

WARS WITHOUT RISK: U.S.HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTIONS OF THE 1990S

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A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate College of Bowling Green  
State University in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

August 2010

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## ABSTRACT

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*Wars Without Risk* is an analysis of U.S. foreign policy under George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton involving forced humanitarian military operations in Somalia and Haiti in the 1990s. The dissertation examines American post-Cold war foreign policy and the abrupt shift to involve U.S. armed forces in United Nations peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations to conduct limited humanitarian and nation-building projects. The focus of the study is on policy formulation and execution in two case studies of Somalia and Haiti. *Wars Without Risk* examines the fundamental flaws in the attempt to embrace assertive multilateralism (a neo-Wilsonian Progressive attempt to create world peace and stability through international force, collective security, international aid, and democratization) and to overextend the traditional democratization mandates of American foreign policy which inevitably led to failure, fraud, and waste. U.S. military might was haphazardly injected in ill-defined UN operations to save nations from themselves and to spread or “save” democracy in nations that were not strongly rooted in Western enlightenment foundations. Missions in Somalia and Haiti were launched as “feel good” humanitarian operations designed as attempts to rescue “failed states” but these emotionally-based operations had no chance of success in realistic terms because the root causes of poverty and conflict in targeted nations were too great to address through half-hearted international paternalism. Trapped by policies driven by empty rhetoric but lacking any validation in terms of national interests, Bush and Clinton weren’t willing to take serious risks in order to fulfill their overly idealistic mandates over unwilling or unmotivated populations. The operations in Somalia

and Haiti were poorly conceived and lacked real public support at home, thus perpetuating the need of policymakers to focus on crafting political theater and positive imagery over generating viable strategies to accomplish these missions. Both interventions in Somalia and Haiti were initiated and executed on the basis of their promise of producing risk-free operations for policies built upon flimsy foundations of empty rhetoric, internationalism, idealism, and the desire to create positive imagery for the U.S. role in the post-Cold War world and for the presidents that conducted humanitarian operations.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

While a dissertation is essentially a lonely self-driven process, it is by no means a product of only the author's efforts. I would like to offer my sincere gratitude to my advisor Dr. Gary Hess for his guidance and patience throughout the process and for keeping the project manageable and on an even keel. I also wish to recognize Dr. Rob Buffington for his invaluable input in helping me formulate the ideas surrounding the subject matter and how to utilize sources available to me, and Dr. Steven Ortiz for volunteering to step in for a committee member who retired while I was on military deployment. I am also heavily indebted to some knowledgeable and very supportive friends, namely Dave Haus, Jim Buss, and Matt Daley; who not only provided great advice along the way but encouraged me to "just get it done," "do work," and reminded me that "a done dissertation is a good dissertation." Lastly, I want to acknowledge the enormous love, patience, and support of my fiancé, Corinna Draeger, who gently motivated me to complete the process so we could finally get married by reminding me, "Hurry and be done, so we can be one." Thanks to all those mentioned above, I'm happy to report that after many years and enormous effort it is finally done.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Wars without Risk: U.S. Foreign Policy and Peacekeeping in the Post-Cold War

In the early 1990s, the United States was scrambling for a new cornerstone in foreign policy in the post-Cold War, and became lost in the contradictions between containment and new overinflated versions of Wilsonian idealism. The Bush and Clinton administrations (along with a complacent Congress) undercut the possibility for a formulation of in-depth foreign policy based on national interests in exchange for ad-hoc “low risk” multilateral adventures in Somalia and Haiti driven by overheated rhetoric and image management. The false notion that humanitarian interventions would present few real risks would be made apparent in these operations, and the emotional rhetoric surrounding saving victims of natural disasters, failed states, civil wars, and even disruptions of democracy augmented by reactionary responses to media images could not support the lack of solid policy formulation that would have been required to save targeted nations from themselves. The following is an examination of the policies under the Bush and Clinton administrations to engage in collective assertive multilateralism and forced humanitarian interventions in Somalia and Haiti from 1991 to 2000 in an approach to conduct a new form of idealistic foreign policy and attempt to fight wars without risk.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the end of the East-West conflict that divided Europe for nearly half a century, the United States suddenly found itself without a familiar sense of purpose in foreign affairs. The beast of the Soviet juggernaut had been put to sleep through American-led resistance; not by overt force of arms, but by outlasting them just as George F. Kennan, the father of containment policy, had predicted in the late 1940s. As the USSR collapsed in on itself, the Red Army pulled back inside Russia’s borders, the Eastern European satellites were freed of their communist shackles and the Soviet Union itself soon

broke up into smaller nationally based pieces. The familiar task of containing Soviet communist expansion had finally come to an end and the Cold War rivalry was no more. Communism, however, wasn't eradicated; there were still the Chinese, the Vietnamese, the Cubans, the North Koreans and other communist factions still confronting the West, but to strategists in Washington these remaining Marxist states seemed almost stranded and demoralized without the force of the Soviets behind them. Although China was embracing market economics and was openly engaging with the West, it would still create a difficult enigma for U.S. foreign policy to grapple with in the 1990s. When it came to U.S. global strategic interests it was generally believed that the other totalitarian antagonists could be isolated, softened, or even perhaps transformed. At most they would be considered only regional threats as opposed to the global menace that the Soviet Union once ominously presented. Other threats to American security still existed, such as terrorism and Islamic extremism, but these paled in comparison to the defunct Russian obstacle to world security. More worrisome was that widespread economic and social disorder also could obviously endanger the newly minted democracies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics, and conditions of extreme poverty and clashing ethnic factions would fracture the fragile balances of Third World countries everywhere. The world was finally free of the Soviet threat, but it could turn into a more chaotic and messy situation as the dynamics of a bipolar structure quickly evaporated leaving a variety of ethnic groups and political factions to fight it out over borders and for control of their respective governments as Cold War economic and military aid from both East and West quickly dried up. It was in this context that American foreign policy under George H.W. Bush and William Jefferson Clinton in the early 1990s sought out new foreign policy directions to undertake in what Bush quickly and others dubbed, "the New World Order".



As civil wars and other low-intensity conflicts erupted throughout the world, the United Nations took on new ambitious roles to end both interstate and intrastate conflicts across the globe. The UN had been conducting traditional peacekeeping missions for decades in which both warring parties would invite international peacekeepers to mediate their dispute and moderate the terms of treaties and ceasefires, allowing the UN to send lightly armed contingents from volunteer nations to keep the peace and prevent the conflict from spreading. In the turmoil of the post-Cold War, however, the outbreak of civil wars expanded rapidly as the pro-Marxist regimes in Africa lost their Soviet benefactor and their pro-Western counterparts were no longer deemed strategically important thus having their lifeline of American aid drastically reduced. Countries originally cobbled together during European colonialism were rife with the diverse ethnic tensions within them, and with bipolar pressures no longer containing them, the old antagonisms resurfaced. Cambodia completely broke down into a multi-factional civil war, as did Somalia, Liberia, Angola, and Mozambique to name a few. Yugoslavia disintegrated into an all-out ethnic civil war as the Serbian nationalists controlled the “rump state” of the former Yugoslavian republics and used the power of Tito’s former military machine to force the other ethnic republics to knuckle under causing them to attempt to break away and attempt to create independent states. Full blown conflict erupted throughout former Yugoslavia which involved conventional warfare, vicious guerilla fighting, and an increasing level of brutality and well-documented campaigns of genocide. The demand for UN peacekeepers rose dramatically during his time, as the international organization found itself strapped for funding and resources and stretched beyond the limit trying to maintain global order and aid underdeveloped countries.

The leadership at the UN under General Secretary Boutros-Boutros Ghali was not discouraged by the overwhelming nature of internal conflicts and overwhelming need for

humanitarian missions. On the contrary, Ghali and many others in the UN saw the end of the Cold War as an opportunity to increase the power of the international body to inject itself into intrastate conflicts and humanitarian disasters. Ghali was joined in this mindset by numerous Western liberal politicians, bureaucrats, academics, members of the media, and human-rights organizations. The assumption was that the time was right for the United Nations to empower itself through international cooperation and expand its role in world affairs, acting as a means towards creating collective security and imposing the will of the international community on “rogue” or “failed” states that ran afoul of what was believed to be in the best interest of world peace, regional stability, or had violated the sanctity of human rights. As Bush proclaimed the New World Order, he envisioned that the UN would assume the lofty idealism of the vague collective security foundations of the UN Charter (which had been nullified by the bipolar nature of the Cold War) and take on new roles and responsibilities in maintaining global peace and responding to humanitarian crises through bold new mandates that went far beyond traditional peacekeeping. “Peace enforcement” would augment traditional peacekeeping in which aggressive mandates would be passed by the UN to admonish violators of human rights or breaches of the peace and use collective force to impose the international community’s will upon these targeted states or factions. Under Chapter VII mandates of the UN Charter, peace would be *forced upon* unwilling populations or squabbling nations, becoming the embodiment of Woodrow Wilson’s proposed dreams at Versailles in 1919 to create world stability. Those that resisted international efforts to address internal strife and suffering would be crushed under the weight of the wheels of the world community supporting the newly empowered United Nations. These elites, such as Ghali and future U.S. Secretary of State Madeline Albright, who embodied this radical change in ideology which rejected traditional views of the sanctity of international

sovereignty or the right of states to act unilaterally, become known as the assertive multilateralists. These neo-Wilsonians maneuvered in this period to get the UN the power and support it needed to fulfill its aggressive new agenda.

The UN, however, quickly found that it didn't have the resources to conduct the multitude of humanitarian and peacekeeping operations to the extent it had envisioned. The sheer magnitude of trying to bring peace to war-torn Cambodia with 50,000 peacekeepers alone while still undertaking traditional peace monitoring in the Sinai, and Cyprus was straining the organization to the limit. The addition of missions in Liberia, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, Mozambique, Sudan, and Ethiopia quickly put limits on the ambitions of the assertive multilateralists in the UN. The United Nations "blue helmets" simply were too few in number and lacked the military capabilities to conduct sustained operations in so many places at once, especially once the UN attempted to impose conditions on belligerents to end conflicts. The UN was similarly plagued with a lack of sufficient planning and coordination assets, and was further hampered by bureaucratic inefficiency, mismanagement, corruption, and sometimes ineptitude in understanding strategic operations. Despite all the empty but high-sounding rhetoric from nations supporting UN peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts, only minimal support was actually offered and the UN was truly a paper tiger that could only operate in only the most permissive environments. Without some kind of massive internal reform and continuous heavy infusions of international contributions, UN peacekeeping could falter and expansion into peace enforcement definitely had no chance of getting off the ground. Ghali and the assertive multilateralists needed a helping hand.

The UN's idealistic overreach to bring stability to the world via an aggressive Wilsonian mandate to end civil wars, rebuild failed states, and rescue victims of humanitarian disasters

coincided with the Washington's search for a new role in world affairs after the demise of the Soviet Union. Bush had purported a New World Order that paralleled much of the assertive multilateralist agenda in that its goals sought the traditional American national interests of maintaining stability and the status quo, but hinged on the old Wilsonian concept that spreading democracy would make the world more stable and more amiable to U.S. security and economic interests. Bush's vaguely defined New World Order spoke of collectivism and international burden sharing in deterring aggressors, and sold the concept as a boon to the strongly isolationist American public as collectivism which would also share the risks and costs of policing the world with the international community. Bush's idealistic rhetoric never clearly spelled out exactly what America's role in this context would actually be, but it was assumed that the traditional conservative approach to support allies (as well as the new infant European democracies) and keep aggressive nations like Iran and North Korea in check while courting more malleable states like China and Vietnam would be part and parcel of that approach. Exactly how the United States as the only remaining superpower would maintain the status quo, reduce regional conflicts, create stability, and spread democracy while avoiding policing the globe alone through multilateralism was simply left to the imagination.

Bush's new world view was soon put to the test as his penchant for conservative approaches to foreign policy quickly deviated after the 1991 Gulf War with Iraq. After defeating Saddam Hussein's attempt to take over Kuwait and ejecting the Iraqi army from that nation in a stunning military victory utilizing a multinational coalition, Bush became emboldened in his vision of a New World Order. Euphoric over the stunning ease of the coalition victory over Iraq's large modern army, Americans and their political and military leadership widely misperceived that their technologically advanced armed forces were virtually unstoppable. Bush

and others saw that American military might could be, echoing Wilson's verbiage, "a force of good in the world" and potential enemies would prove no match for the overwhelming accuracy and firepower of American air and ground forces. In the wake of the stunning victory in the Persian Gulf that miraculously incurred very few coalition casualties, U.S. policy took on a tone of arrogance and hubris that spoke of transforming the world through benevolent collectivist multilateralism in the same Wilsonian tone being used by the assertive multilateralists. When Bush launched Operation Provide Comfort to protect the Kurdish refugees in the mountains of northern Iraq from Saddam Hussein, the notion that American military power should and could be used in humanitarian operations in conjunction with the UN was accidentally initiated.

With the Gulf War and Operation Provide Comfort, Bush ramped up the rhetoric that America's role in the post-Cold War would be one of benefice and humanity to struggling nations as well as promising to take the lead in confronting aggressors and violators of human rights. America was deemed a force of moral good, and as the only surviving superpower in the post-Cold War, the United States was quickly being labeled "the indispensable nation" in upholding the UN's international humanitarian agenda. The assertive multilateralists and the progressively minded liberals of the American political far left quickly attached themselves to this undefined movement to police the world through collective security and burden sharing, and the impetus to get into bed with the Ghali's assertive multilateralist agenda had a level of widespread appeal—at least among elites who rejected realism, embraced Wilsonian idealism, and promoted Jimmy Carter's brand of human-rights based foreign policy founded upon a moral obligation to use American power to address conflict and suffering in the world. These elites, however, were alone in this mindset, as little of this crusading mentality was shared by the vast

majority of the American public which was generally more comfortable with traditional forms of foreign policy and much more concerned with domestic issues.

The multilateralist vision came to fruition when the imagery of starving Somalis suffering under a lengthy famine and civil war inundated Western television screens and printed media covers. The bombardment of the images of bone thin children and pleading mothers in need of desperate aid triggered an emotional response within quarters of the U.S. government that caused it to abandon traditional national security requirements to send forces into a hostile situation solely for humanitarian reasons. The existing UN mission in Somalia (UNOSOM I) to provide relief in famine devastated areas was floundering as gunmen and militias thwarted or stole food shipments, and Ghali begged Bush for military help as the mission was on the verge of collapse. Bush ordered supplies airlifted to nearby nations and aided in refugee efforts, but would not send troops into the war zone. This situation dramatically changed in November 1992, when Bush lost the election to Bill Clinton. Bush claimed he was moved by the heart-wrenching stories of famine victims he was reading in the newspapers, and after meeting with skeptical White House advisors, he ordered a fairly large and heavily armed American intervention force to augment the feeble UN peacekeepers and get the supplies through to international aid agencies operating in country. With the launching Operation Restore Hope in Somalia, the United States had abandoned traditional approaches and realist criteria in utilizing military force and jumped into peacekeeping and humanitarian based interventions.

Bush's foray kick-starting his New World Order in Somalia, however, had its conservative limitations towards serving the needs of Ghali and the assertive multilateralists. Bush crafted the American-led UNITAF (Unified Task Force) to be a short-term "feel good" humanitarian mission to feed starving Somalis and aid international aid agencies, but not to directly confront

or disarm the troublesome militia factions and clans in Mogadishu. Bush rejected Ghali's attempts to expand U.S. military operations to spread out across the country, disarm the militias, and conduct nation-building tasks that would bog down U.S. involvement in the quagmire of Somalia's long term civil war. Bush wanted to get in and out of Somalia as fast as possible while crafting the image that American power was unchallenged and benevolent toward the downtrodden victims of humanitarian disasters while at the same time cooperating within the realm of collective multilateralism. The problem for Bush's strategy was that it lacked any realistic anchoring in national security interests and it had no real exit strategy. As the lame duck president left office, he had initiated no definable plan to pull out U.S. troops other than pinning an exit strategy on having the UN replace the UNITAF force, something it was utterly incapable of undertaking as evident in the need for UNITAF's presence in the first place.

Bush was replaced in office by Bill Clinton who not only embraced assertive multilateralism; he supported Ghali's plans to expand the UN mandate in Somalia into a Chapter VII nation-building and peace enforcement operation. Under the UNOSOM II (United Nations Operation in Somalia) operation, the mission was hopelessly mired in the failing notions of idealism toward rebuilding the Somali state and forcing the warlords there to come to terms, none of which the fragile UN force or its American partners were actually willing to really undertake. The political will never existed to go to war with the warlords to enforce peace, and vaunted American hi-tech weaponry proved to be of little value because Washington was too afraid to use it as it would upset the image of American benevolence and peaceful UN nation-building operations. Clinton, distracted by volatile domestic issues and the economy, paid little attention to the growing tensions brewing in Mogadishu and his inexperienced subordinates in the White House and at the State Department struggled handling the growing crisis. Soon, the

UN found itself trying to impose its abrasive will and attempting to upset the power equations in the civil war, taking on the largest Somali factions and directly confronting the popular warlord Mohammed Farah Aideed and his extensive clan. After tossing away its neutral status as peacekeepers and antagonizing the population, the UN force floundered trying to arrest Aideed and became hopelessly bogged down as a weak and disunited belligerent in the complex civil war. Aideed successfully thwarted attempts to defeat or neutralize him, and turned the tables on Clinton's ill-conceived gambit to win a victory on the cheap by attempting to use U.S. Special Forces and Rangers to capture him. The raid in early October 1994 ended in disaster killing eighteen Rangers and wounding five times more as perhaps 800-1,000 Somalis were likewise killed in the ensuing battle. The images of ungrateful Somalis dragging American corpses through the streets and desecrating the fallen heroes were too much to bear. UNOSOM II's days were quickly numbered as angry public reaction forced Clinton to reluctantly initiate a withdrawal from Somalia.

Clinton and the assertive multilateralists, however, strategically were not daunted by the experience in Somalia and immediately entangled themselves in another nation-building crusade in Haiti. Like Somalia, Clinton inherited the situation from Bush, but unlike his predecessor he pushed American policy towards military intervention. After Bush had talked tough about rescuing Haitians from their brutal military rulers (led by General Raul Cedras) who had overthrown the country's first democratically elected president in decades, the President had actually done very little other than to place an embargo and wisely prevent hordes of Haitian boat refugees from obtaining asylum in the United States. Bush, however, had painted himself into a corner with his overblown Wilsonian rhetoric about the indispensable institution of democracy in the Western hemisphere and the intolerable rule of the military junta that had



overthrown the populist Jean Baptist Aristide, and thus left himself no options in dealing with the regime. Bush nevertheless ruled out the use of force to oust the junta. When Clinton challenged Bush during the election, he vowed he would end Bush's "heartless" repatriation policies and restore Aristide to power, ramping up the Wilsonian rhetoric even higher. Although once in office Clinton fared little better than Bush in seeking diplomatic solutions, he continued to threaten the regime with tougher sanctions and later also with force, but refused to consider the futility of demanding the return of the unstable Aristide to power as the exiled leader had vowed revenge against the coup plotters and their supporters. Like Bush, Clinton had cornered himself with Wilsonian rhetoric about restoring democracy to Haiti and punishing human rights violators and left himself no options in dealing with the junta.

Clinton believed he had to act tough in Haiti to shore up the credibility of American foreign policy after the defeat in Mogadishu and the embarrassment of the *USS Harlan County* incident in which a U.S. warship carrying unwelcomed peacekeepers was embarrassingly driven off by a crowd of drunken paramilitary thugs on the docks of Port-au-Prince. Although Haiti posed no threat to U.S. or regional security, Clinton embraced the new tenets of assertive multilateralism and invoked the obligation to protect human rights and restore democracy there. After failing to remove the junta through negotiation, Clinton finally resorted to using military force to topple the regime with an American-led invasion in September 1994. In launching Operation Restore Democracy, Aristide was restored to power and nation-building was begun again under aggressive UN Chapter VII mandates. Violence against American forces was limited, mostly due to the Pentagon's insistence on avoiding policing the population directly and the obsession with force protection with which ground commanders conducted operations. Luckily, casualties were few. Aristide, however, proved not to be the panacea for Haiti's ills that Clinton and the assertive

multilateralists convinced themselves he was, and the Wilsonian attempt to reform Haiti based on Western enlightened ideals failed. Aristide was obstinate, vindictive, often belligerent towards the Americans, and befuddled the UN plans to reform Haiti at every turn. He was highly corrupt and primarily interested maintaining in his own power, misused the power of his office to obtain his own selfish ends, and in many ways was no better than the regime that was forcefully overturned to put him into power. In many ways he was worse, proving that the CIA's pre-invasion assessments were right all along about his unstable nature and his leftist agenda which was highly counterproductive to U.S. interests in Haiti and in the region. Reinstalling Aristide was a gigantic mistake. Aristide returned the poverty stricken nation to its dysfunctional predatory state as the Clinton administration tried to disguise the ongoing futility of trying to rescue Haiti from itself as a "success," but had little to show for it as the Haitian government was far from reformed and the anemic economy was simply being propped up by massive international aid. American troops which were initially promised by Clinton to be "brought home in months" lingered in the squalor of Haiti for nine years, and nation-building flopped after wasting billions of dollars. By 1999, Haiti eventually again became too violent to conduct UN humanitarian operations. Assertive multilateralism in Haiti was an enormous waste of money and resources that accomplished nothing of real value other than putting an ungrateful and corrupt ingrate back into power.

What makes U.S. foreign policy in Somalia and Haiti unique is that these military humanitarian interventions were not launched to protect or to serve national security interests as these important policy considerations were instead shunted aside. The driving force behind the impulse to launch humanitarian operations and engage in multilateralism driven by overheated Wilsonian rhetoric was the decisive factor of basing policy decisions on risk aversion. Risk was

the determining factor in putting American troops in harm's way and entangling American foreign policy with the dysfunctional bureaucracy of United Nations nation-building. The following chapters will outline the policies and events and demonstrate that the primary force behind American foreign policy in Somalia and Haiti was not realistic security considerations, nor even a concerted "enlightened" or "progressive" effort to rebuild these nations. Policy formulation and policy execution both were predicated on the notion that American power could be applied in both these situations with great fanfare and self-congratulation without any serious political or military risks being taken by the administrations ordering them. The false assumption that American military technology and firepower would overawe potential opponents was found faulty, as was the belief that American military force could be painlessly applied in these "Operations Other Than War" (OOTW) as the Pentagon systematically mislabeled them, without any serious risk to American soldiers on the ground. American entry into both Somali and Haiti was entirely predicated on the concept of *ease*, not need. American forces could be inserted quickly and could easily overwhelm potential resistance, while Washington could claim "victories on the cheap" to shore up rudderless and foundering visions of American foreign policy.

Policy execution too was firmly centered on avoiding risky operations and approaches that could place troops in even more dangerous situations. Fixation on force protection and virtually pointless rules of engagement were instituted to keep soldiers from engaging in too much risk to conduct nation-building or humanitarian operations, because incurring American casualties or creating too much collateral damage would completely undercut public tolerance for these humanitarian adventures-- because public support for nation-building never truly existed in the first place. Casualties had to be avoided at all costs, as the risk adverse nature of these missions

depended on the absence of American soldiers coming home in body bags or flag-draped coffins. The obsession with avoiding risks and their consequential casualties demonstrates the lack of political will policymakers exhibited in conducting these forays into Somalia and Haiti. They knew that these places and the assertive multilateral agendas that put troops at risk there weren't worth American lives, which is why they couldn't afford to take any serious risks in crafting their policies. These interventions were based on the concept of risk aversion in an attempt to conduct quick fixes toward what ironically *could not be fixed* to craft positive images for a shapeless and fuzzy vision of the New World Order and the "feel good" policies of assertive multilateralism.

As risk aversion shaped these policies, producing imagery and conducting political theater became the overarching goals of these policies. *Imagery*, not rational strategic objectives, drove both administrations in both situations to undertake unwise and hopelessly unrealistic approaches toward using military force abroad, as each sought to construct a quick-fix as the sole superpower in the post-Cold War to make these humanitarian problems basically go away without effectively dealing with their root causes. These operations were launched because both the Clinton and the Bush administrations were conducting a dangerous emotional approach towards foreign policy that hinged on producing imagery of American might and benevolence as well as an acceptance of an ideology of benign multilateralism and democracy enlargement. These emotional Wilsonian adventures driven by rhetoric about "saving democracy," "protecting human rights", "creating a secure environment," or "the humanitarian obligations of a superpower" were devoid of definable goals, and efforts focused not on producing measurable results but rather on producing ongoing photo opportunities such as feeding children, working under many flags, and conducting high-profile elections. Policy was designed to produce

symbolism without substance through crafting positive imagery rather than on producing lasting results. To this end, vaguely defined exit strategies completely hinged on getting out before these unrealistic adventures actually turned ugly. In the case of Somalia and Haiti, imagery was also manipulated to cover up the fact that these missions were not bringing peace, accomplishing anything useful, or rebuilding failed states.

