

CIMIC in the early phases of the KFOR mission in Kosovo ¹

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July 25, 1998. On Friday afternoon private trucks driven by policemen are all over the place. There isn't a single shop window that is not broken and there isn't anything left of value in any shop. Somewhere in the main street an officer is stuffing the boot and the back seat of his Volkswagen Golf with unrecognizable goods ... Just a few moments more and Orahovac is empty and clean, and free of Albanians - the few left will stay quiet for the time being. Just a few moments more and in Orahovac nothing ever happened. (Maas, 1999)

1. *De Gele Rijders* and CIMIC

In 1999 the *Gele Rijders* ('Yellow Riders'), the traditional name for the soldiers of 11 Battalion Horse Artillery, and with them soldiers, hussars, and gunners of numerous other units, were deployed to the municipality of Orahovac in Kosovo. In the evaluation report the Secretary of Defence sent to Parliament² special attention is given to the extraordinary task that KFOR carried out in the early phases of the mission: "In practice KFOR has executed military rule for a period of time". Restoring law and order has been the most characteristic part of the activities of KFOR. Like other KFOR units that initially entered Kosovo, the Battalion was faced with a situation which demanded action in many different ways. What it boiled down to was that KFOR temporarily took on administrative or government tasks for as long as it took international organisations (in particular, of course, the UN interim government) to take them over.

Military rule in the sense of the Dutch Law of War (*Oorlogswet Nederland*) evokes associations with World War II as well as with the police actions in the former Netherlands East Indies. This is amply demonstrated by the Van Dale Dictionary definition of Military Rule as 'legal authority over the civilian society in the hands of the military, known as the temporary highest authority immediately after the liberation in 1945'. The military rule under General Kruls that was established in the liberated parts of the Netherlands from 1944 onwards was aimed at the restoration of law and order. In the absence of a government this military rule could (and had to) perform acts of government. In this specific case military rule was placed above the lower bodies of civilian authority (provincial, municipal and water control authorities).³ The authorities of military rule can be very broad indeed and are only justified in extreme situations. A full analysis of the complexities of executing military rule goes beyond the scope of this article.⁴ In the reality of KFOR-1 this discussion was not really the issue of the day.

Originally, the *Gele Rijders* were to go as a pure fire support unit. Consequently, no CIMIC activities were foreseen at all and so no CIMIC personnel had been allocated. Only later, in the planning process, the need for CIMIC arose. In the end, two artillery officers were appointed as CIMIC officers. The employment of specialists did not even come up at all. In the light of the air campaign and the many uncertainties of the overall situation, it was understandable that CIMIC was not a major priority. Another reason why the Artillery Battalion was somewhat wrong-footed with regard to CIMIC was the fact that it was (is?) more or less taken for granted that CIMIC is something for specialists.

Recently the importance of and the attention for CIMIC has increased sharply. The establishment of the CIMIC Group North is a good example of this. CIMIC covers a very wide area, including matters of administration, civil infrastructure, economic and commercial activities, humanitarian relief and cultural affairs. The importance of CIMIC, therefore, is beyond question. Modern military operations require a broad approach and CIMIC is an integral part of them.

Given the limited scope of the present article, I have tried to avoid giving a sheer description of the many activities that were undertaken (or could have been undertaken), and I have therefore focussed on only two aspects of the present thoughts on CIMIC. The lessons to be learned from the experiences of the mission of the *Gele Rijders* may not apply to other missions, as every mission has its unique characteristics. Nevertheless, there are some lessons of a more general nature.⁵

The first focal point concerns the perception of CIMIC in terms of ‘specialists’. Of course specialists are necessary; it could not be otherwise in such a broad profession. However, there is also a need for a broader view on CIMIC, or, in other words, an embedding of civilian aspects in the military decision making procedures. The interaction with the population and the international and non-governmental organisations is too important to be left solely to the specialists.

The second theme in this contribution is that CIMIC must also be a way of thinking. Just as every soldier must be capable of defending himself of herself, or acting adequately in NBC circumstances, he or she should be able to do his/her bit in the more civilian aspects of an operation. For the commander at all levels thinking about civilian aspects of an operation should be as self-evident as the principles of combat.

