indeed, by the end of his term, he reflected upon the nature and powers of his office, stating that "I think the Office of the Secretary-General should be clearly defined...the Charter should actually say that he is more than the Chief Administrator."[144] As a Secretary-General, Lie's achievements have been quite substantial, however, as a learner, Lie can be characterized as moderate.

In short, while Lie did not formulate policy, he was explicit in asserting that he assisted U.N. decision-making by exerting influence in many ways within the limits of the structure and process circumscribing his actions. And although he managed, at times, to extend those limits, he never quite acted beyond or broke those limits. Most of his efforts were aimed at urging cooperation within a deeply divided Security Council. As he argued in an address to the American Association of the United Nations, within the limits of the resources at his disposal, the Secretary-General could exert his influence primarily in two ways:

> He can act privately by direct discussion with representatives of Member Governments on questions at issue. Or he can act publicly, either in an open meeting of an Organ, or in a

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[144] Lie, as cited in Stephen M. Schwebel, *The Secretary-General of the United Nations: His Political Power and Practice*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1952), p. 205.

report, or in a speech. In this case, he takes a public position and appeals to the Member governments and to world opinion to support that position.

I have been criticized by some people who are good friends of the United Nations for not intervening often enough in political issues before the United Nations. I have been criticized by others, who are equally good friends, for intervening at all. Between these two extremes I have tried to take a common-sense middle course, conscious always of my responsibility to stand only for the interests of the United Nations as a whole.[145]

It was through this "middle course" style of leadership, of vocalizing the position of the Secretary-General, mediating major conflicts, and learning from the limited experiences in peace observation that were approved by the Security Council in relation to both his own role and the ability of United Nations to foster peace, that Trygve Lie had helped create the United Nations in its formative years, establishing the expectation that the Office would be a diplomatically active one and enabling his successor to use the world body as a creative instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security.

DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD

Over the course of his tenure, Dag Hammarskjöld would not only maintain the powers of the Office of the Secretary-General as constructed by Lie, but would expand its role far beyond the limits of what was conceived by the U.N. founders. Like Lie, Hammarskjöld was placed in an environment that continually stimulated learning and was receptive to new solutions to international conflicts in the face of blockage and failure. Hammarskjöld, in comparison, was even more motivated to learn, open to a broader range of answers, and far more intuitive and aware of his role and environment than was his predecessor.

Hammarskjöld devoted much time to developing and explaining in speeches and press conferences his beliefs on the ways in which the United Nations in general and the Secretary-General in particular might more effectively contribute

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[145] *Address to American Association of the United Nations*, UN Press Release SG/22, 29 Sept., 1949.

to the maintenance of international peace and security. The dimensions of conflict situations that he considered were also far more elaborate than those considered by his predecessor, reflecting a very high degree of cognitive complexity. Evidence of his searching for new ideas and solutions to ill-structured problems is very strong. Motivated in this manner to learn, more than any other Secretary-General who preceded or succeeded him, Hammarskjöld successfully developed the doctrine for the expansion of his office based on the inherent powers bestowed by Article 99. No other incumbent until Boutros Boutros-Ghali would exhibit the degree of initiative with respect to peace and security issues that had Hammarskjöld.

As Arthur Rovine asserted, Hammarskjöld made more of the Office of Secretary-General than any other of the incumbents "because his extraordinary intellectual capacity was combined with the changing and developing role of the Organization. His personal attributes were truly remarkable."[146] Similarly, Wilder Foote noted that Hammarskjöld had a "brilliant, orderly, pragmatic and subtle mind, capable of lightning speed in both comprehension and construction, yet certainly disciplined."[147] Such dynamism and cognitive and conceptual complexity manifested themselves in a great capacity for learning and resulting initiative. As Janice Stein has stated, the "more complex the cognitive system, the more capable the decision-maker of making new or subtle distinctions when confronted with new information."[148]

Hammarskjöld embodied the antithesis of being cognitively rigid. Like former Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev, he was an uncommitted thinker in matters of security who exhibited openness toward new solutions and innovations in the implementation of peacekeeping. He actively consulted with his advisors, Ralph Bunche and Andrew Cordier, debating his ideas, incorporating critical feedback into his learning, and testing them in peacekeeping missions. Hammarskjöld furthermore exhibited a great degree of sensitivity to his environment. As Ernest Lefever remarked, he was

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[146] Rovine, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 329.
[147] Wilder Foote, ed., *Servant of Peace: A Selection of the Speeches and Statements of Dag Hammarskjöld*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), pp. 13-14. (Hereafter *Servant of Peace*).
[148] Stein, *Political Learning by Doing*, p. 165.

far from naïve, and capable of shrewd, realistic assessments. Through his sensitive antenna, he calculated what could, and could not be done. His expectations were tempered by an intuitive grasp of political reality, and his initiative was disciplined by caution. He knew that the real decisions in international politics were made by states, particularly the Big Powers. He knew that the office of the Secretary-General was essentially an instrument, not an actor.[149]

Recognizing these limits, Hammarskjöld frequently employed the Charter to his advantage, interpreting and invoking Articles 98-100 of the Charter alluding to the role of the Secretary-General with brilliant creativity, enabling him to justify the expansion of his powers and an increasingly more active role through innovative special diplomatic and operational functions. Neither his predecessor nor any of the incumbents who succeeded him had attempted to develop the Charter.

Hammarskjöld learned from his experiences not in an orderly linear fashion, but as a result of the complex interactive relationship between political learning and action that provided quick feedback. His thoughts and actions reflected both simple learning (change in means) and complex learning (change in goals). These simple and complex lessons which moved the United Nations closer to its ultimate aims, were thus stimulated by trial-and-error experimentation. Hammarskjöld stated that

There are, I believe, promising and practical opportunities for improving the practices and strengthening the institutions of the United Nations in this area of multilateral diplomacy. Especially in the past two years we have begun to explore these opportunities in a number of ways with generally positive results. I hope this *evolution of emphasis and practice* will be pursued and broadened in the future. [Emphasis added][150]

It is this "evolution of emphasis and practice", or experiential learning, as consciously recognized by Hammarskjöld, that serves as the underlying framework in which the United Nations, as an organization, learned to play a productive role in world politics. Hammarskjöld was strongly aware of the importance of learning in promoting progress. In the words of his biographer and protégé, Brian Urquhart:

Hammarskjöld's basic view of international peace and security was that a reliable and just world order could only be built pragmatically by making precedents and by case law. By this process he hoped that the United Nations would be gradually transformed from an

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[149] Ernest W. Lefever, *Uncertain Mandate: Politics and Policies of the U.N. Congo Operation*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1967.), p. 28.

[150] Rovine, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 329.

institutional mechanism into a constitutional instrument recognized and respected by all nations.[151]

Following Lie's example, Hammarskjöld was cautious in not immediately in his first term embracing an active role for the Secretariat. He stated that the Secretariat "has creative capacity. It can introduce new ideas. It can in proper form take initiatives. It can put before the Member Governments new findings which will influence their actions." He stressed quiet diplomacy, which, in his words, should be "unspectacular."[152] As he made clear in his first public statement, he conceived of the role of the Secretary-General as being:

> there in order to assist...those that make the decisions which frame history. He should - as I see it - listen, analyze and learn to understand fully the forces at work and the interests at stake, so that he will be able to give the advice when the situation calls for it. Don't think that he - in following this line of personal policy - takes but a passive part in the development. It is a most active one. But he is active as an instrument, a catalyst, perhaps an inspirer - he serves.[153]

Hammarskjöld gradually began, however, to develop his conception of the United Nations as an "active," "living organism," affirming his desire to transform the United Nations from a "static conference machinery" to a more "dynamic instrument," in which the role of the Secretary-General would be enhanced. His superior diplomatic skills and ability to achieve became widely recognized, as illustrated by the motto "Let Dag do it," which quickly became a common phrase uttered among the Security Council and General Assembly.[154] And although during his first term, there was little impetus for learning, Hammarskjöld managed to expand the capacity of the United Nations to promote peace and conciliation through informal and formal methods of diplomacy. Michel Virally has attributed the increasingly active and influential role of the Secretary-General in the mid-1950's to Hammarskjöld's personal attributes. He wrote that

> It is incontestable that recent developments and successes of private diplomacy of the United Nations...owe much to the personality of "Mr. H.", to his exceptional qualities that all the

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[151] Brian Urquhart, "International Peace and Security: Thoughts on the Twentieth Anniversary of Dag Hammarskjöld's Death," *Foreign Affairs* 60 (Fall 1981).

[152] Hammarskjöld, as cited in Rovine, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 330.

[153] Hammarskjöld, *Press Conference at Idlewild, April 9, 1953*, as cited in Joseph P. Lash, "Dag Hammarskjöld's Conception of his Office" in *International Organization*, 16, No. 3, Summer, 1962, p. 542.

[154] Mark Zacher, "The Secretary-General and the United Nations' Function of Peaceful Settlement," *International Organization*, 1966, p. 732.

delegates and all the governments have recognized. It is not only as a result of his functions but also his *intuitu personnai* that he has become the "fifth great power."[155]

In directly acting in a greater capacity as a more active diplomatic agent, over the course of his tenure, Hammarskjöld's original view of his role solely in the context of providing advice and serving the people as an inspiration would be radically altered as a result of this process of self-reflection and learning.

The beginnings of this development can be traced to his efforts in 1954 to free the U.S. pilots held by the People's Republic of China during the Korean War. Mark Zacher has referred to Hammarskjöld's mediation of this dispute as "marking a watershed in the development of the Secretary-Generalship."[156] Because of its explicit condemnation of the Chinese, the General Assembly resolution deploring this action placed the Secretary-General in an awkward position. Hammarskjöld correctly assumed that the government of the PRC would refuse to negotiate with him based on the General Assembly's action. As such, other grounds had to be found to establish and maintain contact with the Chinese on this matter. To overcome this political impasse, Hammarskjöld sought out news ways to mediate, eventually deciding to go to Peking and talk directly with the Chinese government concerning the imprisoned airmen. From this experimentation he would develop the concept of preventive diplomacy, currently referred to as preventive action. As Thomas Boudreau has noted:

> In a confidential cable to Chou En-lai, the Chinese Foreign Minister, Hammarskjöld made it clear that he was contacting the Chinese government on the basis of his authority as Secretary-General, not simply on the basis of the General Assembly's resolution. This working arrangement, which provided a way for the Chinese government to receive Hammarskjöld without recognizing the condemnatory General Assembly resolution, became know as the "Peking Formula"...and...worked.[157]

This episode illustrates Hammarskjöld's ability to experiment and develop unique legal/political solutions to pressing problems of peace in the world,

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[155] Michel Virally, Annuaire Francaise de Droit International, Vol. 4, pp. 396-397, as cited in Zacher, "The Secretary-General and the Untied Nations' Function of Peaceful Settlement," p. 732. Zacher notes that the reference to Hammarskjöld as "the fifth great power" refers to his having been invited by Soviet Premier Nikita Kruschev to attend a summit meeting with the four Great Powers and India in July 1958.

[156] Zacher, "The Secretary-General and the United Nations' Function of Peaceful Settlement," p. 731.

[157] Boudreau, *Sheathing the Sword*, p. 43.

from which he then learned. It also demonstrates his tendency to rapidly respond to feedback, and significantly expand the power of the Office of the Secretary-General. Zacher affirmed that Hammarskjöld "went on to note that this legal position allowed the Chinese to say... 'We don't care a damn about your instructions, but we do recognize your authority. You are an independent organ of the United Nations...'"[158] Hammarskjöld hence learned from this innovative experiment that the increased independence of his role would be beneficial to the Organization in maintaining international peace and security. He translated that learning into policy change by expanding the original role of the United Nations in matters of peace and security to include a preventive function which, over time, would come to occupy a major part of the Organization's activities. This experience, referred to as the Peking Formula, would for example, be employed again in 1960 for a negotiating mission to South Africa.

Hammarskjöld's addresses and statements about the United Nations were in his first term conservative, differing little from those of his predecessor. While he stressed the difference between his authority as agent of the U.N. political organs, and his general scope for action under Article 99 of the Charter, this was never developed in any systematic manner, nor accompanied by much action. Furthermore, his introduction to the annual Report of the Secretary-General of 1955-56 says nothing very remarkable about the U.N., apart from emphasizing its uses as "an instrument for negotiation of settlements, as distinct from the mere debate of issues."[159]

The major change in Hammarskjöld's conception of his role would occur in his second term. The catalyst for this change was the Suez crisis of 1956-1957 and his re-election in 1957. As Brian Urquhart wrote, the state of flux in the Middle East which produced new uncertainties and new problems was:

> a fertile environment for Hammarskjöld's ideas for developing the UN's potential as an instrument of multilateral diplomacy, and the events of the second half of 1956 in the Middle East provided an unexpected opportunity for practical experiment and radically changed both

[158] Mark Zacher, *Dag Hammarskjöld's United Nations*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), as cited by Boudreau, p. 43.
[159] Dag Hammarskjöld, *Introduction to Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization, 1956*, (New York: The United Nations, 1956), p. 2. (Hereafter 1956 Annual Report.)

the Organization's method of functioning and his own position as Secretary-General. He responded to this challenge with enthusiasm and ingenuity, using the limited resources of the Secretariat to the practical extreme and developing whatever new resources and sources of support that he could find. In this process the UN managed, in Hammarskjöld's words, "to renew itself administratively, and in some respects politically.[160]

This learning process and fundamental policy change was clearly stimulated by policy failure. In particular, as Diehl stated, "peace observation, in the form of UNTSO, could not meet the challenges of the Suez Crisis, and there was not sufficient political consensus for a collective security action."[161] It was in this environment, with the help of Lester B. Pearson, that Hammarskjöld, impelled to search for a solution to the situation in the Suez, would define the concept and implement the first United Nations Peacekeeping force.

Recognizing that one of the central problems plaguing the UNTSO operation the Middle East was that the U.N. presence was far too small to prevent a serious military confrontation (UNTSO comprised only 120 personnel and, as an observer mission, was incapable of providing a buffer function), Pearson proposed for the first time the establishment of a truly international peacekeeping force under U.N. auspices to serve as a buffer between the disputing parties. Hammarskjöld was at first doubtful that such a force was feasible under the crisis conditions of Middle East hostilities. The General Assembly, recognizing that peace observation was inadequate and consequently ill-suited to the task, and collective security politically impossible, turned to the Secretary-General for a solution, and Hammarskjöld, despite his reservations, actively involved himself in the undertaking. As Diehl has noted, although Pearson originally conceived of the concept of an international peacekeeping force, because of the "wide latitude given the Secretary-General, it was largely he who defined what this new strategy called peacekeeping would involve."[162]

Learning from past failures and innovating new experimental strategies, Hammarskjöld developed an unprecedented combination of component elements for the UNEF I force. First, UNEF I was under the direction of the Secretary-General

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[160] Brian Urquhart, *Hammarskjöld*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972) p. 133.
[161] Diehl, *International Peacekeeping*, p. 29.

and under the field command of a neutral officer appointed by the U.N. executive head - - as opposed to previous peace observation missions in which units were directed by their own national commanders. Second, Hammarskjöld insisted that UNEF I did not include any force contributions from the major powers, a strategy that had generated difficulties in past missions. This became a guiding principle for peacekeeping operations.

Third, Hammarskjöld designed UNEF I to be a strictly neutral force in action and purpose, as well as in troop composition. The force was not designed to "affect the military balance in the area or to favor one side or the other in its activities." Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, Hammarskjöld conceived of UNEF I as acting as an *interposition force* between the protagonists. This, as Diehl further noted, "represented a qualitative difference from any peace observation forces before, which had neither the personnel nor the mission to serve as a physical barrier between hostile parties."[163] Various successful aspects of prior peace observation missions were thus combined with new principles - - the result of learning from the causes of past problems - - to form a new strategy of peacekeeping.

The success of the UNEF I mission soon convinced Hammarskjöld of its benefits and potential future application. What enabled this learning to result in successful policy change was the interactive combination of individual and political variables: the Security Council authorizing the Secretary-General to take initiative, Hammarskjöld's dynamic personality (openness to new ideas, willingness to experiment, and his cognitive complexity, or capacity to create solutions to ill-structured problems), and the presence of Haas' three conditions of desirability, urgency, and possibility. This convergence of factors impelled trial-and-error experimentation on Hammarskjöld's behalf. The end result of this feedback cycle was the illustration of how the United Nations could play a significant role in maintaining global security. UNEF I successfully monitored the cease-fire, supervised the withdrawal of British, French, and Israeli forces from Egypt, (providing them with a face-saving option), and acted as a buffer, or insurance

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[162] Ibid., p. 31.

policy, against the future engagement of these forces. In addition to being the first instance of peacekeeping, UNEF I is important because Hammarskjöld would succeed in institutionalizing that learning and its mode of operation would become firmly entrenched in U.N. organizational doctrine and memory, serving as the model for almost all future peacekeeping missions.

In particular, what would evolve from early observation missions and the experience of UNEF I was the concept and practice of what has now become known as traditional peacekeeping. Similar to observation missions, traditional peacekeeping also relied on the consent and cooperation of warring parties, but were deployed with slightly more complex military tasks than strict observation. These forces were authorized to use force only in self-defense or in defense of the mandate when under armed attack. The passive use of force, affirms Hillen, "was intended to preserve the impartial standing of the peacekeeping force and reinforce the concept of voluntary cooperation from the belligerents."[164]

The UNEF I experience dramatically altered Hammarskjöld's conception of both the role of the Secretary-General and that of the United Nations in conflict intervention. Following his re-election in 1957, Hammarskjöld rapidly began to expand his office and the role of the United Nations in general. His statement to the General Assembly upon re-election reflected his experience with the establishment of UNEF I in 1956 and his general activity in the Middle East:

> I believe that it is in keeping with the philosophy that the Secretary-General should be expected to act also without such guidance [from either the Charter or decisions in UN political organs], should this appear to him necessary in order to help in filling any vacuum that may appear in the systems which the Charter and traditional diplomacy provide for the safeguarding of peace and security.[165]

For the first time in the history of the United Nations, the Secretary-General declared a doctrine endowing his Office with a capacity to act in international affairs independently of the great powers. No previous Secretary-General had stated a similar view. As Rovine noted:

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[163] Ibid.

[164] Hillen, *Blue Helmets*, pp. 22-25.