Because American policy was built on a foundation of risk aversion and fixations on symbolism, success in saving these failed states was predictably unobtainable in the face of the realities. The scorecard for U.S. foreign policy in the humanitarian interventions of Somalia and Haiti in both cases were two failures; one fairly immediate and dramatic and one drawn out and obscured over time. The idea of the quick fix to humanitarian problems through the application of military force was proven to be a costly myth, and multilaterally based nation-building was naive and dangerous adventurism that was rejected by indigenous populations and had no serious public support or useful military solutions to conduct it. American foreign policy in both Haiti and Somalia hinged upon the concept of a low-risk operation, based upon the perception of the target nation's woeful military capabilities and geographical access. Bush believed Somali warlords could be brushed aside to deliver aid, and Clinton and the multilateralists believed they could entice them into compliance or beat them into submission if they resisted. Either way, the cornerstone of the decision to go into both targeted countries was based on the belief that the locals could not prevent the UN and the Americans from imposing their will upon them and conducting nation-building tasks which essentially meant restructuring the target states' government and society the way the invaders saw fit. Of course, under this neo-Wilsonian effort, it was claimed to be all for the benefit of the local population and for regional peace and stability, both Wilsonian claims, however, fail to hold up to much scrutiny. Somalia and Haiti

were invaded and occupied simply because they were supposedly easy targets to promote the assertive multilateralism agenda and could be used as platforms to promote other symbolism. Other nations like Iraq and Sudan were avoided because they presented too much risk. Both Bush and Clinton used multilateralism as a springboard for launching humanitarian missions, as a political selling point of international consensus for the use of military force and as a method of burden and risk sharing.

U.S. policy toward the Bosnian crisis falls in accordance with these same principles as well. Readers may question why the concurrent conflict in Bosnia is not likewise covered in the following pages as are the policies surrounding Somalia and Haiti. Although American policy in the former Yugoslavia (especially with the interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo) in the 1990s fits well within the circumstances and criteria of the thesis being presented here, it has been reluctantly omitted. Although the Bush and Clinton administrations handling of the Balkan crisis parallels the themes of this work in that these too were “wars without risk” and were predicated upon the notions of risk aversion and image driven policies, the multiple crises in Yugoslavia are far beyond the limits and scope of this project. The complexity of the breakup of Yugoslavia and the depth and length of the conflict there which was heavily entangled with UN, European Union, NATO, and other outside agencies and governmental institutions would require several more chapters to encompass and would make this dissertation far too lengthy and unwieldy. Bush’s policies toward the crisis in Yugoslavia are briefly covered in the context of his choices to intervene in Somalia and abstaining from invading Haiti, as readers will see that Bush had firmly decided to avoid a military intervention in the former Yugoslavia and allowed the UN and EU to take point in policies there which led to two years of basic inaction in American foreign policy.

Clinton's actions in Yugoslavia strongly paralleled his policies in Haiti, in which he took a very militant stand as he criticized Bush as a candidate, but once in office struggled for years over how to handle the crisis, maintained aggressive Wilsonian rhetoric that was not matched with American action, and frustratingly failed to produce a consistent policy. After the UN was on the brink of pulling out of Bosnia, Clinton finally decided to directly confront the Serbs using NATO airpower primarily because it was deemed risk free. This risk aversion approach of only launching "surgical strikes" against highly limited military targets created direct U.S. involvement in the conflict, but it did not achieve the desired results. These events coincided with special envoy Richard Holbrook's exhaustive attempts to negotiate a peace settlement between the Serbs, Croats and Muslim Bosnians over the previous two years and an effectual partitioning of the disputed territory was carried out in the Dayton Accords of 1995. The exhausted belligerents settled into an uneasy peace as UN, U.S. and NATO troops occupied Bosnia and Macedonia and began another lengthy nation-building project. Conflict again erupted with the Serbs in Kosovo in 1999, and again the answer was to forsake ground combat and rely on airpower alone. This war too was centered upon risk aversion and image management leading to an American grandstanding strategy based upon overreliance on airpower and smart bombs again resulting in disappointing results. The Serbs were eventually defeated, but several unsavory unintended foreign policy consequences arose including another costly occupation and nation building project this time in Kosovo.<sup>1</sup>

Essentially the roots of the problem of U.S. policy toward the situations in Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia and elsewhere were the misapplication of Wilsonian idealism by the assertive multilateralists and the formulation of policy approaches that were predicated on the basis of ease and avoiding risk to craft favorable political imagery. The assertive multilateralist agenda

during this period had warped the traditional Wilsonian foundations of American foreign policy, and turned them toward overly idealistic and dysfunctional directions that led to waste and failure. As renowned author Tony Smith outlines in *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy*, traditionally American policy tends to seek situations in which supporting and aiding the spread of democracy and self-determined states benefits the American position by increasing trade and markets and thereby improves the security and overall position of the United States.<sup>2</sup> These policy roots date back to Thomas Jefferson and were set in motion as early as the Monroe Doctrine using a foreign policy approach in which the American position would be benefitted by supporting fellow democracies and mutually embracing anti-mercantilism, anti-militarism, anti-imperialism, and protecting non-discriminatory global economic system.<sup>3</sup> The goal was not to search for a competitive balance of power system, but to instead to craft inclusive, consensus-building mechanisms of collective security. As America emerged as a world power, Woodrow Wilson aggressively expanded this impulse in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by attempting to paternally impose Progressive liberal ideals first on Latin American states (Mexico, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua) to “reform” them, and then attempted to craft global systems in order to spread democracy after the First World War. Wilson firmly believed that the expansion of democracy based on the ideals of self-determination was not only beneficial to American security, but it was imperative that the United States lead the world toward new multilateral collective security arrangements such as the League of Nations to ensure global peace and security. To this end, a new liberalism would be injected into new or “reformed” states in which not only would democratization take place, but individual freedoms through constitutional state governments based on the rule of law would control the nature of the state.<sup>4</sup>



Smith, however, notes that Wilson's experiments intervening in Latin America proved that democratization was not always enough to ensure success, as holding elections or creating protectorates to reform populations and institutions while protecting liberties was not always sufficient to ensure democracy would take root. The events in the Philippines, Cuba, Haiti, and Nicaragua during that period provide testimony to this argument. Although the American impulse since that time has followed in Wilson's footsteps to expand democracy and seek mechanisms for collective security, Smith notes that Wilson's additional application of liberal internationalism has not always been dominant in American foreign policy, and was notably even absent during several administrations such as Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford. American defense of democracy was crucial in defeating fascism in World War II, but Smith writes that for most of the century, the expansion of democracy that marked the progressive thinking in Europe and America seemed excessively naïve and lacked unity and direction in the 1930s, stagnated quickly again soon after World War II, and even seemed on the verge of collapse in the 1970s. Democracies seemed to require too many favorable coinciding circumstances and too much diligent collective effort in order to make them work, and it was difficult for them to survive in a harsh world.<sup>5</sup> As delicate as democratization could prove to achieve, especially in unstable Third World nations, expansionism was naturally extremely limited during the Cold War and the global struggle against communism.

The termination of the bipolar confrontation between East and West and the removal of this obstacle to democratization and global liberalism in the early 1990s caused the assertive multilateralists to fall into Wilson's earlier paternalistic trap-- assuring themselves that democratization, liberalism, and unbound multilateralism were a panacea for all the world's ills and the only possible approach toward American foreign policy. Emotionally based idealism

eradicated any realistic policy strategies or alternative interpretations. The idealists pronounced the lone American superpower, supposedly unchecked in the post-Cold War, was obligated to democratize the world and create peace and stability under the banner of collective multilateralism. The assertive multilateralists, however, failed to understand that while democratization was the strategic ideal, it was not necessarily applicable in many societies or all situations and often fails as a heavy-handed and intrusive approach toward bending unwilling societies towards American (or even supposedly) international will. Like Wilson, the assertive multilateralists dogmatically asserted that democracy would dominate the future globally and eventually eradicate totalitarian or other forms of government, as Western enlightened views on human rights and rule of law would be the primary basis of future nation states. These values in turn would be enforced by a neo-Wilsonian concept of a powerful collective security organization that would punish rogue states upsetting or resisting the new international status quo. This extreme concept of “global democracy” and empowering international organizations like the United Nations toward global government at the expense of the sovereignty of individual nation-states was a fallacy and a misinterpretation of traditional American goals toward democratization, as it was hopelessly idealistic and out of touch with cultural, economic, and political realities.

Contrary to the aggressive assertive multilateralist agenda, Smith argues that not all societies should converge as democracies, as the fragile and complex institution’s emphasis on individual freedoms and property rights normally appeals primarily to Western societies. Confucian and Islamic societies, Smith argues, will not necessarily accept the Western Enlightenment molds to consolidate societies being created for them through democratization efforts, especially if they have no prior experience with democratic foundations or fail to solve class or ethnic cleavages.<sup>6</sup>

Smith also notes that democratization strategies include elements of “genius and tragedy” that must be considered equally in understanding spreading democracy in any region. These strategies are “genius” because they are innovative politically, could appeal to elites, and hold promise to modernize and stabilize societies that they reform. These strategies are likewise “tragic” in that democratization and liberalization are not enough to create sufficient economic, cultural, and societal changes and often create narrowly based and highly corrupt forms of democracy.<sup>7</sup> The assertive multilateralists in the 1990s never understood and certainly never acknowledged the dichotomy of these issues Smith skillfully outlines and were merely fixated on the idealistic “genius” side of the coin while ignoring the “tragic” consequences of their approach to democratization in a extremely paternalistic and elitist “new world order”. Spreading democracy in Somalia, Haiti, and elsewhere through American foreign policy therefore suffered under a heavy dose of unrealistic, emotional, overly rhetorical, and a highly liberalized version of Wilsonian idealism as a result. This misapplication of the traditional American impulse to spread democracy accompanied with the fixation on imagery and risk avoidance led to the failed policies in humanitarian interventions in Somalia, Haiti and the former Yugoslavia.

The arguments being presented in this project regarding the misapplication of Wilsonian idealism and the flawed nature of conducting foreign policy based on avoiding risk and manipulating imagery were a direct result of the methodology utilized in this work. Several separate fields of scholarship were researched and brought together to form a comprehensive analysis of American foreign policy under Bush and Clinton regarding humanitarian interventions in Somalia and Haiti. The approach to the project was quite exhaustive as the topic required a firm grasp of not only American foreign policy under two different administrations, but also tackling UN peacekeeping policy and U.S. military operations as well. As the project

was so extensive, it was unfortunately necessary to abandon an initial effort to include a case study on Bosnia, although as previously stated, the intervention policy under Bush and Clinton there fit the same criteria of “wars without risk” superbly.

To fulfill the needs of the project, a considerable amount of research was undertaken in obtaining a high understanding of UN peacekeeping operations, as there seems to be an ever-expanding body of works tackling everything from humanitarian missions, to traditional peacekeeping, to peace enforcement operations and the numerous implications that they entail in international relations. Several intensive studies have been published on these issues; most useful were standard boilerplate readings on peacekeeping such as John Hillen’s *Blue Helmets: The Strategy of UN Peace Operations*, William Durch’s *The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping Operations* and *UN Peacekeeping Operations, American Policy, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s* (also by Durch) to name a few. These sources, along with several other secondary works and dozens of academic journal articles, provided an excellent “slice” of the peacekeeping puzzle from the international standpoint and provided excellent appendices and annotations of UN primary source documents. For this project it was also necessary to delve into the field of political science to grasp a wide range of UN related issues. Much research included reading works dealing with the abundant theory and academic debate regarding assertive multilateralism, UN policy and practices, the U.S. relationship with the United Nations, UN and non-governmental aid agencies, and many other related international issues. This material provided very useful topical knowledge but the research also proved quite time consuming and unfortunately, very little of that effort ended up in the text or notes of the dissertation. Sources that directly focused on the UN operations in Somalia and Haiti, however, proved much more useful as did a number of books and articles that were directly critical of the disastrous concepts

of multilateral peace enforcement. *Fool's Errands* by Gary Dempsey and Roger Fountaine and Dennis Jett's *Why Peacekeeping Fails* are excellent examples of this genre and served a great purpose to the project.

Recent works on American foreign policy were beneficial to my analysis including Daniel Bolger's *Savage Peace: Americans at War in the 1990s*, Richard Haas' *The Reluctant Sheriff*, and *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War* edited by James M. Scott. *The Evolution of U.S. Peacekeeping Policy under Clinton: A Fair Weather Friend?* by Michael McKinnon and William Hyland's *Clinton's World: Remaking American Foreign Policy* were key sources in understanding policymaking for that administration. Works that focused on global strategy and military intervention, were also an important part of the methodology for dissecting the issues within the project, and included solid analyses such as Max Boot's *The Savage Wars of Peace*, Richard Haas' *Intervention: The Use of American Force in the Post-Cold-War World*, Ralph Peter's *Fighting for the Future*, not to mention several journal articles dealing with strategic analyses in the 1990s. Several of the crucial journal articles on policy were those found in the pages of *Strategic Studies* and *Foreign Affairs*.

Diplomatically based histories were also highly beneficial to my research, especially Hirsch and Oakley's *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacekeeping*, Alexander George's article, "Clinton and Coercive Diplomacy: A Study of Haiti" and Horace Bartilow article, "Diplomatic Victory Misunderstood: A Two-Level Game Analysis of U.S. Policy toward Haiti" found in *Security Studies*. Since imagery and modern news was an equally important factor in policymaking under Bush and Clinton, it was also necessary to research these media related topics as well. Howard Kurtz' *Spin Cycle: How the White House and the Media Manipulate the News* and Robert Denton's edited collection of essays in *Images, Scandal, and*

*Communication Strategies of the Clinton Presidency* were excellent insights for crafting the project. Warren Strobel's *Late Breaking Foreign Policy: The News Media's Influence on Peace Operations* deconstructing "the CNN effect" of media role on foreign policy was also a crucial source in constructing arguments within the project.

The military "slice" of the project was surprisingly bountiful, as the modern American military and its western counterparts were quick to write and publish not only numerous personal accounts, but military agencies also published evaluations from everything from grand operational strategy to minute analysis of small support operations. The U.S. Army was particularly prolific in writing about its operations in both interventions in publications by the Army War College and *Parameters*, the U.S. Army academic journal. Haiti and Somalia produced hundreds of accessible articles from the military obtained for this project and some were indispensable in painting the picture "on the ground" in these operations. Walter Kretchik, Robert Baumann, and John T. Fishel's *Invasion, Intervention, and "Intervasion": A Concise History of the U.S. Army in Operation Uphold Democracy* (later published as a book by the General Staff College Press) serves as an excellent example of an Army strategy and post-operations analysis. These accessible "think tank" sources became a rich source of primary documents and were applied liberally in the project. First hand military accounts were highly insightful in understanding the execution phase of policy. Mark Bowden's *Black Hawk Down* quickly comes to mind, but no less important were lesser known works such as Martin Stanton's *Somalia on Five Dollars a Day*, Matt Eversman and Dan Schilling's *The Battle of Mogadishu*, and Daniel Bolger's less topically specific but insightful look at modern "grunt" warfare, *Death Ground: Today's American Infantry in Battle*. Sources such as Adrian Lewis' *The American Culture of War* and numerous specific articles regarding American military foundations,

humanitarian operations, force restructuring, the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), and casualties and collateral damage, were also highly useful in absorbing the role of risk and casualties in modern American military policymaking.

In doing primary research on U.S. foreign and military policy, I was severely restricted on what I could obtain from primary government sources as many of the events covered in the project took place were less than ten to fifteen years prior to writing. Trips to the National Archives in Washington D.C. proved fairly fruitless as the documents concerning both Bush and Clinton would be restricted for several decades to come; most of which I was told by the head archivist would be sitting boxed in a Maryland warehouse awaiting screening for classification probably for another twenty years or more. Nonetheless, I made the best of what was available from the Bush and Clinton libraries and the sparse material already in public records.

Fortunately, I was assured that the way I was using many of my sources (speeches, editorials, dispatches, biographies, interviews, etc.) effectively dealt with policy analysis and satisfied the necessary research criteria. Congressional records and State Department dispatches were numerous and useful in putting the policy picture together, as were a plentiful source of newspaper, journal, and magazine articles. Notably, the heated congressional hearings after the Battle of Mogadishu exposed valuable content from underneath the usual shroud of Washington policymaking. Of invaluable use were administration speeches and op-ed pieces written by Washington insiders, which exposed the strategic debate. Major participants, insiders, and Washington pundits contributed to the open debate on intervention through the media which also fueled research sources. Colin Powell, Henry Kissinger, Madeline Albright, Strobe Talbot, Jane Kirkpatrick, George Will, Brent Scowcroft and George F. Kennan weighed in on American

humanitarian intervention policy and America's role in the world in several op-ed pieces and articles.

Formal studies on the presidents themselves were somewhat banal, although the energetic works on Clinton generally far outnumbered the mostly lackluster treatments of Bush. Unfortunately, most works found in this genre were quite polemic and generally sought to unfairly discredit Bush's accomplishments, unduly cast Clinton as a messiah or otherwise overly focus on his sexual scandals. John Robert Greene's *The Presidency of George Bush* provided the best comprehensive study and *The Clinton Legacy* edited by Colin Campbell and Bert Rockman gave a balanced treatment of Clinton's approach to office. Neither president's autobiography unfortunately offered much insight on Somalia and Haiti policy, as Bush's memoir doesn't address either Somalia or Haiti in depth and Clinton's *My Life* is somewhat disorganized with little direct focus on the interventions.

It must be noted that I was fortunate in my research that key members of both administrations were quite prolific in their media interviews and many key insiders were quick to publish "tell-all" works about their experiences. As mentioned above, Clinton and Bush both wrote lengthy autobiographies but they were not alone. Colin Powell's biography, *My American Journey*, helped shed light on certain policies, as did biographical accounts by other military leaders such as NATO commander Lieutenant General Wesley Clark, and UNITAF commander Anthony Zinni. Of enormous value was George Stephanopoulos' *All Too Human*, which provides first hand accounts of policy decisions within the Clinton White House that would perhaps otherwise been kept forever in the dark. Dick Morris' *Behind the Oval Office* and Sydney Blumenthal's *The Clinton Wars* were also good inside sources. David Halberstam's amazing ability to get those inside the Washington decision cycle to divulge their thoughts and discuss events taking



place behind closed doors was beyond compare in *War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton and the Generals*. Taylor Branch's *The Clinton Tapes* was another solid "insider" source on Haiti.

Through these invaluable sources: newspaper accounts, editorials, and congressional hearings, State Department dispatches, published military analyses, first hand accounts, journal articles, and secondary works I was able to piece together a solid picture of American policymaking in Somalia and Haiti and lend support for my arguments. It was the exhaustive research of peacekeeping, UN policy, American foreign policy in the post-Cold war, assertive multilateralism, the Bush and Clinton administrations, military operations and the humanitarian operations in the 1990s that culminated in this project. The issues were complex and entwined, and much difficulty was overcome in addressing the both overwhelming amounts of accessible data on one hand and the extreme lack of traditional government primary source data on the other. My intent is that this project effectively used these available resources to tackle these complex issues in a manageable, coherent fashion and addresses crucial topics that no source has yet effectively approached regarding the factors of rhetoric, risk, and imagery within the military interventions in Somalia and Haiti.

The following chapters will scrutinize policy under the Bush and Clinton administrations in the humanitarian interventions in Somalia and Haiti and examine them as idealistic military forays conceptualized and executed as risk-free adventures driven by image management practices. The American humanitarian adventures in Somalia and Haiti in the 1990s served no need or purpose, but were launched under the notion that the Bush and Clinton administrations could engage Americans in wars without risk.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> See Ted G. Carpenter, *NATO's Empty Victory: A Postmortem on the Balkan War* (Washington D.C.: Cato Institute, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> See Tony Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Struggle for Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994). While there are many sources on American foreign policy and democracy, Smith's work is highly regarded for addressing this topic and dealing with events after the Cold War.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 15.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 19.

## PROLOGUE

### The Rockwood Case and the Hypocrisy of Saving Strangers as Foreign Policy

On September 19, 1994, President Bill Clinton ordered a military invasion of Haiti in order to “prevent human rights abuses”<sup>1</sup> and end the brutal rule of the military junta of the small and impoverished Caribbean country. On the surface, such a determined demonstration by a modern nation state to end the suffering of others outside its own borders appears unique, selfless, noble, and truly progressive in the conduct of foreign affairs. Clinton’s policy toward Haiti called for ousting the tyrannical and illegitimate Cedras regime which had seized power in a 1991 coup overthrowing the elected government of President Jean Baptist Aristide, the return of democracy, and the reconstruction of Haiti’s civil institutions. The effort in Haiti, known as Operation Restore Democracy, was to assert the Western model of justice and democracy upon the Haitian people in a reflection of the enlightenment ideals of modern nations and set a new course for American foreign policy and altruistic multilateralism in the post-Cold War world.

All, however, was not how it seemed. Operation Restore Democracy illustrated not an enlightened fulfillment of benign humanitarianism, but was rather a cheap façade of multilateralism and an entangling quagmire of contradictory messages and political slight of hand that served neither American national interests nor did anything real to help Haitians escape the circumstances of their systemic poverty and dysfunctional and predatory governmental institutions. During U.S. military operations in Haiti a strange series of ironic and bizarre events involving a U.S. Army intelligence officer exposed the realities of the strategic fraud of the American involvement in Haiti and elsewhere in humanitarian based operations during the 1990s. This ironic and embarrassing incident serves a symbolic demonstration of the false pretense of American military interventions operations in the 1990s that were supposedly

founded upon Wilsonian justifications hinging upon protecting the victims of humanitarian disasters and human rights abuses for violations of national sovereignty and embracing new United Nations peace enforcement missions. This is the strange case of Captain Lawrence P. Rockwood, who was arrested and court martialed for obeying the orders of his president and carrying out the mission of freeing helpless victims who were the justification for the American invasion of Haiti in 1994.

The American invasion of Haiti ordered by Clinton to topple the Cedras government met no resistance and U.S. troops quickly occupied the island nation and began to dismantle the regime. American policy, however, was to impose order on Haitians through force but avoid directly policing and controlling the population-- a contradiction which undermined the Wilsonian ideals that justified the invasion and exposed the true nature of the mission. Operation Restore Democracy soon revealed itself to be more about the Clinton administration's desire for moral exhibitionism, flexing unchallenged U.S. military muscle, and winning a cheap foreign policy victory than engaging in the lofty enlightenment and humanitarian goals stated by the President. Haiti was not being reformed, its institutions were only getting cosmetic makeovers, and its anemic economy was not getting overhauled as promised. The inhumane and backwards justice system was of particular emotional focus in the UN supposed "rescue" of Haiti, but here too the realities of the situation in the capital of Port-au-Prince greatly contradicted the claims of success being reported by the White House in returning Haitian society to enlightened Western standards. Perhaps the most poignant irony of the occupation was the very apparent symbolism of American troops patrolling the streets with the FAHD, Haiti's tyrannical defense and police forces. This was done out of necessity to control the population during the occupation to reduce the risks of American troops policing the population directly, but it meant that the American

occupiers were now cooperating with the same thugs and abusers of human rights they had been sent there to eliminate. It was this ongoing contradiction between pretending to rescue strangers as victims of human rights abuses through mere UN window dressing measures and lip service from Washington, versus the realities of the utter dysfunction and chaos of Haiti's justice system that brought the façade of American policy there to light. The unusual case of Captain Lawrence Rockwood encapsulates this farcical and hypocritical execution of U.S. foreign policy in the 1990s.

Captain Lawrence P. Rockwood, a counter-intelligence officer deployed with the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, dealt with HUMINT (human intelligence sources) was increasingly troubled by the fact that the American occupation of Haiti wasn't fulfilling its mission to protect the victimized people in Port-au-Prince from human rights abuses. As part of his assigned duties, Rockwood continually reported information he had gathered regarding the prisons and other atrocities to his superiors. Some seventy reports crossed his desk each day describing robberies, rapes, and murders in very graphic detail. The intelligence reports also made repeated references to human rights abuses at some five prisons around Port-au-Prince, most notably Haiti's largest prison, the National Penitentiary.<sup>2</sup> As a counter-intelligence officer, Rockwood was supposed to develop informants. But in his first week in Haiti, his informants began to disappear. Reading intelligence reports about numerous mutilated bodies of tortured victims being discovered, Rockwood could guess at their fates. Determined to try to save his informants, Rockwood lobbied to inspect the National Penitentiary, where 85% of the inmates were political prisoners. He was repeatedly rebuffed and thought his commanders were guilty of "moral cowardice."<sup>3</sup>

Fueling Rockwood's concern about the prison was a September 27<sup>th</sup> 1994 account of the barbaric conditions found in Les Cayes Prison, recently liberated by Special Forces in southern

Haiti. Dozens of emaciated men were wasting away from hunger and illness in a tiny 12 X 4 meter cell. The Washington Post reported:

...several prisoners were only skin and bones, barely able to walk, that one man's testicles were almost rotted off from lack of medical care and another's buttocks had all but disappeared from lying unmoved for weeks.<sup>4</sup>

One prison guard, Mondelus Norelus, known as Saddam Hussein, made one prisoner cut off his ear and eat it. He then carved his initials on the buttocks of the prisoner. Rectifying these types of horrendous conditions were the primary justification for the American invasion and occupation of Haiti, and Rockwood grew increasingly frustrated that nothing was being done about them in Port-au-Prince especially regarding the infamous National Penitentiary.