2. From fire support to area responsibility

Initially, the 11 Battalion Horse Artillery was earmarked to go to Kosovo with 12 German Armoured Brigade, to provide fire support for the German Brigade. At the time there was no need or opportunity to consider other tasks. When in February the first contacts were made, there was no clear picture at all about the mission and course of action. All options were still open. What was clear from the beginning was that the German Brigade commander had the intention of involving his Dutch Battalion commander in the planning process to the full. It soon emerged that in all possible contingencies the German Brigade would be given the province of Prizren as its Area of Responsibility (AOR). Besides, in an early stage, the Brigade concluded that the initially available two (German) manoeuvre battalions were not enough to cover the whole area. Moreover, it became clear during the planning process that, if everything went according to plan, the requirement for fire support would be very limited indeed, and possibly even only in a reserve mode. In case of compliance with an agreement, artillery as well as other heavy means (such as Leopard and Marder) could be held in reserve, only to be deployed in the event of escalation. Because of the scarceness of available units the idea was launched to give the Artillery Battalion an area of responsibility as well. After the green light was received from the Netherlands the plan was worked out along this pragmatic approach.

Naturally, after the failure of Rambouillet⁶ and during the ensuing air war many contingencies were planned for and analysed. In particular, the question of how the Brigade could deploy as fast as possible in order to avoid a power vacuum was frequently discussed. It was absolutely clear that, certainly in the beginning, the city of Prizren was going to be a priority. Initially, too, it was recognised that the border area with Albania would become a second priority, due to smuggling activities and possible non-compliance of the UCK (the Kosovo Liberation Army). Of course the LOCs (Lines of Communication) were another major concern. On the

basis of these considerations, Orahovac emerged as the obvious choice for the Artillery Battalion in all possible courses of action. In the end the operations plan was that the two German Battalions and the Dutch Artillery Battalion, each as a Task Force (Kampfgruppe), would closely monitor the Serb retreat, and in doing so, ensure at least a presence, thus avoiding a power vacuum.

The age-old military adage that plans seldom survive the start line proved to be correct here as well. When they arrived in Prizren on 13 June chaos reigned. In the midst of all this chaos the Brigade Commander decided, on the insistence of the Serb Chief of Police, to send troops to Orahovac the very same day. In the end Task Force Orahovac began its existence as an "attack from the march", and the first day only with tanks and armoured infantry. Detailed planning in the preparation phase is by no means a guarantee for an execution according to plan. What careful planning in this case did bring about was the laying of a common basis for alterations in the plans. Detailed map studies and scrupulous study of deployment options made it possible to continue the march, thus keeping the initiative.

In one respect the original assessment of the situation proved to be spot on. The rapid and disciplined retreat of the Serb forces never necessitated the use of artillery. The decision to have the Artillery Battalion execute part of the primary task of Commander KFOR, "establish and maintain a secure environment, including public safety and order", proved entirely correct. It soon became apparent that all the available troops of the Brigade were necessary for this task. In Prizren personnel of the Air Defence Company were soon manning checkpoints and cooks and mechanics were also used as infantry support. Only when extra battalions arrived (from Austria and Turkey) did the pressure decrease somewhat. If the Dutch Artillery Battalion had not taken the responsibility for Orahovac, the Brigade would not have been able to act adequately here, and the consequences for the Serb minority can easily be imagined.

The limited attention for CIMIC in the preparation phase was not so much the result of an underestimation of the importance of CIMIC as such. What can be said, though, is that it was not a prominent aspect in the decision making. The Commander of KFOR (COMKFOR) in his evaluation report speaks of "little effective UN/KFOR planning". This resulted in a less than well-coordinated cooperation, especially in the early phases. A broader attention for CIMIC, particularly in this phase, might have provided a better insight into the tasks that would have to be carried out until they could be handed over to the civil authorities (in this case the UN).