[165] Hammarskjöld, *Statement on his Re-election before General Assembly, 26 September 1957*, as cited in Foote, ed., *Servant of Peace*, p. 150.

Without great explication, Hammarskjöld was justifying his own role in the Middle Eastern crisis and simultaneously establishing an authoritative rationale for the independent activity of the Secretary-General in world politics. The statement was of enormous significance for the development of the Office and of the executive capacity of the United Nations itself, for it reflected the first dim outline of the global institution as a structure with its own interests and capacity standing ever so slightly apart from the separate members and constituents. This was of historic importance, for it coincided in real world terms with Hammarskjöld's conception that the United Nations itself was indicative of a slow but perceptible movement toward 'higher forms of an international society.'[166]

By the time of his re-election, impelled by learning from experience in the Middle East, Hammarskjöld had refined his conception both of his own role as Secretary-General and that of the United Nations. This experience strongly reflects the process of learning: failure in the Suez lead to experimentation, which in turn resulted in learning about his own role and that of the United Nations.

The creation of peacekeeping operations under the executive direction of the Secretary-General, and Hammarskjöld's establishment of permanent diplomatic missions at the United Nations, placed him in a position of direct contact with belligerent parties and high government officials, affording him opportunities to personally involve himself and interact with important figures, exercise his influence, and make his voice heard in the negotiations regarding the major disputes of the day. Such active personal involvement is an indicator, as noted in the psychology literature, of high cognitive complexity, and enabled the Secretary-General to gather more information through direct contact, with which to study, observe, and interpret, thereby learning and creating solutions to problems and resolving disputes. Hammarskjöld quickly learned the value of such direct contact, noting in 1959 that

The permanent representation at Headquarters of all Member nations, and the growing diplomatic contribution of the permanent delegations outside the public meetings – often in close contact with the Secretariat – may well come to be regarded as the most important "common law" development which has taken place so far within the constitutional framework of the Charter.[167]

Hammarskjöld clearly acknowledges learning from the successes of experimentation and innovation in the absence of a clearly defined role and as a result of the failure of collective security, which catalyzed such practices. This statement, as does many of

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[166] Rovine, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 331, citing Foote at end of quotation.

[167] Foote, ed., *Servant of Peace*, p. 224.

Hammarskjöld's pronouncements, reflects a constant theme in this complex thinking - - that of the informal evolution not only of his own role but of the United Nations itself toward more effective strategies to preserve peace and more realistic and effective goals of the Organization.

Hammarskjöld was acutely aware of the fact that more active and greater independent action on his part would result in the achievement of more effective goals. As Mark Zacher asserted, this emergence of the Secretary-General as an active diplomatic agent has probably been "the most important 'procedural' change which has taken place in the peaceful settlement activities of the United Nations since its creation." Furthermore:

> This has greatly improved the ability of the Security Council and the General Assembly to influence conflicts along certain desired lines. It has allowed them to dispense with unwieldy and often divided committees, which were seldom able to carry out mediatory functions in an effective way, and to insert a single skillful diplomat, whether this be the Secretary-General or his personal representative, who has often been able to negotiate agreements between disputing parties.[168]

Hammarskjöld recognized the value of his own role as an independent single negotiator who can gain the confidence and cooperation of disputing parties through confidential negotiations, noting that "the main significance of the evolution of the Office of the Secretary-General...lies in the fact that it has provided means for smooth and fast action, which might not otherwise have been open to the Organization."[169]

Having established a capacity for independent action on behalf of the Secretary-General, Hammarskjöld in his second term began to significantly expand the functions of the Secretary-General in the realm of peace efforts. His activities testified to his dynamic capacity to learn about a broad range of issues and conceptually integrate them in the exercise of peacekeeping. In particular, he sought additional ways to work around the constraining impact of superpower discord in the Security Council. One such method that Hammarskjöld developed was concept of "preventive diplomacy", or peaceful mediation, and the accompanying notion of a "U.N. presence" in the context of the growing independence of the Secretary-General:

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[168] Zacher, "The Secretary-General and the United Nations' Function of Peaceful Settlement," p. 735.
[169] Hammarskjöld, as cited in Foote, ed., *Servant of Peace*, p. 227.

What I should like to call preventive diplomacy...may be conducted by the United Nations, through the Secretary-General or in other forms, in many situations where no government or group of governments and no regional organization would be able to act in the same way. That such interventions are possible for the United Nations is explained by the fact that...the organization has begun to gain a certain independent position, and that this tendency has led to the acceptance of an independent political and diplomatic activity on the part of the Secretary-General as the "neutral" representative of the organization.[170]

Stimulated by his own perception of the limits to the responses on the part of the United Nations to international conflicts, Hammarskjöld innovated new processes and doctrines to increase his ability to act and allow for greater scope of initiatives from which to learn. A further example of this innovative learning in the area of peacekeeping was Hammarskjöld's dispatch of a special representative to Southeast Asia to mediate a minor conflict between Thailand and Cambodia. The success of Johan Beck-Friis in acting as an advance information-gatherer and mediator, would receive much political support and become embedded in organizational doctrine. This innovation, commonly called the "good offices" of the Secretary-General, would thus set a precedent that would be frequently invoked in future peacekeeping missions. This experiment would also stimulate further learning for Hammarskjöld:

The parties agreed not to raise the issue in the Security Council but, anticipating a possible outcome, to direct parallel invitations...to the Secretary-General to send someone to assist them in getting over the difficulty. Without in any way making this a precedent, I responded to the invitations and a representative was sent there, with the acquiescence of the Security Council. You can see how much more effective and smooth-working such a technique is than the regular one, which involves all the meetings and debates, and so on.[171]

The record of Hammarskjöld's diplomatic achievements in the mid-1950s, not only in the Suez and Southeast Asia, but also in the Lebanese and other crises, demonstrated the value of this "good offices" role as an additional method of resolving international conflicts rapidly. Hammarskjöld affirmed that the dispatch of special representatives of the Secretary-General

may be regarded as a further development of actions of a good offices nature, with which the Secretary-General is now frequently charged. The steps to which I refer here have been taken with the consent or at the invitation of Governments concerned, but without formal decisions of other organs of the United Nations. Such actions by the Secretary-General fall within the

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[170] Hammarskjöld, *Address to Students Association, Copenhagen, 2 May 1959*, as cited in Foote, ed., *Servant of Peace*, p. 210.

[171] Hammarskjöld, *Press Conference Comments, 5 February 1959*, as cited in Foote, ed., *Servant of Peace*, p. 264.

competence of his Office and are, in my view, in other respects, also in strict accordance with the Charter.[172]

Thus Hammarskjöld confirmed and institutionalized this precedent as part of the United Nations repertoire for conflict intervention - - an innovation which would come to form part of the basis of preventive diplomacy, and more broadly, traditional peacekeeping.

The essential rationale behind Hammarskjöld's development of United Nations' efforts to maintain international peace and security - - preventive diplomacy, made possible by the independent position of the Secretary-General - - was, as noted, to remove particular local conflicts from the purview of the superpowers and the Cold War. Hammarskjöld indicated that this notion represented the "main field of useful activity" of the organization in its efforts to maintain peace and security:

> Experience indicates that the preventive diplomacy, to which the efforts of the United Nations must thus to a large extent be directed, is of special significance in cases where the original conflict may be said either to be the result of, or to imply risks for, the creation of a power vacuum between the main blocs. Preventive action in such cases must in the first place aim at filling the vacuum so that it will not provoke action from any of the major parties, the initiative for which might be taken for preventive purposes but might in turn lead to counter-action from the other side.[173]

Moreover:

> The ways in which a vacuum can be filled by the United Nations so as to forestall such initiatives differ from case to case, but they have this in common: temporarily, and pending the filling of a vacuum by normal means, the United Nations enters the picture on the basis of its non-commitment to any power bloc, so as to provide to the extent possible a guarantee in relation to all parties against initiatives from others. The special need and special possibilities for what I here call preventive United Nations diplomacy have demonstrated in several recent cases, such as Suez and Gaza, Lebanon and Jordan, Laos and the Congo.[174]

These statements reflect Hammarskjöld's capacity for innovation and subsequent evaluation. The importance of enunciating and implementing this notion would be fundamental to the conception of the role of United Nations peacekeeping, which had by this time replaced the objective of collective security as the fundamental purpose of the Organization. The very fact that this practice of peacekeeping, nowhere

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[172] Hammarskjöld, Introduction to *Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization, 1958-1959,* (New York: The United Nations, 1959), as cited in Foote, ed., *Servant of Peace,* pp. 226-227. (Hereafter *1959 Annual Report*).

[173] Hammarskjöld, Introduction to *Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization, 1959-1960,* (New York: The United Nations, 1960), as cited in Foote, ed., *Servant of Peace,* p. 303. (Hereafter *1960 Annual Report*).

defined in the Charter, was now widely accepted and recognized as having taken the place of collective security as a role for the United Nations strongly affirms the successful creation of a common and compelling vision based on shared understandings. As Rovine asserted:

> Generally speaking, the Secretary-General was reversing almost totally the original conception upon which the Organization was based. The notion of collective security by the great powers was now eliminated even in theoretical terms as a useful function for the world organization, and in its place was substituted the notion of the UN as a third-party neutral acting primarily to localize conflict and keep the great powers apart. This more modest conception however, went far beyond the "conventional thinking which sees in the Organization only, or mainly, a machinery for negotiation" and as such, constituted at once a more realistic appreciation of the UN's possible contribution in world politics, and a vision of the future in which international structures played a prominent part in constructing a better world order.[175]

Hammarskjöld's complex learning had successively resulted in the transformation of the United Nations from a deliberative organ to an operational instrument of peace and security.

In his development of an active role for the Office of the Secretary-General in U.N. peacekeeping, and more broadly, of the United Nations in world politics, Hammarskjöld learned several lessons from his direct experiences in mediating conflict and establishing peacekeeping operations. In applying these lessons, he successfully introduced many policy innovations (simple learning), and greatly transformed both his own role and the basic goals of United Nations efforts to maintain international peace and security into a more realistic and efficient vision than the notion of collective security (complex learning). Hammarskjöld's vision defined and continues to shape the practice of United Nations peace efforts.

Indeed, the broad manner in which peacekeeping evolved highlights this evolution of learning: the original practice of peace observation proved useful but in some cases problematic, leading to a search for new solutions that resulted in the deployment of larger, neutral, lightly-armed peacekeepers to separate belligerent forces. Along with peacekeeping, the innovative practices aimed at containing local

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[174] Ibid.

[175] Rovine, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 332, citing Hammarskjöld in his Introduction to the *Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization, 1961*, (New York: The United Nations, 1961). (Hereafter *1961 Annual Report*).

conflicts from superpower involvement, such as the dispatch of representatives for fact-finding and mediation purposes, personal visits on the part of the Secretary-General, and preventive diplomacy, are all examples of policy borne out of necessity and improvisation through active learning processes, and not mere mechanistic adaptation.

Even more so than the Suez crisis, the crisis in the Congo in 1960 posed a tremendous challenge to the integrity of the Organization, stimulating much learning and impacting tremendously upon the future of peacekeeping. The influence of the Secretary-General in developing the new mandate surpassed that of the Suez case in 1956. For instance, although Hammarskjöld regularly consulted and incorporated the ONUC Advisory Committee into most of the important decisions, from the outset, he openly sought and played a leading role in bringing the Congo crisis before the Security Council, drafting the first resolution that authorized him to "take the necessary steps" and requested him to report back "as appropriate." He interpreted the Council's resolutions, defined the specific objectives of the mission, personally selected the civilian and military commanders in the field to carry out his orders, and was generally responsible for the executive and military control of the entire operation.[176] Gordenker noted that

> Despite the differences between the Congo and the Sinai Peninsula and between the Security Council and the General Assembly, his ideas provided the main content of his mandate. The Security Council reached enough agreement in principle so that the way was open for inventive, executive action. And this time, the hand of the administrator was more practiced in turning a broad mandate into a peace-keeping force.[177]

Provided sufficient latitude by early agreement among the major powers, Hammarskjöld was presented with a great opportunity to experiment and test new ideas and innovations to further refine and improve the capacity of the United Nations to restore peace in lands of conflict through the practice of peacekeeping.

The ONUC force represented the first time a United Nations force was established in an internal dispute to stabilize chaotic and violent conditions that

[176] Lefever, Uncertain Mandate: Politics and Policies of the U.N. Congo Operation, p. 27.
[177] Gordenker, The U.N. Secretary-General and the Maintenance of Peace, p. 246.

erupted when the country gained independence from Belgium. As Hammarskjöld declared:

> The United Nations must in the situation now facing the Congo go beyond the time-honoured forms for technical assistance in order to do what is necessary, but it has to do it in forms which do not in any way infringe upon the sovereignty of the country or hamper the speedy development of the national administration.[178]

This new crisis obliged the United Nations to do "what is necessary" to prevent the complete breakdown of the country, establishing for the first time, a peacekeeping mandate to supervise troop withdrawal and restore order. Accordingly, the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Congo can more appropriately be considered as the first of the Second-Generation peacekeeping missions deployed in the 1990s, and served in ways as the model on which these later missions were based. Through this experimentation, much learning would result.

Fully aware of the sensitivity of the action that was being undertaken in the Congo, both in terms of the attitudes of those states having a strong interest in the course of events in the Congo, and of the resistance of the Congolese government to any seeming challenge to its authority, Hammarskjöld insisted on complete personal involvement and developed principles which would govern ONUC with these considerations in mind. They included being under the exclusive command of the United Nations, having a neutral composition and impartial posture, and the use of force only in self-defense. Each of these principles was severely tested during the operation, and at times, interpreted elastically. Hammarskjöld stated that

> The Congo crisis has put the Secretariat under the heaviest strain which it has ever had to face...[involving the] organization of a sizable military force under very difficult geographical and physical conditions, the creation of the necessary administrative framework for the military operation, and the development of a far-reaching civilian program to meet the most urgent needs of the country's economy.[179]

These new initiatives to deal with internal conflict, formulated by Hammarskjöld, would some thirty years later, become the basis for U.N. Second-Generation peacekeeping operations in intra-state conflicts, and the experience achieved here would serve as a

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[178] Hammarskjöld, *Memorandum on the Organization of the United Nations Civilian Operation in the Republic of the Congo*, 11 August 1960 UN SCOR, July, August, and September, 1960, p. 60.

[179] Hammarskjöld, Introduction to *1959-1960 Annual Report*, as cited in Foote, ed., *Servant of Peace*, p. 299.

guide in putting them into practice. For example, the "far-reaching civilian program" referred to by Hammarskjöld can be considered an embryonic precursor to the creation of wide-ranging peace-building functions of the United Nations in the 1990s.

In these circumstances of civil war, and lacking firm political support from the major powers, consensus from the developing states, and cooperation from authorities in Katanga, the United Nations would encounter its greatest challenge yet, resulting in the loss of 245 peacekeepers. At the same, the U.N. intervention in the Congo represented the Organization's zenith in world affairs. While Hammarskjöld was deeply aware, as Stanley Hoffman observed, that "the U.N. is not a kind of monolithic force capable of imposing its order on domestic chaos,"[180] his strong personal devotion to restoring peace in the Congo and ability to create shared understandings and a common vision had the effect of securing a relatively high level of autonomy for the Office of the Secretary-General and of the United Nations more broadly (as distinct from the major powers) in the conduct of peacekeeping within the Congo.

The United Nations' actions in this crisis represented a peak in international prestige for the Organization. R.J. Barry Jones opined that this "level of autonomy threatened, albeit temporarily, to supersede the rules of states by a novel form of supranational authority and thus offered a hint of the potentiality of a new, genuinely global political authority." The restrictions placed upon Hammarskjöld's successors, however, marked the "re-affirmation of the primacy of states' interests."[181]

The Congo experience led to many simple lessons and subsequent reforms. Hammarskjöld observed that:

> Naturally, however, the experiences have demonstrated weaknesses in the organization of the Secretariat. It does not dispose of a sufficient number of highly qualified senior officials for all the tasks that no have to be met — in spite of the feeling sometime voiced that the organization is 'top-heavy'. There is...within the Secretariat not enough of a diplomatic tradition or staff with training in political and diplomatic field activities to meet the needs which have developed over the years. And it is, finally, a considerable weakness that the

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[180] Stanley Hoffman, "In Search of a Thread: The UN in the Congo Labyrinth," *International Organization*, xvi, (Spring 1962), p. 355.
[181] R.J Barry Jones, "The UN and the International System," in *The United Nations in the New World Order*, Dimitris Bourantonis and Jarrod Weiner, eds., (New York: St. Martin's press, 1995), p. 35.

Secretariat has not in its ranks a highly qualified military expertise which is able, on a current basis, to maintain a state of preparedness for the kind of situation which the Organization has suddenly had to face.[182]

The Secretary-General would work diligently to correct these weaknesses, although in the wake of the former Soviet Union's disapproval of Hammarskjöld's action in the Congo, much of these reforms would not be implemented until several decades later. The importance of the recognition, after each operation, of such simple lessons should not however, be underestimated. While they may not have immediately translated into policy change, they would, over the gradual development of peacekeeping, and when the convergence of enabling conditions allowed, come to expand and improve the original concept of traditional peacekeeping.

It is not always the case that lessons from one operation are employed in other peacekeeping missions. As noted previously, organizational learning depends on features of individual memories and procedures that bolster organizational memory. As Levitt and March have argued:

Rules, procedures, technologies, beliefs, and cultures are conserved through systems of socialization and control. They are retrieved through mechanism of attention with a memory structure.[183]

At this relatively early stage in its history, the United Nations lacked such instruments to encode and preserve the lessons of experience. Hammarskjöld, however, was unique in that he made every effort possible to improve peacekeeping from prior experience, demonstrating an acute individual memory. The experiences in the Congo testified to the value of previous experience, illustrating how learning sets precedents and becomes embedded in organizational doctrine, to be drawn upon and modified in the future. As Hammarskjöld emphasized:

The value of such preparedness can be seen from the fact that the organization of the United Nations Force in the Congo was considerably facilitated by the fact that it was possible for the Secretary-General to draw on the experience of the United Nations Emergency Force in Gaza and on the conclusions regarding various questions of principle and law which had been reached on the basis of that experience. The Congo operation being far more complicated and far bigger than the Gaza operation, it is likely that it will lead to a new series of valuable

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[182] Hammarskjöld, *1959-1960 Annual Report*, in Ibid., p. 300. See also Evan Luard, *A History of the United Nations*, vol.2, *The Age of Decolonization*, 1955-1965, (London: Macmillan, 1989).