Reading the daily horrors in his intelligence reports and realizing that U.S. forces could easily stop these atrocities and other general violence on civilians, Rockwood repeatedly asked superiors to take action against the prisons in Port-au-Prince. Rockwood's superiors ignored his requests and downplayed the problem. His immediate superior, Lt. Colonel Frank Bragg, told him to, "Keep things in perspective about Haiti. 100% of what you hear don't believe, and 50% of what you see don't believe." Rockwood later learned that his reports were not filtered up through the intelligence bureaucracy to the Daily Intelligence Summary (DISUM) for the military high command. In attempt to report the information, Rockwood even went outside his chain of command—to the chaplain, the command's legal office, the UN Military Observer, The U.S. Special Forces, and the Civil Military Operations Command Center. No one claimed that they could do anything. "I just don't see any logic to that," Rockwood said. "How can you convince anyone that you have an armed force around a facility that you're not responsible for what's going on inside that facility."<sup>5</sup>

Rockwood found himself at a crossroads. He later wrote to General Meade, the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division commander, "how is it that the United States Government could not to some

degree be held ethically , morally, or legally responsible for human rights violations being carried out...by Haitian military police, whose activities, under an agreement of ‘cooperation,’ were being supervised by U.S. forces?” Rockwood filed a formal complaint with the division’s Inspector General. He charged his immediate commanders with criminal negligence for allowing gross human rights violations, including murder, to continue unabated in the city. “For an officer in my position to levy a complaint against his own command was pretty much a career ending move,” Rockwood later recalled.<sup>6</sup>

Rockwood tired of the stonewalling and hypocrisy and decided to take matters into his own hands by investigating the National Penitentiary himself. He first consulted with the military’s legal staff and several legal texts concerning his rights to do so under military law and the principles of international law.<sup>7</sup> On the evening of September 30<sup>th</sup>, Rockwood prayed and meditated on his cot. He wrote a note to his superiors:

I am doing something that is clearly legal to stop something that is plainly illegal. Action required: All means necessary to implement the intent of the United Nations and U.S. President intent on human rights.

Pinning an American shoulder patch on a note, he wrote, “Take this flag. It is soiled with unnecessary blood. You cowards can court martial my dead body.”<sup>8</sup>

About 5 p.m. Rockwood gathered his combat gear, loaded his M-16 rifle, and snuck out of the secured area. He headed for the National Penitentiary, although he was not quite sure how to get there. Because of the pitched battles that had taken place that day in the area, a taxi driver would only drop him off nearby. He wandered around lost for hours, encountering a wounded man, soaked in blood that grabbed him and yelled at him. Eventually he stumbled upon the prison. Rockwood bluffed his way past the gate guards, claiming to be part of an inspection team.

Responding to the commotion, the night warden appeared and drew a .45 caliber pistol upon Rockwood. Interestingly, the warden spoke English and had been trained at the infantry school at Fort Benning, Georgia. He claimed he could not unlock the prison block. Frustrated, Rockwood then set out on his own and found an open door to the infirmary that he blocked open with his foot as someone tried to close it. He found twenty-six people on a filthy concrete floor in circumstances resembling those at Les Cayes. Many were near death. Rockwood demanded to see a list of the prisoners, but the warden refused. Rockwood was unable to reach his superiors by telephone, and hoping to create a scene, had the warden call U.S. authorities. Then he pulled up a chair in the courtyard and waited.<sup>9</sup>

Three hours later Major Roland Spencer Lane, a military attaché from the American Embassy arrived with U.S. troops. Lane talked with the warden and Rockwood said it seemed the two knew each other and talked about their families. Lane ordered Rockwood to leave, and Rockwood was escorted back to the base, given a psychiatric exam and read his rights. Bragg, his immediate superior, was furious. “How could you go off on your own like this? You had your orders.” Rockwood shouted, “I just don’t follow orders, I am an American officer, not a Nazi officer.” A shouting match ensued in which Bragg kept telling Rockwood to shut up. On October 2, Rockwood was shipped back to Fort Drum, New York, the home base of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. There he faced another psychiatric examination which he again passed. The Army did not intervene in the National Penitentiary until late November. UN inspectors called the conditions found there the worst they have ever seen.<sup>10</sup>

Offered a chance to resign, Rockwood instead demanded a court martial. Facing a possible ten-year prison term, Rockwood was represented by Ramsey Clark (Lyndon Johnson’s attorney general) and Army Captain Judith Camarella, and also received outside support from many



diverse groups including Vietnam veterans, Amnesty International, and law students at William and Mary College. Rockwood's case seemed strong, as Ramsey argued that Rockwood was court martialed only because "he took action to protect lives and human rights of prisoners..."<sup>11</sup> Clark stated, "You have to assume that the military was embarrassed that a U.S. Army officer would act to protect human rights...does the Army really want to be identified with court martialing a man who made a personal effort to protect human rights in a country that has one of the worst human rights records over the past thirty to forty years?"<sup>12</sup>

During his trial, Rockwood told the court, "I placed my loyalty to the Constitution...above loyalty to the careers of my immediate supervisors." Rockwood's main defense was his claim to be adhering to the orders of the President regarding the stopping of atrocities, and that the charges he leveled against his superiors illustrated their disobedience of the Commander-in-Chief's orders. "The chain of command had cowardly failed to carry out the primary objective of the Commander-in-Chief. I felt it was my duty."<sup>13</sup> Rockwood evoked the Nuremburg Principles, in which American servicemen are required to disobey illegal orders to carry out duties to fulfill moral obligations, and are to be held personally responsible for executing illegal or immoral orders. Captain Pede, the prosecutor, said Rockwood had overstepped his authority by launching upon a "personal crusade" and he had no rights to interpret the President's intent from what he heard on television. Prosecution witnesses painted Rockwood during the incident as misdirected, overly emotional, and dangerous.

The trial and its subsequent appeals did not go well for Rockwood. The Army evaded the human rights issues by simply charging Rockwood with failure to be at his post, dereliction of duty, and conduct unbecoming an officer. The Army stated that these were "military charges," and nothing to do with human rights. Several journalists also accused the Army of "stacking the

deck” against Rockwood, as the judge limited expert witness testimony on the conditions in the prison, and expert witnesses who were to testify about international and military law. Clark said “one has the distinct impression that we are witnessing a cover-up.”<sup>14</sup>

Clark also raised the issue of command bias—a defense that can be used when a substantial part of a unit can be perceived as having a collective interest in the case. Since Rockwood’s charges against General Meade affected the entire command structure of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, all the jurors would also be affected as well; Meade would be signing their efficiency reports necessary for promotion. Clark argued that Meade exercised an unlawful command influence over the jury. “If Captain Rockwood is acquitted, Gen. Meade will be humiliated. If convicted, the General is vindicated.”<sup>15</sup> Other improprieties existed during the trial, as star witnesses were allowed to illegally socialize with jury members, and prosecution was given special access to outside court communication denied to the defense. Meade’s personal staff was also allowed to communicate with the prosecutors in full view of the court, but the judge ruled that their repeated presence did not intimidate the jurors. Many reporters claimed the proceedings were “a kangaroo court.”<sup>16</sup>

Rockwood lost his case, as a panel of five Army officers ordered his discharge without benefits, but rejected the prison term. He was found guilty of conduct unbecoming an officer for leaving the post, for endangering himself and the military attaché that retrieved him, and for leaving the Army hospital without permission during his psychiatric evaluation. He was acquitted of dereliction of duty. After sentencing, Rockwood said: “They don’t want me behind bars. They are looking after their own self-interest. They want this story and the allegations against their criminal negligence to go away. By sending me to prison, of course, those

allegations would not go away. It was not their ideals that motivated them. It's their lack of moral courage."<sup>17</sup>

Rockwood told reporters that he was not relieved by the absence of a prison sentence. The fifteen-year veteran said, "This is my profession. It is my vocation. So I am not relieved by this sentence whatsoever."<sup>18</sup> General Meade never got the chance to sign Rockwood's conviction papers. He retired days after the trial ended and was replaced by General James Hill, who inspected every prison in Haiti personally. After being cashiered from the Army, Rockwood hoped the Secretary of the Army would overturn the decision, but it never happened. President Clinton, the initiator of the human rights based invasion, could have exonerated Rockwood or ordered the military charges against him dropped at any point. Clinton, however, never lifted a finger and simply let the Army crucify him. Rockwood paid the price for embodying the enlightened idealism of the crusade to save Haiti from itself and taking his commander-in-chief at his word.

The Rockwood case was an indictment of the entire operation in Haiti which exposed the levels of hypocrisy from the President down through the chain of command. The events in Haiti and the circumstances surrounding the Rockwood case beg questions larger than those that ask if the mission was militarily successful or if Rockwood was guilty of the charges that cost him his career. Ramsey Clark said during the trial that the issue was "not what's being done to a little captain in the Army...the real issue is why did 400 people in cramped conditions, 85% of them were charged or convicted of no crimes, have to stand in six inches of their own feces while listening to the voices of American soldiers in the street?" The legitimacy of the intervention, the subsequent American actions in Haiti, and the Army itself were on trial as much as Rockwood.

The Rockwood case added fuel to the critics' fiery case against the ever-lengthening venture in Haiti. The political argument regarding the necessity of intervention revolved around whether or not U.S. interests were served in Haiti, and whether those goals were met. The Clinton administration claimed the operation a success with temporary order restored to Haiti. For many experts, however, the long-term outlook appeared highly unfavorable. Connected to these debates were the issues of the over-extension of U.S. forces globally, the value of peacekeeping missions, the lack of a clear foreign policy, the long delay in withdrawal from Haiti, and the erosion of military factors such as combat readiness and morale.

The purpose of the mission in Haiti was to install democracy and justice-- as long as it didn't interfere with controlling the population and putting Aristide back into power. The "non-enlightened" system of repression practiced by the Cedras regime imposed social control through terror with no regard for personal liberties was erased by violating Haiti's sovereignty through invasion. The enlightened system of justice of the Americans was obviously far more benevolent, but only paid lip service to the ideals of protection of liberties while its obvious *d'être* was to impose social control over the Haitian population in order to protect the Americans' own convoluted interests. These interests were, as will be depicted in the following pages, to conduct strategically useless political theater while avoiding risks to those who were promoting Wilsonian military crusades to inject Western enlightened ideals upon unwilling or ungrateful populations. Beset with contradictions of the mission and its bizarre treatment of the elements of the justice system, Rockwood was punished for not understanding that the humanitarian beliefs supposedly driving the invasion and occupation of Haiti were actually of little real consequence, despite of what Clinton repeatedly told the public and Congress. Rockwood was punished because he embraced the Wilsonian enlightened ideals about the

importance of protecting human rights and actually took action to protect Haitian victims and thereby revealed the sham of American justifications for invasion and the breach of Haiti's sovereignty.

What the idealistic Rockwood didn't realize was that Operation Restore Democracy had little to do with protecting human rights of victimized Haitians. The U.S. government sought social and political control of the Haitians through the use of force in order to serve the needs of U.S. foreign policy and the president's own political self-promotion. The failure to act decisively once on ground and to punish the despots and their army of thugs were indications that the U.S. mission was less about upholding democracy that it was about scoring political points and promoting idealistic rhetoric and symbolism without substance. The quickly established alliance with most of the abusive individuals in "reforming" Haiti clearly displays the sham reform nature of the mission. Rockwood's actions (and his refusal to cut a deal to hush the matter) clearly embarrassed the administration and damaged the facades of reform. The United States government was obviously more interested in putting on a show of "protecting human rights" and "saving democracy" than in dispensing justice for the good of Haitian society and its abused people. After nine years and millions of dollars spent, Operation Restore Democracy obviously did not accomplished the stated goals of democratic and judicial reform in the long term.

Rockwood's attempt to liberate the National Penitentiary represents one of the most traditional and symbolic acts of the enlightenment justice system. Acts of prison liberation represent the revolutionary ideal of freeing the oppressed and instigating a more valid system of justice for the disenfranchised masses. Historically, this act of liberation has been performed as a matter of priority within many revolutionary or foreign intervention circumstances. The storming of the Bastille or the progressive reforms of mental institutions imbibes the spirit of

overthrowing barbarism and backwardness. The breaking of the prisoner's chains represents the destruction of repression and bondage. The U.S. military has participated many times in this act of liberation, particularly within the history of the U.S. Marines in the Caribbean. The Marines have historically been involved with prison liberation and reformist administration, as is best illustrated with their operations in the intervention of Haiti's neighbor, the Dominican Republic, in 1916. The case of liberation that most motivated Rockwood in his act of liberation was performed by the U.S. Army in Europe during WWII. Rockwood was imbued with the post-War ethos of "Americans as liberators." Rockwood's father, an Air Force officer, served in WWII and had taken him to Dachau. "My father emphasized to me the role of cynicism and blind obedience to authority played in their (the concentration camps) creation." Despite what he calls the "aberration" in Vietnam and Haiti, Rockwood saw the U.S. military as "the most effective enforcer of human rights this planet has ever known". Rockwood, like all American troops, saw Americans as liberators rather than oppressors.

Rockwood's actions and his defense at his trial hinged on the fact that liberation of barbaric prisons is morally and ethically essential, especially if it is at all in the power of the Army to do so. Historically, this is the mission of the U.S. military, and under the rules and conduct of war the military must perform these acts of liberation in order to justify implementing a model of enlightened justice on other cultures and nations. To ignore the suffering of others or to subvert the rules of liberty and justice is to undermine the enlightened justice system and to engage in despotism. In short, by failing to liberate and reform a prison like the National Penitentiary the new ruling power condones such brutality and thus contradicts, if not rejects, the enlightened justice system.

Deposing tyranny, and implementing democracy and an enlightened justice system was the justification for Operation Uphold Democracy. The problem with this type of justification for a military venture is that liberation never really happens. The lower working class Haitians simply trades the rule of one power for another, with little control over establishing their own institution, government, or liberties. In the Rockwood case, we see that even those chained to the prison walls were not to be liberated from their torturous existence because it was not in the state's interest to do so. Politics, bureaucracies, career minded officers not willing to rock the boat and the overriding concern for social control squelched the impetus for liberation. Had Rockwood not sacrificed himself in order to draw attention to the restrictions and/or denial of acts of liberation, would the National Penitentiary ever been inspected and reformed? Would liberation happened there at all? It is doubtful that the prisons around Port-au-Prince would have been liberated, at least not in any kind of expedient manner that could have alleviated suffering and many deaths. Even after Rockwood's attempted liberation, it took over a month for The Army to take any action. The Rockwood case merely reveals that invading Haiti wasn't really about saving strangers and taking a bolder new course in making protecting human rights the new cornerstone in U.S. foreign policy. American policy in the post-Cold War was about something else that was far less grandiose, less progressive, while still foolishly avoiding realism and logically focusing on real national security concerns in the conduct of foreign affairs. Foreign policy under George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton was about something much less idealistic or useful in the post-Cold War.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> “An Invasion Averted; Clinton’s Speech: No Vengeance, No Violence,” *The Atlanta Constitution*, 19 September 1994, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Dan Coughlin, “The Case of Captain Lawrence P. Rockwood,” *Haiti Progres* 12, no. 51 (March 1995).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Dorothy Vidulich, “Soldier to Go On Trial for Haiti Works of Mercy,” *National Catholic Reporter*, 14 April 1995, 7.

<sup>8</sup> Coughlin, “The Case of Captain Lawrence P. Rockwood.”

<sup>9</sup> Stephen Wrangé, “A Question of Duty: How an Officer Destroyed His Career by Trying to Liberate Haitian Prisoners,” *Newsweek*, 22 November 1994, 52-54.

<sup>10</sup> Coughlin, “The Case of Captain Lawrence P. Rockwood.”

<sup>11</sup> Col. David H. Hackworth, “When Duty and Conscience Clash,” *Newsweek*, 22 May 1995, 38.

<sup>12</sup> Coughlin, “The Case of Captain Lawrence P. Rockwood.”

<sup>13</sup> Francis X. Clinks, “American Officer’s Mission for Haitian Rights Backfires,” Literature for the Holocaust available from [www.english.upenn/~afilreis/Holocaust/haitian.html](http://www.english.upenn/~afilreis/Holocaust/haitian.html)

<sup>14</sup> “Army Stacks deck Against Rockwood for May 8 Trial,” *This Week in Haiti* 13 no. 5, (April/May, 1995).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Hackworth, “When Duty and Conscience Clash.”

<sup>17</sup> “Army Dismisses Officer for Unauthorized Visit to Haiti Prison in Search for Human Rights Violations,” *The New York Times*, 15 May 1995, A-10.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.



## CHAPTER 1

The Willing, the Unknowing, and the Ungrateful:

The Flawed Policy of Forced Humanitarian Intervention in Somalia

*We, the willing, led by the unknowing, are doing the impossible for the ungrateful...*

---old U.S. Navy saying

When severe famine brought an almost biblical proportion of human suffering in Somalia in the early 1990s, the world was moved by the scale of the misery and starvation that was escalating daily. The desperately poor African nation had been torn by years of civil war and drought. Persistent and intense media coverage of the chaos, carnage, and death in this remote land created a powerful emotional impact on the American public and its leaders in Washington. Images of millions being engulfed by the hellishly intolerable conditions of famine perpetuated by bloodthirsty warlords flooded televisions and Western print media daily. The horrific circumstances seemed to demand that something be done to help the victims of this collapsed state. First within the United Nations Security Council and then later inside the White House, leaders grappled with the growing humanitarian crisis that virtually screamed out for swift action from the international community and the world's sole remaining superpower.

With the end of the Cold War, many believed that it was time for the international community to turn its attention and resources towards building "a new world order" in which crises like the one developing in Somalia could be confronted and widespread human suffering greatly curtailed. Fresh on the heels of creating an unprecedented international coalition to defeat the aggression of Iraq, the United States and President George H. W. Bush seemed willing and

capable of ushering in a new era of worldwide cooperation and progress. The multinational forum of the UN, with its supportive structures and humanitarian aid organizations, would naturally serve as the fulcrum for the effort to improve worldwide cooperation, security, and peace and to pull nations together in times of crisis. Somalia, many believed at the time, could be the first test for this new international effort.

Somalia was not the first humanitarian-based international intervention, nor the first UN-led peacekeeping mission; it was however, the first humanitarian based intervention that advocated using direct force under the collective security agreement of the United Nations Charter. Code named UNOSOM I, the multinational effort's goal was to restore peace to Somalia, conduct a long-term program of delivering humanitarian aid to famine victims, and support non-governmental agencies engaged in similar activities. The United States would then follow with a unilateral but overlapping plan known as Operation Restore Hope.

Both these missions, however, were doomed to fail miserably and the intervention spiraled into a horrible fiasco for the United States. The reasons for this failure were rooted in Somalia's troubled past and chaotic society, and within the flawed nature of forced humanitarian intervention itself. The main cause for the painful foreign intervention failure in Somalia, especially concerning the United States, was the creation and adherence to unsound and unrealistic policy that was constructed more around the facade of creating positive political imagery than upon defensible national interests. Operation Restore Hope became a tale of the willing, the impossible, the unknowing, and the ungrateful. In Somalia, the foreign policy boiled down to a simple formula along these lines: the *willing* U.S. military took on dangerously *impossible* open-ended peacekeeping duties ordered by floundering, inattentive, and *unknowing*

policymakers in order to save the *ungrateful* Somali people from themselves. The situation was a foreign policy nightmare.

This chapter will analyze the events surrounding the United Nations and the United States intervention in Somalia from 1992-1995 focusing primarily upon these aspects of foreign policy conducted by Presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton. Since the failure of the Somalia intervention policy rests upon the ideologies that drove the formation and continuation of the American policy (and is mirrored in UN policy as well), some analysis of policy theory is necessarily included and applied to these events, but this is covered in more detail in the following chapters. Some attention is also given to the military interpretations and firsthand accounts of Operation Restore Hope, since these experiences and views are intrinsically related to the situation in Somalia and the conduct of American and UN policy there.

Somalia has frequently been described as a “collapsed” or “failed” state. Throughout the period of the intervention, those involved in “restoring hope” obviously understood little about or failed to take into account the sources of state dissolution and the respective roles of the Somali clan system, colonialism, and Cold War geopolitics in the Horn of Africa.<sup>1</sup> Prior to British or Italian colonial rule, there was no common Somali identity or centralized control over the territory. Although more homogeneous than many other African nations and having a common language, culture and religion (Islam), Somalia has always been a region dominated by nomadic pastoral groups organized by paternal kinship ties. The nomadic culture prevented a centralized government foundation or strong economic interaction, and conflict was common among lineages, especially in competition for scarce land and other resources necessary for survival. Conflict was kept in check by popular adherence to tradition and local customs (*shir*),<sup>2</sup> as well as by Islamic law. Six major clans are found in Somalia: Darod, Digil, Dir, Hawiye, Issaq, and

Rahanwein, along with several smaller clans. Each major clan has several subclans based on lineages that further created and shifted alliances among these groups.<sup>3</sup>

Somalia was colonized by the British in the north in 1896 (British Somaliland) and the by the Italians (Italian Somaliland) who held the larger southern portion of the country. The rule by Europeans had little effect on the nomadic culture, but did radically change how trade was conducted and controlled, which further isolated northern clans from those in the south and between those in urban and rural areas. With access to wealth, some urbanized Somalis abandoned the acceptance of the hierarchical *shir* as a means to mediate exchanges and disputes and called for modernization and integration of the civil and legal structure.

After the British occupation of all of Somalia resulting from WWII ended, a ten-year UN mandated Italian trusteeship began. The mandate did not go smoothly from 1950-1953. Somali nationalists resented the Italian's presence, but in 1954 the UN intervened with new socio-economic reforms within the governmental systems that appeased the dissenters. Several developmental programs were initiated, but the national budget annually ran in the red and relied on outside grants. Positive gains, however, were made in educational programs and creating a territorial government system that would evolve into institutions for future Somali self-rule. This system consisted primarily of rural and municipal councils. A legislative assembly was also formed in 1956. The situation was peaceful for the last four years of the Italian mandate, but prominent Somali leaders were already struggling with the idea of a "Greater Somalia" that would make unwelcome territorial demands on her neighbors.<sup>4</sup> The two main political parties (which were based on clan ties), the Daarood and Hawiye, clashed bitterly over the Greater Somali issue and the question as to whether the new nation should keep closer ties to the West or with the Arab world. Negotiations with Ethiopia failed to gain further territories, but the

traditional northern portion of the country (British Somaliland) was moved closer to annexation. After meeting popular pressure at home, the British government merged its northern mandate territories with the new Somali state in 1960.

With the merger of the two mandates, Somalia became independent in 1960. The problem lay in the fact that both areas had been created under two different administrative systems (British and Italian) and the government got off to a rocky start. Northern political elites had trouble dealing with the new leadership in Mogadishu, and further political and revolutionary activity over the years drove a wedge between the two portions of the country. Many of those who served in government under the British left the country soon after independence. Public service was made even less attractive in the 1960s as the meager financial situation was coupled by the unstable position of the government, which was further plagued with several military coup attempts and civil strife. As most of those capable of running the affairs of state disappeared, the populace turned toward its old reliance on the clan system infused with the new forms of power and wealth adopted from colonization. Migration into the cities expanded relations within the complex clan and subclan system, and many vied aggressively for economic and political power. Attempts to unify the country and give the people a sense of national identity were made more remote after Somalia was decisively defeated in the 1967 Ogaden War with Ethiopia and parliamentary politics increasingly became confused and divided along clan lines. In 1968, sixty-two parties represented by 1,002 candidates ran for only 123 seats.<sup>5</sup> The president was assassinated, setting the stage for an army coup that brought the dictator Mohamad Siad Barre to power.

Rhetorically Barre's "scientific socialism" aimed to eliminate "clanism", but the end result of his twenty-two year rule was to increase clan-based politics. He drew support and power from

his own clan and used tactics that pitted one clan violently against one another. Money and weapons were distributed to loyal clans while the use of Soviet trained secret police, the National Security Service, repressed other clans. Cold War competition kept Barre supplied with developmental and military aid. During the 1970s, Somalia became a major recipient of Soviet aid. Backed by this military aid, Barre ambitiously planned to unify all Somali speaking areas, and in 1977 he launched a new attack against the Ogaden region. Ethiopia and Somalia then switched superpower support, but Ethiopia drove out the invaders with the help of Cuban troops. The United States stepped up military shipments and loans in 1980 in exchange for base located in Berbera, as Barre used the aid to continue the war by supporting insurgents in Ethiopia.

Somalia could ill afford such attention to military adventures and was essentially an economic corpse propped up by outside aid. 57% of Somalia's GNP in 1987 was from outside sources, as was 100% its development spending.<sup>6</sup> Inflation spiraled out of control, and Somalia's horrendous economy earned it the title, "the Graveyard of Aid".<sup>7</sup> The largest employer was the state itself, which was highly corrupt on every level and allocated resources extremely unevenly.

International food aid was diverted and sold illegally on the black market, while the massive influx of outside food reduced domestic production on an ever-increasing scale. From 1980-1984 84% of all foodstuffs came from external sources.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, the influx of military arms was pouring in from several countries: the United States, China, France, Great Britain, South Africa, and West Germany. Italy was the largest donor through training soldiers and providing \$124 million in weapons by 1980.<sup>9</sup>

Barre was able to hold onto power because he was adept at playing the Somali clans off one another and keeping them disunited. He ran a very tight Stalinist-styled state keeping the population and any potential opposition in constant fear of him, and made sure the police and the

army remained loyal by channeling large amounts of funding to them. Barre also promoted Islam, nationalism, and Marxism simultaneously, which undermined the chances of mass revolt among the competing clans. As long as Barre remained strong and no other alternative leadership existed, and the Soviets kept propping him up economically and militarily, he could remain in power indefinitely.