As the deployment of the interim authorities and especially the police component was slow, the military had to fill the vacuum, a situation that had explicitly been foreseen in the UN resolution.⁷ That KFOR would have to act in this field did not come as a surprise, but the manner in which and especially the time frame were much less clear. A greater attention in the preparatory phases for the cooperation between the military and the civilian components (KFOR and UNMIK) would have provided a much clearer answer to these specific questions. Therefore, the conclusion is justified that CIMIC must be an integral and indispensable part of the decision making process.

3. Military rule

Like other KFOR units the Dutch Battalion was confronted with the necessity to execute military rule almost immediately after deployment. The final evaluation report, mentioned above, states, "As a consequence of the circumstances in Kosovo and the absence of countless facilities and bodies of public administration, the unit has been forced to take over a number of these civil functions until other bodies were able to take on these tasks". KFOR temporarily took responsibility for administration because creating a 'secure environment' cannot be

separated from public safety and order, monitoring the upholding of human rights and starting up public main services. There simply was no alternative. In June the Artillery Battalion, like other KFOR units, was faced with an utterly chaotic situation. With the departure of the Serbian army and police virtually all administrators had left and all areas were facing an administrative vacuum. The first aspect that required immediate action from the KFOR troops was the execution of the police task. The task of maintaining public law and order, and, more specifically, setting up a police force had been explicitly given to the civilian UN interim authorities in UN resolution 1244. It was the intention to first establish an international police force (UNMIKPOL), and, in a later stage, to build up an independent, impartial, local police.⁸ Until UNMIKPOL was ready to take up its work the military would have to take over the police tasks. Initially, the military were to limit themselves to tasks that were strictly necessary for maintaining public law and order.

For KFOR the execution of police tasks was essential, as the UCK was only too eager to take over the police role in Kosovo, which was absolutely unacceptable for KFOR. The UCK wanted to employ their own police to carry out the police task in particular, arguing that they were forced to do so as it took so long for the UN police to begin carrying out its task. The decision whether or not certain police tasks had to be carried out was strongly determined by the need to curtail UCK initiatives.

Especially in Orahovac the position of the Serb (and Roma) minorities played an important role in this. It was unacceptable, particularly here, that the UCK would take over police tasks. From the very first days this fact constituted the main reason for fully taking over the police task and not allowing the UCK to get involved in any way. This of course meant that a large diversity of police tasks had to be carried out.

Arson and looting, but also maltreatment and various forms of theft had to be dealt with. The most frequent offence was the carrying of arms contrary to the agreements.⁹ In Orahovac the openly carrying of arms was not tolerated from the beginning. There were also plenty of other less serious offences. A good example of dealing with relatively minor offences – in order to prevent the UCK from appropriating police authority – was the illegal cutting of wood. In the forests around Orahovac the cutting of wood had always been regulated by strict rules to avoid erosion of the steep inclines, which would affect the valuable vineyards. The UCK quickly grasped that here lay an opportunity to execute authority. They planned to start supervising the woodcutting and impose sanctions. In order to prevent the UCK from thus gaining even limited police authority, the supervision of woodcutting was temporarily taken on by KFOR.

The police task in Orahovac was particularly difficult, as it was here that in the early days of KFOR many corpses of murdered Albanians were found. The corpses were not only discovered in mass graves, but many were still lying about in the open air. It goes without saying that the returning population, confronted with the many dead and completely devastated villages, had a great need to tell their stories.

One of the first steps taken by the Dutch Battalion, in particular, was the setting up of a central point where people could tell their stories, and voice complaints. It was for these very pragmatic reasons that what was to become the first police station in Kosovo was opened up. Initially, it was not the intention that people could file formal reports, it was much more a point where the scarce interpreter capacity could be employed most efficiently. The small office manned by two experienced senior NCOs and an interpreter proved to meet an enormous need. The fact that the population had the feeling that their stories and complaints were taken seriously, took away most of their anger. This action, born of necessity, illustrates that when a civilian task must be taken seriously, there is not always the possibility to wait for experts. In this case the choice was made very consciously to employ personnel here without

specialist expertise, but with a lot of life experience. It is, however, obvious that the availability of trained experts makes this work a lot easier.