[183] Levitt and March, "Organizational Learning," p. 326.

experiences which should be fully utilized by the United Nations, by appropriate informal planning within the Administration.[184]

The "conclusions regarding various questions of principle and law" also exemplifies fundamental belief changes consistent with complex learning. In particular, the deteriorating situation in the Congo impelled Hammarskjöld to invoke Article 99 for the first time, initiating a meeting of the Security Council, and leading him to speculate upon the proper response and function of the Secretary-General in situations where the political mandate of U.N. operations was unclear or fragile. As a result of these speculations, he enunciated a doctrine of executive action to clarify his role in such situations:

> The Secretary-General has been under the obligation to seek guidance, to all possible extent, from the main organs; but when such guidance has not been forthcoming, developments have sometimes led to situations in which he has had to shoulder responsibility for certain limited political functions, which may be considered in line with the spirit of Article 99.[185]

This highly innovative and unprecedented interpretation of his role reflects Hammarskjöld's perspective that the Office of the Secretary-General has a competence and standing of its own, and is not completely dependent upon the decisions of member governments. More fundamentally, it illustrates Hammarskjöld's ability to quickly observe and interpret experience, learn, and innovate new solutions when called upon to do so, relating them to or justifying them under Charter provisions. Each experience, as had the Suez, further reinforced his learning that the more independent action he could implement, the more that could be accomplished by the Organization.

As a further example of this drive, Hammarskjöld took an unmistakable position of leadership in developing a mandate for the peace-keeping mission in the Congo. He built this position out of his use of Article 99 and the experience of UNEF. In directing the operation in the Congo, Hammarskjöld in fact drew heavily upon his experiences in UNEF. The precedents of both UNEF and ONUC had a persuasive bearing on the work of the Secretary-General, for they provided some firm background to which he could refer. In the Congo case, Hammarskjöld assumed the practicality of assembling a force and began planning it before obtaining the instructions he sought from the Security

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[184] Hammarskjöld, *1959-1960 Annual Report*, in Ibid., p. 301.

[185] Hammarskjöld, Introduction to *1961 Annual Report*, as cited in Foote, ed., *Servant of Peace*, pp. 366-367.

Council. As Gordenker noted, he "expressly employed the lessons of UNEF as the basis of his planning." Furthermore:

> As in the Suez case, he regarded the foreign troops in the Congo – sent by a Belgian government intent on protecting its nationals from what was believed to be a violent threat to their personal safety – as unacceptable "as a stopgap arrangement pending the establishment of order through the national security force.[186]

Hammarskjöld, on his own initiative, told the Security Council:

> I strongly recommend to the Council to authorize the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps, in consultation with the Government of the Congo, to provide the Government with military assistance during the period which may have to pass before, through the efforts of the Government with technical assistance of the United Nations, the national security forces are able to fully meet their task. It would be understood that were the United Nations to act as proposed, the Belgian Government would see its way to a withdrawal.[187]

Basing his actions upon UNEF experience, it followed that the new force would not be authorized to act beyond self-defense, would not take part in internal conflicts, and would comprise personnel whose nationalities caused no complications. Clearly, Hammarskjöld had referred to his prior learning in relation what worked in the case of UNEF and sought to apply those strategies to ONUC. This was possible, despite the U.N.'s lack of instruments and procedures to encode experience into organizational memory, as it was Hammarskjöld himself that had managed UNEF I and also because of the fact that UNEF I was still relatively fresh, and as the first such operation, imprinted in the Organization's memory. ONUC however, also represented a significant break from UNEF and traditional peacekeeping, as it was the first time the United Nations intervened in an internal dispute, with a mandate to restore order within the borders a state.

The influence of the Secretary-General in developing these new mandates hence surpassed that of the Suez case. His early and open involvement, planning, and ideas provided the main content of the mandate for a temporary, paramilitary intervention to ensure security in the Congo, and oversee the withdrawal of the Belgian troops. In addition, the conditions in the Congo were very different from those in the Sinai Peninsula, and ONUC would, as had UNEF, generate a set of new valuable lessons for peacekeeping. In adapting to the new set of environmental conditions such as the much

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[186] Gordenker, *The UN Secretary-General and the Maintenance of Peace*, p. 244.

larger scale of the operation and the different sources of conflict, ONUC represented a stronger peacekeeping force. Moreover, for the first time, a peacekeeping mission was expanded to include civilian assistance programs.

Constitutionally, there was no provision in the Charter that the Secretary-General would assume command of military force. Since there was no express prohibition, however, Hammarskjöld performed such a role in the Congo as experience required. This role involved the unprecedented innovations of the resort to the use of force to maintain the territorial integrity of the state; the provision of large amounts of humanitarian assistance; and the innumerable political and military actions taken to maintain law and order. ONUC took operational control of elements of the Congolese army and put great pressure on the various political factions to join in the formation of a viable national government. Some of these innovations would in turn become embedded in organizational doctrine, and drawn upon in future experiences of peace-enforcement in the early 1990s.

In contrast to Lie's attempts to establish a U.N. Guard Force, Hammarskjöld's experience in the Congo expressly taught him that, as every operation is unique, new strategies and doctrines needed to be developed each time that cater to the specific situation, and that flexibility is required on behalf of U.N. peacekeeping. Hammarksjold remarked that

> It should, however, be stressed that the Congo experience has strengthened my conviction that the organization of a standing United Nations force would represent an unnecessary and impractical measure, especially in view of the fact that every new situation and crisis which the organization will have to face is likely to present new problems as to the best adjustment of the composition of a force, its equipment, its training and organization.[188]

That different Secretaries-General reached different conclusions on the nature of peacekeeping illustrates that the role of the individual in relation to peacekeeping is not epiphenomenal, as consistent with theories of adaptation, but rather that all Secretaries-General do not learn from the lessons of operational experience to the same degree. Hammarskjöld's thinking in this regard reflects greater cognitive and conceptual complexity - - through his more comprehensive understanding of the nature of

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[187] Hammarskjöld, United Nations Security Council Official Records (SCOR), 873rd meeting, as cited in Gordenker, The UN Secretary-General and the Maintenance of Peace, p. 244.

peacekeeping and awareness of the potential dangers of a U.N. Guard Force - - than the thinking of his predecessor.

More broadly, although Hammarskjöld had the benefit of Lie's previous experience to draw upon, it is clear that the differences in the extent of learning between the two Secretaries-General are dramatic. In particular, Hammarskjöld displayed a very strong willingness to correct organizational weaknesses and put into practice what he learned from operational experiences. Hammarskjöld also learned extensively from experience how to implement better strategies for peacekeeping and more creatively develop tactics to improve the United Nations' capacity to act to preserve or restore international peace. The Secretary-General furthermore learned through experimentation how his own role in directing peacekeeping operations can productively enhance the role of the United Nations as an important diplomatic tool to resolve armed conflicts.

Like Lie, Hammarskjöld conceived of a dynamic rather than a static United Nations and advocated a flexible interpretation of the Charter regarding the Office of the Secretary-General. And although both were innovators, exponents of a diplomatic role for the Secretary-General, and both were willing to accept executive responsibility, Hammarskjöld exhibited a far greater degree of cognitive complexity, a much stronger willingness to experiment, and hence a wider range of learning. As a result, Hammarskjöld consequently innovated and achieved to a greater extent as Secretary-General. It must be recognized, in comparing these two Secretaries-General, that Hammarskjöld was presented with great crises in the Middle East and the Congo which urgently required solutions - - powerful incentives to learn. By the time of his premature death in the Congo, the United Nations was engaged in several major peacekeeping operations, with almost 25,000 soldiers under the United Nations flag, and, more importantly, under the command of the Secretary-General.

Hammarskjöld greatly expanded the powers of his Office and, through his independent and innovative action, significantly enhanced the ability of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security by "playing a vital role in making it a positive force for reconciliation," bringing an unprecedented degree of respect to the

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[188] Hammarskjöld, Introduction to *1960 Annual Report*, as cited in Foote, ed., *Servant of Peace*, p. 301.

Office of the Secretary-General. Adlai Stevenson noted the importance of this new development, stating in 1964 that

> Hammarskjöld...understood that the machinery not only needs lofty goals and high principles but it has to work in practice – that it has limited, not unlimited, functions; that it has finite, not infinite, capabilities under given circumstances at a time...
>
> ...Understanding all this, Dag Hammarskjöld – himself a key part of the machinery – helped make the machinery more workable, more adaptable, more relevant to the immediate political needs. By doing so, he helped expand the capacity of the machinery to act effectively. This, I think, was his greatest contribution to the United Nations, and thus to world peace.[189]

This statement underscores Hammarskjöld's realistic attitude, superior learning, and his awareness of the general process of the experimentation, learning, and organizational change.

Although the focus of this essay is on the individual, one must take care not to overstate the importance of that role in exercising United Nations diplomacy and peacekeeping. The enlargement of the powers and responsibilities of the Office of the Secretary-General which took place during Hammarskjöld's incumbency reflected not only his own leadership abilities but the needs of the international community and the systemic factors which encouraged the fulfillment of those needs by the Secretary-General at that juncture.

With these systemic forces facilitating the development of his Office, Hammarskjöld successfully managed to contribute not only to the United Nations' ability to preserve peace, but also to a growing autonomy for the Organization in international politics from its Member nations that would not duplicated until the end of the Cold War more than three decades later. Much of this dynamism in the 1950s can be attributed to the creation of UNEF I and the growing stature of Hammarskjöld. By the same token, however, this growth of stature for the Office of the Secretary-General was due also in significant measure to the latitude of independence allowed by the Member nations and the confidence those nations held in Hammarskjöld, a factor prone to instability. In the last two years prior to his death, Hammarskjöld had fallen out of favour with the Soviets for his independent action in the Congo crisis. As a direct result, any autonomy achieved

for the Organization was quickly withdrawn, and it would not be until almost three decades later that the Security Council would allow such initiative on the part of the Secretary-General.

U THANT

U Thant became Secretary-General of the United Nations in 1961, the successor of Dag Hammarskjöld and his dynamic eight-year Secretary-Generalship. This was also a time when the membership of the Organization had rapidly expanded (from 50 to 103), reflecting a new majority of developing nations from Asia and Africa, which supported policies of insistent neutralism and anti-colonialism. The U.S. could no longer command a majority in General Assembly votes. In this environment, U Thant of Burma was selected as Secretary-General, reflecting for the first time, a non-Western candidate.

U Thant would serve, in many respects, as a spokesman of these interests on behalf of developing nations. Given this broad support, U Thant would be less dependent upon the Great Powers than any of his predecessors, and, on certain occasions, would make his beliefs known on important issues, even demonstrating his displeasure bluntly at a particular member state's policy on occasion. Like Hammarskjöld before him, his words angered both Moscow and Washington at times, despite what some have called his "generally mild and diplomatically correct style."[190] However, in contrast to his predecessor, as Mark Zacher stated, he was "highly respected by most observers but [was] not regarded by them as possessing the rather unusual diplomatic finesse and physical energy of Hammarskjöld." Thant would greatly benefit from the expectations on the Secretary-General which had emerged from Hammarskjöld's Secretary-Generalship, succeeding on several occasions to exert his influence and continue all the practices and functions originated by his predecessor. However, with a few exceptions, he was unable

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[189] Adlai E. Stevenson, "From Containment to Cease-Fire and Peaceful Change," in Andrew W. Cordier and Wilder Foote, eds., *The Quest for Peace: The Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Lectures*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), p. 53.
[190] Rovine, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 343.

to further develop those functions or innovate new procedures for promoting peace and conciliation.

In the realm of peacekeeping, the permanent members of the Security Council were significantly more reluctant to undertake new initiatives given the difficulties encountered in the Congo. Moreover, when U Thant inherited the Office in 1961, the United Nations was, as Harrelson observed, "in the midst of a grave financial and political crisis...and the atmosphere was one of gloom."[191] These environmental and political conditions, along with U Thant's reserved personality, thus created an environment less conducive to learning.

Over the next decade, persistent difficulties in the Congo, the inability of the United Nations to take an active role in peace efforts in the Vietnam war, the Nigerian Civil war, and the conflict between India and Pakistan, as well as its failure to resolve the continuing disputes in the Middle East and Cyprus, would represent grave setbacks to the Organization and strike a major blow to its prestige. These failures would also promote learning for U Thant. However, while U Thant learned from these failures, it was not in the same degree as Hammarskjöld, as Thant lacked a strong willingness to experiment and learn more in the cognitively complex sense. In this respect, U Thant was more similar to Lie - - a "surface learner" - - failing to exhibit fundamental conceptual analysis and reevaluation. Moreover, U Thant did not succeed in mobilising consensual knowledge and institutionalizing learning as had his predecessor - - being severely constrained by inaction on the part of the major powers.

When it came to the development of his office, and to further development of the concept and practice of peacekeeping, U Thant's administration was largely a period of consolidation. During his term, it appears that U Thant relied heavily on Hammarskjöld's conception of the Secretary-General's role, explicitly stating that this role "has its basis, of course, not only in my cultural and religious background, but in the Charter, and in the experience and practices of my two predecessors."[192] Indeed, even before his appointment as Acting Secretary-General was formally

[191] Andrew w. Cordier and Max Harrelson. *Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations, Vol. VIII: U Thant, 1968-1971*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), p. 14. (Hereafter *Public Papers of the Secretary-General*)

confirmed, U Thant had made it clear that his concept of the Office was similar to that of his predecessors and that he intended to continue in the same direction.[193]

U Thant also shared with his predecessors a view of the United Nations as being concerned essentially with mediatory and conciliatory tasks, with peace-keeping operations designed to keep hostile parties from engaging in conflict. As U Thant affirmed, "my conception of the Secretary-General's role is to build bridges between peoples, governments, and states." Furthermore, U Thant noted that

> one of the primary functions of the Secretary-General – who is really the number one servant of this Organization – is to see that the United Nations serves as a centre to harmonize the actions of States, with a view toward the achievement of common ends...my primary function is to harmonize [those] viewpoints.[194]

This statement reflects U Thant's understanding of the importance of his role a hub for the creation of shared understandings if meaningful action is to occur. U Thant's diplomatic abilities in this regard, however, could not compare with his predecessor in terms of effecting organizational change.

U Thant stated that he agreed with former President Roosevelt that the chief executive of the United Nations should be called the "Moderator", and not the Secretary-General, which he viewed as misleading. Specifically, U Thant stated the primary function of the Secretary-General is to "moderate, to conciliate, to find a consensus, to harmonize, which would be in strict conformity with the language of the Charter."[195] Although this consensus-building role is an essential function of the Secretary-General, these statements stand in stark contrast to the views expressed by his predecessors who also advocated a strong leadership role for the Secretary-General in addition to acting as a moderator. This more limited conception of his Office would, along with the limitations placed on his capacity for independent action by the Security Council, constrain his ability to learn in the complex sense and significantly reduce his willingness to apply any learning through the innovation of new practices and procedures.

[192] U Thant, *View from the U.N*, (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978), p. 28.
[193] Rovine, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 333.
[194] U Thant, *Portfolio for Peace: Excerpts form the Writings and Speeches of U Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nations, on Major World Issues 1961-1970*, (Hereafter Portfolio for Peace), p. 11.
[195] Ibid., p. 13.

By the end of his first term, however, Thant's thinking became more in line with that of Hammarskjöld concerning the nature of his role. He began to argue that the Secretary-General must not limit his activities to purely administrative duties as the servant of the deliberative political organs, but must also play a political role. In helping to settle disputes, U Thant sought acceptance of this belief and took several political initiatives. As had his predecessor, U Thant believed that his Office must not be static, affirming that "the office is, of necessity, developed through *trial and error*, and in response to the demands and challenges of the passing years. Each Secretary-General must build as best he can on the office as he inherited it."[196][Emphasis mine]

Some scholars have argued that although he succeeded in mediating numerous conflicts, U Thant was not able to expand the importance of the Office beyond the point at which Hammarskjöld left it, and was not even permitted to hold the line. This was not due in any large measure to U Thant's leadership capacity, but rather to the fact the former Soviet Union and France strongly resisted further development of the discretionary powers of the Secretary-General. The need for stability and calm was essential when U Thant assumed office in 1961, so that the Soviet Union could regain assurance that its interests were not threatened by executive direction. Accordingly, Rovine has noted that

> Whether Thant would have been a more powerful Secretary-General in the absence of such resistance must remain purely speculative. He had succeeded in reducing enormously the controversy swirling about the Office at the end of Hammarskjöld's administration. Thant has not articulated intricate theoretical propositions concerning the structure and processes of the Office as did Hammarskjöld. He has supported Hammarskjöld's theory, but has not insisted on a strong application; nor has he any desire to construct a limiting theory. The result has been a marked absence of abstract pronouncements, and a concentration on pragmatism...In terms of articulating the nature, role, and goals of the Secretary-General, Thant has left the field to Hammarskjöld.[197]

While it is indisputable that such systemic factors created an environment much less conducive to experimentation and hence, learning, the role played by U Thant's personality also had a substantial impact in limiting learning and the application of

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[196] U Thant, *From Speech at Luncheon for the Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Scholarship Fund*, New York, 16 September, 1971, pp. 590-591.
[197] Rovine, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 343.

that learning to practice. This is not to imply that U Thant rarely learned. Indeed, there are several noteworthy illustrations of his learning over time.

U Thant clearly acknowledges studying and learning from the experience of his predecessors. In the realm of U.N. peace efforts, much of his activities involved putting into practice previously established procedures. "I exercised my good offices in a large number of disputes or difficulties. In doing so, I was merely following the previously established practice of taking action and keeping the Security Council informed of what I was doing."[198] Frustrated by the lack of collective action on behalf of the Security Council, U Thant sought to pursue, as had Hammarskjöld, "quiet diplomacy." Much of his time, in fact, was occupied in the exercise of his good offices - - often secretly and without any directive from any United Nations organ.