Barre, however, overplayed his hand with his efforts to promote pan-Somalism and using aggression against bordering states. The stunning defeat in Ogaden in 1977 stirred dissent against the ruthless Barre regime (including within the military itself) and was followed by several attempts to overthrow the government. Barre's escalating reprisals against widespread opposition unified several clans who sensed a growing weakness within the regime. After 1980, Barre's power progressively declined. The combination of economic collapse, high food prices, and the end of the Cold War (and its accompanying U.S. aid to Somalia) rapidly numbered Barre's days. Barre had no choice but to end insurgency efforts against Ethiopia and cut aid to northern clans involved in the incursions across the border. A violent uprising by newly disenfranchised northern clans was brutally crushed by Barre's son-in-law, General Mohamed Siad "Morgan," and many innocent civilians were either killed or fled across the border. 60,000 were believed to be killed and over 450,000 turned into refugees. Civil war erupted throughout the country, and in 1990, Barre controlled only the areas around Mogadishu by the time the U.S. cut off all military aid. Barre turned to Libya for weapons, but several revolutionaries led by the Hawiye clan united in Mogadishu to overthrow him. Heavy fighting took place in the capital in January, 1991 resulting in 4,000 deaths.

Barre was soon overthrown and a new conflict started between his highest ranking officers and possible successors, Mohammed Farah Aideed (leader of the Habr Gidr subclan) and Ali

Mahdi (leader of the Abgaal subclan) and his soon-to-be ally Colonel Jess (leader of the Ogaden subclan, which was centered around Kismayu). In all, over a dozen major factions were fighting for control of Somalia after Barres' ouster. Mogadishu was split into two armed camps by July 1991 and the situation became highly chaotic as numerous political and clan based groups vied to unite the country under their rule. Alliances shifted quickly as warlords controlling local militias imposed their own fiefdoms. The militias were composed of soldiers known as *mooryan*, who had known nothing but war and poverty their entire lives and usually were under the influence of *qat* (or *kat*), a cheaply produced but powerful stimulant that is chewed and often has lasting side effects that promote strong feelings of paranoia and invulnerability for those that use it.<sup>10</sup> The streets of Mogadishu were filled with heavily armed and psychotic *mooryans* anxious to repay blood debts on their enemies and terrorize innocent civilians.

By 1992, 30-50,000 people were killed, 400,000 others fled the country, 60% of the government infrastructure was destroyed, the health care system disappeared, and 70% of all livestock perished.<sup>11</sup> Continuous fighting and looting destroyed harvests and any incentive farmers may have had to grow food, even for their own households. Droughts increased the waves of famine after Barre's scorched earth policies in 1991 had decimated the northern fertile regions, displacing most of the population there. By 1992, much of the population was trapped in the famine-ridden areas and was being decimated by diseases—malaria, malnutrition, typhus, and measles. The mortality rate rose to around 1,000 a day in most major cities. Between 1985 and 1994, 90,000 Somalis died in the civil war while an estimated 300,000 died in the subsequent famine.<sup>12</sup>

By 1992, most humanitarian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) began to pull out of Somalia due to the lack of security. The World Food Program (WFP) and UNICEF withdrew in



1991 to Kenya after failing to get more than 28% of food aid delivered.<sup>13</sup> CARE, Save the Children (UK), and World Vision remained to counteract the human suffering under volatile conditions. Only after much media attention was given to a massive third wave of famine, did the number of NGOs increase (temporarily to fifty).<sup>14</sup> The Red Cross, however, was continually involved, and launched the largest operation in its history until this was surpassed by those later conducted in the former Yugoslavia. The pullout of the UN humanitarian aid agencies in 1991 caused the Red Cross to publicly condemn the UN for its operations in Somalia.<sup>15</sup> The remaining NGOs were effectively combating the humanitarian crisis in Somalia without outside help, effectively feeding 1.17 million people a day in field kitchens and through direct food distribution.<sup>16</sup>

While combating starvation and banditry, the NGO efforts were also causing negative side effects. More people were drawn to the food distribution points, which were mainly in the Aideed-controlled areas of Mogadishu, thus increasing his prestige and power to manipulate the civilian population. Massive aid also diminished incentives for farmers to grow food, and soon almost no food was being produced domestically.

Several western countries including the United States did take action outside of the UN and airlifted hundreds of tons of food in Operation Provide Relief (OPR), but all these supplies did was replace, rather than augment, NGO distributions of food. The airlift conducted 2,846 flights delivering 112 million meals, but was extremely expensive to maintain. Unfortunately, many reports showed that most of the food delivered did not get to those in need. Some estimates showed that from 15 to 80% of the supplies were being looted and used to feed members of the militias.

Growing criticism against the UN's lack of action led Secretary General Boutros-Boutros Ghali to begin to galvanize the organization into greater involvement in dealing with the deepening humanitarian emergency. Boutros Ghali, an Egyptian, was very adamant about focusing UN activities on the neglected region. The UN had done nothing in the civil war throughout 1991, as it was preoccupied with events in Iraq and Yugoslavia. Though the UN response was slow and would prove to be inadequate, Somalia was not relegated to the ranks of the insoluble.<sup>17</sup>

Throughout 1991, the perspective at UN headquarters was that the international community should be limited to delivering relief supplies. According to UN Undersecretary General, James Jonah, at the time there was no thought of dispatching relief forces. The OAU (Organization of African Unity) had rebuffed UN involvement in Liberia and Sudan and did not favor intervention on the grounds that there was no government in Somalia to request it. The sovereignty issue, Article 2 (7) of the Charter prohibited intervention in internal matters. Matters soon changed when Jonah returned from a summit with the Organization of Islamic Countries in Dakar and presented their appeals for action in the form of an official letter. The outgoing Secretary General, Javier Prez de Cuellar, did not act upon it, but Boutros Ghali did so immediately upon taking office. Boutros Ghali sent Jonah to assess the situation in Somalia and negotiate with the warlords for a cease-fire. Aideed wanted none of it, as he felt he could beat Mahdi and claim national leadership. A second round of negotiations failed too, as both the warlords agreed to the principle of cease-fire, but never enforced it. Boutros Ghali soon concluded that the situation could not be solved from New York.<sup>18</sup>

As the crisis deepened, Boutros Ghali implored the Security Council to act in an impassioned speech describing the humanitarian disaster that was only growing worse by the day. The first

action the Security Council took was to establish an arms embargo—a classic case of closing the barn door long after the horse had bolted.<sup>19</sup> In July the Council passed Resolution 767 to airlift food into the “Triangle of Death” region around Mogadishu. Operation Provide Relief (launched by the United States) matched these efforts but the airdrops were ineffectual, very expensive, and food shipments could not be protected.

The Security Council, meanwhile, invoking its traditional concept of small-scale peacekeeping under Chapter VI of the UN Charter, continued to operate under the premise that a limited operation requiring the consent of local authorities could be effective. Stronger action was taken in the form of Resolution 733, which was unanimously adopted in on January 23, 1992 and declared that the internal conflict in Somalia was “a threat to international peace and security”<sup>20</sup> which allowed for authorization of the arms embargo under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The resolution also called for the Secretary General to increase humanitarian assistance and to work with the Arab League and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to achieve a cease-fire.

By March 1992, Aideed and Mahdi had agreed to negotiate, but this breakthrough was only obtained in view of the fact that the warlords wished to increase foreign aid and place themselves at the head of the line in any newly recognized Somali government. The Security Council members at this point had no interest in the lengthy process of reconstructing the Somali state beyond brokering a lasting cease-fire and addressing the issues surrounding humanitarian assistance. The truce quickly broke down, however, as the warlords demanded control of key territories and food distribution areas, and demanded a share of incoming aid as a price for protecting aid workers. Lacking military protection, meanwhile the NGOs were forced to

succumb to this protection racket and were unwillingly supplying the warlords with food that they used to feed their armies, sell for weapons, and to further control starving civilians.

The new wave of famine that struck in 1992 was not caused by a lack of food supplies in Somalia, but rather due to the inability to distribute them in time to those that needed it. The inability to get food out of the ports and distribute it to the people was becoming a concern. The international community, however, did not immediately conclude that large-scale humanitarian intervention was the appropriate response. On April 24, 1992 the Security Council adopted Resolution 751 to send fifty unarmed observers to Somalia to study the problem and observe any cease-fire arrangements. No one seemed anxious to see Somalia move rapidly up the international agenda. Indeed, so reluctant were the Americans to face Congress on the issue that they had to be persuaded by other members of the Council to allow the observer mission to be paid for out of assessed rather than voluntary contributions over which they had discretionary control. By mid-summer it became apparent that the mission could not succeed without strong U.S. support and that the UN lacked the organizational resources and its members lacked the political interest to fashion a cohesive strategy for Somalia. Intervention relied on U.S. leadership, but the U.S. State Department and the Pentagon were arguing against escalating involvement.

The Security Council then ordered 500 peacekeepers to assist in emergency food distribution, but this decision was made without the warlords' consent. (Traditional peacekeeping missions were only conducted via the invitation of warring factions.) Paradoxically at this time, the United States argued against a sending a large peacekeeping force because it feared it would have to bear the brunt of the financial burden.<sup>21</sup>

Jarat Chopra argues that the application of traditional Chapter VI peacekeeping doctrine in Somalia was inherently flawed.<sup>22</sup> The purpose of such a consent-based operation is to separate warring states *after* they have reached agreement. Somalia was in the midst of an internal conflict between warlords who lacked domestic legitimacy and respect for civilians. The warlord forces, however, thrived on anarchy and would naturally disrupt any real peace process-- much less be party to one. The application of the Chapter VI mandate foolishly legitimated the warlords as leaders, but the inconsistent and aimless UN policy first negotiated with the warlords, and then completely ignored them, then renegotiated with them in sweeping cyclical patterns.

A UN humanitarian fact-finding mission led by Mohammed Sahnoun, however, made inroads with many clan elders and obtained the warlord's consent for allowing in the small peacekeeping force. Sahnoun also reported that the UN operation based in Mogadishu was failing to distribute aid effectively and was destroying the best chances for a grass-roots foundation for Somalis to begin nation building activities in the interior. Sahnoun also criticized the UN for taking until September to get the 500 peacekeepers in place. Boutros Ghali brushed Sahnoun's protests aside, and he was infuriated when matters were made worse as the Secretary General announced (before the initial 500 troops had even arrived) that a force of an additional 3,500 troops would be sent without the warlords' approval. After finally making headway with Aideed only to find his efforts quickly undercut and his protests ignored, Sahnoun retired in disgust. Sahnoun's replacement, long term UN diplomat Ismat Kittani, immediately dropped all of his predecessor's efforts to negotiate with the warlords and restrict UN actions to traditional peacekeeping roles. Boutros-Ghali's decision to have the UN impose its will on Somalia was adopted when Sahnoun's lone voice of dissent was silenced with his resignation.

The pendulum swung toward deeper UN involvement when President Bush ordered the joint Operation Provide Relief airlift in August. The Americans soon became aware that the airlift was not working, and Bush was dissatisfied with Boutros Ghali's handling of the crisis and inability to shortcut the long bureaucratic delays in getting troops to protect food convoys. The resolution to employ then 500 and later 3,500 peacekeepers passed under Chapter VII of the Charter as Security Council Resolutions 749 and 775,<sup>23</sup> but the shift from negotiating with the militias and embarking on traditional peacekeeping to relying on force to provide humanitarian relief had noticeably been made clear.

Aideed grew suspicious of the UN military efforts which unintentionally protected the weaker position of his rival Mahdi, and Aideed promised to "send soldiers home in body bags until they lost interest in controlling the port" in Mogadishu.<sup>24</sup> When 500 Pakistani peacekeepers were finally deployed in late September to control the airport, Aideed refused to protect them and attacks on UN aid personnel increased.<sup>25</sup>

The UN military operation became known as UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) and the small 500 man Pakistani contingent was dispersed to the Mogadishu airport and a few ports throughout the country and tasked with guarding the food shipments as they arrived from overseas. The relief effort proved futile, however, as the warlords plundered the convoys after they left the protected areas before they reached the starving masses.<sup>26</sup>

Plans for large-scale intervention in Somalia prevailed only due to growing American support. The American intervention in Somalia was an example of political theatre being played out on the world stage. The United States had no economic or strategic interests in Somalia, and yet the Bush administration galvanized the Security Council to support Boutros Ghali's decisions to increase involvement, stretch the interpretation of Chapter VII of the UN Charter, and Bush

plunged the American military into the haphazard mission. After years of neglect, U.S. foreign policy suddenly became obsessed with the horrific conditions in Somalia although the civil war in Somalia posed no realistic threat to American interests or world stability. Bush's decision to intervene in Somalia was not based on realistic foreign policy calculations, but rather on the need to engage in policies driven by emotionalism and political imagery.

After the demise of Barre, the U.S. government, as former ambassador to Somalia, T. Frank Crigler noted, "turned off the lights, closed the door, and forgot all about Somalia."<sup>27</sup> Senior officials in the Bush administration were too preoccupied with the breakup of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and the war with Iraq. Bush was made aware of the crisis in Somalia by reports from the U.S. embassy in Kenya regarding huge numbers of refugees. Democratic challenger Bill Clinton was criticizing Bush for his alleged foreign policy failures, including Bosnia and the crisis in Somalia, which quickly attracted massive media attention. U.S. efforts in Somalia to this point had concentrated on aiding UN and non-governmental agencies such as the International Committee of the Red Cross programs to distribute food supplies. By October, the U.S. had contributed \$148 million in aid, including 80,000 tons of food,<sup>28</sup> which somewhat abated, but did not solve, the famine and population dislocation problems nor did it end the violence running rampant across the country. Despite aiding the UN and NGOs, American efforts were not making a conclusive impact on the tragedy that started to receive serious media attention that summer. Bush was slow to act, and waited until the Republican National Convention to announce the implementation of the multinational airlift (Operation Provide Relief) and to declare the famine as "a major human tragedy" in which the United States would provide food and medical relief supplies. The timing of the announcement, several months after a brief UN brokered cease-fire between the factions, "evoked a high degree of cynicism among many

observers.”<sup>29</sup> Bush’s announcement induced even more media attention to Somalia that quickly snowballed into a reaction often referred to as “the CNN effect.”<sup>30</sup> “Sustained media coverage of the anarchy and starvation on Somalia contributed heavily to Bush’s decision to deploy Operation Restore Hope, but that contribution postdated Washington’s decision to initiate robust relief.”<sup>31</sup> In September 1992, Andrew S. Natsios, President’s Special Coordinator for Somali Relief, reported that the airlift was working but much more needed be done to put the plague in check. Natsios supported the UN view that the peacekeeping mission should be expanded into the interior, but warned that without getting the Somali leaders to resolve the crisis and end clan violence, the relief effort as a whole would not be very successful.<sup>32</sup> By this time, Bush was also affected by the strong emotional calls for more action from many members of Congress and those within his cabinet.

It is at this point in the history of American intervention in Somalia that the existence of political theater begins to reveal itself as a major factor in determining foreign policy and initiating military action. Placing Bush’s strong humanitarian impulses aside, the actions taken by the administration from the beginning were never placed under the justification of national security interests, economic considerations, or even fulfilling the mandate of the UN Charter, since the United States was preparing to act unilaterally if necessary. The impulse for focusing serious attention to the Somali crisis was driven by the 1992 campaign and the massive and relentless media coverage, rather than any real interests involving either the United States or maintaining international peace. David Halberstram writes:

The danger was that the roots of the policy were not deep; it was impelled more by emotion than by the forces that usually created foreign policy, particularly a policy that used the U.S. military. In addition, if you made some kind of humanitarian commitment and it worked according to plan, the cameras, given the extremely limited attention span of the network’s executive producers, would quickly go elsewhere. Among other things, this also meant that the policy was vulnerable to the boredom of the television



executives and susceptible to the pull of countervailing emotion and the impact of [its opposite and negative force], the counter-image.<sup>33</sup>

The media, rather than any important foreign policy considerations, were pressuring Bush to act.

As Lawrence Eagleberger, Secretary of State during the Somali crisis, stated:

...television had a lot to do with President Bush's decision to go in. I was one of the two or three that strongly recommend that he do it, and it was very much because of the television pictures of those starving kids [and] substantial pressures from Congress that came from the same source.<sup>34</sup>

The continuous stream of pictures of starving children greatly contrasted with Bush's statements after the airlift in August that the United States "would do anything" to provide food "for those who desperately needed it." The media had presented the famine as a direct result of warlords interfering with food distribution, and many within the administration felt public pressure to quickly rescue victims by "riding shotgun over food convoys." Airlifting food just wasn't making Bush look like he was doing enough to end the crisis. He needed a more powerful image.

One serious obstacle for Bush in considering taking more assertive action in Somalia was the possible role of the U.S. military in any UN operation. Neither the U.S. nor the Soviet Union had deployed troops as traditional peacekeepers during the Cold War, as they could not be considered neutral or impartial in any dispute. No administration was ever anxious to delegate American troops to be used as "blue helmets" under UN control, as the political implications of placing American soldiers under foreign control were considerable.<sup>35</sup> Rumors in September that Bush was contemplating such a move to enhance U.S. credibility in directly dealing with the crises in Somalia and Yugoslavia sparked a controversy in the press. The move was vigorously opposed by the Pentagon, which saw such operations as a diversion from its main mission of defending the country. Some State Department officials were equally unenthusiastic about the idea. With the election six weeks away, campaign aides reportedly were urging Bush to shy

away from such dramatic foreign policy steps and focus more on issues with domestic appeal. White House officials soon hinted that less dramatic steps were being considered such as offering long-term logistics or training support for future UN operations.<sup>36</sup>

Although having U.S. troops don blue helmets was not a possibility, the upcoming 1992 election was still pushing Bush to act hastily. Coupled with all the media attention, Clinton was attacking Bush's inattention to foreign policy and humanitarian crises including those in Yugoslavia and Somalia. If Bush failed to take decisive and swift (although perhaps even rash or unwise) action to confront the human tragedy in Somalia, he would lose his advantageous position in the foreign policy realm to the brash newcomer over the issues of morality and international leadership. Bush's campaign staff urged him to retain an image of strength and experience with foreign affairs and downplay the sagging economy. Bush, who was already quickly slipping in the polls by August, could not afford to hand the foreign policy issue over to Clinton. For Bush, a successful military operation might even turn the tables in his favor.<sup>37</sup>

A military operation launched on heels of the overwhelming victory in the Gulf War could also expect to meet little public resistance. White House officials said Bush and Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, would have never accepted the mission if they didn't believe it could be done quickly and at a comparatively low cost.<sup>38</sup> General Powell only changed his mind after some resistance and supported the intervention plan-- once he was assured that the operation would be short-term and involved little military risk.<sup>39</sup> Powell predicated his endorsement on two key conditions. The first was that the military's mission in Somalia must be well-defined and of limited duration. The second was that a commitment to Somalia would not obligate the United States to attempt a similar rescue missions elsewhere—particularly in Bosnia,<sup>40</sup> which Powell repeatedly warned could turn into a quagmire.<sup>41</sup>

Sending troops to Somalia, it was widely believed in both the top NSC and Pentagon circles, was Powell's way of doing something humanitarian but, equally important, of *not* sending troops to Bosnia, a place that, as far he was concerned, was far more dangerous. He did not want to send troops to Somalia, but he wanted even less to send them to Bosnia. Somalia seemed the easier one, with more control mechanisms.<sup>42</sup>

Powell agreed to the use of ground forces to protect relief supplies, but insisted that any U.S. forces would be limited by the following conditions: (1) Operations would be restricted to the geographical regions of Mogadishu, Baidao, and Berbera, which were the areas hit hardest by the famine; (2) U.S. forces would hand over the mission to UN forces once the new U.S. president came to office; (3) U.S. deployment would consist of a sufficient force with overwhelming firepower to overawe any potential Somali enemies and minimize casualties. Powell's conditions focused on a limited deployment in size, scope, and time frame. Getting out was as important as getting in. Exit strategy and force protection measures were the factors foremost on the Chairman's mind, but he doubted that the exit strategy was all that clear. Powell asked since the tragedy was mainly due to human causation, "How do we get out of Somalia without turning the country back to the same warlords whose rivalries produced the famine in the first place?"<sup>43</sup> Brent Scowcroft, the National Security Advisor, echoed the same reservations, "we can get in," he told Bush, "but how do we get out?"<sup>44</sup> Bush was convinced that the mission could be successfully turned over to UN peacekeepers by the time he left office, and that would comprise the exit strategy.

The main problem was that Operation Restore Hope lacked a timetable for complete withdrawal (essential in a viable exit strategy) because it was believed that without U.S. troops no UN force was capable of maintaining order. Without a clearly defined exit strategy, the operation was open-ended and would naturally take on a process of gradual and incremental bureaucratic entanglements and expansion known as "mission creep," and this bothered the

Pentagon. The thinking was circular; the U.S. mission was to be terminated by turning it over to the same organization that required the U.S. presence to run the overall mission in the first place. Mission creep was the foundation of unintended consequences and often self-defeating outcomes bearing little if any resemblance to the originally conceived policy.<sup>45</sup>

Bush, however, was assured in a NSC meeting on November 25 that “we could do this at not too great a cost, and certainly without any great a danger of body bags coming home.”<sup>46</sup> The belief that the operation could be carried out quickly without significant casualties stood in contrast to President-elect Clinton’s call for the strong use of force in Bosnia that would draw the United States into a protracted and bloody conflict. Bush almost certainly wanted to detract attention from Bosnia as well.<sup>47</sup>

Once having lost the election, Bush wanted to show that his call for a “new world order” was not empty rhetoric; the United States had assumed world leadership after the Cold War, and he could leave office with one more foreign policy success.<sup>48</sup> One Pentagon official reported that Bush had stated that he had to act and “would not leave office with 50,000 people starving that he could have saved.”<sup>49</sup>

Bush sold the intervention to Congress and the public the same way he sold the Gulf War, by playing up the imperative nature of U.S. involvement to drive positive international actions while working within a coalition supported by the UN. He emphasized the short-term nature of the involvement and stressed the humanitarian implications while attempting to downplay fears that the U.S. would become a new “global-cop.” Bush stated, “In taking this action, I want to emphasize that I understand the United States alone cannot right the world’s wrongs. But I also know that some crises in the world cannot be resolved without American involvement: that American action is often necessary as a catalyst for broader involvement of the community of

nations.”<sup>50</sup> Bush again and again specifically emphasized that the mission was “specific and limited” and that it was merely quickly preparing the way to hand the mission off to UN peacekeepers. The logic of this approach appears muddled and obtuse; it advocated an undefined moral international obligation that can be waived at any time or limited from protracted commitment, so it’s not really an obligation to act multilaterally or stick around if things get messy. Even if the United States were to commit itself to act in a times of international crises, under what circumstances would the United States galvanize world cooperative efforts and lead coalitions in the post-Cold War? Bush did not specify which actions required American involvement, nor how the U.S. was going to avoid having “to step in and right the world’s wrongs” if its cooperation was so essential to crises management. Why did Somalia suddenly require a massive restructuring of U.S. foreign policy? Did the humanitarian impulse to save thousands of people ignore the long-term policy implications of assigning the U.S. to act “as a catalyst for broader involvement in the community of nations”? How *exactly* was Somalia a threat to international order as the UN kept selling the need to intervene? These were important questions about America’s role in the post-Cold War world, but Bush never directly addressed these issues publicly.

Despite the garbled message of U.S. obligations to international crises and the moral imperatives of saving starving Somalis, none of the considerations that propelled Bush to undertake military intervention had anything do with American strategic or economic interests, or in fulfilling the existing UN mission to protect supplies (the previous allocation of 3,500 troops). The Bush administration was engaging in political theater, which included initiating a policy that was based on presenting positive *imagery* that involved very low risks while not addressing the problems at hand in any real or meaningful manner that could assure long-term

solutions to complex problems. While the humanitarian impulse to take action is certainly commendable, events in this case seem to definitely place it in a secondary rather than a primary role as the timing of such action indicates. Saving starving Somalis and protecting food shipments only became a primary concern when outside pressures (the campaign, the media, Congress) dictated that the famine be addressed directly. Even at that, once the commitment to send troops was made, it was made under the assumption that it would be a fairly quick and risk-free venture.

Critics argued that Bush was only wholly committed to action once he lost the election. There is strong case for this viewpoint, as no serious NSC plans for intervention were drawn up until *after* his defeat. Many believe that had Bush won a second term, he would have been much more wary in committing forces where no real national interests were apparently at stake.<sup>51</sup>

The loss of the election, the guarantee of a quick foreign policy victory, and the lack of any effort to work directly within the existing UN deployment plan only reinforces this notion. Despite the moral tenets that stood at the heart of the administrations desire to take action, Bush was more certainly concerned with augmenting his lame duck presidency within a heated media spotlight than he was in wholly restructuring relief to famine victims toward U.S. leadership and force protection. Political theatre is at its zenith when policymakers send troops into dangerous and messy situations to project an image of vigorous control over situations they rarely took the time to fully understand in the first place.