4. Police specialists

In spite of the enthusiasm of the soldiers, the need for specialists of police tasks was recognised. The arrival and deployment of the UN police took much longer than expected. Normal service personnel were confronted with problems that went far beyond their knowledge and experience. The German Brigade from the start used their organic military police (*Feldjäger*) to carry out police tasks.

In Orahovac, too, part of the police work was taken over by specialists. By allocating a small platoon of German *Feldjäger* and by involving the Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary contingent (with permission of The Hague) as advisors for specific investigations into serious crimes, it was possible to work in a much more structured manner. Both groups of military police worked under the auspices of the Dutch Battalion. The German *Feldjäger* took over the complaints bureau and established an adequate police station to replace it. In fact they catered for the basic police care and in cooperation with the regular soldiers took care of the required law and order. The Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary took on the role of advisors and concentrated on investigations into a number of serious crimes. When on 27 October the UN police, consisting mainly of Americans and Germans in Orahovac, took over their task, the American Chief of Police concluded that Task Force Orahovac had laid a unique foundation for his work. The preparatory work and the way in which essential tasks were carried out greatly facilitated the UN police in assuming its responsibility.

5. CIMIC and force protection

Another aspect that points at the interweaving of CIMIC in more general operational processes concerns the relation with the force protection of the unit. At first sight the execution of a great variety of police tasks, in particular, brings with it a certain risks. It seems obvious that every action may also cause a reaction. Every arrest may bring on retaliation, every inspection may end in a firefight. This, however, cannot be the basis for effective military action.

Police action in Kosovo was by no means always dangerous or even unpleasant. Much happened in an atmosphere of consultation. KFOR personnel were trusted and accepted as mediators. In connection with this it is necessary to point out the totally different situation as compared with that in Bosnia. The service personnel and especially the Dutch and the Germans in Orahovac could perform their task without any great threat. All entities had an interest in being on a good footing with KFOR. Therefore, there was only very sporadic evidence of direct threats towards these soldiers and the patrols often had the nature of police teams. This does not mean that it was always easy to deal with criminal activities and, of course, those that were caught (or prevented from) perpetrating their illegal activities were not happy.

The most telling example is the way arson attempts were dealt with. Especially Albanian youths tried to vent their anger or frustration by setting fire to Serb buildings. As this always happened at night it was extremely difficult for patrols to catch the arsonists, especially as they always perfectly knew their way in the town. In a similar situation in the town of Zjurm, soldiers of the German parachute battalion who were stationed there were fired upon. One of the German soldiers owed his life there to his excellent bullet-proof vest.

It never got that far in Orahovac. The frequency of patrols and especially the determined actions of the Dutch and German soldiers of Task Force Orahovac certainly contributed to

that success. When at the end of July the KFOR commander explicitly ordered to carry out more foot patrols to get more contact with the population, this had been standard procedure in Orahovac for quite some time.¹⁰ In this sort of situations an active posture, in which not only the trust but also the respect of the population can be won, can be an important factor in force protection. A good impression and acceptance by the population allows a pro-active stance that makes reactive protection less relevant.

6. The municipal administration

It goes without saying that it was important to come into contact with the local population as quickly as possible. Establishing a consultative structure with representatives of the various entities in the municipality of Orahovac, therefore, was a first step towards a more normal administration. Some members of the former Serb municipal administration were still present but they could speak on behalf of the Serb entity only. Initially, the only available point of contact for the Albanians was the UCK. When former administrators and other respected representatives had returned with the refugees a more balanced consultative structure could be realised, which enabled KFOR, and later UNMIK, to consult with committees from the various entities who were also recognised by their followers as legitimate representatives.¹¹

The situation in the early days of KFOR necessitated the establishment of an improvised administration, which made it possible to discuss problems and make decisions. Here, CIMIC went beyond coordination with civilian institutions; it was all about creating the circumstances that would allow the population to propose solutions themselves. UNMIK's policy was directed at establishing as quickly as possible a relatively normal administration, in which a large role for self-rule was deemed necessary.