U Thant greatly appreciated the value of peacekeeping in dealing with international conflict. He affirmed early on that

> The United Nations has responded in a practical way to a variety of crises in its eighteen years of existence, and has, in the process, developed practices and precedents which have greatly enlarged its capacity to deal with emergencies...These efforts have also entailed an increased responsibility and workload for the Secretary-General and his staff as an objective international civil service. This too is a most significant institutional development.[199]

Furthermore,

> If we briefly look through the United Nations experience with this kind of operation, we can see that small and informal beginnings a useful body of precedent and practice has grown up over the years of using military personnel of Member states on peacekeeping operations.[200]

These statements clearly reflect U Thant's explicit understanding of the importance of learning from trial-and-error experience and the process by which this learning results in effective institutionalized policy change.

While U Thant recognized the value of such experimentation and innovation, and continued employing the practices developed by his predecessors, his activities,

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[198] U Thant, *View from the UN*, p. 31.

[199] U Thant, From "The United Nations as a Force for Peace," A Message to the People of Sweden," New York: 1 May 1963, as cited in Cordier and Harrelson, Public Papers, Vol. VI, p. 335.

[200] U Thant, *Address to the Harvard Alumni Association, "United Nations Stand-by Peace Force,"* Cambridge, Massachusetts, 13 June 1963, (Press Release SG/1520), as cited in Cordier and Harrelson, Public Papers, Vol. VI, p. 356.

however, were for the most part not as innovative as those of Hammarskjöld, given his unwillingness to experiment and the restrictions placed upon him and his capacity for independent action. Although U Thant's degree of cognitive complexity could be characterized as higher than that of Lie but below that of Hammarskjöld, these two other factors conspired to limit innovation. Despite these constraints, U Thant did in fact learn some valuable lessons from his experiences in peacekeeping and mediation, but much of what he learned was not put into practice. For instance, as he learned from his 'good offices' experiences, he noted that

> This quiet method of forestalling conflict...seems to me a part of the Secretary-General's role which should continuously developed as an alternative to the specific – and much more dramatic – invocation of Article 99. There are good reasons why Article 99 has been specifically invoked only once. Nothing could be more divisive and useless for the Secretary-General to bring a situation publicly to the Security Council when there is no practical possibility of the Council agreeing on effective or useful action. On the other hand, a quiet approach which avoids a public confrontation may often hold out some hope for success.[201]

Like Lie and Hammarskjöld, he applied the broadest possible flexibility to his interpretation of his functions and limitations under the Charter. Cordier has stated that

> although the two men differed in personality, philosophy, background and manner, Thant's public statements...reflect a keen grasp of world problems and their causes. Like his predecessor, Thant was a skilled diplomat eager to continue the development of the Office of the Secretary-General as an agency of conciliation and mediation.[202]

Moreover, he readily recognized and did not hesitate to speak his mind about the shortcomings of the United Nations, noting for instance that "so far the United Nations has not been able to achieve much in the political field."[203] Over his ten-year tenure, U Thant wrote at length about his views of the problems plaguing the Organization. It is not, however, evident in his public speeches that he actively sought out and readily learned in a complex sense, lessons from experiences, nor did he express a willingness to initiate fundamental policy change as a result of learning.

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[201] U Thant, from *Speech at Luncheon for the Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Scholarship Fund*, as cited in Cordier and Harrelson, *Public Papers* of the Secretary-General, *Vol. VIII*, p. 596.
[202] Cordier and Harrelson, *Public Papers of the Secretary-General*, *Vol. VI*, p. 7.
[203] U Thant, as cited by Cordier and Harrelson, *Public Papers of the Secretary-General*, *Vol. VI*, p. 128.

In marked contrast to his predecessor, U Thant seemed reluctant to justify the use of his good offices by reference to Article 99 of the Charter. For instance, he did not invoke Article 99 when he received the request from President Nasser in May 1967 to remove UNEF forces from the Sinai. He simply complied with the request, paving the way for the preemptive Israeli attack that followed. And during the India-Pakistan crisis over Bangladesh, which led to war in 1971, he was also eminently justified in invoking Article 99, but again did not. These two failures of sorts whereby U Thant disregarded his preventive responsibilities under Article 99 reflect not so much a lack of learning, but an unwillingness to experiment. However, this lack of experimentation contributed to the lack of learning by U Thant about the role and functions of U.N peace efforts.

Among U Thant's greatest contributions to his Office were his personal mediation efforts in the Cuban Missile Crisis. By actively intervening in the 1962 Cuban crisis, he established an important precedent for U.N. involvement in nuclear crises and thereby enlarged the scope of the Secretary-General's role in the prevention of conflicts. Moreover, in contrast to his predecessor's theory of preventive diplomacy which stressed the necessity for U.N. involvement in potential or actual conflict situations outside the realm of superpower conflict, U Thant directly interjected his Office into a dispute between the superpowers. Boudreau affirmed that

> In doing so, he legitimated the United Nations' interest and role in such crises, especially if others should occur in the future. It is significant that the superpowers not only allowed this to happen but made full use of the Secretary-General's intervention.[204]

Perhaps U Thant's most beneficial application to the concept of U.N. peace efforts was his innovative response to the humanitarian disaster in East Pakistan in 1971. Severe flooding and a particularly bloody civil war between East and West Pakistan which claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands and injured even more, resulted in an exodus of over nine million refugees to India and culminated in full-scale war between India and Pakistan. This situation impelled a search for new responses, and stimulated learning in U Thant, as he perceived the link between this

massive suffering and the war that followed. In particular, without any supporting resolution from any United Nations organ, U Thant initiated the United Nations Pakistan Relief Operation (UNEPRO), undoubtedly helping to save thousands of lives. Peacekeeping operations have almost always, as Raimo Vayrynen noted, "served primarily unilateral political and strategic interests of major powers."[205] U Thant's action in East Pakistan on the basis of humanitarian concerns is one of the few exceptions to this rule.

Justifying this unprecedented action, he stated that: "I felt that my obligation under the Charter must include any humanitarian action which I could take to save the lives of large numbers of human beings."[206] The sole authorization for this action was derived from Pakistan's acceptance of U Thant's offer to provide assistance, and U Thant justified his by reference to the Charter. Gideon Gottlieb has noted that

> Thant's explicit assertion that the Charter requires the Secretary-General to take humanitarian action, without any enabling resolution if need be, to save the lives of human beings in times of civil war, is an important development in the authority of the Office of [the] Secretary-General under the Charter. It has now been unanimously endorsed by the General Assembly...[207]

U Thant had learned from this experience and became acutely aware of the dire need for economic and social development in the countries of the Southern Hemisphere. U Thant similarly noted that, in reviewing the results of truce supervision in the case of UNTSO in Palestine, "the importance of the unsolved problem of the Palestinian refugees cannot be overemphasized. The Arab states consistently declined to discuss a peace settlement until the refugee problem was solved. This problem has been a major cause of the failure to convert the armistice into a peace settlement."[208] This learning in respect to the importance of deep-seated roots of conflict and the role of refugees in exacerbating

[204] Boudreau, *Sheathing the Sword*, p. 70.

[205] Raimo Vayrynen, "Focus On: Is There a Role for the United Nations in Conflict Resolution," *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 22, no. 3, 1985, p. 193.

[206] U Thant, as cited by Boudreau, p. 74.

[207] Gideon Gottlieb, "The United Nations and Emergency Humanitarian Assistance to India-Pakistan," *The American Journal of International Law 66*, p.364, as cited in Boudreau, *Sheathing the Sword*, p. 75.

[208] U Thant, *View from the UN*, p. 208.

conflict would come to form a fundamental component of peacekeeping strategies years later under the tenure of Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

In these two cases of learning, and action in East Pakistan, what further illustrates the distinction between adaptation, or relying upon previous doctrine, and learning and innovation, is that U Thant's intervention was in a conflict that was originally a civil war, within the domestic jurisdiction of the nation-state.[209] There had been no previous situation similar to this experience, and instead of relying on established procedures which would not apply, U Thant learned from the situation and developed new and unprecedented responses. He was not deterred by the norms of non-intervention, explicitly asserting that the Charter required such action on the part of the Secretary-General. As Boudreau noted of this action, "[U Thant] made it clear that the United Nations could effectively operate, even while a conflict was continuing, to mitigate the effects of violence through its humanitarian assistance, and thus...prevent a further deterioration of events."[210] This represented an important development in the authority of the Office of the Secretary-General and a new application of peacekeeping that was unanimously endorsed by the General Assembly in 1971, becoming embedded in Organization doctrine.

In his writings, U Thant conveyed evidence of having learned, but, as noted, did not exhibit a strong desire to apply these lessons in future peacekeeping missions, often unable to translate learning into policy change. The crisis in the Congo was an exception. With the death of Hammarskjöld, the Security Council acquiesced to an increased U.N. military role, authorizing U Thant to "take vigorous action, including the use of requisite measures of force" to apprehend and expel all foreign military and paramilitary personnel and bring about a resolution to the conflict. In contrast to his predecessor, in managing the ONUC force, he relied heavily on he Advisory Committee, calling their services "invaluable." This committee offered the Secretary-General a chance "to test proposed lines of actions," discuss policies with regard to the operation, and receive "sound

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[209] Article 2, paragraph 7, of the U.N. Charter prohibits the United Nations from intervening "in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state."
[210] Boudreau, *Sheathing the Sword*, pp. 75-76.

guidance."[211] Thant moreover, had the experience of his predecessor in the Congo, and by that time had acquired a greater understanding of the issues exacerbating the transition to independence.

> In regards to ONUC, U Thant drew several lessons:

> The force presented certain weaknesses common to all United Nations peace-keeping forces, since the national contingents composing it were never fully merged, used their own arms, and had their own commanding officers. The authority of the commander of the force did not extend to the discipline of its members, that being left to the commanders of each national contingent.[212]

U Thant expressed a desire to transform these principles of peacekeeping to take these lessons into account. In particular, he considered at this early stage, the usefulness of a standby force: "It would be extremely desirable...if countries would, in their national military planning, make provision for suitable units which could be made available at short notice for the United Nations service and thereby decrease the degree of improvisation necessary in an emergency." [213] With the conflict in the Congo having claimed the lives of two hundred and forty-five peacekeepers, however, the major powers were reluctant to establish such a force.

Despite the setbacks experienced in the Congo, the ONUC force, noted U Thant, "whatever its shortcomings, and whatever the political contentions about it, that Force has proved and extended the ability of the United Nations to meet grave emergency situations."[214] In learning from this experience, U Thant also recognized the limits of United Nations peacekeeping:

> The United Nations has learned very much from its experience in the Congo thus far; in the circumstances, much of that experience could only be unhappy. Fundamentally, what it has learned there is that the Congolese, in education, training and experience, and even in their understanding of the concept of nationhood, were unprepared to assume the responsibilities of independence; that fatal division and conflict were built into the political structure of the Congo at the very beginning of its independence; and that the inevitable consequence of these two conditions, acutely complicated by foreign interests and interference, was the collapse

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[211] Gordenker, *The U.N. Secretary-General and the Maintenance of International Peace and Security*, p. 202.

[212] Ibid., p. 148.

[213] U Thant, *Address to the Harvard Alumni Association, "United Nations Stand-by Peace Force,"* Cambridge, Massachusetts, 13 June 1963, (Press Release SG/1520), as cited in *Portfolio for Peace: Excerpts from writings and speeches of U Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nations, on major world issues 1961-1970*, (New York: United Nations Office of Public Information, 1970). p. 46. (Hereafter *Portfolio for Peace*)

[214] U Thant, *View from the UN*. p. 148.

and chaos which soon occurred in the Congo, with the United Nations then becoming the country's sole prop and hope.[215]

These statements also reflect U Thant's understanding of the different conditions of civil conflict and the need for peacekeeping to define its methods and functions accordingly. As the United Nations was obliged to search for new solutions, learning, and not adaptation, resulted.

U Thant recognized as a crucial difficulty inherent in peacekeeping the "continuing absence of any earnest resolve on the part of the parties directly involved in the dispute to seek a reasonable way out of it." Accordingly, he stated that "the effectiveness of peacekeeping depends above all on the willingness of the parties to accept, however grudgingly, a peaceful alternative to violence, even if they have no real will to peace in a solid and enduring sense."[216] The experience in the Middle East similarly reaffirmed the limits of peacekeeping for U Thant. He stated that "there is a profound lesson to be derived by this Organization from recent developments in the Middle East...the basic issues which provoke the explosions remain unsolved and, indeed, except for a few sporadic and inconclusive debates over the years, largely untouched by the United Nations." U Thant noted that there "has been no enduring, persistent effort in any United Nations organ to find solutions for them."[217] Furthermore:

> In my view, the failure of the United Nations over these years to come to grips with the deep-seated and angrily festering problems in that area has to be considered as a major contributing factor to the war...I am bound to express my fear that, if again no effort is exerted and no progress is made towards removing the root causes of conflict, within a few years at the most there will be ineluctably a new eruption of war.[218]

U.N. peacekeeping efforts in the Middle East and the Congo impelled a significant degree of learning on the nature of civil war and the limits of the outside intervention. U Thant clearly learned from experiences in the Middle East that there is a recurring pattern of conflict, which only sees highs and lows of violent eruption. Such conflicts must, he argued, be more profoundly addressed through long-term strategies that

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[215] U Thant, *Report in the Withdrawal of the United Nations Force form the Congo, June 29, 1964*, as cited in Cordier and Harrelson, *Public Papers of the Secretary-General, Vol. VI*, p. 601.

[216] U Thant, Introduction to *Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization, 1966-1967*, (New York: United Nations, 1967), (Hereafter *1967 Annual Report*),as cited in *Portfolio for Peace*, p. 49.

[217] U Thant, *1967 Annual Report*, as cited in *Portfolio for Peace*, p. 53.

"encourage democratic institutions and legitimate national aspirations." U Thant was the first Secretary-General to affirm the importance of socio-economic development in maintaining peace and security, noting that "there is a desperate need for a determined, immediate and urgent effort by the United Nations to help bring about the conditions essential to peace in the Middle East."[219]

As did Hammarskjöld before him, U Thant saw the U.N. as an active, evolving institution in need of improvement, stating that:

> I have no doubt that there is room for imaginative and forward-looking initiatives by these organs [Security Council and the General Assembly] in seeking ways to improve and further develop the capacity of the United Nations to settle disputes instead of trying merely to stop the fighting and to avoid a recurrence of it once it had erupted.[220]

U Thant specifically recognized that "there must be, therefore, a sound and gradual development of thought and action at the national and the international level, if, on this matter of peace-keeping, we are to profit from the lessons of the past and plan and act for a more stable and happier future."[221] Apart from his action in the humanitarian field, U Thant did not, for the most part, attempt to follow the example set by his predecessor to develop "this thought and action" and seek ways to overcome the limits imposed by the Security Council. While U Thant learned in significant measure many simple and a few complex lessons from peacekeeping experience, in contrast to Hammarskjöld's tenure, much more of this learning would be prevented from resulting in policy change because of the inability of the Members of the Security Council to agree. Moreover, while Hammarskjöld continually pushed the limits of both his capacity for independent action and peacekeeping, U Thant demonstrated a more resigned attitude to the limits of his action, and a reluctance to experiment. Although the severe constraints and subdued international environment accounts in part for U Thant's mixed record of learning, it is clear that his personality traits and leadership style equally shaped the extent of his learning. In summary, in comparing the two Secretaries-General, Hammarskjöld was an

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[218] Ibid., p. 53.

[219] Ibid.

[220] U Thant, Introduction to *Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization, 1965-1966*, (New York, United Nations, 1996), (Hereafter *1966 Annual Report*), as cited in *Portfolio for Peace*, p. 50.

[221] U Thant, *Address to the Canadian Parliament, Ottawa, Canada, 26 May 1964*, (press Release SG/SM/76), as cited in *Portfolio for Peace*, p. 50.

extensive learner who learned both simple lessons and very profoundly in the complex sense, whereas U Thant learned simple and a few complex lessons but to a lesser extent and in a less cognitively and conceptually complex manner.

U.N. peace efforts, the end of the Cold War, and the 1990s

From 1945 to 1988, the United Nations' responses to both its internal political difficulties as well as the global change in international conflict were quite innovative and, considering the political constraints within the Security Council, represent a significant achievement. During this period, the United Nations established six traditional peacekeeping operations, and six peace observation missions.[222] Despite the passive use of force associated with peacekeeping efforts in this period, traditional peacekeeping operations are still often dangerous, and have claimed the lives of almost 600 Blue Helmets and 50 in Observation missions.[223]

In learning from its early experiences in managing observation and traditional peacekeeping missions, the United Nations developed a doctrine of sorts commonly known as "the principles of peacekeeping." This "body of principles, procedures, and practices came to constitute a corpus of case law or customary practice," and characterized the management of peacekeeping until the late 1980s. Former Under-Secretary for Peacekeeping operations, Marrack Goulding, summarized these principles as the following:

1. They are United Nations operations. Formed by the United Nations from the outset, commanded in the field by a UN-appointed general, under the ultimate authority of the UN Secretary-General, and financed by member states collectively.

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[222] The U.N. operation in the Congo is not considered here as an example of traditional peacekeeping, but more accurately conforms to and represents the first, or embryonic model of Second-Generation peacekeeping. In particular, it employed active force and coercive measures against belligerents along the same lines as the use of peace-enforcement measures in the missions in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia.
[223] Hillen, *Blue Helmets*, p. 24. This number does not include the 245 peacekeepers killed in action in the U.N. operation in the Congo (1960-1964), for the reasons stated in the above footnote.

2. They are developed with the consent of all the parties involved and only after a political settlement has been reached between warring factions.

3. The forces are committed to strict impartiality. Military observer and peacekeepers can in no way take sides with or against a party to the conflict.

4. Troops are provided by member states on a voluntary basis.

5. These Units operate under rules or engagement that stress the absolute minimum use of force in accomplishing their objectives.[224]

These principles reflect the process of evolution in United Nations peacekeeping thus far, from its origins in the failure of collective security and subsequent limited practice of peace observation. They also illustrate the evolution of trial-and-error experimentation and learning on behalf of the Secretary-General from the experiences in peacekeeping.