After securing the concurrence of the NSC on November 25<sup>th</sup> to intervene, the only issue that remained for Bush was securing authorization for intervention by the UN, although many sources argue that this was window dressing since Bush was prepared to act unilaterally if necessary.<sup>52</sup> The point is moot, however, as the UN was unlikely to deny U.S. efforts to lead a

rescue mission under UN auspices or try to prevent or even condemn one conducted unilaterally by the United States. The reality, of course, was that the UN desired and needed U.S. intervention. Bush and the NSC members nonetheless agreed that UN authorization was to be sought beforehand, as the plan called for a handoff of the mission to the UN after limited U.S. involvement. The UN rubber stamp was important, as any deployment without UN authorization would have jeopardized any exit strategy.<sup>53</sup>

Public opinion was clamoring for U.S. action, but should this turn into a protracted and messy commitment, as had happened in Vietnam and Lebanon, domestic support for U.S. intervention would ebb away. It was not so much for concerns about international legitimacy that constrained U.S. actions; rather UN legitimization was vital in securing Bush's objectives for the mission, and hence in maintaining domestic legitimacy for it.<sup>54</sup>

Coming under more pressure from the media and some corners of Congress to do something about the failing UN mission, the Bush administration broached the idea to the United Nations of sending in the U.S. military confident the offer would be accepted. Eagleburger flew to New York and met with Boutros-Boutros Ghali with an offer to provide 30,000 U.S. troops to protect the delivery of humanitarian aid in Somalia. It was made clear that the offer was contingent on U.S. troops remaining under U.S. command and control.

Bush's decision to undertake a massive military operation in Somalia was surprising to policy analysts and policymakers alike. Bush rejected two options that involved a more minimalist approach (the so-called "ball-peen hammer" option) regarding use of only support forces and insisted on utilizing the maximalist approach known as the "sledgehammer option." Instead of simply providing the UN with sea and air support, Bush selected the approach that called for the aggressive insertion of at least a whole division to lead the way for follow-up UN forces.

Bush, however, was also warned to stay out of Somalia by experts on Africa and the CIA. Smith Hempstone, the U.S. ambassador to Kenya cabled that the United States should think

“once, twice, and three times” before getting involved in Somalia. Hempstone added, “I fail to see where any vital U.S. interest is involved. Statecraft, it seems to me, is better made with the head than the heart.” Hempstone also raised the question of how long the American public would tolerate a long, drawn-out presence in Somalia, how expensive it was going to get (perhaps \$10 billion a year based on the similar UN efforts in Cambodia), and “how large a butcher’s bill it was preparing to pay.” Hempstone surmised that the Somalis would unite against the American presence which they would perceive as an invasion or a target to raid and plunder. He further warned that the Somalis were “natural born guerrillas” who would engage in hit-and-run attacks on peacekeepers “If you liked Beirut”, he warned, “you’ll love Mogadishu.” Hempstone advised that Somalia had no quick fix so beloved of Americans” and that it was best just to leave the Somalis alone.<sup>55</sup> Robert Gates, Director of the CIA, also reported that prospects for success in Somalia were bleak, stating that only food distribution could be carried out quickly, but Somalia would require a long-term international involvement such as creating a protectorate to end the anarchy and reestablish a government.<sup>56</sup> Bush ignored the advice and clung to the sledgehammer option.

On November 29, the Secretary General reported the American offer to the Security Council and recommended that the mandate for UNOSOM I include the use of force to assist in the delivery of humanitarian aid. UN command and control would cover the whole country, but other forces would be under national control (to placate the Americans). In advocating the forcible option to the Security Council, the Secretary General argued that since there was no government in Somalia the Council would have to authorize Chapter VII of the Charter. Ghali also argued that conditions under Article 39 existed and a threat to peace existed to the region and that international stability was at stake.<sup>57</sup>



The Secretary General's argument implemented a "solidarist" viewpoint<sup>58</sup> in that it supported the premise that the human tragedy and suffering occurring in Somalia were a threat to international peace and security, and that Chapter VII could be invoked under such conditions. The decision to use force under grounds of humanitarian intervention was groundbreaking, but no explanation was ever given on the floor of the UN how such conditions were ever a threat to international peace and security. Many nations contended that conditions in Somalia were "unique" and that the UN decision to use force was an "exceptional case" due to the grave humanitarian disaster and the absence of government in Somalia. Discussion was also lacking as to why recent conditions in northern Iraq or famine engulfed Ethiopia years before had warranted UN assistance but had not called for invoking Chapter VII. China, at first planning on abstaining, was uncomfortable with setting a precedent for using force and subverting sovereignty in such cases, but did not want to openly conflict with the strong requests of several African states. Most nations argued that moral obligations compelled them to vote for authorizing an intervention with force. Most nations presented an attitude that they were comfortable breaching the sanctity of the tenets for sovereignty of states because Somalia had no longer had any true sovereignty to breach.<sup>59</sup> The call for forced intervention under Chapter VII unanimously passed the Security Council as Resolution 794 on December 3, 1992 to provide humanitarian relief to Somalia. Resolution 794 robustly authorized "all necessary means" to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia.<sup>60</sup>

Unfortunately, UN resources were utterly incapable of taking on such massive operations beyond those being undertaken in UNOSOM and that mission was already falling apart. The United States would have to take on a much larger role than simply being an active participant of the coalition, even as the major contributor to UNOSOM. If Somalia were to be saved, it was

going to require a considerable infusion of American logistics and large numbers of quickly deployable combat troops and support units to make the force protection plan of Operation Restore Hope a reality. Even with American air and sealift support, the UN mission didn't have the muscle or cohesion to do much more than tenuously secure Somalia's few crumbling ports. Most UN contingents were even incapable of resupplying themselves without continuous U.S. assistance. The Pentagon was quickly put in the position of having to carry the bulk of the mission's burden, and despite the costs and drain on strategic resources this appeared to be preferable for the Bush administration in many ways in order to control the direction of the international policy in Somalia. On December 1, The Security Council reached a road agreement that made an American the commanding general of the operation.<sup>61</sup> It may have been a UN operation based on a coalition of the willing, but the realities of the mission dictated that it was going to be, for the most part, an American show under a UN tent.

The expanded U.S. military mission utilizing the sledgehammer option (which met Powell's criteria for using overwhelming force) in implementing the UN resolution was dubbed "Operation Restore Hope." The Pentagon military plan to support UN operations was created as a "force protection mission"<sup>62</sup> and had the stated purpose of delivering and protecting food supplies under the UN program in Somalia.

Within a week of the passing of Resolution 794, 21,000 U.S. troops began landing on the beaches of Somalia joined by 16,000 troops from other countries in a multinational coalition known as the United Task Force (UNITAF). Bush addressed the nation stating, "Our mission has a limited objective—open the supply routes, to get the food moving, and to prepare the way for a UN peacekeeping force to keep it moving. This mission is not open-ended." The U.S. military central command even removed civil affairs and police units from the deployment to ensure that

no “encumbering activities” emerged during the operation that would prolong America’s stay.<sup>63</sup> Despite Ghali’s pleas to use UNITAF to pacify Somalia and initiate political reconciliation, Bush further stated that the United States had no plans to “dictate political outcomes” in Somalia and that “we do not intend that U.S. Armed Forces deployed to Somalia become involved in hostilities”.<sup>64</sup>

The chief unanswered question was when, and under what circumstances, could U.S. troops be withdrawn. White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater originally said Bush was hoping U.S. troops would be out of Somalia before Clinton’s January 20 inauguration, but Defense Secretary Dick Cheney soon brushed that timetable off as being “unrealistic”. President-elect Clinton echoed this view that the mission would not end that quickly when he said, “an artificial timetable cannot be imposed.” Bush told Congress that, “U.S. forces will remain in Somalia only as long as necessary to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations,”<sup>65</sup> but how this endstate was to be reached under definable terms was left open to the imagination. Administration officials also could not answer other critical questions, including how American forces will ensure that peace in Somalia would last beyond a withdrawal of U.S. troops, and who, if anyone, will be available to run the country once some order was established.<sup>66</sup> The January 20<sup>th</sup> deadline was fudged then junked without offering a substitute exit date or any other form of concrete exit criteria. Nonetheless, high-level administration officials exuded confidence that U.S. forces would be out in less than six months or sooner.<sup>67</sup>

The Pentagon, however, was still somewhat about the goals of the mission. As forces began to land in Somalia, Ghali asked U.S. officials to expand the mission of the U.S. force to pacify the country and train a national police force. “There is a disconnect between the U.S. and the UN missions”, said a senior Pentagon official who explained that the U.S. merely wanted to

get food supplies moving again while the UN expects the U.S. to make peace.<sup>68</sup> UN officials and other pundits warned that no peace could be obtained without reconciliation between the warring factions, and that no political settlement could take place without a *complete* disarmament.<sup>69</sup> Such involvement which would embroil the U.S. into the politics of the clans, subclans, and warlords, and accepting such an undertaking would stand as an utter contradiction to Bush's desire to limit the mission and pull out after completing the humanitarian relief operations. Was disarmament necessary to "establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations"? Was the U.S. obligated to follow the UN's lead in interpreting what establishing a secure environment involved? The vague Bush plan to get in and get out was already sinking fast under the weight of the reality of Somalia.

Both Bush and Pentagon planners may have wanted to get out of Somalia quickly, but there were solid reasons other than simple expediency to reject Boutros-Boutros Ghali's disarmament/reconciliation plan for nation-building. Somali society was arguably one of the worst cultures to try to impose a western style government upon. Somalis lived for centuries with no centralized form of government, and their nomadic lifestyle is deeply imbedded in their psyche, causing them to distrust centralized government control. The lack of formal government and instituted authority is strongly reflected in their extreme independence and individualism. The recent corrupt and brutal Barre regime only reinforced these beliefs.<sup>70</sup> Although the immediate UN priority would be the creation of conditions that would best permit the feeding and care of the starving; this may not be perceived by the clans or warlords as being in their best interests,<sup>71</sup> especially since they were stealing the food, profiting from exploiting the NGOs, and using food as a weapon in clan warfare.

Furthermore, the clan armies had nothing to gain from disarming, and guns were synonymous with survival in Somali society. Clans feared the retribution by their enemies in long-standing blood feuds and weren't about to accept becoming helpless and pacified in exchange for guarantees of UN protection, unity, and order. UN plans for disarming and political reconciliation disregarded that Somali culture stresses the unity of the clan above all else and that alliances are made with other clans only when necessary to elicit some gain. Weapons (guns are considered an extension personal power and manhood), overt aggressiveness, and an unusual willingness to accept casualties are intrinsic parts of Somali culture. Even women and children are considered part of the clan's order of battle. Most importantly, betrayal and revenge are everyday matters on both the clan and individual levels.<sup>72</sup> As General Montgomery later noted about the inability of the West to grasp the mindset of the Somalis and their penchant for violence, "It's impossible for an American mother to believe that a Somali mother would raise children to avenge the clan."<sup>73</sup> A relief worker in Mogadishu spelled out the difficulties of trying to use coercive measures to disarm the Somalis when he wrote:

It is clear that U.S. forces committed to the chaos in Somalia must be prepared to fight, if necessary to accomplish their mission. Whoever comes in here has to be prepared, if necessary, to blow away some of these young men. If you shoot a Somali's brother, he will try to shoot any of your relatives. If a UN soldier shoots a Somali, any white person will be seen as a relative of that man.<sup>74</sup>

Attempting to disarm Somalis would be a nightmare. The warlords themselves had even less to gain from disarming as they would lose all their power unless they were named the legitimate heads of the new government dominated by their clan. But even a *realpolitik* approach to creating a negotiated peace among the clans by siding with the strongest warlords wasn't wholly practical, as Rutgers Professor Said S. Samatar noted:

These are not men who have supreme command over a horde of followers and can deliver them to a field of battle or a negotiating table. Their power depends on the

dynamics of war, and when you deprive them of their capacity to rape and loot, their supporters will slip away.<sup>75</sup>

On paper, if enough coercion could be applied, disarming the population seemed like a logical and necessary step toward bringing the chaos under control. However, there was much more to be weighed in the balance of how much the UN was willing to risk in saving Somalia, as disarmament would naturally lead to a confrontation with most, if not all of Somali society. Pundits in the intelligence community noted that a coercive UN policy of disarmament would have immense practical difficulties, would require a massive military force (as large as that used in Desert Storm) to occupy the entire country, and would risk provoking severe hostility from the local population. Not least, such an approach could ignite the latent flames of Islamic fundamentalism which permeate much of Somali society.<sup>76</sup>

Another issue that was being avoided in the UN's political ambitions for Somalia was the consideration of dividing Somalia into separate nations once famine relief operations were concluded. Since most of the factions are divided along clan lines and roughly correspond to territorial enclaves, and some of which have expressed recognition as autonomous states, why not divide Somalia and start from scratch? Somalia, although a heterogeneous society (there are no ethnic minorities), was an artificial creation of colonialism to begin with and there seemed very little incentive to keep feuding clans under the same roof in a constant state of civil war. The most viable division would at least include UN recognition of Somaliland in the north, which roughly corresponds to the borders of old British Somaliland and is dominated by the Somaliland National Movement (SNM). The SNM was the first to rebel against Barre in 1991 and declared its independence, but no country has yet to recognize its independence. One reason for this was the reluctance of OAU members to set a precedent that would affect the volatile issue of Eritrean separation from Ethiopia.<sup>77</sup>

Despite these issues, planning for intervention continued in Washington. Lt. General Robert G. Johnston (USMC) was designated commander of UNITAF (U.S. led unified task force). The stated purpose of the heavy combat forces of UNITAF was to ensure the protection of the relief effort and pass its responsibility back to the lighter armed UNOSOM forces once the situation stabilized. On December 9, the U.S. Marines initiated the operation with an amphibious assault on Mogadishu as a show of force demonstration. The effects of this highly publicized, pre-dawn landing were somewhat compromised by a barrage of western reporters spotlighting the Marines on the beach. The Marines moved in unopposed, as the leading warring factions quickly agreed to an armistice with the UN. On December 13, the U.S. Army's 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain division<sup>78</sup> joined the Marines in Mogadishu and began setting up established humanitarian relief sectors (HRS) and supporting the various NGOs in those sectors. Limited disarmament procedures of locals were enacted, but Johnston and US Ambassador to Somalia made it a point to work with local clan leadership and avoid embarrassing or provoking them. Major General Zinni, UNITAF's director of operations, noted that UNITAF was working closely with Mogadishu's most powerful warlord, Mohammad Farah Aideed because UNITAF's headquarters and major logistics points were all in his area of control. Although this engagement strategy was temporarily successful and the warlords tended to cooperate with the UN on the surface, they would not agree to share power with one another and only went through the motions during UN led negotiating councils.<sup>79</sup> UNITAF was successful in getting food supplies through and maintaining localized stability, but little else had been resolved creating "a secure environment" to hand off the mission to a smaller UN force as planned.<sup>80</sup>

The purpose of the armed intervention by U.S. Marine forces in UNITAF in the hostile environment Somalia initially was to accomplish two specified tasks—(1) providing security for

humanitarian relief sectors (HRS) located in Bardera, Baidoa, and Mogadishu, and (2) providing escort security for food relief to HRS throughout south central Somalia. It was presumed by U.S. commanders that these missions would be of short duration and involve very little more than preventing the hijacking and looting of relief supplies. However, due to delays in the involvement of the United Nations, success would also have to be dictated by how well U.S. forces assumed and executed numerous implied tasks related to nation building. These tasks included everything from conducting meetings with local clan leaders, controlling civil disturbances, rebuilding infrastructure, setting up police forces, running medical and dental clinics, hunting bandits, and supporting the less capable UN contingent forces.<sup>81</sup> The list of implied and expanded tasks grew longer every week. As much as Bush and Powell believed they had engineered a limited intervention and avoided mission creep, it quickly became a reality.

Although mission creep was already occurring by default, the Bush administration and the Pentagon planners for Operation Restore Hope were reluctant to let the mission officially go beyond its limited objectives to secure food distribution in the coastal areas. The Pentagon hoped to be out of Somalia before March soon after Clinton took office. Boutros Ghali, however, was putting more pressure on the Americans in the Security Council to expand the mission by pushing deeper into the interior, disarming warlords, and laying the groundwork for creating police forces.<sup>82</sup> The Americans politely claimed that they were already stretched to the limit, and that they did not wish to go beyond the providing humanitarian relief despite Boutros Ghali's desires to engage the UN in quickly rebuilding Somalia. Ghali also repeatedly delayed the termination of UNITAF<sup>83</sup> in hopes of effectively disarming the Somalis and creating conditions conducive to nation-building.<sup>84</sup> Meanwhile, proponents of the intervention, including those of the incoming Clinton administration, began clamoring for a need to refine U.S. international interests and international law to allow for more such operations in the future. The table was being set for deeper American involvement in peacekeeping, nation-building and assertive multilateralism in Somalia under the Clinton administration.



## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Weiss, *Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises* (New York: Rowan & Littlefield, 1999), 69.

<sup>2</sup> Also known as *xeer*. The rules and customs surrounding *shir* include a formalized negotiations ritual that incorporates male seniority rights and speaking privileges based on lineage and strength in terms of the size of individual or clan herds. Persuasive speakers are also given extra weight. The details of *shir* can be quite complex and can include exchanges of gifts, debates, reading of ancestral poetry or stories, and contests that demonstrate warrior skills. For more on the customs of *shir*, see *Somalia: A Country Study* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, U.S. Dept. of the Army, DA PAM 550-86).

<sup>3</sup> For a more on the overall history and culture of Somalia, see John L. Hirsch and Robert B. Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacekeeping* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995) and Helen Chapin *Somalia: A Country Study*, ed., Dept. of the Army, (Washington D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993), and Mike Graf, *Somalia* (Mankato, MN, Bridgestone Books, 2002).

<sup>4</sup> British colonialism and operations during WWII redrew many borders that placed some Somali clans behind the borders of Kenya and Ethiopia.

<sup>5</sup> See Anne Simons, *Networks of Dissolutions: Somalia Undone* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995), 44 and U.S. Dept. of the Army *Somalia: A Country Study: Area Handbook Study*, 4th edition, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, Federal Research Division, 1993).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 60.

<sup>7</sup> State Department, Robert Houdek, Statement before the Subcommittee on Africa of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, *Update On Progress In Somalia*, Washington, D.C., 17 February, 1993 (U.S. Department of State: Dispatch 4, No. 8, February 22, 1993).

<sup>8</sup> Ken Merkhaus, "U.S. Foreign Assistance to Somalia: Phoenix from the Ashes?" *Middle East Policy* vol. 5, no. 1 (January 1997): 126-127.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Foreign Military Assistance: Somalia: Army Area Handbooks*, 17 December 1993, available from

<http://www.gopher://gopher.umsi.edu:7000/library/govdocs/armyahbs/aahbs/aahbs3/aahb0227>

<sup>10</sup> "Somalia [Day One]," *Nightline*, ABC News. MPI Home Video, 1992.

<sup>11</sup> Figures based on NGO and UN records. See Weiss, 77.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Dept. of the Army, *Somalia: A Country Study*, 112-118.

<sup>13</sup> William Durch, "Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and 'State-Building' In Somalia," in *UN Peacekeeping, American Politics and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990*, ed. William Durch. (New York: St. Martins Press, 1996), 316.

<sup>14</sup> Weiss, 79.

<sup>15</sup> J. Clark, "Somalia," *Enforcing Restraint: Collective Intervention in Internal Conflicts*, in ed. L.F. Damrosh (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1993), 213.

<sup>16</sup> Andrew S. Natsios, "Humanitarian Relief Intervention in Somalia: The Economics of Chaos," in *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention*, ed. Walter S. Clarke and Jeffery Herbst (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1997), 88.

<sup>17</sup> John L. Hirsch, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*, (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press) 1995, 17.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 18-20.

<sup>19</sup> Nicholas J. Wheeler, *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 175.

<sup>20</sup> Exactly *how* the internal conflict in Somalia threatened international peace and security is a subject for debate as there were no other nations, territory, or significant trade activities directly involved in the conflict.

<sup>21</sup> Wheeler, 177.

<sup>22</sup> Jarat Chopra, Age Eknes, and Toralov Nordbo, "Fighting for Hope in Somalia," *Peacekeeping and Multinational Operations* no 6. (Oslo: Norwegian Institute for International Affairs, 1995): 36.

- <sup>23</sup> For complete text of UN Resolutions leading up to the deployment of U.S. forces to Somalia see Statement of the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations before the UN Security Council, New York City, 3 December, 1992, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 3, no. 50, (14 December, 1992): 877. Article includes Resolution 733, 23 January, 1992 (weapons embargo), Resolution 746, 17 March, 1992 (establishing mechanisms for delivering humanitarian supplies), Resolutions 751, 767, and 775 and 794 (deploying UN forces). Ambassador Perkins statement before the Security Council pledges U.S. support to all UN policies found in these resolutions.
- <sup>24</sup> Quoted in Oliver Ramsbotham and Tom Woodhouse, *Humanitarian Intervention in Contemporary Conflict* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 205.
- <sup>25</sup> The Pakistanis did not venture from their parameter at the airport until U.S. troops arrived in December.
- <sup>26</sup> Gary Dempsey and Roger Fontaine, *Fool's Errands: America's Recent Encounters With Nation Building* (Washington, DC: Cato Institute, 2001), 29.
- <sup>27</sup> Quoted in John Pilger, "The U.S. Fraud In Africa," *New Statesman and Society* 6, no. 234 (8 January, 1993): 10.
- <sup>28</sup> Herman J. Cohen, Assistant Secretary for Africa Affairs, Statement before the subcommittee on Africa of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Washington, D.C., 16 September, 1992. U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 3, no. 38 (21 September, 1992), 713.
- <sup>29</sup> J. Clark, 227.
- <sup>30</sup> Quoted in S.L. Carruthers, *The Media At War* (London: Macmillan, 1999), 220.
- <sup>31</sup> Andrew Natsios, "Illusions of Influence: The CNN Effect In Complex Emergencies," in *From Massacres to Genocide: The Media, Public Policy, and Humanitarian Crises*, ed. T.G. Weiss and R.I. Roteberg (Washington: Brookings Institute, 1996), 159.
- <sup>32</sup> State Department, Statement before the Subcommittee on Africa on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Washington, D.C, September 16, 1992, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch*. 3, no. 39, (28 September, 1992): 738.
- <sup>33</sup> David Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton, and the Generals* (New York: Scribner, 2001), 250.
- <sup>34</sup> Quoted in L. Scott Minear and T. Weiss, *The News Media, Civil War, and Humanitarian Action* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Reiner, 1996), 54-55.
- <sup>35</sup> For more on the history of UN peacekeeping, see *The Blue Helmets: A Review of United Nations Peacekeeping* (New York: United Nations, Dept. of Public Information, 1985).
- <sup>36</sup> Warren Strobel, "Bush Ponders Sending In Troops As Peacekeepers," *The Washington Times*, 18 September, 1992, A-7.
- <sup>37</sup> See David Halberstam, *War In a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton, and the Generals*.
- <sup>38</sup> Eric Ransdell and Carla Anne Robbins, "Operation Restore Hope: Feeding the Hungry In Somalia May Be the Easy Part for America," *U.S. News and World Report*, 14 December, 1992, 26-30.
- <sup>39</sup> J.L. Hirsch and R.B. Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*, 42-43.
- <sup>40</sup> The administration in the fall of 1992 was under heavy pressure to more assertively address the crumbling humanitarian situation in the former Yugoslavia and was contemplating taking military action to protect UN relief efforts against the Serbs. As one State Department official lamented, "We do not have a strategic interest in Somalia and we do in an unstable Balkans". Ransdell and Robbins, 28.
- <sup>41</sup> Ransdell and Robbins, 26-27.
- <sup>42</sup> Halberstam, 251-252.
- <sup>43</sup> Colin Powell, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), 565.
- <sup>44</sup> Halberstam, 252.
- <sup>45</sup> Peter Schraeder, "From Ally To Orphan," in *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy In the Post-Cold War*, ed. James M. Scott, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 342.
- <sup>46</sup> Quoted in Minear and Weiss, 55.
- <sup>47</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, 42-43.
- <sup>48</sup> Nastios, 261.
- <sup>49</sup> Reported in, "Whitehouse Steamrolled Into Intervention," *Independent*, 10 December 1992.
- <sup>50</sup> U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 3, no. 51, (21 December, 1993): 898.
- <sup>51</sup> Schraeder, 338.
- <sup>52</sup> I. Lewis and J. Mayall, "Somalia," in *The New Interventionism 1991-1994: United Nations Experience in Cambodia, Former Yugoslavia and Somalia*, ed. J. Mayall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 111.
- <sup>53</sup> Wheeler, 182.
- <sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Cable from U.S. Ambassador Hempstone to Undersecretary of State Frank Wisner, obtained by *U.S. News and World Report*, 14 December, 1992, 30.

<sup>56</sup> Elaine Scioliono, "Doubts at the CIA" *The New York Times*, 2 December, 1992, A-18.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, 183.

<sup>58</sup> The various views and legal arguments pertaining to how UN power should be employed under the Charter are laid out in depth by Nicholas Wheeler in *Saving Strangers*. The pluralist view holds that the UN has every legal right, and is obligated to use force in situations like Somalia. This globalist vision seriously degrades the values traditionally assigned to the tenants of national sovereignty.