The military had to make the first moves, here. It was not until August that the first administrator for Orahovac, the Mauretanian Kane, was appointed.¹² After he had been given a small staff in September he could make a start with administering the municipality, initially mainly through consultation with the committees and with the Dutch Battalion's support. Eventually this developed into an interim administration, led by an UNMIK administrator. The municipal council as well as the administrative council (comparable to the municipal executive) were made up of representatives of the various entities. It certainly cannot be said that this was a normal administration, but the first steps had been taken.

7. Public Utilities

Apart from the police task and municipal administration, Dutch KFOR personnel also undertook a broad range of matters that were essential for the normalisation of life. In doing this, the intention was always to hand over tasks as quickly as possible to suitable international organisations (IOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and possibly also to local authorities, insofar as they could be expected to carry them out fairly and impartially.

Thus, one of the Dutch Battalion's aid stations helped set up the regional hospital of Orahovac. For a time the aid station staff actually ran the day-to-day management, which allowed returning Albanian doctors to go to work efficiently and for a new hospital administration system to be set up. Treatment of Serb sick and wounded people could only take place under direct supervision of Dutch medical orderlies. The hatred among the Albanian doctors and nurses was so intense that a decent treatment could not be guaranteed otherwise, at least not in the beginning.¹³ The repair platoon did their bit by the truly miraculous feat of getting the local fire engine into action once more, after which a fire brigade, made up of volunteers from the population, was founded. The garbage collection service was set up in a similar manner. The extremely professional German aid agency *Technisches Hilfswerk* (THW) supplied the

garbage trucks and the garbage cans and volunteers did the job of collecting it. An important provision was always that all the work also had to be done in the Serb part of the town. Initially, this took place with a KFOR escort, but at a later stage the garbage trucks could collect the garbage all over town unescorted, without any problems.

Power and water had always been a problem in the entire region. The capacity of both the water works and the electricity grid was insufficient. Besides, the water works had been damaged in several places during the war and a number of pumps had broken down, which regularly caused water shortages, especially in the summer months. Where the shortages were particularly acute, support could be given in cooperation with the THW to the Serb as well as the Albanian side with the help of special mobile drinking water reservoirs. In particular the Serb residential area, which was situated higher up in Orahovac, received drinking water on an almost daily basis during the summer months. On the request of a Serb doctor, quality checks of the drinking water were carried out with the help of THW. With regard to power there were many similar problems. In particular the state of maintenance was very poor (according to experts, worse even than in other parts of Kosovo). In addition many (90%) safety fuses had been bypassed or replaced by copper wiring, which caused dangerous situations. There were still mechanics, though, to repair the wiring and transformers.

By mediation and consultation the two CIMIC officers of the Dutch Battalion ensured an impartial distribution of facilities. The importance of these activities for the normalisation process must not be underestimated. Often the talks about the supply of water, power or other facilities offered an opening for discussing more fundamental matters. The 'stick and carrot'-approach was hardly ever needed, but no doubt it played a role in the background.

The interim administration also had to prevent the enrichment of a few at the expense of the community, while at the same time it was important to create conditions for companies that could operate on their own feet. It was striking that the (Albanian) directors thought it quite normal to receive strict guidelines; apparently they had been used to this during the communist Tito era.

Thus, it was agreed that the bakeries could deliver bread to the Dutch Battalion itself at a reasonable price. In exchange they had to supply bread and other products to shops in the Serb residential area, which after some hesitation and initial escorts by the Battalion was indeed effected. The same approach was successfully applied to Podrima, a food wholesaler. These successes may serve as examples for the attempt to let the population solve their own problems as much as possible.

In the beginning of May 2000 a delegation of the Eindhoven regional cooperation (SRE) visited Orahovac to explore how civilian institutions from the municipality of Eindhoven could build on the work of the Dutch military (SRE, 2000). During the mission of the *Gele Rijders* in Orahovac in 1999 the idea had come up to see to what extent the municipalities in the Eindhoven region could contribute to the rebuilding of this Kosovar municipality.¹⁴ Its purpose was to show that in spite of the fact that the Dutch military would depart from Orahovac, Dutch support would still be possible.