This form of traditional peacekeeping permitted the United Nations to play an acceptable role in the maintenance of international peace and security, given the divisive, restrictive, and constraining attitudes of the Member states in the Security Council that reflected the state of international relations at the time. Hillen states that these principles "reinforced the political characteristics of a cooperative multinational organization that had no forces, structure, or mandates with which to manage a coercive military force," and that, "from a purely military standpoint the application of the principles of peacekeeping made observation and traditional peacekeeping missions somewhat militarily ineffective." Secretaries-General and the Secretariat had designed these operations recognizing this fact, having learned that the only way such missions would be approved was if they adhered to these principles. Former peacekeeper John Mackinlay has affirmed that "the importance of the military factor in the equation is considerably less than the political factor." Similarly, Ramesh Thakur states that "the goal of peacekeeping units is not the creation of peace, but the containment of war so that others can search form peace in stable conditions." Expectations for what these U.N. military

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[224] Marrack Goulding, "The Evolution of United Nations Peacekeeping," *International Affairs*, June 1993, p. 455. The principles first appeared in this form in s/11052/Rev. 27 October 1973, in reference to UNEF II.

units could accomplish through force were kept low, and traditional peacekeepers merely held the line while other nonmilitary forces worked to resolve the conflict.

The late 1980s forced the realization that these principles and limited responses were insufficient to meet the growing number of intra-state conflicts and environmental and humanitarian issues. With the optimism for a "New World Order" following the end of the Cold War, the international community turned to the United Nations to resolve a number of internal conflicts that had erupted. As Boutros-Ghali himself stated,

> The machinery of the United Nations, which had often been rendered inoperative by the dynamics of the Cold War, is suddenly at the center of international efforts to deal with unresolved problems of the past decades as well as an emerging array of present and future issues.[225]

As a result, propelled by the end of the Cold War and increased cooperation among the five permanent Members of the Security Council, both the number and forms of peacekeeping missions expanded tremendously. As U.N. Diplomat Shashi Tharoor similarly noted,

> at the end of the Cold War, an unprecedented degree of agreement within the UN Security Council in responding to international crises had plunged the organization into a dizzying series of peacekeeping operations that bore little or no resemblance in size, complexity and function to those that had borne the peacekeeping label in the past.[226]

Much of the traditional peacekeeping doctrine was altered in response to these sweeping changes and new challenges posed by intra-state conflict. These new missions reflected the changes in operational environments and the complex and multi-functional nature of what is commonly referred to as Second-Generation peacekeeping. In particular, Hillen has asserted that during this immediate post-Cold War period, the Security Council "created operations that had to operate in less supportive political environments, often in the middle of intrastate wars. The old political prerequisite of a previously concluded peace settlement was no longer always taken into account."[227] These new missions were considerable more complex than inert buffer zone

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[225] Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "Empowering the United Nations," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 1 Winter 1992-1993, p. 89.

[226] Shashi Tharoor, Special Assistant to the Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, "Should UN Peacekeeping Go Back to Basics?," *Survival*, vol. 37, no. 4 Winter 1995-1996, p. 53.

[227] Hillen, *Blue Helmets*, p. 25.

peacekeeping. Such more ambitious missions in unstable environments consequently required larger and more robust U.N. forces that were equipped aggressively.

These Second-Generation missions were qualitatively and quantitatively different from traditional missions, which, as Hillen notes, the U.N. had characterized as mere "holding actions." Such operations are defined by Fetherston as "force-level operations which usually, although not necessarily, include a large civilian component and are mandated explicitly to deal with socio-political and/or humanitarian aspects of the conflict."[228] The Economist characterized this change by stating that

> though still [sometimes] called peacekeeping, the concept of a true peacekeeping unit interposed neatly between two dormant belligerents has evolved into an untidy and intrusive host of soldiers and civilians who are supposed to demobilize guerilla armies, run or monitor elections, train police forces and rebuild shattered infrastructures.[229]

The first examples of such missions were the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia, and the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). In later cases such as Somalia and Bosnia, the United Nations attempted "a near-simultaneous management of political, societal, economic, humanitarian, electoral, diplomatic, and military initiatives."[230]

The fact that these new missions were now being implemented indicates that the previous learning about the weaknesses of peacekeeping such as those evidenced in the Congo, had not only registered, but also were gradually reinforced with experience and passed on from one Secretary-General to the next. This expansion and process of reform further reflected the ability of the Organization to experiment, learn, and benefit from each experience of peacekeeping. Many of these reforms were the result of lessons learned in the Congo, which were reinforced by subsequent operations in Somalia, Namibia, Mozambique, and Cambodia. The failures and successes registered here would lead the United Nations to devote much attention to peace-building, recognizing the critical importance of social and economic development as the basis for lasting and secure peace.

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[228] A. B. Fetherston, *Toward a Theory of UN Peacekeeping*, (London: St. Martin's Press, 1994), p. 24.
[229] *The Economist*, 26 December 1992, p. 57.
[230] Hillen, *Blue Helmets*, p. 26.

BOUTROS BOUTROS-GHALI

By the early 1990s, the guiding principles for peacekeeping developed by Hammarskjöld had, as noted, undergone a fundamental restructuring. Peacekeeping was now being applied to protracted and deep-rooted social conflicts resistant to resolution by traditional methods of conflict management aimed at inter-state mediation. This process reflected the dynamic ability of the United Nations not merely adapt to the altered political landscape and nature of international conflict, but to actively learn from its four-decade old experience in peacekeeping. Much of this dynamism on the part of the United Nations can also be attributed to the capacity to learn and the motivation to improve the effectiveness of peacekeeping on the part of Boutros Boutros-Ghali. However, these changes did not occur solely as the result of Boutros-Ghali's strong determination to reform and revive the practice of United Nations peacekeeping, but were enabled by a convergence of other international environmental and political factors. The end of the Cold War had ushered in great hope for the ability of the United Nations to provide collective security, and the permanent members of the Security Council began to agree more closely on coordinating their policies, and thus began to authorise more peacekeeping missions. Whereas in 1990, the United Nations was managing fewer than 10,000 personnel in eight observation and traditional peacekeeping missions, by 1993, it had control over some 80,000 troops in eighteen different missions.[231]

Early in his term in 1993, Boutros-Ghali could bask in the U.N.'s newly won credibility after its role in Persian Gulf war, and count on the support of a broader base of members of the Security Council. Boutros-Ghali did not hesitate to take advantage of this latitude to expand his powers and pursue his vision of the United Nations. Much like Hammarskjöld, he was quick to act, and had no qualms about using any loophole in the U.N. Charter that might give him a little more power. He interpreted Article 99 very

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[231] Ibid., p. 28.

broadly to take more initiative and exercise more authority. Boutros-Ghali was equally active in crises and effective in expanding the role of his office.

Boutros-Ghali's approach to peacekeeping was, however, very different than that of Hammarskjöld's, which was predicated on noncoercive and facilitative activities. In contrast, Boutros-Ghali sought to create a role for peacekeepers that involved repelling aggression through armed combat. Frustrated with the limits of peacekeeping in civil conflicts where the combatants prefer to seek their goals through violence, Boutros-Ghali was determined to seek new means of injecting more authority and strength into United Nations peacekeeping. In this sense Boutros-Ghali's thinking was for a long time, "committed", or strictly focused on this dimension of empowering Second-Generation peacekeeping operations, at the expense of other critically important issues. The Secretary-General consequently required a longer time to address other dimensions.

One of the major recommendations of *An Agenda for Peace* for example, was to establish agreements with governments to set aside special troops for possible rapid deployment in peacekeeping and other military missions. Furthermore, Boutros-Ghali broke new ground in recommending the use of peace-enforcement troops, more heavily armed than traditional peacekeepers, for dangerous military missions such as the forcible maintenance of a cease-fire. This proposal went far beyond previous calls for a standing U.N. force.

An indication of this new and stronger policy was Boutros-Ghali's decision to use air power in the conflict in Bosnia as authorized by the Security Council. As Stanley Meisler noted, "conscious of the authority of his office, the Secretary-General interpreted the resolutions to mean that he had the right to order the first use of air support and air strikes to protect the safe areas." Furthermore, Meisler noted that international acceptance of Boutros-Ghali's "right to order or veto air power allowed him to assert an executive power as if he were a kind of chief minister of the Security Council."[232] As with the control of armed forces against Congolese rebels in Katanga some thirty years before, this action represented an extreme instance of the power of the Secretary-General.

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[232] Stanley Meisler, "Dateline U.N.: A New Hammarskjöld?" in *Foreign Policy* 98 Spring 1995, p. 192.

Although Boutros-Ghali was early on often likened to Hammarskjöld for his outspoken and independent-minded leadership style, Boutros-Ghali was, in contrast, much less open to new ideas and advice, preferred not to rely on advisors, and was generally considered very dictatorial. One journalist portrayed him as "an intellectual and a politician but not a diplomat and not a master of UN complexities" due to his "abrasive, arrogant, confrontational and worse, often imprudent methods."[233] Political psychologists would attribute this behaviour to Boutros-Ghali's very high need for power.[234] Despite his disregard for open debate among advisors, Boutros-Ghali's writings exhibited a large capacity to learn from operational experience, and a high degree of cognitive complexity, surpassed only by Hammarskjöld. In reformulating the basis of peacekeeping, Boutros-Ghali broke new ground and went far in demanding new military roles for the United Nations. In addition to these new functions aimed at maintaining peace (simple learning translated into policy change), he also demonstrated how the peacekeeping experiences in Somalia and Bosnia generated complex learning (establishment of new goals).

In particular, Boutros-Ghali took an important step forward for both the United Nations and the international community when he requested the imposition of U.N. decisions on recalcitrant parties. While in the past, the U.N. was unable in any way to force the parties to a conflict to respect agreements they had signed, Boutros-Ghali's concept was to change the equation. As he described it: "There is a conflict between A and B. A and B agree to a cease-fire and the deployment of a peacekeeping mission. But A decides not to respect the cease-fire. The UN then decides to take action against A. I will ask for coercive measures against A."[235] This view was conveyed in Boutros-Ghali's

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[233] Louis Wizniter, "Boutros-Ghali's Sinking Ship," *The Japan Times*, 25 March, 1993.

[234] Preston and 't Hart, "Understanding and Evaluating Bureaucratic Politics," 1999, pp. 60-61. The need for power is a personality trait has been extensively studied. See T. W. Adorno., E. Frenkel-Brunswick, D. J. Levinson, and R.N. Sanford, *The Authoritarian Personality*, (New York: Harper, 1950); R.P Browning and H. Jacob, "Power Motivation and the Political Personality," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 28, 1964, pp. 75-90; Etheredge, *A World of Men*, 1978; Hermann, "Explaining Foreign Policy Behaviour Using Personal Characteristics of Political Leaders, *International Studies Quarterly*, 24, 1980, pp. 7-46; and R. J. House, "Power and Personality in Complex Organizations," 1990. In this study, need for power is not as relevant for learning. In particular, while high need for power has been linked to less open decision-making, in contrast to other personality variables such as cognitive complexity and willingness to experiment, an individual's need for power does not appear to significantly affect the ability to learn.

[235] Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *Interview with Jocelyn Coulon, 1993*, as cited in Jocelyn Coulon, *Soldiers for Peace: The United Nations, Peacekeeping, and the New World*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), pp. 4-7.

interpretation of Second-Generation peacekeeping: "the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, *hitherto* with the consent of all parties concerned."[236] [Emphasis added] Learning from the inability of the United Nations to maintain peace when parties to a conflict insist on violence in cases such as Somalia, Boutros-Ghali attempted to redefine the basis of peacekeeping to include an enhanced military capacity which was previously regarded as outside the scope and capacity of peacekeeping.

Drawing upon past experiences, Boutros-Ghali also took advantage of the new opportunities afforded by the profound transition in international relations to develop a holistic conception of peacekeeping aimed at better managing global conflict. This conception of peacekeeping was based upon the elements of preventive diplomacy, traditional and multidimensional peacekeeping and peacemaking, allowing for peace-enforcement as well as mediation and post-conflict peace-building. In his document *An Agenda for Peace*, Boutros-Ghali defined each of these new functions and their inter-relationship, establishing a new broad basis for peacekeeping. For the first time, a Secretary-General had explicitly advocated the use of peacemaking and peace-enforcement as acceptable functions of peacekeepers when absolutely necessary. Furthermore, this represented the first time that peace-building was embedded in peacekeeping doctrine, becoming widely accepted and endorsed by the General Assembly.

Boutros-Ghali's new conception of peacekeeping as outlined in *An Agenda for Peace* reflected a greater understanding of security, involving not only military, but also social, economic, and humanitarian considerations. It encompassed many lessons the United Nations had learned from peacekeeping operations since the Congo. Boutros-Ghali's new philosophy of peacekeeping also illustrated how his elaborate thinking covered many different dimensions, illustrating a high degree of cognitive complexity. In particular, these dimensions included not only the need for improved reaction capabilities, but also new strategies to deal with social and economic conditions, the fragility of the ecosystem, the widening gap between rich and poor nations, and the close linkages across these dimensions and their relation to conflict. Boutros-Ghali affirmed that

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[236] Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking, and Peacekeeping*, (New

We have seen how problems emanating from poverty, social unrest and humanitarian tragedies in jus one state can — if left unchecked — reach a magnitude that disrupts the stability of an entire region. That is why I believe that there can not really be peace without development. It is therefore essential that efforts toward peace be pursued along with efforts toward economic and social development in an integrated and supporting way.[237]

An Agenda for Peace also tapped into an array of diplomatic and academic proposals to improve and modernize the United Nation's capacity to maintain international peace and security, illustrating how in addition to trial-and-error experimentation, Secretaries-General and the U.N. more generally, learn from epistemic communities who have been studying the problems associated with peacekeeping. I will mainly focus on instances of complex learning, as it would be too lengthy an exercise to examine the numerous reforms and improvements to the management of peacekeeping operations. Although many of these simple and more fundamental lessons were not new, Boutros-Ghali was determined to seize the opportunity in the post-Cold war world to realize these reforms and build a more effective peacekeeping process.

In addition to his unprecedented proposals in *An Agenda for Peace,* Boutros-Ghali's first Annual Report in 1993 would be the longest and most comprehensive one of a Secretary-General in many years, reflecting the author's devotion, great ambition, and hopes for the United Nations. In regards to peacekeeping, Boutros-Ghali re-affirmed his 'new peacekeeping' vision to meet the demands of a fundamentally altered international context:

I discussed the need to view efforts for peace as a continuum over time. From preventive diplomacy to peacemaking and peace-keeping, to post-conflict peace-building, the cycle continues through perpetual rounds. Increasingly we have learned that working for peace provides us with no place for rest.[238]

Boutros-Ghali explicitly recognized that his work represented a profound change or evolution, towards Second Generation Peacekeeping as part of the broader "United Nations renaissance." He learned that in order to cope with the new demands and challenges posed by intra-state conflict, the U.N. "must fashion comprehensive and

York: United Nations, 1992), para. 20. Emphasis added. (Hereafter *An Agenda for Peace*)

[237] Boutros-Ghali, "Setting a New Agenda for the United Nations," Interview with Carolyn Reynolds et al., *Journal of International Affairs,* 46, no.2, Winter 1993, pp.290-291.

[238] Boutros-Ghali, *Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization,* 1993, (New York: United Nations, 1993), p. 2. (Hereafter *1993 Annual Report*)

integral projects, policies, and efforts" based on a more universal social and economic development-oriented approach, in addition to stronger military approaches.

Boutros-Ghali elaborated his concept of peacekeeping further, consciously recognizing the importance of learning from experience:

> The past twelve months have demonstrated that peace operations involve interrelated functions. United Nations operations in the field, most prominently in Cambodia, El Salvador, Somalia, and the former Yugoslavia, have had to range far beyond the accepted notion and definition of peace-keeping. Virtually every one of the departments and established functions of the United Nations may now be involved in operations for peace. The second generation of peace-keeping is certain to involve military but also political, economic, social, humanitarian and environmental dimensions, all in need of a unified and integrated approach.[239]

Moreover, Boutros-Ghali has noted that the "established principles and practices of peace-keeping have responded flexibly to new demands of recent years," and that:

> the basic conditions for success remain unchanged: a clear and practicable mandate; the cooperation of the parties in implementing that mandate; the continuing support of the Security Council; the readiness of Member States to contribute the military, police and civilian personnel, including specialists, required; effective United Nations command at Headquarters and in the field; and adequate financial and logistic support.[240]

The experience garnered from peacekeeping missions in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia instigated profound learning that affected the form of subsequent missions. While the United Nations had realized a very substantial degree of success through the incorporation of this wider framework for U.N. peace efforts, continuing experiences in these conflicts, and future experience in Rwanda, would register dramatic failures, at times highlighting the lack of learning on behalf of the United Nations. In particular, although the United Nations had drawn upon some key lessons from the ONUC operation in the Congo, and from the humanitarian action practiced under U Thant's leadership, it equally failed to employ other lessons in these later Second-Generation peacekeeping operations.

This failure highlights the degree to which the United Nations not so much lacks an institutional memory where the organization and deployment of multinational forces are concerned, but rather structures and procedures to make full use this memory. Prior to

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[239] Ibid.
[240] Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace*, para. 50.

the 1990s, no records (or very few records) had been kept of either the issues arising during deployment period periods in varying situations, or the problems or their solutions which have arisen in previous operations. Moreover, turnover of U.N. personnel and especially military staff, even commanding officers, is such that personal insights or wisdom also tended to be lost. The U.N. operation in the Congo is a prime example. The experiences of the ONUC force foreshadowed many of the problems faced by current Second-Generation missions, but no official records are available and those officers and troops who took part in the Congo operation are, for the most part, long since retired from active service.

This example illustrates that the lengthy period between the Congo and the era of expansion during which no large peacekeeping missions were authorised, was detrimental to the practice and evolution of U.N. peace efforts. It further confirms that while Secretaries-General tend to benefit from the experience of their immediate predecessors - - lessons which are still "fresh" in their own and organizational memory - - it has been far more difficult for them to readily access the lessons of U.N. peacekeeping experiences some twenty and thirty years earlier. It is often the case that such "older" lessons may hold greater relevance than perhaps some more recent missions.