<sup>59</sup> The issue of the right of international organizations (especially the United Nations) to intervene in the internal affairs of nations is complex and hotly debated. Space here does not permit engaging with this very important topic of sovereignty, but readers are directed to see Nicholas Wheeler *Saving Strangers* which provides political science theory and perspective. Also see Thomas Weiss, *Civilian Military Interactions*.

<sup>60</sup> For a full text of resolution, see United Nations Security Council Resolution 794, United Nations, New York, 3 December, 1992, available from <http://www.un.org/documents/sc/res/s92r794e.pdf>

<sup>61</sup> Paul Lewis, "UN Council Essentially Agrees to U.S. Command In Somalia", *New York Times*, 2 December, 1992, A-1.

<sup>62</sup> The military uses very specific terms when planning any mission to reduce or eliminate any confusion and ambiguity. Force protection is a defensive and passive role which is reactive in nature normally allowing the enemy hold initiative, especially under restrictive rules of engagement. The strength of this type of mission is found in its numerous deterrence factors.

<sup>63</sup> Walter Clarke, "Failed Visions and Uncertain Mandates," in *Learning From Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Interventions*, ed., Walter Clarke and Jeffery Herbst (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997), 18

<sup>64</sup> President, George Bush, Text of a letter to the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 3, no. 50 (14 December, 1992): 877.

<sup>65</sup> Eric Ransdell, "Strangers in A Strange Land," *U.S. News and World Report*, 21 December, 1992, 64.

<sup>66</sup> Ransdell and Robbins, 28.

<sup>67</sup> Dempsey and Fontaine, 30.

<sup>68</sup> Ransdell, 64.

<sup>69</sup> Statement by Ali Sahdo Habdi, former Somali Ambassador to France and Saudi Arabia is typical of UN statements regarding the necessity of disarming the whole of Somali society. Ransdell, 65.

<sup>70</sup> Antal, John F. "Peacemaking in Somalia," *Marine Corps Gazette* 77, no. 2, (February 1993): 38-43.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, 42.

<sup>72</sup> Somali culture is extremely complicated, volatile, and circulates around a very cutthroat or survivalist mentality. A Somali proverb best describes this mentality which says, "Me and Somalia against the world, me and my clan against Somalia, me and my family against the clan, me and my brother against my family, me against my brother." Proverb quoted by MAJ Norman J. Cooling, "Operation Restore Hope in Somalia: A Tactical Action Turned Defeat," *Marine Corps Gazette* 85, no.9 (September 2001): 92-106.

<sup>73</sup> Stevenson, 93.

<sup>74</sup> Antal, 43.

<sup>75</sup> Ransdell and Robbins, 29.

<sup>76</sup> James Wyllie, "State Disintegration and Regional Stability," *Jane's Intelligence Review* 5, no. 2 (February 1993): 71-72.

<sup>77</sup> Wyllie, 72.

<sup>78</sup> For 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain's Order of Battle, see <http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/matrix/10MD/10MD-Som.htm>.

<sup>79</sup> Johnathan Stevenson, "Operation Restore Hope in Somalia: A Tactical Action Turned Strategic Defeat," *The Marine Corps Gazette* 85, no. 9 (September 2001): 92-106.

<sup>80</sup> Ransdell and Robbins, 29.

<sup>81</sup> John M Taylor, "Somalia: More Than Meets the Eye," *Marine Corps Gazette* 77, no. 11 (November 1993): 74-77.

<sup>82</sup> Lewis and Mayall, 112.

<sup>83</sup> At the end of Bush's term, there was a struggle between Pentagon officials and the UN planners on the pullout of U.S. troops sent with UNITAF. UN officials disputed the U.S. assessment that the situation in Somalia had improved enough to turn it over to UN blue helmets. "We never wanted to get locked into that place", a U.S. official said. "Now we want to extricate ourselves." Pentagon officials were aware of Ghali's attempts to delay U.S. troop withdrawals as the mission expanded, prompting one to ask rhetorically, "If I were Boutros-Ghali would I want to

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get these guys out? The short answer's 'No'." Warren Strobel, "U.S. Presses UN Chief to Take Over Somalia Effort," *The Washington Times*, 22 January, 1993, A9.

<sup>84</sup> Stevenson, 94.

## CHAPTER 2

### When Peace Enforcement Fails: Clinton's Assertive Multilateralism in Somalia

*"Me and Somalia against the World, me and my clan against Somalia, me and my family against the clan, me and my brother against my family, me against my brother."*  
--old Somali proverb

On January 20, 1993 Bill Clinton was sworn into office and soon ordered studies conducted on the topic of Cold War peacekeeping operations. Early drafts of the study recommended UN operations should be expanded along Boutros Ghali's line of thinking to what UN ambassador Madeline Albright was arguing for in the way of "state-building operations" and "rescuing failed states."<sup>1</sup> The liberal Clinton administration agreed with the UN's expansionist sentiments, and wholeheartedly bought into the nation-building concept and believed that facilitating democracy there was indeed in America's best interests.

The Clinton administration wasted little time with its nation building operation in Somalia and on February 17, 1993 sent Robert Houdek to testify before the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee to promote the new scheme. Within days of Houdak's testimony, the United Nations proposed a \$253 million rehabilitation package for Somalia to rebuild roads, bridges, irrigation canals, construct sanitation facilities. It also included an additional \$20 million for vocational training if Somali militiamen laid down their arms and another \$20 million for farm assistance. By March, the Clinton administration had sent sixty International Development and Foreign Service specialists to Somalia to rebuild local governments. U.S. Justice Department studies proposed a six-month \$12.7 million program to jumpstart police services. Albright told the House Appropriations subcommittee, "The key to the future of Somalia will be the establishment of a viable and representative national government and economy."<sup>2</sup>

No one on the senior policy level on the Clinton team ever went to Somalia. Secretary of Defense Les Aspin was uneasy about Somalia and sensed the policy was starting to drift away from the original agreement, but poor health cancelled his scheduled trip there. The policy was already falling apart, and no one in Washington seemed aware of it. The hand-over from American personnel to UN troops was going badly. Powell's outlined core policy points for military operations were being expanded under new nation building guidelines. The policy was rapidly becoming something very different from that envisioned by Bush and Powell. But Bush was in Texas, Powell was on his way out as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and Clinton's mind was on other matters.<sup>3</sup>

Within the upper levels of the administration, only Secretary of Defense Aspin seemed to question the wild-eyed enthusiasm of "global engagement," Wilsonian internationalism, and embracing humanitarian interventions and nation building as an ongoing form of foreign policy. While National Security Advisor Tony Lake and Madeline Albright were publicly calling for more U.S. involvement in Bosnia and elsewhere, Aspin was struggling with Congressional battles to cut defense spending while a Defense Department report put the cost of the three-month Somalia mission at \$583 million, doubling earlier estimates. "If we're going to do more Somalias, and presumably when you look around the world there's an awful lot more places that this same thing could happen," Aspin said, "how are we going to establish a funding mechanism so that the American taxpayer isn't stuck with the whole bill?"<sup>4</sup> Aspin was quickly put in the middle because Congress was under no obligation to cut other defense programs to find money to pay for the operation in Somalia, and he was raining on the optimistic future plans of Clinton's foreign policy inner circle to get even more involved globally using a shrinking military force.

Meanwhile in the Humanitarian Relief Sectors (HRS), the warlords were attempting to exact as much political and personal advantages for themselves as possible from the intervention. The UN presence in Mogadishu protected Mahdi by inhibiting Aideed's ability to seize the ports and launch an all out offensive against him. The warlords were also siphoning off huge amounts of cash from the nation builders descending on Mogadishu. Relief workers and UN personnel were being charged exorbitant rent to live in properties owned by the warlords. Local drivers and workers hired by the UN were almost always affiliated with local clans and militias and were drivers quite adept at getting repeatedly "hijacked" by their cohorts. Theft of food and UN equipment was rampant. The warlords used the new flow of income to buy more weapons and ammunition.<sup>5</sup> Riots and looting were common. U.S. military operations directed at restoring order,<sup>6</sup> disarming thugs that threatened UN forces, and capturing bandits<sup>7</sup> were maintaining some semblance of localized control, but arguably were inconsequential in changing the overall environment of lawlessness.

Despite the uninviting picture unfolding in Somalia, the Clinton administration's formal transition to nation building began on March 26, 1993 with the passage of UN Resolution 814 which was actually written in the Pentagon and handed to the UN as a *fait accompli*.<sup>8</sup> According to the Bush plan, the U.S. rescue mission was to be gradually handed over to the UN within six months at the very latest. In stark contrast, Resolution 814 stressed "the crucial importance" of disarming the warlords and laid out the long-term and encumbering tasks of nation building. Clinton officials heralded the resolution as a means for "re-creating a country,"<sup>9</sup> and pronounced that political and economic rehabilitation of Somalia would be conducted with vigor. In a telling moment, a Clinton spokesperson gleefully praised the passing of Resolution 814 as a revolution in policy making, stating, "this has never been done in the history of the world"<sup>10</sup> without

commenting on the implications such an action would have on future U.S. obligations after Somalia. Highly infused with high-brow intellectual optimism in multilateralism and international humanitarian intervention, the new administration seemed incapable of addressing pertinent data regarding UNITAF operations to date,<sup>11</sup> the miserable track record of nation-building as a whole, or the unattractive prospects of unleashing it on a society with a volatile history like Somalia's.

In addition to dictating the nature and scope of the effort to recreate Somalia, Washington also seized the helm of the nation-building mission under Resolution 814, which was to be designated UNOSOM II. At Washington's urging, Jonathan Howe, a former U.S. military officer, was named the UN Secretary General's Special Representative for Somalia. Howe's inner circle was made up of American experts and it was his job to oversee all civilian aspects of UNOSOM II. The civilian personnel numbered about 3,000.<sup>12</sup> On the military side, Washington insisted that Lt. General Cevit Bir be named chief commander of the 21,000 peacekeepers due to remain in Somalia as the UNOSOM II force, including 2,600 U.S. logistical (non-combat) forces.<sup>13</sup> Although Bir was not an American, the Clinton Administration had selected him for the position because he was from a NATO member country—Turkey—and years of experience in the top echelons of the American-led alliance. Bir also clearly understood and embraced the nation-building mission Washington had in mind for Somalia. "We are here to re-establish a nation" he proclaimed on arriving in the war-torn country.<sup>14</sup> Bir's deputy, moreover, was an American, Major General Thomas Montgomery. Montgomery exercised independent command of the 1,400 U.S. combat troops in country and he maintained frequent contact with Special Representative Howe.<sup>15</sup> Montgomery actually operated under two chains of command, serving as the UN's military forces deputy under Bir, while remaining under the command of U.S. Central



Command (CENTCOM) which was commanded by U.S. Marine General Joseph Hoar.<sup>16</sup> The third in command of operations in Somalia was also an American, U.S. Army Colonel Edward Howe.

In short, The United States had effective control of UNOSOM II, even though officially it was a UN mission.<sup>17</sup> Elisabeth Lindenmayer, a UN peacekeeping official in Somalia, conceded that the unprecedented role of Washington in a UN mission meant certain concessions were going to have to be made. “With joining in of the big boys, things have obviously changed... they are used to doing things their own way...it’s a different kind of game. We are all trying to adjust”<sup>18</sup> But from the very beginning, the Italians and the Pakistanis, two of the largest contingents in the UNOSOM II force, were not as amenable and reportedly looked to their own governments for instructions and on occasion refused to follow Washington’s presumptive orders.<sup>19</sup>

The strange command structure would prove to be obstructive to smooth operations and allied coordination, especially during the chaotic Battle for Mogadishu later that year. Technically, U.S. troops fell under the overall UN command structure and Gen. Bir’s command, but in reality they were part of the U.S. Central Command’s chain of command which effectively put them only under Gen. Montgomery’s authority in Somalia. U.S. troops could only “request” assistance from fellow UN peacekeepers, but shared little to no tactical intelligence or logistical assets with them. Bir as UN commander had no operational authority over Montgomery, despite the fact that all U.S. military and civilian forces were supposedly operating in Somalia under the auspices of UNOSOM II and UN authority.

The dysfunctional command structure was partially a result of image management for purely political purposes. The desire for American autonomy from UN direct military command

followed long-established precedents to keep U.S. units tactically independent from multinational control, but made little sense in the fact that Washington structured UNOSOM II to fit its own designs and had hand picked its commander to begin with. The selection of Bir thinly veiled American domination of the mission, and as a NATO veteran and convert to the ideology of nation-building-- he was the next best thing to having an American general in charge. Although American autonomy was structured into UNOSOM II, other nations' peacekeepers were pressured by the General Secretary to integrate completely under Bir's command authority.

Creating a dysfunctional and overlapping (but not binding) command structure made little sense militarily, but it would serve a political purpose and quiet dissent. The slight of hand involved was designed to sidestep large portions of the American military establishment and public who were uncomfortable or unwilling to place American soldiers under direct UN command, or to placate nations uncomfortable with having total American military control over the humanitarian operations. With the creation of the dysfunctional command structure, key decisions were implemented not for increasing efficiency or to resolve problems, but for the sake of constructing political imagery at the expense of military cohesion and true international cooperation. Clinton and the Pentagon planners mistakenly believed that Bir's appointment and the awkward command structure was suitable camouflage for assuming domination of UNOSOM II while leaving the U.S. almost unlimited room to maneuver in Somalia. The United States barely disguised the plan to run the intervention as it saw fit regardless of UN's original intentions and limitations. Cooperation between UN forces and American forces became problematic and the United States would later pay dearly for creating its Frankenstein-like command structure.

UNOSOM II officially took control in Somalia on May 5, 1993, when U.S. Marine Lt. Gen. Robert B. Johnston ordered the American flag lowered over the command headquarters and his Turkish successor Lt. General Bir ordered the raising of the UN colors. The ceremony, held in the sweltering heat and humidity of the Somali afternoon, lasted less than twenty-five minutes and only a handful of Somalis attended. Bir thanked the American-led forces for laying “a firm foundation” for the United Nations and promised, “We are ready to continue hope for all of Somalia”.<sup>20</sup> Washington’s chief nation-builder in Somalia, Special Representative Howe, added that the day’s transition opened, “a bright new chapter in the history of this nation”.<sup>21</sup>

Others were less optimistic about UNOSOM II’s prospects as relief workers and pundits alike equated conditions in Mogadishu to Beirut.<sup>22</sup> The comparison was foreboding, as during that conflict the U.S. was gradually sucked into a civil war on the side of one faction. Having lost their neutrality in Lebanon, U.S. Marines increasingly became targets of violence, and within five months, 241 Marines were killed when a truck bomb was driven into their barracks. The U.S. mission to reconstruct Lebanon quickly collapsed.<sup>23</sup>

A similar scenario was unfolding in Somalia. At first Aideed welcomed the outside intervention. As the commander most responsible for ousting the Barre regime, he naturally felt that he would become Somalia’s new leader. His view was reinforced as the UN and later the United States set up their headquarters in his sector of Mogadishu. To his dismay, however, his proximity to foreign peacekeepers meant that his militia would be the first to be disarmed, which advantaged his chief rival, Ali Mahdi.<sup>24</sup> Meanwhile, Mahdi understood that he was militarily weaker than Aideed, so he maneuvered to use the UN and U.S. to his political advantage. He soon began forging numerous links with influential Americans and UNOSOM II personnel, and

he played along with their nation-building plans.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, tensions grew between Aideed and UN forces, which increasingly began to view Mahdi as an emerging ally.<sup>26</sup>

The nation-building mission itself began to sour almost immediately, as attempts to disarm both Mahdi's and Aideed's militias did not go well. Both warlords believed that surrendering any weapons weakened their position, and Aideed feared that the UN was focusing mainly on disarming areas in Mogadishu where he had control. Aideed did not trust Boutros Ghali, and for good reason. As former foreign minister of Egypt, Ghali had been supportive of Said Barre and later had aided anti-SNA factions; a fact that would weigh heavily in the Somalis inability to believe in any impartial intervention. Aideed began to see the UN to be siding with Mahdi, an increasingly viewed the peacekeepers as a threat to his power. Mahdi slyly began to appear more cooperative with the Americans to increase his advantage over Aideed.

Admiral Howe and General Bir adopted a philosophy and operational strategy very dissimilar from that employed by UNITAF under Gen. Johnston and Ambassador Oakley. Instead of engaging clan leaders, Howe attempted to isolate and marginalize them. Howe ignored Aideed and other clan leaders in an attempt to decrease the warlord's power. Disregarding the long-established Somali cultural order, the UN felt that, in the interest of creating a representative, democratic Somali government, they would be better served by excluding clan leadership. The policy reeked of arrogance coupled with cultural ignorance.<sup>27</sup>

In late May, tensions between Aideed and the United Nations came to head over the issue of local peace negotiations. Aideed had initiated a round of his own negotiations, arguing that peace in Somalia would only be achieved by Somalis, not by well-intentioned foreigners. UNOSOM II authorities refused to acknowledge these peace talks, and created a competing round of peace negotiations of their own in the southern port city of Kismayo. UNOSOM II invited Aideed's rival

Mahdi, but excluded his local ally, the warlord Colonel Jess. Aideed interpreted the UN move as an overt threat to his power.<sup>28</sup>

Consistent with Howe's strategy to isolate and marginalize the warlords, in May U.S. forces began conducting air assault operations to deny warring factions freedom of movement, conducting house-to-house weapons searches, engaging "technicals"<sup>29</sup> with helicopters, and securing key points around Mogadishu. Many Somalis began to see the U.S. forces as a direct threat instead of a partial mediator and legitimate stabilizing force. As Aideed saw it, Howe was subordinating his force to Ghali his nemesis who he believed was planning to restore the Darod clan to power. U.S. forces, highly concerned with force protection after a series of sniper attacks, began to adopt a siege mentality within their HRS and the working relationship with local populations eroded. The Americans gradually turned command in many sectors over to the UN, but since the UN did not replace many of the Americans responsible for controlling access within the HRS, several warlords, no longer operationally isolated, made their way back into urban areas.<sup>30</sup>

Adding to an already tense environment, a pro-Mahdi radio station announced that on June 5 UNOSOM II was going to take over the country's radio stations (most were run by pro-Aideed factions) and "other institutions that are causes for instability".<sup>31</sup> This could only mean that Aideed's primary source of information control, his main radio station, "Radio Mogadishu," was put on the UN's priority hit list and Aideed's power could be seriously jeopardized.

By this time, Aideed had correctly deduced that he was going to be the primary target of the UN's attempts to disarm the militias and castrate the warlords in order to restructure Somalia's political and economic structure under nation-building. The UN focused on Aideed because he was the most powerful warlord in Somalia, controlled most of Mogadishu, had loudly and

repeatedly demanded an end to the UN presence, and was the most visible target in Mogadishu. Perhaps it was believed that breaking his control would present an example to the other warlords and clans and a domino effect would then take place in disarming the warlords. Stevenson argues in “Operation Restore Hope: A Tactical Action Turned Strategic Defeat” that it was Admiral Howe who was responsible for driving the policy of focusing on Aideed:

Howe began to view a single clan, Aideed’s Habr Gidr, as the center of gravity blocking mission progress. Similarly, he saw Aideed’s personal security as a critical vulnerability. If Aideed could be captured and brought to justice, he would be isolated from his public support, and the Habt Gidr could be persuaded to share power with rival clans.<sup>32</sup>

In an attempt to isolate him politically, UN forces began to pressure Aideed by launching a series of raids to seize weapons and shut down his infrastructure. On the same day as the pro-Mahdi radio announcement threatening to shut down Radio Mogadishu, Pakistani troops paid an unannounced visit to an ammunition storehouse near the building containing “Radio Mogadishu”, and at one point actually entered the station. Fearing a takeover of the station, Aideed’s forces ambushed the Pakistanis later that day, killing twenty-four and crowds desecrated their bodies in the streets.

The failed raid on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1993 was a major turning point in Operation Restore Hope. The U.S. Special Representative for the UN in Somalia, Jonathan Howe, took Aideed’s resistance to the raids as a personal affront.<sup>33</sup> Howe, a former admiral with little diplomatic skill or ability for making political decisions, had recently replaced Robert Oakley who was critical of the administration’s floundering policies in Somalia. National Security Advisor Tony Lake (a controversial appointment himself)<sup>34</sup> assigned Howe to the post to “put a military face on the delicate situation and present an image that the administration could not be accused of being soft”.<sup>35</sup> Image management had driven Lake’s decision to appoint Howe who was wholly unsuited for the job, and Howe unsurprisingly botched it badly. Instead of consulting with other

nations participating in the operation or waiting for the results of an investigation of the incident, Special Representative Howe responded as if he were the sheriff of Mogadishu, and without proper authorization, he officially declared Aideed an outlaw and offered a \$25,000 reward for his arrest.<sup>36</sup> The reward was dramatically accompanied with “Old West”-styled wanted posters of Aideed placed around the city. Despite the fact that Howe’s overzealousness against Aideed and the Habr Gidr headquarters had forced the warlord into hiding, U.S. officials optimistically felt that the Habr Gidr leadership could be removed in a month.<sup>37</sup>

Following Howe’s lead, within twenty-four hours the Security Council passed Resolution 837 authorizing military operations against those responsible for the attacks. The new mission priority changed literally overnight to hunting down the warlord. With that move, Washington’s nation building mission expanded again to include fighting an all-out war against Aideed.<sup>38</sup> An internal UN inquiry published months later admitted that “opinions differ, even among UNOSOM II officials whether the weapons inspection of June 5, 1993 (that led to the ambush of the Pakistanis) was genuine or merely a cover-up for the reconnaissance and later seizure of Radio Mogadishu”. By the time the report was issued, however, UNOSOM II had already singled Aideed out as its principal enemy. The round of warfare that broke out between UNOSOM II and Aideed would last four months and produce thousands of casualties.<sup>39</sup>

On June 12, 1993, Washington moved to destroy Aideed’s power base and militia. For several days, U.S. planes and helicopters hit the warlord’s weapons depots, strongholds, and the radio station which was then seized by U.S. infantry units.<sup>40</sup> The day after the raids began, an angry Somali crowd gathered to protest the attacks. Nervous Pakistani troops positioned in elevated sand-bagged bunkers opened fire on the crowd killing at least fourteen, including women and children, and wounded twenty.<sup>41</sup> Some of the demonstrators were apparently shot as they tried to

flee, and victims of the gunfire lay helplessly in the streets as UN armored vehicles drove past them making no effort to help the wounded. Several western reporters witnessed the scene and focused on the bloody results of the violence while dramatically playing up the plight of the wounded, ignoring the realities of how the Somali crowds regularly orchestrated increasing levels of violence against peacekeepers. Regardless, the press stories were politically damaging in Western capitals.<sup>42</sup> Positive images of saving grateful starving masses in collapsed nations were changing to shooting into angry mobs full of women and children. “This is an absolute disaster,” lamented one UN official. “Before this, we had the moral high ground.”<sup>43</sup> The highly moral foundations underpinning nation-building were being swallowed by the realities of having to use force against those who rejected and resisted its unwelcome application on their society.

UNOSOM II, nevertheless, believing that it was perhaps one major obstacle away from success, pressed harder and harder to get Aideed. On June 17, UN troops, backed by U.S. airpower, seized Aideed’s headquarters. But Aideed’s defiant militia fought for six hours in street battles leaving five UN soldiers dead and forty-four wounded. At least sixty Somalis, including civilians, were also killed. One U.S. missile struck the building housing the French aid group International Action Against Hunger, killing one relief worker and wounding seven.<sup>44</sup> Despite all the casualties, and the fact that Aideed again evaded capture, President Clinton depicted the operation as the beginning of the end for Aideed. We have “crippled the forces... of the warlord Aideed,” claimed Clinton.<sup>45</sup> “The military back of Aideed has been broken”.<sup>46</sup>

Aideed’s military, however, was not really broken, as President Clinton had earlier claimed. Aideed was soon able to replenish his arms and ammunition from stockpiles in central Somalia and from his base camps across the border in Ethiopia and wasn’t about to cave in. Despite Defense Department claims that “Radio Mogadishu is absolutely down and has functionally been



destroyed,”<sup>47</sup> it was only off the air for a few days as Aideed soon had a mobile radio set and was broadcasting propaganda once again. Aideed meanwhile refused to cooperate with what he saw was the erosion of his power and his camp vowed to fight against “neocolonialism” and “hegemony”.<sup>48</sup> John Murphy noted in “Memories of Somalia”:

The effect of the high profile actions against Aideed undoubtedly led more people into his camp. Somalis respect power, and what Somali could be more powerful than one targeted for death and openly fighting the greatest military force on earth? Once again, the cultural differences were not being properly taken into account.<sup>49</sup>

The nation-building face of the mission was maintained despite increasing levels of coercive and aggressive military action designed put pressure on Aideed. The two goals increasingly appeared to be in contradiction with one another and producing diminishing returns but were wrapped around the same cloaked rhetoric of saving the poor Somalis from themselves. After the June 5<sup>th</sup> raid, Howe requested more firepower and soon received the 24<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF). Howe appealed for equipment to beef up UN forces, “everything from flak jackets to helicopter gunships...he also wants tanks,” one administration official described the request. Critics of administration were pointing to the infusion of more troops and weapons as a sure sign of mission creep, and wondered if it wasn’t a bit of overkill just to teach a third-rate warlord a lesson. Opponents of nation building also pointed that the UN troops clearly weren’t up to keeping the peace in Mogadishu. After the attacks on Pakistani troops one Senate foreign policy aide responded, “It shows that the real bad guys in Somalia will only respect a U.S. troop presence, and if you have to put in more American troops, then you’re acknowledging that the collective security of the United Nations doesn’t mean much.”<sup>50</sup>

The mission was obviously expanding, and the Clinton administration couldn’t hide it. When 2,200 Marines of the 24<sup>th</sup> MEF returned to Somalia in June, U.S. troops stepped up offensive operations while Washington downplayed the latest rounds of violence and Aspin continued to

insist the retaliatory strikes were UN, not U.S. run operations.<sup>51</sup> In early July, 1993 U.S. forces began conducting house-to-house weapons searches while Italian soldiers re-established key checkpoints in a prelude to what Col. Ward said would be an all-out effort to reclaim control of Mogadishu. In a statement describing the flurry of new activity, Ward reflects the effort to shroud the new “get Aideed” focus of the UNOSOM II mission behind the warm and fuzzy sentiments of rebuilding Somalia for its helpless masses by removing its enemies through the aggressive use of force. “My personal opinion is that the UN has stayed behind these [protected compound] walls too long,” explained Ward, and it has “waited too long to give something to the people of this city—roofs over their heads, schools for the kids, a judicial system in place.” U.S. soldiers, he added, are prepared to get involved in “nation-building activities,” such as constructing schools and rebuilding roads.”<sup>52</sup> More overt and aggressive military activity, however, only made Somalis more resentful of the UN presence and gave the warlords more opportunities to create more ugly scenes of violence to be played out in the ever watchful and overly critical media.