A fact finding mission was set up in early 2000 to see what help could be given. The team consisted of experts in public utilities and two experienced municipal administrators. It was supported by one of the Battalion's CIMIC officers, who, incidentally, had left active service by that time. A thorough knowledge of the local situation and, in particular, the existing contacts, allowed the team to quickly get a good idea of the required and realisable help.

Three specific projects were chosen. At the time the present article was written the power supply had been improved, including the construction of street lighting, which is so important for creating a sense of safety. For the schools a number of sports facilities had been built, and a park had been constructed as a meeting place for people of the different ethnic groups and

for children to play. These are fine examples of the military laying the foundations for civilian institutions to take over and build on.

8. CIMIC officers

In connection with this, the role of the Dutch Battalion's CIMIC officers must be considered. The whole idea behind CIMIC is based on cooperation between the military and civilian authorities. In a situation in which civilian authority has broken down completely the normal CIMIC concept is only relevant to a limited extent. In such a case it is essential to establish a basic structure, which provides the foundation for a civilian administration. This is a fundamentally different approach from the classic CIMIC approach. The two CIMIC officers concerned themselves with a very wide range of issues, necessary for the normalisation of social life. The intention was always to hand over tasks as quickly as possible to suitable aid organisations and, if possible, also to local authorities, insofar as they could be expected to carry out the tasks fairly and impartially.

Quite apart from what has been achieved and the pragmatic approach adopted, it remains advisable to anticipate on a situation in which the military also have to take over administrative tasks temporarily. When this is the case it stands to reason to equip them for this task. This can be realised by training CIMIC officers, or by attaching administrative experts recruited from the reservist reservoir.

9. Expertise

Effective action in such complex situations requires the availability of the right experts. For the Dutch Battalion the first need that became apparent was that for police experts. This requirement was met by allowing the Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary officer¹⁵ to advise the Battalion commander in police matters. Of course it would be preferable to settle this unequivocally beforehand, in which case attaching one or more experienced permanent advisors would be the best solution. This could also be achieved by attaching experienced regular police officers.

The availability of an expert for legal matters (lawyer) is also essential. The operational commander must have immediate access to a lawyer who has a relevant knowledge of and experience in administrative, and, if possible, international law. In Kosovo the Dutch Battalion command could make use of the services of the lawyer of the German Brigade. It is, however, advisable that the operational commander, who has to operate in difficult and unclear circumstances in a legal vacuum, should be able to rely on an immediately and constantly available expert legal advisor of his own nationality.

Because it is probably very difficult to assess beforehand what specific expertise is needed, a flexible system of quickly deployable specialists should be set up. Incidentally, this does not only concern experts in the area of public administration described above, but also in environmental matters. Suppose there had been a factory leaking chemical material? To deal with the requirement commanders in the field identify during the execution of their mission, a pool of experts on immediate call, as flexible as possible, needs to be set up. This aspect should be taken into consideration in the light of the setting up of a new CIMIC organisation. There are surely experienced administrators, police officers, lawyers, environmental experts and many other specialists who are reserve officers and willing to do this kind of fundamental work on a temporary basis. There is a real possibility here for future deployment of specialists in missions.

It is striking that COMKFOR mentions this aspect in his evaluation report, when he concludes, "What was required was a pool of experts on call, who could deploy to the Operation

when required, take stock of the situation, recommend action and then, working closely together with HQ KFOR and UNMIK, find the expertise and resources required, both locally and from external agencies, to address the problems.”

What is necessary is not so much specialists who take over the civilian side of the operation, but experts who can give the right advice at the right moment. The CIMIC field is so broad, certainly in a ‘failed state’ situation as in Kosovo, that assessing beforehand which expertise is required at what moment is quite difficult. An effective deployment of such experts, or indeed asking the right questions, requires a complete embedding of CIMIC as a principle in the operational processes. It is here that CIMIC officers play a crucial role, as they have to achieve a seamless match between the unit's requirements and the experts. They should also ensure that the right questions are asked. Although the two CIMIC officers of 11 Battalion Horse Artillery did an excellent job, it is certain that in the future CIMIC will require more training and expertise. For future deployment the same energy should be put into the training and integration of CIMIC officers as into the training of more traditional experts. In a way it is striking to realise that whereas, for instance, S2 officers, signallers, and certainly fire controllers had been permanently trained, both CIMIC officers had been appointed at a very late stage and had not had any specific training at all.