Hillen has noted that the United Nations experienced two similar cycles between 1948 and 1996 involving its role in organizing and managing peacekeeping operations. In each of those cycles, "the UN, encouraged by moderate success in missions involving small, impartial, and passive peacekeeping measures, attempted more active approaches to peacekeeping that strayed into the realm of coercive enforcement."[241] In the first of these latter ventures – the Congo – the U.N. "burned its fingers" by engaging in the fighting and squandering its impartial status, with the result that the Security Council authorized only three new observation missions and four peacekeeping operations that strictly adhered to prior principles over the next 25 years. This cycle would be repeated thirty years later under the leadership of Boutros-Ghali. This repetition of history demonstrates that organizational learning is not linear and constant, but rather interactive,

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[241] Hillen, "Getting UN Military Operations Back to Basics," in Ted Galen Carpenter, ed., *Delusions of Grandeur*, (1995), pp. 113-118.

prone to neglect as the result of personnel turnover, and likely to be forgotten unless a steady stream of crises and failures exist to stimulate such learning.

As failures had done in the Congo, each failure of the Second-Generation missions reinforced the lessons of the limits of peacekeeping, where a great discrepancy exists in relation to both the international community's and many scholar's expectations of peacekeeping's abilities. For instance, Boutros-Ghali has written that

> In recent years, the practice of peace-keeping, developed during the cold war and based on the consent and cooperation of the parties and the impartiality of United Nations forces, with resort to arms only in self-defence, has proved most effective in multidimensional operations where the parties not only entered into negotiated agreements but demonstrated the political will to achieve the goals established. However, where the climate was one of hostility and obstruction instead of cooperation and political will, peace-keeping came under heavy strains and pressures. This has been the experience in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the United Nations itself came under armed attack.[242]

Moreover:

> While efforts to achieve a political agreement between the parties remained futile, the determination to press for military advantage undermined laboriously negotiated cease-fires, and the force of events on the ground drove the United Nations into situations in which mandates assigning peace-keeping tasks simultaneously with limited enforcement actions proved contradictory and ineffective. The Bosnian Serbs' use of military force to obtain their objectives demonstrated the perilous balance to be maintained by the international community between the limits of a mandate defined in response to a particular situation and the larger objective of realizing the purposes of the Charter. This has compelled renewed reflection on the instruments available to the international community in its efforts to maintain international peace and security.[243]

The setbacks suffered in Bosnia led Boutros-Ghali, as noted, to advocate a greater peace-enforcement role for the United Nations. In particular, while in the past peacekeepers were authorized to fire only in self-defense, "as a last resort if deterrence should not prove effective," the difficulties experienced by the 500 Pakistani troops in Mogadishu, who were largely immobilized by the violence and looting that ravaged the city, led to a re-examination of the basis of peacekeeping. Under these circumstances, the major humanitarian effort on behalf of the U.N. and other non-governmental organizations came to a practical halt. Accordingly, Boutros-Ghali stated that

> the conditions that have developed in Somalia...make it exceedingly difficult for the United Nations operation to achieve its objectives approved by the Security Council. I am giving

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[242] Boutros-Ghali, *Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization*, 1995, (New York: The United Nations, 1995), p. 222. (Hereafter *1995 Annual Report*)

[243] Ibid.

urgent consideration to this state of affairs and do not exclude the possibility that it may become necessary to review the basic premises and principles of the United Nations effort in Somalia.[244]

The U.N. force in Somalia was subsequently strengthened to authorize the use of "all necessary means" to ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance. This action not only set a precedent in that it was the first time that military force was justified by humanitarian assistance, but it provided a new definition of international security in the post-Cold War world. In particular, these new changes in the deployment of peacekeeping operations challenged the traditional U.N. peacekeeping requirement for strict neutrality and the passive use of military force. To manage the strategic challenges of these many complex and dangerous missions, the U.N. for example, rejected its traditional recruiting formula and relied heavily on the sophisticated military forces of the great powers. The United Nations had learned from its past experiences that the innocuous forces and methods employed under traditional peacekeeping could only succeed in highly favourable political conditions. Such propitious political circumstances, however, were neither present nor obtainable in several Second-Generation peacekeeping environments. Having learned the consequences of deploying traditional peacekeeping forces in such hostile environments such as Somalia, Boutros-Ghali thus sought to ensure that future missions were deployed with more robust, or militarily aggressive mandates.

In his 1994 Annual Report, after having witnessed major failures in Somalia, Rwanda, and Bosnia, Boutros-Ghali's statements reflected a greater understanding of the limits of peacekeeping and of collective action dependent upon the Security Council. These experiences of failure provided a rich source for simple and complex learning. Affirming the importance of learning for the future of U.N. peace efforts, the Secretary-General declared that

> The instrument of peace-keeping has been employed in new and ever more challenging settings. It has met with profound successes as well as the inevitable set-backs from which much can be learned. Yet in learning from these set-backs we must take special care not to make the mistake of discarding useful tools, or attempting to shun risks altogether.[245]

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[244] Boutros-Ghali, *Security Council Resolution 751*, establishing UNOSOM, 1992.
[245] Boutros-Ghali, *1994 Annual Report*. p. 153.

This learning includes both many complex and simple lessons:

> The experience in Somalia has underlined again the necessity for a peace-keeping operation to function as an integrated whole. That necessity is all the more imperative when the mission is operating in dangerous conditions. There must be no opening for the parties to undermine its cohesion by singling out some contingents for favourable and others for unfavourable treatment. Nor must there be any attempt by troop-contributing Governments to provide guidance, let alone give orders, to their contingents on operational matters. To do so creates division within the force, adds to the difficulties already inherent in a multinational operation and increases the risk of casualties. It can also create the impression amongst the parties that the operation is serving the policy objectives of the contributing Governments rather than the collective will of the United Nations as formulated by the Security Council. Such impressions inevitably undermine an operation's legitimacy and effectiveness.[246]

These statements make reference to a wide range of important simple and complex lessons and limits learned from the U.N. experience in Somalia. More generally, while the early post-Cold war agreement among the Security facilitated rapid and dramatic expansion, experimentation, and eventual learning, by the mid-1990s, the United Nations and the international community began to realize the negative impact of this overloading and peacekeeping overstretch that was the result of previously exaggerated 'post-Cold War euphoria.' Boutros-Ghali affirmed that "the limits are being reached."[247] Rivlin similarly noted that

> Because the situations in Somalia and Bosnia had become more intractable and new conflicts were being dumped into the lap of the world body, the new post-Cold War climate did not lend itself to reasoned discourse over how the UN could be "strengthened" and made more "effective" in dealing with threats to the peace...[248]

Although by this time the United Nations under Boutros-Ghali's leadership had experienced in Somalia and Bosnia the severe consequences of an international organization attempting to accomplish far too ambitious and unrealistic mandates given its political constraints and limited resources, Boutros-Ghali remained confident in his optimism and belief that the United Nations could and should consider the use of peace-enforcement under certain circumstances, prompting him to push for the establishment of a rapid reaction force. He noted that

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[246] Boutros-Ghali, *Supplement to An Agenda for Peace: Position Paper of the Secretary-General on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations*, (New York: United Nations, 1995), p. 10. (Hereafter Supplement to "An Agenda for Peace")

[247] Boutros-Ghali, as cited in Shashi Tharoor, "The Future of Peacekeeping," in Thakur and Thayer, eds., *A Crisis of Expectations*, p. 20.

In these circumstances, I have come to the conclusion that the United Nations does need to give serious thought to the idea of a rapid reaction force. Such a force would be the Security Council's strategic reserve for deployment when there was an emergency need for peace-keeping troops. It might comprise battalion-sized units from a number of countries...The value of this arrangement would of course depend on how far the Security Council could be sure that the force would actually be available in an emergency. This will be a complicated and expensive arrangement, but I believe the time has come to undertake it.[249]

By 1995, however, Boutros-Ghali was forced to recognize that any attempt to inject peacekeepers with more military power could only produce greater problems in view of the lack of political authority and strategic legitimacy inherent to the Organization. This complete reversal in thinking or belief change clearly illustrates how learning shapes the future direction of United Nations' conceptions of its goals and attitudes concerning its efforts to maintain international peace and security:

The limits of peace-keeping in ongoing hostilities starkly highlighted by the distressing course of events in the former Yugoslavia have become clearer, as the Organization has come to realize that a mix of peace-keeping and enforcement is not the answer to a lack of consent and cooperation by the parties to the conflict. The United Nations can be only as effective as its Member States allow it to be. The option of withdrawal raises the question of whether the international community can simply leave the afflicted populations to their fate. The Organization has been confronted with this issue with increasing frequency, not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also in Somalia, Rwanda, Liberia, Angola, and elsewhere.[250]

The frustrations of Somalia and Bosnia had thus taught Boutros-Ghali that peace-enforcement, however badly needed, was not only not likely to be achieved given the reality of a lack of support by the major powers, but also was ill-suited to the fundamental conception behind United Nations peace efforts. As he recognized in 1995, "Enforcement action at present is beyond the capacity of the United Nations except on a very limited scale...It would be folly to attempt to alter this reality at the present time."[251]

No other Secretary-General was faced with as many challenges and opportunities as Boutros-Ghali, and no other since Hammarskjöld actively, consciously, and continuously learned as much as Boutros-Ghali. The dramatic end of the Cold War and collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe not only prompted rethinking and learning among international security scholars and leaders but also, as attested by Boutros-Ghali, organizational learning and evaluation on a massive scale. Such organizational learning

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[248] Rivlin, "The UN Secretary-Generalship at Fifty," in *The United Nations in the New World Order*, p. 97.

[249] Boutros-Ghali, *Supplement to An Agenda for Peace*, p. 11.

[250] Boutros-Ghali, *1995 Annual Report*, p. 223.

would serve as the basis for a new era of renewal and reform of the United Nations, and of peacekeeping in particular:

> Increasing our responsive capacity to immediate crises clearly is not enough...The United Nations must renew and strengthen its commitment to work in the economic and social fields as an end in itself and as the means of attending to the sources of conflicts. In the altered context of today's world, the definition of security is no longer limited to land and weapons. It now includes economic well-being, environmental stability and the protection of human rights; the relationship between international peace and security and development has become undeniable...In the midst of urgent efforts to deal with outbreaks of violence and sudden disasters, it is the task of the world community to redefine and bring to fulfilment the idea of development as the long-term solution to the root causes of conflict.[252]

This recognition of the critical importance of social and economic development to the securing of peace, as noted three decades before by U Thant, was finally being manifested in the program of peace-building, becoming widely accepted by governments around the world. Boutros-Ghali's extensive learning from peacekeeping operations accounts for many changes to the conception and application of peacekeeping.

In his document "Implementing "An Agenda for Peace", Boutros-Ghali acknowledged the General Assembly's acceptance of his recommendations in Agenda for Peace and its Supplement, and the specific resolutions adopted that gave him a clear mandate to pursue his recommendations and actions such as preventive diplomacy and early-warning techniques. The Supplement was accorded a high degree of priority in the Security Council, General Assembly, and other organizations and entities. As Boutros-Ghali observed, "it is encouraging to see that the lessons of contemporary peace-keeping have begun to appear not only in United Nations documents but in the training manuals of number of Member States as well."[253] Moreover, Boutros-Ghali clearly recognized the importance of learning itself for the future of the organization:

> Our ability to fulfil that promise [for peace and development] depends on how well we can learn the lessons of the Organization's successes and failures in these first years of the post-cold-war age. Most of the ideas in "An Agenda for Peace" have proved themselves. A few have not been taken up.[254]

Indeed, not since Hammarskjöld's tenure had there been a similar demonstration of learning on the part of the Secretary-General - - learning which had begun to translate

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[251] Ibid., p. 17.

[252] Boutros-Ghali, 1994 Annual Report, p. 2.

[253] Boutros-Ghali, Implementing "An Agenda for Peace", (New York: United Nations, 1995), p. 1.

into fundamental change in the understanding, operation, and goals of peace-keeping. While Hammarskjöld possessed a greater intellect and capacity to learn, Boutros-Ghali was more ambitious and determined to revitalize the United Nations, and thus sought to learn as much as he could. Moreover, Boutros-Ghali was challenged with many more instances of grave failure than Hammarskjöld, and was given the authorization to implement many reforms in the aftermath of the end of the Cold war. Under his guidance, a new and expanded set of underlying principles for peace-keeping, with an unprecedented focus on economic and social development had been formulated and implemented.

The establishment of Second Generation peacekeeping on the part of Boutros-Ghali is illustrative of how, in Haas' words, "human collectivities choose more complexly and discriminatingly as they come to know and understand more." In his article "*Reason and Change in International Life*", Haas illustrated how progress has occurred as the result of "reason in human affairs." Haas argued that this progress is the outcome of behavioural patterns of "reciprocity", or the process by which "each encounter is dominated by the assumption that there will be need for future encounters and bargains." And reciprocity "must be learned." Each peacekeeping operation represents opportunities for reciprocity, and valuable experience, which serves as a catalyst for learning.[255]

Although many of these lessons of peacekeeping are not new, particularly those relating to the limits of peacekeeping, it is important to note that they were learned again firsthand by each Secretary-General. And while the limits of peacekeeping are such that little can be done on the part of the U.N. to ensure that these lessons are maintained, recognition alone allows for more effective and efficient coordination and deployment, and more appropriate mandates for future operations. Boutros-Ghali re-evaluated the broader conception of U.N. peace efforts, reaffirming the importance of, and necessity to adhere to, these fundamental principles:

> The United Nations can be proud of the speed with which peace-keeping has evolved in response to the new political environment resulting form the end of the cold war, but the last

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[254] Boutros-Ghali, *Supplement to An Agenda for Peace*, p. 3.
[255] Ernst B Haas. "Reason and Change in International Life: Justifying a Hypothesis", *Journal of International Affairs*, 1995, pp. 212-213.

few years have confirmed that respect for certain principles of peace-keeping are essential to its success. Three particularly important principles are the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defense. Analysis of recent successes and failures shows that in all the successes those principles were respected and in most of the less successful operations one or other of them was not.[256]

Thus while these lessons were previously recognized by Lie and especially Hammarskjöld, recent experiences of failure in Bosnia, Somalia, and Rwanda, reinforced them firsthand for Boutros-Ghali. For instance, he noted that

There are three aspects of recent mandates that, in particular, have led to peace-keeping operations to forfeit the consent of the parties, to behave in a way that was perceived to be partial and/or to use force other than in self-defence. These have been the tasks of protecting humanitarian operations during continuing warfare, protecting civilian populations in designated safe areas and pressing the parties to achieve national reconciliation at a pace faster than they were ready to accept. The cases of Somalia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are instructive in this respect.[257]

Furthermore:

In both cases, existing peacekeeping operations were given additional mandates that required the use of force and therefore could not be combined with existing mandates requiring the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force. It was also not possible for them to be executed without much stronger military capabilities than had been made available, as in the case in the former Yugoslavia. In reality, nothing is more dangerous for a peacekeeping operation than to ask it to use force when its existing composition, armament, logistic support and deployment deny it the capacity to do so. The logic of peace-keeping flows from political and military premises that are quite distinct from those of enforcement; and the dynamics of the latter are incompatible with the political process that peace-keeping is intended to facilitate. To blur the distinction between the two can undermine the viability of the peacekeeping operation and endanger its personnel.[258]

These experiences strongly impelled learning about peace-enforcement, leading to a change in Boutros-Ghali's earlier optimism. Second-Generation peacekeeping missions, even those that were enormous military enterprises by U.N. standards, still did not have the resources, command and control structure, or modus operandi for effective enforcement. Boutros-Ghali learned from experience that without the full military commitment of the major powers, enforcement activities can be very risky, and often exacerbate existing humanitarian and traditional peacekeeping mandates. In particular, Boutros-Ghali learned that the use of coercive force in conjunction with traditional

[256] Boutros-Ghali, Supplement to An Agenda for Peace, p. 9.
[257] Ibid.
[258] Ibid.

peacekeeping precepts, as Mats Berdal noted, tended to obfuscate "the basic distinction between peacekeeping and enforcement action...[and] highlighted the particular risks of attempting to combine the coercive use of force with peacekeeping objectives."[259] The Secretary-General, however, would be denied the opportunity to implement such learning as the Security Council retrenched from authorising new peacekeeping missions in the wake of the difficulties experienced particularly in Bosnia. The aftermath of the Congo had thus reared its head in the form of the repercussions of Second-Generation peacekeeping in the wake of Somalia and Bosnia.

As noted, many of Boutros-Ghali's statements on peacekeeping involve recommendations for improved mechanisms for action, noting practical technical difficulties and reflecting simple learning from peacekeeping experience. Boutros-Ghali was quick to translate simple learning into policy change, such as the restructuring of various U.N. organs into a single Department of Peace-keeping Operations (DPKO) in 1992 for greater efficiency and improved coordination. Boutros-Ghali also streamlined the Organization's bureaucracy, eliminating many staff and reducing the U.N. sclerotic bureaucracy. He also implemented many reforms to improve the deployment of Second-Generation peacekeeping such as structural reforms to ensure that peacekeeping operations would be deployed much quicker than in the past, illustrating his grasp of both the outward changes and inward reforms important to peacekeeping.

It is clear from the wealth of evidence of Boutros-Ghali's simple and complex learning that he was an extensive and fast learner who did as much as was within his power to reform and improve the U.N.'s capacity to respond to crises and further the goal of maintaining international peace. Evidence is plentiful that Boutros-Ghali recognized, responded to, and learned from these many changes. He continuously made every effort possible to exploit opportunities and improve the U.N.'s peace-keeping capacity. As noted, he also learned more a fundamental lesson from experience that any solution to intra-state conflict requires a broad attack on the deeper roots of social conflict, providing for basic social conditions, improving the economy, establishing a favourable environment conducive to non-violent open competition, and promoting reconciliation.

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[259] Mats R. Berdal, *Whither UN Peacekeeping?* Adelphi Paper 281, International Institute for Strategic

These lessons would become institutionalized in his new broad conception of peacekeeping, and be applied by his successor, just as Hammarskjöld's principles continue to be put into practice in peacekeeping operations today.

Moreover, it is equally clear that Boutros-Ghali's learning was not limited to any one area of the U.N.'s activities. For instance, Boutros-Ghali was quick to recognize deficiencies in the financial contribution system, efficiency of the Organization, coordination among member-state governments, disarmament, the use of sanctions, and implement the necessary reforms and procedures to make the Organization more efficient.

