

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

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50 YEARS LATER, ARE WE STILL DESERT PEACEKEEPERS...?

“We are a nation of peacekeepers, not imperial war-hawks,” say both the opponents *and* supporters of Canada’s continued military presence in Afghanistan. What Canadians don’t know, however, is when and why we started saying this. How was our reputation for peacekeeping originally established – and what trials, tribulations, and sacrifices did it involve?

Pearson’s Peacekeepers locates the genesis of this mythology in the first peacekeeping effort mounted by the United Nations during the Suez Crisis, a role for which Lester Pearson won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957.

It asks the critical question: should the success of a peacekeeping mission be determined by the length of time the peace is kept, or the lasting initiatives of peace that are created?

Judged by the former, the UN’s first major attempt at peacekeeping was a success. The United Nations Emergency Force eased tensions and kept peace in the Middle East for over a decade. But judged by the latter, the UN’s report card is less stellar. UNEF’s hasty withdrawal, and the United Nations’ inability to even imagine, let alone actively manage, peacekeeping’s retreat, paved the way for the conclusion of hostilities between Israel and Egypt in the form of the Six Day War.

W.A.B. Douglas, official historian of the Canadian Armed Forces, says: “*Pearson’s Peacekeepers* brilliantly sums up the significance of the UNEF experience, which was both a failure and a wonderful achievement. Although a so-called ‘classic’ example of peacekeeping, UNEF has far more relevance to current Canadian operations in response to international crisis than is generally thought.”

One of the few histories that applies the literature on peacekeeping to an actual operation, *Pearson’s Peacekeepers* gives us an unprecedented glimpse of the nuts and bolts of raising and sustaining a military force, and a good look at what life is like for peacekeepers in the desert.

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Review Copies are available for ***Pearson’s Peacekeepers: Canada and the United Nations Emergency Force, 1956-67***, Michael K. Carroll, Foreword by Robert Bothwell, Published by UBC Press.

For more information, to obtain a review copy or schedule an interview, please contact:
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