By July, the Somalis began to view the UN peacekeepers as another clan, with its own set of allies and enemies, fighting to get its own way. Viewed from their perspective, the logic is perfectly reasonable as erratic fighting broke out between the warlords and with peacekeepers lasting for four months and producing thousands of casualties. Street protests were commonplace, and riots between rival clans often included shootings, throwing rocks, and fatal beatings. U.S. troops often got sucked into the frays trying to maintain order in the streets or ferreting out snipers. Often gunmen would hide in riotous crowds and let loose volleys of fire before disappearing down the maze of back streets and alleys. Militia often used women and children as shields, or targeted them deliberately to draw enemies or peacekeepers into

ambushes. Often women and children would use their own bodies to shield snipers from receiving UN return fire.<sup>53</sup> Snipers plagued UN troops constantly as thieves and looters tried to run off anything that they could carry during riots. The restrictive rules of engagement prevented soldiers from deterring the Somalis from running amok. The effort to maintain peace and reconstruct the infrastructure in such a hot, chaotic, complex, and dangerous environment often drove soldiers to the point of exhaustion.<sup>54</sup> The military was being asked to take on the impossible.

Maintaining order was problematic, but Aideed refused to directly confront the U.S. led assault against his faction confounding Washington's strategic game plan even further. "I'm still amazed that we haven't got a response" from Aideed, explained one frustrated U.S. officer. "The idea was to have him draw out his weapons so we can destroy them."<sup>55</sup> Unfortunately for U.S. military planners, Aideed had spent the better part of a lifetime as a military or a guerilla leader demonstrating a knack for survival. He knew better than to fight on someone else's terms and he naturally chose to fight the UN forces asymmetrically using the civilian urban population as a buffer against the use of overwhelming U.S. firepower.<sup>56</sup> By July 11, seventy or more UN peacekeepers and UN employees were wounded or killed by hit-and-run attacks carried out by Aideed forces.<sup>57</sup> Many of the attacks were boldly carried out in what were the safest areas of Mogadishu: the airport, the port, and the road in front of the U.S. embassy. In one incident, four Norwegian peacekeepers were wounded when a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) was launched over the Norwegian embassy wall. In another incident, several Somali UN workers were found executed after they had distributed pro-UN literature.<sup>58</sup>

On July 12, seventeen U.S. Cobra helicopter gunships and Blackhawk reconnaissance helicopters fired more than 20,000 rounds of 20mm cannon fire and sixteen rockets into a

residential villa used by Aideed's command structure. U.S. infantry then descended on the property to confiscate radios and documents. According to a UN spokesman, "no collateral damage occurred whatsoever" outside the villa compound and "no innocent civilians were injured in the attack".<sup>59</sup> Thirteen militiamen were reported killed and eleven were wounded. The spokesman made it a point to indicate that all the casualties were armed adult males.<sup>60</sup>

Reporters on the scene refuted UN portrayals of the raid as a pinpoint surgical strike resulting in light casualties and no collateral damage. The Red Cross and local hospitals reported that at last fifty four Somalis were killed and seventy-four were wounded in the attack. The casualty rate was possible higher, given the nature of the survey was limited to nearby major hospitals and the Somali tradition of burying their dead without taking them to a hospital first. Enraged by the apparent slaughter, angry Somalis mobs rioted in the streets, killing three foreign journalists in the process.<sup>61</sup>

Meanwhile, Ali Mahdi, Aideed's chief rival, used the situation to his advantage by staging pro-UN rallies on his side of Mogadishu while launching attacks against his rivals. Invigorated by the punitive military strikes being taken against his enemy, he echoed Washington's claim that Aideed was the main impediment to peace in Somalia. "After so many people have died, the world now realizes that the only obstacle to peace is Aideed," Mahdi said in an interview after the strikes began, and if "the world realizes that Aideed is the obstacle and has to be removed, that is good for all Somalis."<sup>62</sup> Many Somalis, however, actually held Mahdi as culpable as Aideed for Somalia's disintegration after the fall of the Barre regime, and observers noted that Mahdis militias were "every bit as blood-soaked as those of Aideed's."<sup>63</sup> In fact, the power struggle between them had already left 30,000 dead or disfigured, and Ali Mahdi eventually joined forces with Barre's brutal son-in-law General Morgan.<sup>64</sup>

Street violence in Mogadishu and guerrilla warfare in the countryside intensified, but only Aideed was officially targeted for capture or military engagement by the UN. Mahdi had skillfully maneuvered the UN into a position of a passive and unintentional ally. In fact, dozens of the factional chiefs began jockeying for power and Western largess after the campaign began to get Aideed, who himself used the opportunity to launch a low-intensity guerrilla war against the UN and establish himself as a new folk hero.<sup>65</sup> T. Frank Crigler, the U.S. ambassador to Somalia from 1987-1990 stated, “Unfortunately, we’ve allowed ourselves to be sucked into choosing sides and picking bad guys and good guys.”<sup>66</sup> Casting U.S. troops in the role of imposing peace at the point of a gun had predictable results: Aideed resisted violently while the other warlords like Ali Mahdi encouraged anything that targeted their main rival and even later organized protests after Clinton announced the troop pullout to get the UN to *stay* in Mogadishu. After the pullout, Mahdi was forced to take on Aideed again after a nineteen-month truce.<sup>67</sup>

Despite the deteriorating situation on the ground in Somalia, advocates of nation building continued to push their policy prescription before Congress and the media, claiming the process would take time but would succeed as promised. In testimony before Congress on June 24, UN ambassador Albright justified the use of the U.S. military in actions against Aideed by claiming that it was essential to “rebuilding Somali society and promoting democracy in that strife-torn nation”.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, on July 29, the State Department’s undersecretary for political affairs, Peter Tarnoff told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, “the process of nation-building will take time” and “we owe it to ourselves—and to Somalia—to help.”<sup>69</sup> Advocates of the nation-building mission in the UN and in Washington continued to tout the mission as an increasing success and a springboard for future expanded international cooperation in humanitarian disasters and collective security. Clinton officials also kept reinforcing the notion that U.S.

troops would soon not be required to carry the bulk of the mission, despite some unforeseen setbacks, all was going as planned and the UN would assume most current American military roles under UNOSOM II.

Despite the Clinton administration's rosy assessments regarding the success of nation-building in the press, domestic and international support for the mission meanwhile began to show its first serious cracks. The backlash from the renewed efforts to crush Aideed was intense. At home, skeptics began to ask tough questions about the prudence of the mission, asking whether risking American lives in the absence of any conceivable or definable connection to American interests was worth the sacrifices being made. Many in the press and on Capitol Hill expressed dismay over the change in the mission's objectives, why units had not been sent home as scheduled, and why General Montgomery was requesting more combat troops if the mission was supposedly winding down as Clinton had repeatedly promised. The international picture was no better for the administration. Somalis regularly protested in the streets calling for the UN to leave the country and Kenyan newspapers equated the peacekeepers as being "the new warlords" of Somalia.<sup>70</sup> The Italian government voiced concerns over the shift in operations to nation-building and hunting Aideed as well as the total American control of operations. The Germans made noises about withdrawing their offer to send 1,600 peacekeepers, and Democratic leaders in Congress led by Senator Robert Byrd were echoing Republican Senator Bob Dole's calls to bring the troops home.

After ushering in nation building as a radical policy shift and demonizing Aideed, the upper levels of the Clinton administration oddly enough were not really paying much attention to Somalia that summer. Clinton was focusing on domestic issues, Secretary of State Warren Christopher's voice was essentially muted, and National Security Advisor Tony Lake stayed

aloof from the Defense and State Department officials that dealt with Somalia. Les Aspin was eager to cut back the commitment and end the policy but no one was listening. Aspin later complained to a friend that he couldn't get any direction from the White House, and had to call and ask them on Saturday night what to say on the scheduled rounds of the Sunday morning talk shows. In a similar fashion, no one in the White House or NSC was consulting with Bob Oakley, the State Department's point man in Somalia and facilitator of negotiations between the factions. Oakley, a veteran of the same inflated concept of nation building in Vietnam, was reeling under the rhetoric coming from Albright's and Clinton's statements while a spiraling level of crisis was developing that summer. Oakley surmised that no one was really in charge in Washington; after command-detonated mine blew up a humvee (jeep) and killed four Americans in August, no one even called a meeting to discuss the growing dangers for U.S. troops. Powell and Aspin were calling to get out, but the NSC members never responded. Aspin had so much difficulty contacting Tony Lake and trying to get any kind of policy direction at all that he begged R.W. Apple of the *New York Times* to "get *something* out of him."<sup>71</sup>

Aspin, who was already under attack from members in Congress that he was incapable of running the complexities of the Pentagon especially with issues surrounding force reductions and budgets, was getting flustered over the nonexistent foreign policy leadership found within the administration. No one outside the Pentagon seemed to pay much attention to the looming crisis in Somalia. Powell and Aspin were increasingly feeling left outside the loop and forced to make calls completely on their own:

More troops to protect the forces there were requested. That had the smell of Vietnam. So both Aspin and Powell were caught between their fear of escalation and the need, because of their positions in the chain of command, to ensure the safety of American troops and honor, if at all possible, the requests of their commanders. It was a nightmare.<sup>72</sup>

When General Montgomery again requested more troops, both Aspin and Powell reluctantly agreed to propose to send in Task Force Ranger, which was already slated on the table for deployment. In August 1993, after being assured the deployment would be kept very low key, Clinton agreed with the proposal, but ordered in the elite troops specifically to hunt and arrest Aideed. Powell, disdainful of nation-building and the ever-widening open-ended commitment, told friends “we were being nibbled to death in Somalia”. General Hoar, CENTCOM commander, advised against the deployment but was overruled. Aspin had similar reservations, and saw that the new deployment of Special Forces units was fraught with perils. Aspin thought the secret Delta Force commandos and U.S. Army Rangers were by nature uncontrollable, and he referred to them as “a pack of over-trained pit bulls.” Aspin hated the whole idea of using commandos “to act as a posse,” and made a major speech contradicting the stream of rhetoric about successful nation building that had been coming from the State Department. Aspin angered Clinton when he publicly called for a reappraisal of the policy in Somalia.<sup>73</sup> This act would later cost Aspin dearly when Clinton went looking for scapegoats after things went horribly wrong.

Clinton continued with the policies that had produced no real positive results toward rebuilding the collapsed state and precariously hinged on the prerequisite requirement of destroying a weakening warlord that could not be captured or decisively defeated. What Howe and Clinton refused to recognize was that destroying Aideed was a zero-sum game, in which his removal from the scene would only strengthen his many equally bloodthirsty rivals. Even if Clinton did indeed recognize this fact, he failed to seek out or exploit alternative courses of action. Because of the clan system and the ever-shifting nature of the alliance system in Somalia, it is doubtful that capturing Aideed, even along with several of his lieutenants, would have produced a vacancy that would go unfilled for very long. It is also doubtful that any subsequent



leadership change would be any more amenable to UN/U.S. interests than Aideed. Ironically, it was Aideed himself who had articulated a common theme among the feuding Somali factions—peace in Somali could only be resolved by Somalis themselves-- which in the end, turned out to be the case. To the Somalis, outside interference was viewed as being either neo-imperialistic, a threat to a warlord or clan's power, or something to be utilized to one's own advantage against his enemies. A UN brokered peace was never a viable option in Somalia, especially since the intervention and the mounting violence had stretched its ability to use force as far as the international community could stomach.

By August 1993, UN peacekeepers and aid workers were becoming regular targets of snipers, mines, and occasional mortar attacks. The frustration among U.S. soldiers grew after often being pelted with rocks from protesters on several occasions. Heavier attacks in late July were concentrated on Pakistani mounted patrols which shifted toward American troops. A Marine intelligence analyst briefed General Montgomery that Aideed had shown indications that he (correctly) believed that American forces were the center of the UN's gravity,<sup>74</sup> and that evidence pointed to command detonated mines would be used against American vehicles. In a heated exchange, Montgomery flatly rejected the analysis, because he "didn't want to hear about Americans getting killed". On August 8<sup>th</sup>, four American MPs were killed when their humvee was destroyed by a mine.<sup>75</sup> An American spokesperson blamed Aideed for planting explosive devices on the roads and claimed the escalation of attacks on American vehicles "reflected Aideed's frustration over his shrinking support base."<sup>76</sup> These attacks actually signaled Washington's inability to defend against Aideed's low-intensity guerilla campaign, which was increasing the American military's level of frustration on all levels and making it impossible to implement a viable exit strategy.<sup>77</sup>

Despite the deployment of the Rangers in late August to capture Aideed, Washington continued to face frustrating setbacks. A Ranger led raid conducted to nab key Aideed lieutenants on August 30 mistakenly captured two UN workers instead, and the media had a field day with the story.<sup>78</sup> On August 12<sup>th</sup> and again on September 9<sup>th</sup>, U.S. helicopters fired upon mobs which had turned on U.S. troops defending against a militia attack resulting in large numbers (perhaps 200 fatalities in one attack alone) of Somali casualties. General Hoar, head of the U.S. command, wrote a strongly worded letter to the State Department's undersecretary for defense policy, Frank Wisner, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Colin Powell, that the situation was rapidly deteriorating and the mission was becoming more fruitless. "Control of Mogadishu has been lost", he wrote. "If the only solution for Mogadishu is [the] large-scale infusion of troops and if the only available country to make this commitment is the United States, then it is time to reassess our commitment".<sup>79</sup>

The UN and the Clinton administration, however, were not reassessing nation-building in Somalia at all. On September 22, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 865, reaffirming previous resolutions in Somalia, commending UNOSOM II for its activities, and setting a target of March 1995 for national elections (although absolutely no political reconciliation progress had yet been made). By omitting any suggestion of a change in the policy of pursuing Aideed, the Security Council effectively endorsed its continuation. The Resolution made several direct references to undertaking political reconciliation and "nation building". Although it also called on the Somali people to show "the political will to achieve reconciliation, peace, and security," the resolution clearly treated them as secondary players in finding solutions to their country's problems.<sup>80</sup> The advocates of in New York and Washington nation building continued to be oblivious to realities in Somalia.

In late September, Powell attended his last NSC meeting, which was predominately about Bosnia, not Somalia. All the top people were there except Clinton. Powell, after clearing it with Aspin, introduced the subject of Somalia and expressed his views on getting out. Powell reported Montgomery's recent requests for armor which Powell later reported "made George Stephanopolous and David Gergen look appalled because the last thing they wanted was to enlarge something they thought was supposed to be *looking* smaller." When pressed, the White House advisory staff apparently was only concerned with *imagery*. Powell met with Aspin after the meeting, and Powell was told that Montgomery's request for armor was denied because of the political implications of sending tanks into Somalia instead of pulling more troops out. When Powell explained the value the armor would have in protecting troops and why Montgomery had requested more support, Aspin replied, "...it ain't gonna happen".<sup>81</sup> Because weak political considerations overrode strong military ones, fatefully the tanks would not be there to back up the Rangers when all hell broke loose in October.

Instead of pulling out or adopting other strategies such as returning the mission to traditional peacekeeping, in August Clinton banked on Task Force Ranger and its 400 men commanded by Major General William Garrison to capture Aideed.<sup>82</sup> Conducting several small successful tactical raids in a period of six weeks,<sup>83</sup> the task force failed to capture the warlord, but stirred up a hornet's nest of zealous anti-Americanism in most of Mogadishu. Garrison's scant human intelligence sources were unreliable in tracking down Aideed and his "Tier One" (top six) lieutenants<sup>84</sup> and U.S. forces suspected the Italians of providing covert assistance to Aideed. Since the Rangers employed the same aerial raid techniques repeatedly, they forfeited the advantage of tactical surprise and allowed Aideed to set a trap once he recognized that their raids required speed in order to be successful and offset his superior numbers. Aideed correctly

deduced that the American helicopters were the key to the Ranger's vulnerability and that a barrage of RPG fire could bring one down and his forces could swarm over any survivors and ambush the inevitable rescue elements. When the Rangers launched another raid to capture two of Aideed's lieutenants in the Bakara Market district far from UN positions,<sup>85</sup> the results were disastrous:

The turning point in Washington's manhunt for Aideed—and indeed its entire nation-building operation in Somalia--- came on October 3-4, when a major U.S. assault on Aideed's positions in Mogadishu resulted in the shooting down of a [sic] Blackhawk helicopter. Eighteen U.S. Army Rangers were killed and seventy-six were wounded in the firefight that ensued. More than 1,000 Somalis, including women and children bystanders, were killed by American forces during the fighting. The Blackhawk pilot was taken prisoner, while another crew member's body was dragged through the streets of the Somali capital.<sup>86</sup>

Most of the American casualties were taken not in the initial Delta Force raid itself, but were taken in the several attempts to rescue trapped units that had converged around the two Blackhawk crash sites using convoys of light-skinned (unarmored) vehicles.<sup>87</sup> Aideed's troops' inability or unwillingness to close on the tenuous American positions luckily kept casualties lower than they could have been.<sup>88</sup> It was quickly reported that the heavy American casualties were increased due to the time lost trying to coordinate a UN-led heavy force rescue of soldiers trapped at the crash sites because the U.S. had no armor of its own and had not coordinated or even informed the allies about the raid beforehand.

As often had been the case in Somalia, the media was right on top of the story and not shy about airing or publishing the gruesome pictures of war. The American public was shocked and angry at the scenes of joyous Somali mobs at the crash sites, the uncomfortable hostage videos of captured pilot Michael Durant, and the overall unfolding debacle in Somalia. David Halberstam describes the public backlash driven by these images in the aftermath of the battle:

No sight could have been more bitter for ordinary Americans sitting at home to witness: the body of a dead soldier, being dragged through the streets, while the people he was there to help cheered his desecration. It was a tragic example of the fickle quality of foreign policy arrived at because of images, in this case, images of starving people, which can be quickly reversed by a counter-image, that of a dead body being dragged through the streets of a foreign capital...<sup>89</sup>

The bloody clash sent shock waves through the United States, arousing anger and incredulity that at the same time the country was asking the United Nations to back off confrontation, its own forces, under direct U.S. operational control, were actively engaging in military attacks. For ten days, once-remote Somalia electrified Washington. Though Clinton resisted calls from many members of Congress for an immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces, he recognized a major crisis in Somalia policy.<sup>90</sup>

Clinton handled the crisis abysmally, and he failed to take firm control of the situation or take real responsibility for the runaway policy. Just when the American public needed presidential leadership the most, Clinton's primary political instinct was to protect himself from the blame. Clinton feared the political backlash and felt betrayed that Tony Lake and others had let him down. He needed to focus his anger on a target and find a scapegoat, which quickly became Les Aspin. Clinton's primary concern was on personal damage control, and how to use spin to run away from the mess he had allowed to get out of control. Halberstam explains this situation based on the accounts of White Houses staffers such as George Stephanopoulos:

Clinton was furious. "How could this happen?" he ranted. Translated, that meant how can this happen *to me*? and he was deadly serious. He was appalled that the United States was being pushed around by what he called "two-bit pricks". There had been, he decided, a shift in policy without his informed approval. That was the key phrase, *his informed approval*, and in his mind, that let him off the hook. Why hadn't anyone told him about the downside about the policy? He believed that the people that were supposed to protect him had not protected him. He had been a little careless, more than a little disengaged, in fact, but that did not mean he entirely accepted responsibility for what had happened. His anger needed a target, and gradually it focused on Les Aspin, who had been urging the

White House to clarify the policy and to limit the vulnerability of the mission, but whose name, because he had tried to limit the mission before that tragic day, *was on several pieces of paper* denying the forces in Somalia tanks in September. Some of Clinton's anger was focused on the UN people who had expanded the mission. Some of his anger was privately aimed at Colin Powell in a personal pique... He felt a lingering irritation with Tony Lake as well, for not protecting him on this one... [but when it had to respond to questions from Congress] the White House made it clear that it wanted to minimize Lake's role and emphasize that of Jonathan Howe. For much of the concern immediately following the Mogadishu tragedy was over spin: how to make something disastrous look a little less like a disaster and how to put as much distance between the White House and the disaster."<sup>91</sup>

Clinton's first and overriding concern immediately upon learning about the disaster in Mogadishu was *how his image as President would be affected* should he return from a swing through California to make a public address about the casualties. After receiving the advice of his top political aides telling him that an immediate statement would make him *look* more personally responsible, Clinton decided to continue with his trip rather than return to Washington immediately and directly face the nation.<sup>92</sup>

In public statements, Clinton spun the events of October 3-4 as a tragic episode in an otherwise very successful mission to rebuild Somalia, and tried to drum up support for continuing Operation Restore Hope as planned.

President Clinton's initial response was to justify the soldier's deaths by claiming that they "lost their lives in a very successful mission against brutality and anarchy." He also announced, "You may be sure that we will do whatever is necessary...to complete our mission." Days later, when it became clear that the American public and Congress were not persuaded, Clinton reversed his Somalia policy: U.S. troops would be withdrawn within six months. The administration's hunt for scapegoats then began.<sup>93</sup>

After returning to Washington, Clinton continued to evade personal responsibility for his policies and the inattention to their consequences that had caused the tragedy. Clinton told Congress that it was the UN that had drawn U.S. forces into personalizing the conflict by going after Aideed. While meeting with the families of the Rangers killed in combat, Clinton claimed

that he was “unaware and shocked” that Aideed was still being pursued after he had decided upon a diplomatic solution.<sup>94</sup> Soon after hearing this clumsy attempt to change the facts, one of the grieving fathers, a Vietnam combat veteran, angrily told Clinton that he was a disgrace and had no right to hold the office of Commander in Chief.<sup>95</sup> Adopting bad policy was regrettable and painful, but telling grieving families of dead heroes that the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States was almost completely unaware of the entire process-- was clearly irresponsible.<sup>96</sup>

Not buying Clinton’s line that the October 3-4 battle was simply a tragic incident tainting a success story in Somalia, a Congress demanded real answers from the White House as members from both parties were calling for an end the current open-ended and aimless policy. Almost immediately, Aspin and Christopher were sent to the Hill on Oct 5<sup>th</sup> to face Congress’ wrath for the fiasco in Somalia and to explain the administration’s actions. The congressional meetings resembled a lynch mob as the administration appeared confused and directionless.<sup>97</sup> Liberals and conservatives were unsparing in their criticism. Democratic Senator Ernest Hollings of South Carolina exclaimed, “It’s Vietnam all over again!”<sup>98</sup> which seemed to sum up the mood of the committee members:

To the people on the Hill, what happened in Somalia smacked of everything that could go wrong. It was a war in a distant country in which we had no vital interests; and it bore the unenviable imprimatur of the United Nations, a humanitarian exercise that had ended with these people—these savages killing our boys. Neither Christopher nor Aspin arrived with a policy that day. Instead, they suggested that the members of Congress help them find a policy. It was if they had drawn their own blood so that the circling sharks could have a go at them... what was evident...was that Christopher was content to let Aspin do most of the heavy lifting.<sup>99</sup>

After the meeting, the committee members were anything but pacified by the Clinton team’s shallow explanations. Rep. Pat Schroeder, a Democrat from Georgia, equated their rosy

evaluation of the Somalia policy to the “five o’clock follies” military press briefings of the Vietnam War era.<sup>100</sup> Most in Congress did not agree with Clinton’s designs to stay in Somalia, and felt that they were still being kept in the dark. Senator John McCain, Republican from Arizona, stated that the White House had given them less information than they could get from watching the evening news.<sup>101</sup>

It was no accident that Aspin had been thrown to the angry wolves on the Hill and had to field all the tough questions-- he was quickly becoming the administration’s primary scapegoat. Someone had to pay the piper, and he was vulnerable because of his level of involvement with Somalia and the mounting criticism surrounding his inability to run the Pentagon very effectively. His inability to coolly toe the company line even when things were falling apart with the Somalia policy certainly didn’t help much either. Much of this has to do perhaps with his tortured relationship with the President. Aspin had angered Clinton when he failed to meet Clinton’s unrealistic campaign promises to smoothly integrate gays into the military, increase the number of women in combat roles, and drastically cut the defense budget by a trillion dollars, all of which embarrassed Clinton politically. Although he defended Aspin over Mogadishu publicly, after some hesitation the President decided to cast him off.<sup>102</sup> Two months later he was gone.