Much in the same manner as Hammarskjöld fell out of favour with the Soviets after demonstrating strong executive action in the Congo, Boutros-Ghali came under heavy criticism from the United States, which blocked his re-election to a second term. His tenure as Secretary-General will be marked by an unparalleled drive to expand, strengthen, and improve the United Nations' capacity for peacekeeping. His cognitively complex thinking and willingness to experiment which translated into a great ability to learn from peacekeeping experience, coupled with his drive to enhance the process of peacekeeping, resulted in many sweeping changes to the conceptual basis and operation of peacekeeping. In addition, his reports and public speeches indicate that he was a fast learner, prompt to expand his own powers and eager, if often unsuccessful, in convincing the reluctant major powers to converge on central policies.

If there is one overwhelming lesson on the nature of peacekeeping to be derived from the United Nations' attempts at forming and directing comprehensive and sometimes coercive military missions in the early 1990s - - a lesson ubiquitously reflected in the statements of Boutros-Ghali and a host of peacekeepers and analysts - - it is the inevitable dominance of prevailing political considerations over military ones that shape United Nations peacekeeping. The challenges of large, militarily sophisticated, and dangerous Second-Generation missions exposed the limits of an international organization inherently lacking in political legitimacy and military authority, and thus unable to provide the political and functional framework for significant military operations. In 1995, after the debacle in Somalia, abject failure in Rwanda, and the

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Studies, (London: Brassey's, 1993), p. 76.

impending failure of UNPROFOR, Boutros-Ghali reaffirmed this and noted in a speech that

> the imposition of peace requires military, financial, and political resources that member states are simply not willing to provide for operations other than war; and these resources require a capacity to manage them which the United Nations Secretariat does not possess and is unlikely to be granted.[260]

John Hillen affirmed that "the United Nations' inability to command and control significant military operations was rooted in its lack of sovereign legitimacy and authority."[261] Recognizing these limits, Boutros-Ghali subsequently "trimmed his sails"[262], as evidenced in the *Supplement to An Agenda for Peace,* downplaying the central role that the United Nations could play in managing large and ambitious military efforts.

Scholars similarly began to recognize that, as Ronald Steel asserted, the "enthusiasm for multilateralism results in large part from the unwillingness of states to make serious sacrifices to establish order."[263] In reflecting on this "expansion period" of U.N. peacekeeping in the early 1990s, Hillen furthermore observed that "new Security Council consensus or not, the international security system has some natural currents that do not easily change."[264] It was in this sober international environment that Boutros-Ghali's successor, Kofi Annan would replace him as the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations.

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[260] Boutros-Ghali, as cited in Shashi Tharoor, "Should UN Peacekeeping Go Back to Basics?," p. 57; Secretary-General's speech given to Twenty-Fifth Vienna Seminar, 2 March 1995 (UN Information Service Press Release 1310), p. 4.
[261] Hillen, *Blue Helmets*, p. 243.
[262] Thomas G. Weiss, "The United Nations at Fifty: Recent Lessons," *Current History*, May 1995, p. 224.
[263] Ronald Steel, *Temptations of a Superpower*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 135.
[264] Hillen, "Picking Up U.N. Peacekeeping's Pieces: Knowing When to Say When," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 1998, p. 102.

KOFI ANNAN

The number of United Nations military and civilian personnel in the field was greatly reduced by 1996, from approximately 76,600 in 1994 to 25,000 in 1997. Kofi Annan, who had been Boutros-Ghali's Under Secretary for Peacekeeping and who headed the Department of Peacekeeping Operations since 1993, would become Boutros-Ghali's successor in January 1997. Annan would inherit an organization whose Member States were much more reluctant to engage in peace-keeping and risk the lives of their soldiers, notably the United States which lost 18 soldiers in Somalia.[265]   Annan's prior experiences as Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping would greatly facilitate this transition, and shape his leadership style as Secretary-General.

As early as 1994, Annan had learned the lessons of the limits of an international organization dependent on its Member States.   Annan directly experienced the consequences as the major powers in the early 1990s placed more weight upon the U.N. than it could bear, authorising more missions that the U.N. could not hope to handle and then refused to support its efforts. Annan stated that any plans to further expand the size, scope, and nature of U.N. military operations were "building on sand."[266] Shashi Tharoor affirmed that

> it is sometimes argued that the peacekeeping deployment to Bosnia-Herzegovina reflected not so much a policy as the absence of policy; that [UN] peacekeeping responds to the need to 'do something' when policy-makers are not prepared to expend the political, military, and financial resources required to achieve the outcome that the press and opinion leaders are clamoring for.[267]

Having the benefit of such prior experience and learning, Annan takes to the Office of the Secretary-General with a deep understanding of the role, the nature of United Nations peacekeeping, and the limits imposed on such activity by the vagaries of the state of the international system.   Despite these benefits, however, he has not demonstrated the independent-mindedness or dynamism of the other four Secretaries-General examined in this study. David Rieff, in his article entitled, "The Non-Leadership of Kofi Annan," noted that "it is important, when considering the severe limitations of

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[265] This scaling back can appropriately be considered the "Congo syndrome."
[266] Annan, as cited in Hillen, *Blue Helmets*, p. 241; from BBC Television Special, *A Soldier's Peace*, 1994.

Kofi Annan, to emphasize the fact that he is the first U.N. Secretary-General to have been neither a diplomat nor a politician. He is, rather, a career U.N. diplomat."[268] It is perhaps this bureaucratic decision-making style that has shaped the lack of innovation and learning on the part of Annan, instead replaced by a predisposition toward policy continuation and organizational adaptation in policy-making practice.

In comparing the styles of Boutros-Ghali and Annan, it is fair to conclude that Annan is more cautious, more mindful of the reservations of the Security Council's members, and more wary about provoking them. In this sense, Annan can more appropriately be compared to U Thant, who similarly inherited an organization whose members were very sensitive to undertaking new peacekeeping operations after the experiences in the Congo. Moreover, Annan similarly appears to rely heavily on his advisors. Although Annan continued to implement very major reforms in the staffing and structure of the United Nations, in relation to peacekeeping, like U Thant, he has shown less interest in redefining the Organization's procedures and goals. Although it is perhaps to early in his term to judge, Annan's commitment, however, has not produced as a similar degree of results compared to U Thant. Annan rather, succeeds at smaller objectives, while relying upon his predecessor's vision for the application of U.N. peace efforts.

The current period under his Secretary-Generalship can thus appropriately be characterized as one of consolidation of the reforms implemented under Boutros-Ghali. This cautious posture was reflected in Annan's own statement that

> The international community has developed a clearer understanding both of the limits of peacekeeping and also of its continuing usefulness. As a result of past setbacks, Member States are more aware of the risks associated with dispatching operations with resources which do not match their mandates. We have also learned that inaction in the face of massive violence and threats to international peace and security is not an acceptable – or viable – option.[269]

The lessons and emphasis placed upon the broader conception of security on the part of Boutros-Ghali would be adopted by Annan, illustrating how individual learning

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[267] Shashi Tharoor, "Should UN Peacekeeping Go Back to Basics," p. 59.

[268] David Rieff, "The Non-Leadership of Kofi Annan," *The New Republic*, 1 February, 1999, p. 21

becomes part of organizational doctrine and history, as it is translated and promoted from one Secretary-General to the next:

> The world is beginning to recognize the many roots of conflict, the economic base of stability, and the grim truth that intolerance, injustice and oppression – and their consequences – respect no national frontiers.[270]

Moreover:

> Today, security is increasingly understood not just in military terms, and as far more than the absence of conflict. It is in fact a phenomenon that encompasses economic development, social justice, environmental protection, democratization, disarmament and respect for human rights. These goals – these pillars of peace – are interrelated. Progress in one area begets progress in another. But no country can get there on its own.[271]

With regard to humanitarian assistance, Annan also echoed the views of his predecessor, noting that

> Experience has shown that once crises erupt, the international community can move swiftly to address the suffering of innocent civilian victims...While the international community is to be commended for its rapid responses to complex and large-scale humanitarian emergencies, such efforts would not have been necessary had we been able to prevent identifiable threats from becoming terrible realities. The lesson here is clear – humanitarian action must not be the only measure to which the international community can quickly agree. Our response must also include political efforts to defuse conflicts, to promote peace and stability, and foster economic and social development.[272]

Kofi Annan would also continue the tradition of his predecessor in writing lengthy Annual Reports. In contrast to the writings of Boutros-Ghali, however, Annan's reports reflect less innovation, less substantive analysis of the nature and application of peacekeeping, and less complex learning. Instead, they are imbued with a tone of consolidation, and focus on more minor administrative reforms. In contrast with all of his predecessors, Annan has not required in his first term the requisite time to familiarize himself with his role and environment, and thus this caution can not be attributed to his having only completed two years of his five-year term. Annan had already garnered

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[269] Kofi Annan. *Renewal Amid Transition: Annual Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization*, (New York: The United Nations, 1997), 3 September 1997 (A/52/1), para. 110. (Hereafter 1997 Annual Report)

[270] Annan. *Address to the General Assembly upon accepting the post of Secretary-General*, New York, 17 December 1996 (GA/9211).

[271] Annan, *Address at Cedar Crest College, Allentown, Pennsylvania, 13 December 1997* (SG/SM/6325).

[272] Annan, *Message to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Carnegie Commission Conference on Humanitarian Response and Preventing Deadly Conflict, Geneva, 16 February 1997* (SG/SM/6164).

significant experience as Boutros-Ghali's Under-Secretary for Peacekeeping Operations beginning in 1993.

Given this prior policy experience, particularly being witness to many severe failures in peacekeeping, Annan clearly would have learned many important lessons and already formed his own ideas for improving the Organization's capacity for peacekeeping. It thus may appear surprising that he has not yet undertaken to implement more changes to the practice of peacekeeping. Annan, however, opted instead to allow enough time to elapse for the backlash surrounding the controversy generated by Boutros-Ghali to subside before exercising any independent initiative in relation to peacekeeping. Like U Thant, Annan argued that the task for the post-Cold war U.N. is to reach consensus, molding together the changes that will move the Organization forward.

The second half of the 1990s has been an era of slow reform and consolidation of gains internationally, in contrast to the rapid and chaotic activity of the early 1990s. This is indicative of the view that it takes approximately a decade to fully learn and absorb the impact of major international phenomena such as the end of the Cold War. Annan has, however, successfully implemented minor reforms, consolidated 16 peace operations, attempted to revitalize flagging mediation efforts in East Timor, Cyprus, and Western Sahara, and successfully concluded an observer mission in Guatemala. He also reorganized the means for dispatching peacekeeping operations.

Although his reports and public speeches reflect some evidence of learning from peacekeeping experience, these instances are few in comparison with the reports of his predecessor. For instance, Annan has observed that

> Early post-cold-war euphoria exaggerated the possibilities for expanding the scope of United Nations peace operations, but the more recent sense of limits may err in the opposite direction...Important lessons have been learned from recent experience, however, as a result of which peacekeeping and its institutional support structures continue to be refined and adapted, while post-conflict peace-building has assumed a more prominent role in the United Nations repertoire of means to achieve more lasting peace.[273]

In his 1998 Annual Report, Annan was able to state that the "the world has been mercifully free from large-scale regional conflict over the past twelve months", although a few new ones have broken out and some local wars have continued, such as the renewal

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[273] Annan, *Annual Report 1997*, paras. 108 and 109.

of conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia.[274] Much of this report is devoted to preventive action, disarmament, and humanitarian assistance. With respect to peacekeeping, Annan has noted that "the international community has begun to overcome its reluctance to make use of the Organization's peacekeeping capacity", authorizing two new operations in the Central African Republic and in Sierra Leone.[275] The relative calm and reluctance among the Security Council for authorising new operations have thus promoted consolidation and policy continuation in the absence of the kind of major crisis that prompts a search for new solutions.

In 1998, the number of military and civilian peacekeeping personnel in the field was further reduced to 14,500. Annan noted that "peacekeeping continues to be adapted to changing needs and cooperation with regional organizations is now an important aspect."[276] Beyond this statement there would be, for the remainder of 1998, little further public analysis of peacekeeping and of evidence of learning about past experience. Annan did devote some attention to other instruments of peace such as sanctions, prevention, and peace-building. On the subject of peace-building, Annan echoed the view of earlier Secretaries-General, noting that "because the causes of conflict differ, United Nations actions must be tailored to specific situations to strengthen the peace process and make it irreversible. There is no standard post-conflict peace-building model."[277] As with peacekeeping, clearer guidelines will evolve as the result of more experience and learning.

Annan does, however, recognize the growing importance and increase in civilian police operations, which have been conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Haiti, "and could prove very useful in other post-conflict situations, such as that in Angola." This development, noted Annan, "reflects a growing interest in the role that peacekeeping operations can play in helping to build human rights, law-enforcement and other institutions, and thus to strengthen the foundations for lasting peace."[278] Although

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[274] Annan, *Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization, 1998*, (New York: The United Nations, 1998), para. 17. (Hereafter 1998 Annual Report)
[275] Ibid., para. 56.
[276] Ibid., para. 58.
[277] Ibid., para. 65.
[278] Ibid.

he recognized its utility, Annan did not formally attempt to improve or institutionalize the practice of civilian policing in the functions and structures of peacekeeping.

More than two years into his term as Secretary-General, Annan has slowly begun to make his views on the future of peacekeeping more known. In particular, he addressed the subject in late February of this year at Georgetown University. Annan not only recognized that the nature of civil war has "obliged the United Nations to re-define the tasks that peacekeeping involves," but also addressed the mistakes of the recent past:

> Namibia, Mozambique, El Salvador, even Cambodia are countries which have now lived several years without war, and which at least have a fair chance of lasting peace, thanks to the hard work of United Nations peacekeepers in the late 1980s and early 1990s...To some extent we have been victims of our own success. In the early 90s expectations ran very high, and some of the assignments we were given were ones which could only have been carried out successfully by much larger forces, armed with heavier equipment and above all with clearer mandates.[279]

Annan affirmed that the United Nations has begun to learn the lessons of the early 1990s major peacekeeping operations. In particular, in relation to Africa, Annan has drawn several lessons:

> Of course we must be careful to avoid the mistakes of the past. We must never again send a UN force, just for the sake of it, to keep a non-existent peace, or one to which the parties themselves show no sense of commitment. That, perhaps, is the lesson of Angola, where as you know civil war is now raging once again, and I have had to recommend the withdrawal of the United Nations force.

Furthermore:

> It is sadly clear that the need for United Nations peacekeeping will continue, and indeed will probably grow. And it is very much in America's national interest to support an international response to conflicts – even those which seem remote – because, in today's interconnected world, they seldom remain confined to one country or even one region...Take Rwanda, for example. The failure of the international community to respond effectively led not only to genocide in Rwanda itself, but also to the exodus of refugees and combatants across the borders. Because we failed to act in time, seven countries are now fighting each other in mineral-rich region which should have been a prime area for investment and development...the next time we will act differently...we will not hide behind the complexities and dangers of the situation...we must not wait for hindsight to tell us the wisest course.

> Nor must we set impossible conditions, thereby ensuring that the Security Council takes no decision until too late. We must be prepared to act while things are still unclear and uncertain, but in time to make a difference. We must do so with sufficient resources –

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[279] Kofi Annan, *The Secretary-General Address on Receiving the JIT Trainor Award for Distinction in the Conduct of Diplomacy, "The Future of United Nations Peacekeeping,"* Georgetown University, 23 February 1999, p. 2.

including military strength when a deterrent is necessary – to ensure the mission's success and peacekeeper's safety...And once the Security Council has authorised an operation, everyone, - but especially those Council members who voted for it – must pay their share of the cost, promptly and in full.[280]

These statements reflect not so much Annan's individual learning, but rather recognition, as Under-Secretary for Peacekeeping in the early 1990s, of his predecessor's experiential learning, and less so new learning on his part given the relative lack of peacekeeping missions authorized by the United Nations. Annan in this manner echoes Boutros-Ghali's devotion to ensuring that these mistakes of the early 1990s will not be repeated in future peacekeeping missions. In particular, he explicitly recognizes the need for United Nations peacekeeping operations to be provided with greater military capabilities and militarily stronger mandates in certain situations, and if not possible, the need for the United Nations to work hand in hand with regional organizations such as NATO. As evident by his subdued, or "quiet" approach, Annan has appreciated the valuable lessons concerning the importance of not setting unattainable and unrealistic goals in situations where the warring parties exhibit no signs of cooperation and willingness to seek a resolution of their conflicts.

Annan has learned several very important lessons from the failures and successes of the large, multifunctional operations deployed in the early 1990s, although much of this learning was likely passed down from his predecessor. He has furthermore managed to restructure the system to ensure those large, unmanageable operations with unrealistic mandates and limited force will never be deployed again. Indeed, Annan has stated in this regard that, with the support of its Member states, the United Nations has in the last four years developed "a sound infrastructure for directing and supporting peacekeeping operations." Moreover, he noted that "it is a paradox that, in technical terms, we are better equipped now that we have only fourteen thousand soldiers in the field that we were five years ago when we had nearly eighty thousand."[281]

Unfortunately, the member states, with the exception of a few cases, remain largely reluctant to authorise new peacekeeping operations, thus depriving Annan of the

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[280] Ibid., pp. 4-7, *passim*.

opportunity to put into practice these lessons, experiment, and test new solutions to the many lessons of failure - - of what did not work under which conditions. This experimentation is critical for the second stage of learning - - learning what will work under what conditions to prevent a repetition of past mistakes. Moreover, this reluctance on the part of the Security Council has deprived the United Nations of new opportunities to prove its abilities and value, and thus regain the international community's confidence and bolster the Organization's prestige. Only time will tell if this reluctance will last as long as the aftermath of the Congo mission. It is worth noting, in this regard, that the United Nations has recently established a "Lessons Learned Unit" for the purpose to having accessible records to draw upon in future U.N. peace efforts. With this greater institutionalization of memory - - representing an important instance of learning - - perhaps the cycle may be broken in the future.