10. CIMIC ?

CIMIC in its classic form is based on cooperation with civilian authorities, but in Orahovac, as in the entirety of Kosovo, there were no acting civilian authorities to cooperate with. Strictly speaking, therefore, there was no civil military cooperation either, and this begs the question whether the term CIMIC always covers the field of activities sufficiently.

A first problem is that the present terminology on CIMIC stems from the days that CIMIC had a clearly defined supportive function and was directed at the creation of conditions for more classic operations of military units. Kosovo is a very clear example of CIMIC acquiring a function of its own, essential for mission-achievement. CIMIC is therefore shifting from a supportive to a primary function, and, consequently, CIMIC specialists are getting a different place in the decision making process. CIMIC gets a more central position and it is difficult to imagine that this will change in the near future. The interaction of the military with the population and many other parties is a fact and it will certainly not become less relevant.

Due to its more central position CIMIC is becoming a task that must be embedded in all aspects and levels of the unit. In Kosovo this implied that the primary staff officers were much more involved in the CIMIC aspect of the decision making than they had been during previous training. The S3 as well as the S4 officers spent a substantial amount of time on the civilian aspects of the mission and, after the arrival of IOs and NGOs, also on the contact with civilians and officials of many different organisations. Partly because the Dutch Battalion had only two CIMIC officers (and not a single specialist) the staff officers and NCOs were given secondary tasks. The signals officer, for example, maintained contact with ICTY and the various forensic teams, and the S3 officer with UNHCR and OSCE. Usually the two CIMIC officers kept contact with the local population. In some cases ordinary soldiers were used as liaison officers. Thus, one of the members of the Signals troop, together with some Americans, distributed warm clothing in remote villages. CIMIC, therefore, is no longer the field of activities for a few specialists but an essential aspect in the work of many officials.

The third and possibly most fundamental reason for making the definition of CIMIC broader, lies in the execution or taking over of elements of administrative authority. Whether or not the formal decision has been made to execute military rule is not so important. The Australian military jurist Michael J. Kelly argues convincingly that when the military operate in an area

where there is no functional administration left, they are the 'de facto' authority, anyhow (Kelly, 1999). At least in Kosovo there was not the slightest room for doubt that the local population, certainly in the first few months, considered KFOR as the authority, and even more important, accepted it as such. This implies that there is a need for specialists who are able to support the process of re-establishing the most fundamental aspects of a functioning administration. This goes beyond the classic notion of CIMIC and requires a much broader approach.

In essence the main task for all units in Kosovo was to lay a foundation on which to build a more or less normal civilian structure. This can only be done if everyone is aware of this task and when all efforts are focussed on it. Although the term CIMIC in the case of the Gele Rijders did not fully cover the actions, the Battalion laid its main effort precisely in this field. In other words, it may not have been fully according to doctrine, but the ethical awareness and the will to help were obvious. The German Brigade formulated it, quite to the point, as follows, "es gibt viel zu tun, packen wir es an".

11. Conclusions

Eventually the Dutch soldiers left Orahovac. As a desired 'endstate' 11 Battalion Horse Artillery wanted to lay a foundation for organisations to build on. This was achieved, as UNMIK-POL, UNHCR and many other IOs, GOs and NGOs have stated. In the words of the UNHCR representative from Djakovica (responsible for Orahovac):

In the early days when the main humanitarian actors were not yet on the ground, Dutch KFOR stepped in where the need was high, impartial, down to earth and very efficient. In the absence of main UN actors, your men took over functions of which they were only partly relieved months after the first troops entered Kosovo. From my experience over the past months I am convinced that no better foundation could have been laid for our humanitarian work in Orahovac municipality than was done by your men.