A crucial lesson experienced by all Secretaries-General and learned again by both Boutros-Ghali and Annan concerns the volatility of the international community's support for peacekeeping initiatives. Reflecting upon the failures in Somalia, Rwanda, and the difficulties in Bosnia, Annan, as had Boutros-Ghali, recognized the limits of an international organization dependent upon the cooperation and support of its Member states:

> The international community has drawn lessons from these sad experiences, but perhaps not always the right ones. In Africa, the effect was to make external powers more reluctant to expose their forces. Indeed, the tragedy of Rwanda was caused, in part, by fear of repeating the experience of Somalia, which haunted some members of the Security Council. In Europe, thankfully, a different lesson was drawn. External powers, especially the United States, became more involved, not less. We saw diplomatic skill and military muscle combined — late in the day, but with great effect — to produce the Dayton agreement.[282]

Annan has noted that the "Implementation Force in Bosnia, and the Stabilisation Force which succeeded it, have to my mind been model peacekeeping forces. Heavily armed, and authorised to use their arms if challenged, they have in practice hardly used them at all because their authority has not been challenged."[283] Although authorised by the Security Council, these missions were not U.N. peacekeeping operations, but rather

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[281] Ibid., pp. 3-4.
[282] Ibid., p. 2.
[283] Ibid.

under NATO leadership. The successes of the more militarily capable NATO has however, had an adverse impact on the United Nations, causing U.N. successes to be overlooked. In particular, the parallel successes in Macedonia and Eastern Slavonia have illustrated the value of a role only the United Nations can fulfill, in addition to the ability of the Organization to learn the lessons of the past and implement them in practice. Annan noted that

> There too a force was deployed strong enough to intimidate the local parties, so that the Transitional Authority was able to see off early challenges and fulfil its mandate without being dragged into combat...this was a United Nations operation in the full sense of the term. It brought together a broad range of international responses – military, political, and humanitarian – under the authority of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General...The result was an integrated strategy, and the force was able to withdraw on time, without leaving renewed bloodshed behind it.[284]

As the success of this mission testified, Annan, as had Boutros-Ghali, had learned from his predecessor's experiences that United Nations peace efforts in the 1990s requires stronger military capabilities, not mandates, and an integrated strategy whose tasks can be undertaken simultaneously without compromising each other.

Perhaps the most important threat to the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping, as Annan warned, consists of the tendency of the Security Council to begin to rely upon militarily capable NATO for future peacekeeping operations while currently under-utilising the United Nations capacity. The recent crisis in Kosovo, in which NATO could greatly benefit from the U.N.'s peacekeeping and peace-building experience must not set a precedent. Instead of working together, notes Annan, this practice "puts an unfair burden on the organizations [such as NATO] in question. It is also a waste of the expertise in peacekeeping which the United Nations has developed over the years." Peacekeeping, affirmed Annan, "is not, and must not become, an arena of rivalry between the U.N. and NATO. There is plenty of work for both of us to do." Learning from the difficulties experienced in Somalia and Bosnia, Annan noted that

> We work best when we respect each other's competence and avoid getting in each other's way. In fact, the UN Charter explicitly encourages regional arrangements and agencies, like NATO, to deal with regional problems, provided they do so in a manner consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations."[285]

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[284] Ibid.
[285] Ibid., p. 3.

While Annan has undertaken several structural reforms, and learned very important simple lessons concerning strategies for future peacekeeping missions, it is perhaps too early in his administration to expect evidence of fundamental learning by the Secretary-General, which, as noted, requires dramatic stimuli - - catalysts that have yet to occur. In comparing the Secretary-General with his predecessors, Annan remains noticeably more cautious and more restrained. Annan's thinking furthermore appears to be less cognitively complex than that of his predecessors. Although he has not expressed an aspiration to make major new contributions to the concept and practice of peacekeeping, he has managed to correct existing weaknesses and displayed a moderate desire to put into practice simple lessons learned. The evidence to date suggests that Annan incorporated much of Boutros-Ghali's vision and consolidated his achievements, but has yet to demonstrate the depth and extent of learning as demonstrated by Boutros-Ghali. Accordingly, Annan may be considered, like U Thant, a cautious and moderate learner, whereas Boutros-Ghali was a fast and extensive learner.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The United Nations has faced many challenges throughout its history, most notably by improvising the unforeseen mechanism of peacekeeping, thereby pioneering the use of military forces in the non-violent role of peacekeepers and not soldiers. Since these peace efforts were first undertaken in the late 1940s, they have undergone a remarkable period of development in function, scope, and application. The strategies and goals of these efforts have been greatly transformed, from the limited objective of separating parties to a conflict to the expansive aims of preventive action, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and post-conflict peace-building. As the findings of this study have illustrated, this evolution is due in large measure to the individual abilities of U.N. Secretaries-General to learn from direct experience.

It is not coincidental that during the incumbencies of the two highest learners, United Nations peace efforts underwent the most dramatic development and fundamental changes. Moreover, the evidence of Hammarskjold and Boutros-Ghali early on in their terms suggests that individual dynamism influences the confidence of member states in entrusting more responsibility to the Secretary-General and more broadly, in the capacity of the United Nations to effectively contribute to the prevention, mediation, and resolution of international conflict. While the state of the international system and the interests of the major powers played an important role in facilitating/constraining the transformation of learning into organizational policy change, it is clear that the individual's performance and ability to learn through trial-and-error experimentation is a vital condition for such change. In particular, the key personality traits of cognitive complexity and willingness to experiment determined the scope and form (simple or complex) of learning for the Secretaries-General. These two particular characteristics ignited the process of learning and organizational policy change, while international politics determined the timing and extent of any such transformation.

As widely recognized in the literature on individual learning and foreign policy change, this study of organizational learning at the international level lends additional support to the importance of failure, and/or the occurrence of unexpected crises, as a

requisite catalyst to learning. For learning to occur in both the complex and simple senses, the stimulus of failure must first be present. Otherwise, policy continuation and adaptation will limit organizational change. This broad feedback process of learning and change thus originates in the failure of previous policy, which, depending on individual personality, then stimulates trial-and-error experimentation and learning. In turn, this learning in the form of shared understandings of solutions to problems results in effective policy change when embedded within the broader social and political context. Such change hence provides new experience from which to observe, interpret, and learn - - beginning a new cycle of organization learning and policy change.

With respect to the evolution of United Nations peace efforts, learning was neither linear nor constant but highly interactive and dependent upon the personality of the Secretary-General, organizational memory, the political constraints imposed by the Security Council, and the frequency and recency of major crises and failures. Individual observation and interpretation of direct experience provoked initial, tentative learning and trial-and-error experimentation, that in turn led to the development of shared understandings concerning solutions to prior failures and problems. Such consensus in favour of change among the Secretary-General, Secretariat, and Security Council was critical in institutionalizing individual learning into organizational doctrine and memory, and effective policy change. This incremental process of learning could have been either reinforced or blocked at multiple stages in the process. See figure 1.1. (page 51).

In terms of the personality traits of the Secretaries-General, the secondary hypothesis of the study was similarly proven to be correct. Higher levels of cognitive complexity and willingness to experiment corresponded with a greater extent of complex learning on the part of the Secretaries-General, institutionalization and policy change. Effective learning is the combined product of the limitations imposed on the Secretary-General by the nature of the international system and the personal qualities of the office-holder. The importance of this latter factor as a dynamic force and not an epiphenomenal variable is conveyed in the impact of the differing styles and personalities of each incumbent on the effectiveness of the Office of the Secretary-General. The ability to learn is largely a function of personality. Cognitive complexity, (openness to new ideas, the capacity to

create new understandings of ill-structured problems, and the ability to consider multiple dimensions of a problem), and willingness to experiment are all qualities which vary from individual to individual. The different degrees to which these attributes were exhibited by each Secretary-General also helps explain the non-linear, intermittent, and incremental progress in the development of peace efforts.

The extent of learning about the concept and practice of U.N. peace efforts by these five Secretaries-General can be ranked on a scale depicting the greatest to the least degree of learning. Dag Hammarskjöld represented the most cognitively complex Secretary-General, actively searching to correct weaknesses and for new ideas to enhance his own role and that of the United Nations in maintaining global stability. He learned at the quickest rate, and over a broad range of issues. More than any other incumbent, Hammarskjöld independently introduced procedures and techniques, institutionalizing his ideas to accomplish the objectives of the United Nations. These include the functions of preventive diplomacy, good offices (either through personal missions or by dispatching representatives), mediation, and his most important contribution, peacekeeping. His extensive simple and complex learning was also not limited to any one particular aspect of the Organization but spanned many different diplomatic and operational activities. In short, of the five Secretaries-General, Hammarskjöld learned to the greatest extent, and his learning had the largest impact upon the policies and role of the U.N., fundamentally transforming the organization from a deliberative body in the areas of peace and security into an operational instrument for peace. The principles he developed for peacekeeping operations continue to define the use of peacekeeping today.

On the same scale, Boutros Boutros-Ghali's capacity to learn was second only to Hammarskjöld. Although not as cognitively complex and far more of a "committed thinker", Boutros-Ghali was strongly motivated to improve the concept and practice of peacekeeping, learning from the many operations undertaken during his tenure. He learned extensively about the strengths and weaknesses of U.N. deployments, and also about the importance of implementing long-term social, economic, and humanitarian strategies as part of the broader concept of Second-Generation peacekeeping that he significantly developed and put into practice. As a result of his preoccupation with the

need to strengthen the military capability and function of peacekeeping he did not innovate as much as Hammarskjöld in other areas. However, with a wealth of experience from which to learn and a wide latitude to expand peacekeeping in the early 1990s, Boutros-Ghali was able to experiment and correct many weaknesses evident in the deployment of peacekeeping operations. Much of his simple and complex learning was transformed into policy change, greatly improving the ability of the U.N. to respond to international crises. Apart from Hammarskjöld, Boutros-Ghali was the only other Secretary-General to significantly develop and expand the concept of peacekeeping.

Learning and policy change as related to United Nations peace efforts peaked under the tenures of Hammarskjöld and Boutros-Ghali. Much lower down the scale, Trygve Lie was the third highest learner. Far less willing to undertake independent action than either Hammarskjöld or Boutros-Ghali, and not faced with many large-scale crises such as the conflicts in the Congo, Somalia, or Bosnia, Lie's tenure was marked by caution and limited initiatives in the realm of peacekeeping. With the exception of the collective enforcement action in Korea, Lie's learning was largely limited to the expansion of his own role. He did learn some important simple and complex lessons from the early peace observation missions which helped shape the parameters of peacekeeping under Hammarskjöld. However, his rate of learning was not as quick, and his grasp of events not as profound as that of either Hammarskjöld or Boutros-Ghali. As he was the first Secretary-General, with little experience to guide his actions, Lie's environment was conducive to learning but he did not encounter a comparable amount of crises and failures to stimulate learning during his tenure. There was furthermore little determination to experiment on his part.

The least degree of learning by the Secretaries-General occurred in political environments much less conducive to the search for new ideas and solutions. U Thant's capacity to experiment was severely constrained by the Security Council in the wake of the failures of U.N. intervention to resolve the conflict in the Congo. The Council made it clear at the time that the United Nations would not undertake similar initiatives again and strove to limit independent action on his part. Consequently, U Thant did not exhibit a strong desire to search for new ideas and solutions to existing problems but rather relied

on the procedures developed by his predecessor. He was resigned to the limits imposed on his capacity for independent action and did not exhibit much evidence of complex learning. Although he was successful in learning about the importance of humanitarian strategies in resolving conflict, that learning would not be institutionalized in peacekeeping practice until Boutros-Ghali's tenure. While U Thant's thinking may have been more cognitively complex than that of Lie's, his environment stifled his ability to experiment, learn from experience, and develop new procedures and solutions.

Kofi Annan was similarly restricted in his capacity to experiment by the Security Council in the aftermath of the failures of U.N. intervention in Somalia, Bosnia, and Rwanda, and by the general erosion of earlier optimism in U.N. peace efforts. Annan thus ranks fifth on the scale of learning as Secretary-General despite absorbing several important lessons in his earlier position of Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping. Although Annan has instituted many structural reforms and has actively sought new ways to further consolidate prior changes to improve the operation of peacekeeping (simple learning), he has not yet exhibited much evidence of complex learning.

While only two years have passed since he became Secretary-General, Annan has demonstrated the least capacity to learn new lessons in the complex sense from experience of any of his predecessors. Indeed, Annan has strongly relied upon the conception of peacekeeping developed by Boutros-Ghali, and sought to consolidate these reforms rather than experiment and innovate. Annan thus conforms much more closely to the model of the bureaucrat rather than the bold leader engaging in trial-and-error experimentation in an effort to transform his Organization's role in the maintenance of peace and security. In making these judgements, one must bear in mind the greater extent of activity, failures, and hence stimulus that challenged Boutros-Ghali. In contrast, Annan took Office in an environment focused on internal U.N. reform and consolidation, and was confronted with much more restrictive attitudes by members of the Security Council. Dramatic reduction of U.N. peacekeeping activity, the reluctance of Member states to undertake new peacekeeping missions, and the tendency of the international community to rely more upon regional organizations such as NATO, have severely limited Annan's stimulus for learning.

The varying degrees of learning as exhibited by these five Secretaries-General are represented in Figure 1.2:
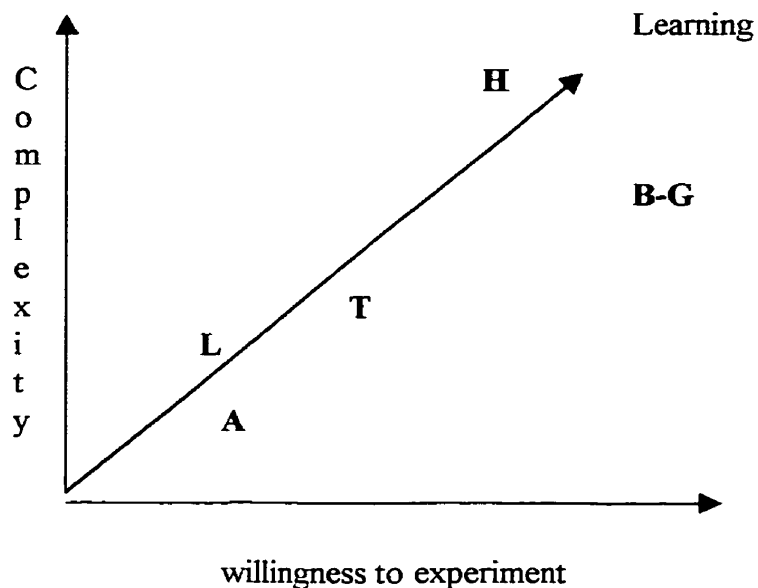
The evolution and expansion of United Nations peace efforts is in many ways the product of the ability of individual Secretaries-General to learn from past experience and their motivation to implement simple and complex learning in the formulation of future peace efforts policy. This analysis of learning and the evolution of United Nations peace efforts has provided further support for the argument that learning shapes policy change and progress. In particular, the findings illustrate that through processes of simple (more efficient matching of means or strategies to ends) and complex learning (more efficient reordering of fundamental goals), United Nations peace efforts evolved over five decades of experience to more effectively allow the Organization to maintain international peace and security. This process of organizational learning and policy change was stimulated by failure, originated at the individual level of the Secretary-General, who then created shared understandings of the solutions to operational problems in peacekeeping, which in turn became translated into policy and embedded into organizational doctrine.

Greater understanding of how such individual decision makers learn and of what factors facilitate or impede that process will allow future policy-makers to recognize and prevent the repetition of errors in foreign policy making and create more effective strategies and goals. The role of individual personality is critical in accounting for learning from past experience and creating new common understandings based on that knowledge. In addition to case studies such as this analysis of the U.N. Secretaries-General, more quantitative studies are required to better develop theories of personality that explore cognitive complexity, willingness to experiment, and general openness and creativity as traits that influence individual capacity for learning, particularly in international organizations.

However, individual-level explanations alone are not sufficient to explain how learning results in policy change. Individual learning occurs in a broader social and political context and is dependent on unanticipated policy failures and crises that stimulate a search for new solutions. Within an international organization, individual learning requires a convergence of international, political, and individual circumstances in order to result in policy changes that subsequently become institutionalized in the norms, procedures, and memory of the organization.

A notable gap in existing analyses of international organizations is the relative absence of any comprehensive treatment of the relationship, links, and interaction effects between these organizations and the international system in which they operate. This study has illustrated that the functions and activities of the United Nations are molded not only by individual leaders, but also by the basic dimensions and dynamic processes of the international system. Moreover, this research has demonstrated that when these individual, organizational, and systemic factors converge in favour of change, the United Nations itself becomes an important actor in the system that is sometimes able to significantly influence its environment. More systematic and quantitative studies are needed to gain a better understanding of the political conditions that motivate and provoke learning, and the broader links between organizations and the international system that also influence institutional learning and change.

The international community will be increasingly confronted with unanticipated large-scale, violent crises in the next century. The ability of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to learn from failures in Somalia, Bosnia, and Rwanda and apply these lessons in responding to new crises will be critical if the United Nations hopes to preserve global stability. More understanding of how individual learning is stimulated and institutionalized, such as the learning process of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations, will allow national leaders, advisors, and heads of other international organizations to contribute more effectively to the maintenance of international peace and security in the coming century.

APPENDIX A

Only a few U.N. scholars have attempted to integrate the practice of U.N. peace efforts with theories of conflict resolution. And many conflict resolution analysts relegate peacekeeping to a narrow conflict management task as distinct from conflict resolution, instead of viewing the two approaches as complementary. We can conceptualize a more integrated approach by relating the broad concept of U.N. peace efforts (or the expanded focus of peacekeeping as outlined by Boutros-Ghali), to Professor Brecher's Unified Model of Crisis (UMC):

The nexus of peace efforts

Stage of Conflict:	Pre-crisis (onset)	Crisis (escalation)	End-crisis (de-escalation)	Post-crisis (impact)
Strategy:	Preventive Action	Peacemaking	Peacekeeping	Peacebuilding
Aims of U.N. Peace Efforts:	prevent disputes from arising, escalating and spreading	Initiating De-escalation Undertaking negotiations, Reaching agreements,	Sustaining agreements	Implement social change (socio-economic reconstruction and development)
Target Group:	Leaders	Leaders (+ armed combatants)	Armed combatants	Civilians
Components:	-Measures to build confidence -Early warning -Fact-finding -Preventive deployment -Demilitarized zones	-Mediation and negotiation -World Court -Amelioration through assistance -Sanctions -Use of Force -Pacification	-Traditional peace keeping -Observation -Humanitarian assistance -Arms control verification -Election supervision -State/nation building -Demilitarized zones -Intervention in support of democracy -Sanctions enforcement	-Disarmament -Humanitarian and financial assistance -Repatriating refugees -rebuilding infrastructure -advising and training security and judicial personnel -taking over administration