In many modern operations CIMIC plays a dominant role, and the cooperation between military and civilian organisations is of crucial importance for the success of an operation. CIMIC, therefore, is too important to be left exclusively to specialists. CIMIC is increasingly becoming one of the key principles of modern operations, and must be embedded as such in the training of soldiers and particularly commanders.

Especially in difficult conditions CIMIC is also a way of thinking that every soldier must have. The individual soldier on patrol can do a lot of good or harm by a single remark or simple gesture. CIMIC, therefore, is for every soldier and not the exclusive domain of a few specialists.

Winning the confidence and respect of the population is a condition for creating a safe environment and certainly also for the rebuilding of a functioning administration. The military can and must play a crucial role in the transitional phase. The better the military are prepared for this aspect of their task, the better the foundation they can lay will be. Therefore, preparation, not only for the military aspects of an operation, but also the administrative aspects, deserves maximum attention. CIMIC is increasingly becoming a full-fledged aspect of military operations, and this implies a professional approach in all respects. A structured CIMIC officer training and the creation of an adequate pool of specialists are as essential as the full embedding in military training of officers and NCOs, in particular.

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Notes

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- ¹ KFOR (Kosovo Force) is the name of the military component of the international mission in Kosovo.
- ² Letter of the Secretary of Defence to the Speaker of the Second Chamber of the States General of 30 June 2000
- ³ See amongst others: Th. J. Clarenbeek, *Netherlands War Law*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Amsterdam, 1978, and J.C.E. van den Brandhof, *The Decision Making in the De Geer and Gerbrandy Cabinets*, Doctoral Thesis University of Amsterdam, 1986
- ⁴ For further background information on this subject, see: A.J.H. van Loon, 'Mededelingen van het militair gezag' [Communications from the Military Rule], *Militaire Spectator*, December 2000
- ⁵ During the preparations the situation in Bosnia was too often referred to, without bearing in mind the essentially different situation the Battalion would face in Kosovo. Whereas, on the one hand, using lessons learned is essential in making professional progress, it is wrong to assume that all experiences can be matched one on one.
- ⁶ In the French town of Rambouillet near Paris the negotiations on the cessation of the violence in Kosovo were conducted. After a hopeful start it proved to be impossible to reach any results here. For the Serb government of Milosovic the stationing of a NATO-led peace force, in particular, was a prohibitive objection. After the failure of the talks and the continuation of the violence against the Albanian Kosovars, NATO began its discriminate air raids to force the Serb government into submission.
- ⁷ Resolution 1244 explicitly states: "Ensuring public safety and order until the international presence can take responsibility for this task".
- ⁸ In Resolution 1244 one of the responsibilities of the 'civil presence' is defined in paragraph 12: "Maintaining civil law and order, including establishing local police forces and meanwhile through the deployment of international police personnel to serve in Kosovo".
- ⁹ In connection with this it must be realised that the carrying of arms is a sign of manliness in Albanian culture.
- ¹⁰ The order to make more direct contact with the population was especially prompted by the exceedingly rapidly changing circumstances. Hardly a month after the arrival of KFOR there was actually no threat from the Yugoslav army left anymore, but maintaining public law and order had become extremely important. Just like policemen, the soldiers would have to leave their armoured (vehicles) and make contact with the local population.
- ¹¹ On the Albanian side this recognition was almost always there. Not so for the Serbs, where especially the discussion about whether to leave or not was always problematical. Nevertheless, the established group of spokespersons was capable enough to speak on behalf of the majority of Serbs and to make binding agreements.
- ¹² UNMIK uses the term 'administrator' for the interim administrators. In fact the term only partially covers the work of these functionaries. Their tasks lies in the administrative and administration support domain. In fact they combine the mayor's and town clerk's tasks.

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- ¹³ It should be noted here that during the Milosovic' regime the so-called Albanian 'shadow government' had set up a completely separate health system. Albanians and Serbs had got used to segregation rather than mutual support.
- ¹⁴ The plan was first conceived during one of the regular meetings between the commander of 13 NL Brigade and the mayors in the region.
- ¹⁵ Every Dutch contingent always has a military police officer to deal with national policing business.