The administration also continued to blame the UN for the fiasco in Somalia. After leading the charge in the disastrous hunt for Aideed, the White House turned to blaming UN policies for the Oct. 3-4 loss of American lives, echoing congressional complaints that the United Nations had “sucked in” Washington into targeting Aideed.<sup>103</sup> The policy failure, however, was a product of *both* the Secretary General and the Clinton Administration’s insistence on nation building and its prerequisite conditions which directly led to targeting Aideed. Going beyond the original scope of Operation Restore Hope by promoting Resolution 837 was an act of hubris that both



Washington and Boutros-Ghali mutually embraced. Washington, however, must bear most of the blame because American domination of the operation was readily apparent from the formulation of Operation Restore Hope, and with every policy shift-- the Americans always had it their way. For Clinton and members of Congress to blame the UN for “sucking them in” was an exercise in spinning themselves out of the line of fire from an angry and disillusioned American public.

The next cycle in the “spin” control process was the elimination of the promotion of the rhetoric and ideology that consisted of the unchallenged core of the administration’s policy in Somalia. “Extending democracy,” “rebuilding collapsed states,” and “nation building” became taboo phrases in press statements, as the administration tried to pretend that it had never even heard them before. Clinton was now openly contradicting the rhetoric that supported the administration’s policy in Somalia since he took office in 1992. “Somalia is not America’s responsibility,” he declared, “...we have obligations elsewhere.”<sup>104</sup> Unfortunately for U.S. foreign policy, the firm adherence to the ideologies of nation building and extending democracy were to be hidden from public view, but these ideologies were not seriously scrutinized by its practitioners for their tragic shortcomings.

The “spin” cycle to protect Clinton and the members of the administration after the Battle of Mogadishu was really just the icing on the cake. The administration had not been honest with the American public, Congress, or even itself for many months prior to Oct. 3-4. The administration’s reliance on positive sounding but quite hollow rhetoric rather than on actual results was nothing new in its handling of policy in Somalia. The attempt to cover up the eroding realities on the ground by touting the triumphs of nation building was a game of ever-deepening self-delusion. As peacekeeping was falling apart in August and the cycle of violence was escalating, rhetoric still spewed from the White House and UN ambassador Albright regarding

how progress was being made toward lifting Somalia “from a failed state into an emerging democracy.”<sup>105</sup> Unfortunately, no one at the top levels of the White House was paying any attention to what was really happening and were content to accept as fact the myths spun in the rhetoric.

Another turn in the “spin” cycle was how the impending and humiliating retreat could be cushioned now that the public and Congress were demanding withdrawal, and no positive nation building results had been manufactured in Somalia. On October 6, Clinton convened an urgent policy review with key cabinet members and senior military staff. Former special representative Oakley was invited to join the review. The NSC met to decide on:

...how to best get out, or more accurately, how to cut and run without looking like we were cutting and running, to use Lyndon Johnson’s phrase. The answer in the end was to reinforce our troops—no one was going to push us around, by God—and then we would get out as quickly as possible.<sup>106</sup>

The meeting concluded with an agreement on a new policy approach, a set of implanting proposals, and a selection date for U.S. forces to leave. Clinton ordered that U.S. forces take no more action against Aideed and the SNA except in self-defense. Albright and Hoar communicated the President’s decision to a very unhappy Boutros-Ghali.<sup>107</sup>

On October 7, Clinton publicly announced a major change in course, strongly defending overall U.S. policy but acknowledging that it had been a mistake to be drawn into a UN decision “to personalize the conflict” in response to Aideed.<sup>108</sup> He outlined plans for a new policy and its implementation, first in a two-hour meeting with congressional leadership and later in a televised address. To stem the growing pressure from the public and Congress for a speedy exit from Somalia, Clinton announced in the short term he was building up U.S. forces as a protective measure; a phased withdraw would be implemented, but all U.S. forces would be pulled out by March 31, 1994. Clinton argued that U.S. troops should not hastily withdraw from Somalia in

order to convince the world of U.S. resolve and credibility, but the timetable had been firmly set. The simultaneous reappointment of Oakley as special envoy was intended to signal the administration's intent to focus U.S. policy once again on political reconciliation involving all the Somali factions.<sup>109</sup>

The October 7 television address is a telling sign of how Clinton was squirming under the pressure, distorting the facts, and revealing the contradictions of his Somalia policy. In the address, Clinton began by reminding Americans about the importance of preventing millions from dying of starvation and disease. He argued that the humanitarian crisis was now well under control, although over “one million Somalis still depend completely on relief supplies, but at least the starvation is gone”. He added, however, if the U.S. were to pull out now, famine and “chaos would resume”. After over a year of pouring millions of tons of relief supplies in Somalia, Clinton was touting the figures of how many millions had already been saved and fighting to continue feeding the ungrateful masses; which, by his own admission, could not put their own affairs in order and feed themselves even after such a massive amount of foreign assistance. Clinton didn't seem to grasp the implications of his message--there seemingly was no end in sight to feeding millions of Somalis and having to protect those supplies. Even under the improved conditions created by the UN the task could not be adequately accomplished, but somehow should be permitted to continue the futile task with less resources. Worse yet, if a pullout would certainly mean a return to square one, than obviously all the UN efforts and recoveries in the Somali economy to date he'd been praising were arguably futile in getting Somalis to feed themselves. In short, he was unwittingly spelling out Somalia as a lose-lose situation in providing food relief, but was championing a continued commitment there anyway

because hungry people would at least get fed temporarily before they probably turned it back into the mess they started with.

Clinton's October 7 speech was further imbued with misdirection and mixed messages about pressuring Somalis to reach political reconciliation and sticking around another six months "to give them a chance to rebuild their country" while simultaneously getting out as soon as possible.<sup>110</sup> What Clinton thought could be accomplished in six more months that could not be accomplished in the previous three years is unknown. In another twist, Clinton openly disowned nation building, the cornerstone of his policy in Somalia, without taking responsibility for it. "It is not our job to rebuild Somali society, or even create a political process that can allow Somalia's clans to live and work in peace," he said. Clinton then tried to borrow a page from Franklin Roosevelt's playbook, in using an analogy of a fighting a fire in a burning house to describe the effort to rescue Somalia and convince Americans to save Somalia, and followed by asking whether "we leave when the going gets tough, or when the job is well done?" The question was pointless, in that there was certainly no guarantee the job would be any better done by March than in December, since the practical difference in the political time frame was marginal.<sup>111</sup> Clinton proceeded this by quoting Colin Powell who said, "just because things get difficult, you don't cut and run", but immediately, however, reminded the audience that number of U.S. troops was being quickly reduced on schedule to turn the mission completely over to the UN. Clinton was cheerleading a "stay the course" position, but the U.S was indeed, cutting and running and leaving the mess to the UN.

Clinton then announced that "we must leave on our own terms", meaning that a sizeable U.S. heavy force will be deployed to Somalia *only* to protect the rest of the forces already there until a complete pullout would be effected March 31<sup>st</sup> when the mission could be handed off to the UN.

Clinton argued for the prudence of keeping U.S. troops there until March 31, because an immediate pullout would undermine U.S. credibility and leadership in promoting peace in the post-Cold War<sup>112</sup> and destroy the UN's chances of bringing in replacement troops and completing the mission. Clinton also added, "Moreover, having been brutally attacked, were American forces to leave now we would send a message to terrorists and other potential adversaries around the world that they can change our policies by killing our people."<sup>113</sup> It would be open season on Americans."<sup>114</sup>

On October 13, the president submitted to Congress, at its request, a detailed report on "the new modified" U.S. policy in Somalia explaining that the U.S. role was now only supporting the greater UN humanitarian relief effort and assured them that all U.S. troops were totally under U.S. operational control. Clinton also outlined the use of the incoming reinforcements, described the details of the March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline, and explained that the U.S. was now focusing on helping African leaders work with Somali factions to find a political solution.<sup>115</sup>

Clinton's new policy announcement was timely. He successfully quelled a rebellion on the Hill led by Senator Robert Byrd, Democrat from West Virginia, which had erupted after the battle in Mogadishu but had been brewing since September, which demanded an immediate pullout while threatening to cut funding for the Somalia mission.<sup>116</sup> After passing a compromise provision<sup>117</sup> to impose limitations on U.S. troops in UNOSOM II, Congress now seemed satisfied that the mission was ending soon and that there was little chance of another military disaster once the reinforcements arrived to cover the pullout. "The president has listened to Congress," said Minority Leader Bob Dole, a Republican from Kansas. "He was under a lot of pressure, and he changed direction." Senator John McCain also seemed mollified, stating, "the mission the American people supported ... has been accomplished. We didn't say we'd feed

those people forever.” Although most supported the amendment to accept the new policy, many were still bitter about the direction Somalia policy had taken under Clinton and still wary of Clinton’s affinity of interlacing U.S. foreign policy with the UN interventionism. Congressman Mitch McConnell, a Republican from Kentucky, summarized the mood of Congress when he said, “Creeping multilateralism died on the streets of Mogadishu.”<sup>118</sup>

During that week, Oakley had returned to Somalia had successfully secured the return of Durant and another UN POW from the SNA, and set up procedures for a cease-fire to be enacted.<sup>119</sup> Ghali and many of the UN contingent commanders were quite upset about the sudden reversal in U.S. policy, but without the Americans, they were powerless to do anything but accept the ceasefire and abandon the policy of getting Aideed. Once Durant was handed over by the SNA safely, Ghali knew the Americans had no reason to stay in Mogadishu and were just watching the clock until March.

For the next few months, the U.S. pledged more military surplus and humanitarian aid for the UNOSOM II, aided the reconciliation talk in progress, and worked toward a smooth military transition. Ghali tried to keep the Somali nation building mission alive, sans Americans, and desperately sought troops from other nations to replace them. UN officials claimed that political and economic progress was being made across Somalia, except in the SNA held regions around Mogadishu. Ghali continued to push for a total disarmament process, but announced that he needed at least 30,000 troops to achieve it, or at least 19,000 to undertake a voluntary disarmament program. Either way, Ghali realized that UNOSOM II’s Chapter VII mandate was going to have to be scaled back.<sup>120</sup> Few countries came forward and Ghali could not convince nations tread where the United States would not go. By January 6, 1994 Ghali announced that given the lack of troop contributors, only the voluntary disarmament plan was still possible, and

that the UN would scale back military activities and pin its hopes on its ongoing efforts to get the Somali factions to reach a settlement. UNOSOM also advocated some of its control of political activities to outside agencies to appease Aideed and aid in the reconciliation process.<sup>121</sup>

Despite the addition of more firepower, morale was low for the remaining U.S. combat troops sitting it out in Somalia who had reverted to a bunker mentality.<sup>122</sup> Months after the October 3-4 battle and Oakley had secured the release of Durant, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain soldiers sitting in the sand remained angry and still wanted to get Aideed despite the official change in U.S. policy. “We’d all be happy just to nail him to a tree” said SSG Richard Roberts of the 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment. “He’s responsible for the deaths of a lot of people in the coalition... there’s a lot of anger and desire to go out there and finish him off.” SPC Ralph Scott, who was nearly killed in October by when his vehicle hit a mine, said. “If I caught him, I’d give him a taste of what he gave Michael Durant and a few other soldiers.” By February, U.S. forces had little to do but prepare to hand the mission off to the UN as the Pakistanis assumed the QRF (Quick Reaction Force). Many UN forces began to withdraw (as many predicted) before the Americans pulled out. On March 25<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. military forces withdrew to ships offshore, leaving 1,000 civilian contractors and military advisors to stay on with the UN.<sup>123</sup> Only fifty-eight Marines remained behind to protect the tiny U.S. liaison presence remaining at the embassy.

After the U.S. forces withdrew, the NGOs soon followed once their security situation once again deteriorated. At the end of May, the UN Security Council expressed its concern over the deteriorating situation and extended the UNOSOM II mandate until September 30, and called for another review in July. As clan fighting and large scale banditry re-escalated that summer, Ghali reported in July that UNOSOM II could no longer carry out its mission. As the contingents continued to pull out without replacements and the political reconciliation process was going

nowhere fast, the situation grew more precarious. Attacks on peacekeepers intensified in August, and then as the UN set March 31, 1995 as its target date for complete withdrawal. U.S. pulled out the last remaining embassy staffers in mid-September and shut down all its civil assistance programs.<sup>124</sup> In early March, U.S. Marines went into Somalia one last time to secure equipment and cover the UN's withdrawal under Operation United Shield. Executing a collapsing perimeter defense, the Americans pulled out of Mogadishu's airport and then the harbor area. Marine Lt. General Anthony Zinni, the veteran of the UNITAF mission, was the last one off the beach the night of March 3rd leaving the scene to the Somalis.<sup>125</sup> Once again, the United States had turned off the lights, closed the door and gone home. The fiasco of forced humanitarian intervention in Somalia was finally over, leaving Somalia to its own devices.

To this date, Somalia is still in a state of violence and disarray without a formalized state structure and run by the feuding clan structures. Ironically though, two years after the UN forces departed, the warlords entered into an uneasy semi-truce. As Aideed had prophetically predicted in 1992, the UN was kicked out and Somalis solved things their own way.



## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Congress, House, Madeline K. Albright, Statement before the Subcommittees on Europe and the Middle East and on International Security, International Organizations, and Human Rights of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, *Building a Collective Security System*, Washington, DC, May 3, 1993. U.S. Dept. of State *Dispatch* 4, no. 19 (10 May, 1993): 331.

<sup>2</sup> Congress, House, Madeline K. Albright, Statement before the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs of the House Appropriations Committee, Washington, DC, March 12, 1993.

<sup>3</sup> Halberstam, 254.

<sup>4</sup> Palmer, Elizabeth, "Putting a Price on Global Aid Underscores Tight Budgets," *Defense and Foreign Policy* 51, no. 4, (23 January, 1993)

<sup>5</sup> Dempsey and Fontaine, 31-32.

<sup>6</sup> Under UNITAF disarmament procedures were often inconsistent in different command areas. After a few days of the Marines landing, Somali gunmen reappeared on the street confident that UN troops would not interfere with them as long as they avoided checkpoints and threatened only other Somalis. When a local warlord's power was diminished by the presence UN forces, it created a power vacuum in which armed clansmen began freelancing and violence in the streets increased. Looters were increasingly harder to control, as warning shots soon failed to have any effect, as "after awhile, they knew we weren't going to shoot them, and they just laughed at us." For more on complications restoring order in Somalia under UNITAF, see LTC T.A. Richards, "Marines in Somalia: 1992," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 119, no. 5 (December 1994):133-136 and SSG Elroy Garcia "Where Anarchy Rules," *Soldier* 48, no. 3 (March 1993): 13-20.

<sup>7</sup> During UNITAF, most of the bandits outside Mogadishu robbing food supplies never engaged U.S. forces directly and usually ran away, hid their weapons and blended into the population whenever confronted. The frustrating rules of engagement prevented U.S. forces from initiating ambushes and could only engage bandits while in the act of committing crimes. Most bandits operated in groups of less than ten men and had absolutely no organization or chain of command making it impossible to break their infrastructure as is conducted in normal counterinsurgency operations. Each bandit group had its own identity, groups did not work with other bandit groups, and bandits would rob each other if given the chance. Due to their elusive nature, few bandits were ever cornered and caught under the restrictive rules of engagement. For more on U.S. operations against bandits in Somalia, see MAJ Martin N. Stanton, "Lessons Learned From Counter-Bandit Operations," *Marine Corps Gazette* 78, no. 2 (February 1994): 30-32.

<sup>8</sup> Walter Clarke and Jeffery Herbst, "Somalia and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention," in *Learning From Somalia*, 41.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in Daniel Williams, "U.S. Troops to Remain in Somalia; Force Assisting UN in 'Recreating' Nation," *Washington Post*, 11 August, 1993, A-1.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> On Feb. 17, 1993 Deputy Assistant Secretary Robert Houdek reported the plan for UNOSOM II to the Subcommittee on Africa of the House Foreign Affairs Committee in which he specifies that political reconciliation and creating a professional police force are essential and that the administration endorses Ghali's peace enforcement plans. The entire report operations in Somalia, although no exit strategy is mentioned. He reports that "we anticipate a smooth transition from UNITAF to UNOSOM II" and "we are confident that the UN will field a force that will accomplish its mission" and he also stated that "I can assure you that the vast majority of the UNOSOM II forces will not be American". As previously discussed, the size force needed to conduct peace enforcement throughout the whole of the country would have to be at least twenty times that of the forces slated to UNITAF (which was a much larger force than UNOSOM II), and the UN was having tremendous difficulties raising and supplying quality troops for the transition from UNITAF to UNOSOM II. Although many of the troops would indeed not be American, many more American troops were forced to stay or rotate into Somalia than was planned, and many of the international contingents were wholly reliant on U.S. training, logistical, and fire support. Since this report is so out of line with the realities of the transition, Houdak's statements seem to be either a case of the administration believing its own rhetoric or simply telling Congress what they thought they wanted to hear. U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 4, no. 8, (22 February, 1993): 99.

<sup>12</sup> Lewis and Mayall, 116.

<sup>13</sup> James Bone, "Pressure Grows for U.S. to Stop Calling Shots in Somalia," *Times* (London), 14 July, 1993.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted in Mark Fineman, "Now It's Their Turn; When the UN Takes Control of Somalia Today it Begins a \$1.5 Billion Experiment," *Los Angeles Times*, 4 May, 1993, WR-1.

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<sup>15</sup> Richburg, "UN Takes Command in Somalia," *Washington Post*, 5 May 1993, A23.

<sup>16</sup> Stevenson, 95.

<sup>17</sup> Many authors such as Noam Chomsky have argued that large scale U.S. involvement in UN missions since Korea demonstrated that the U.S. only gets involved in peacekeeping missions that serve its own ends. Also that the American military makes no pretense in asserting almost complete operational control in these situations; thus negating the lofty purposes of mutual cooperation.

<sup>18</sup> Quoted in James Bone, "Pressure Grows for U.S. to Stop Calling Shots In Somalia," and Keith Richburg, "UN Takes Command of troops in Somalia."

<sup>19</sup> Dempsey and Fontaine, 32.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Richburg, "UN Takes Command of Troops In Somalia."

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Donatella Lorch, "As UN Prepares for Somalia Command, Rebuilding is Most Urgent Task," *New York Times*, 2 May, 1993, A16.

<sup>23</sup> Dempsey and Fontaine, 34.

<sup>24</sup> Steven Holmes, "The Man Who Makes Somalia Worse," *New York Times*, 15 August, 1993, WR4.

<sup>25</sup> Keith Richburg, "It Makes A Warlord Smile," *Washington Post*, 24 June, 1993, A32.

<sup>26</sup> Dempsey and Fontaine, 34.

<sup>27</sup> Stevenson, 95.

<sup>28</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, 115-116.

<sup>29</sup> A "technical" was a Somali vehicle, usually a small truck, shabbily converted by thugs into a mobile weapons platform which was usually mounted with machine guns, anti-aircraft guns, or recoilless rifles. The term derives from the practices of NGOs unofficially hiring their crews as mercenaries to protect their convoys before UNITAF arrived. NGOs could not officially use funds to pay for armed guards, so they were listed on the payrolls as "technical workers".

<sup>30</sup> Stevenson, 95.

<sup>31</sup> Quoted in Gerard Prunier, "Somalia: Civil War, Intervention, and Withdrawal 1990-1995," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Writenet Issue paper (July 1995), available at <http://www.unhcr.ch/refworld/country/writenet/wrisom.htm>

<sup>32</sup> Stevenson, 96.

<sup>33</sup> Halberstam, 254-255.

<sup>34</sup> Many in the State Department felt that Lake had been promoted far above his abilities and experience level, and completely owed his position to his liberal politics and long-term friendship with Clinton. Lake had never held a higher posting in State or any other foreign policy agency, was recognized as a theorist and an academic, and had never logged any time in a supervisory role. His announced plans to deeply engage U.S. foreign policy with aggressive multilateralism and to restructure access to the President did not win him many friends at Foggy Bottom or the Pentagon. See Halberstam, *War In A Time of Peace* and Dick Morris, *Behind the Oval Office: Winning the Presidency in the 1990s* (New York: Random House, 1999) and George Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human: A Political Education*, (Boston: Little and Brown, 1999).

<sup>35</sup> Halberstam, 255.

<sup>36</sup> For Howe's take on the lessons of Somalia, see Jonathan T. Howe, "The United States and the United Nations in Somalia: The Limits of Involvement," *Washington Quarterly* 18, no. 3 (Summer 1995): 49-62.

<sup>37</sup> Stevenson, 96.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 35.

<sup>39</sup> Dempsey and Fontaine, 35.

<sup>40</sup> Keith Richburg, "U.S. Planes Hit Mogadishu Again," *Washington Post*, 13 June, 1993, A1 and Keith Richburg, "U.S. Planes Launch UN Attack on Somali Warlord," *Washington Post*, 12 June, 1993, A1.

<sup>41</sup> Keith Richburg, "UN Unit Kills 14 Somali Civilians."

<sup>42</sup> Prominent Democrats in the House, however, continued to defend the administrations' policy in Somalia and endorsed the attacks on Aideed. John Murtha, House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman blamed the disaster wholly on poorly trained and disciplined foreign troops. House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Lee H. Hamilton echoed the administrations' line that Aideed was the main impediment to securing a peaceful environment. Republicans like Henry Hyde, on the other hand, cited the episode as proof that outside military intervention could not significantly improve the country's chaotic situation. See Pat Towell, "Risks of Peacekeeping Shown In Battle With Warlord," *Congressional Quarterly* 51, no. 25 (19 June, 1993): 1590.

<sup>43</sup> Quoted in Richburg, "UN Unit Kills 14 Somali Civilians."

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- <sup>44</sup> Keith Richburg, "UN Troops Battle Somalis," *Washington Post*, 18 June, 1993, A1.
- <sup>45</sup> A Department of Defense spokesman said the following day that it was "too early to say" if the attacks had a major impact on Aideed's military capability, but stated, "this has been a real psychological as well as military defeat for Aideed, and I think it's going to be real interesting to see what he's able to do in any kind of military sense." SFC Elroy Garcia, "Violence in Somalia," *Soldiers* 48 no. (8 August, 1993): 6-7.
- <sup>46</sup> Quoted in Richburg, "UN Troops Battle Somalis."
- <sup>47</sup> Garcia, 7.
- <sup>48</sup> Quoted in Robin Wright, "Raids Redefine Rules for UN Peacekeeping," *Los Angeles Times*, 13 June, 1993, A1.
- <sup>49</sup> John R. Murphy, "Memories of Somalia," *Marine Corps Gazette* 82, no. 4 (April 1998): 20-25.
- <sup>50</sup> Tom Post and John Barry, "Cry Uncle!" *Newsweek* 121, no. 25 (21 June, 1993), 20.
- <sup>51</sup> Matthews, William, "Somalia Like War Zone As U.S. Downplays Attacks," *Air Force Times* 53, no. 47 (28 June, 1993): 28.
- <sup>52</sup> Quoted in Keith Richburg, "UN Force Reasserts Clout In Somalia," *Washington Post*, 7 July, 1993, A27.
- <sup>53</sup> One soldier's account tells of several Somali children actually sitting on a prone sniper to utterly shield him as he engaged the U.S. squad. See Garcia, "Violence in Somalia."
- <sup>54</sup> For more on the soldier's daily experiences in Mogadishu, see Martin Stanton, *Somalia On \$5 A Day: A Soldier's Story* (Navoto, CA: Presidio Press, Inc., 2001).
- <sup>55</sup> Quoted in Keith Richburg, "Somali Warlord's Tactics Confound UN," *Washington Post*, 16 June, 1993, A1.
- <sup>56</sup> For more on Aideed's campaign plan see MAJ Norman Cooling, "Operation Restore Hope in Somalia: A Tactical Action Turned Strategic Defeat," *Marine Corps Gazette* 85, no. 9 (September 2001): 92-106.
- <sup>57</sup> Keith Richburg, "Somali Mob Kills Three Journalists," *Washington Post*, 13 July 1993, A1.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>60</sup> Dempsey and Fontaine, 38.
- <sup>61</sup> Richburg, "Somali Mob Kills Three Journalists."
- <sup>62</sup> Quoted in Keith Richburg, "It Makes A Warlord Smile," *Washington Post*, 24 June, 1993, A32.
- <sup>63</sup> Jennifer Parmalee, "Waltzing With the Warlords: Will the Test Make Martyrs of the Thugs in Somalia?" *Washington Post*, 20 July, 1993, C1.
- <sup>64</sup> Dempsey and Fontaine, 36-7.
- <sup>65</sup> Dempsey and Fontaine, 49.
- <sup>66</sup> Quoted in Richburg, "UN Helicopter Assault in Somalia Targeted Aideed's Top Commanders," *Washington Post*, 16 July, 1993, A-1.
- <sup>67</sup> Dempsey and Fontaine, 49.
- <sup>68</sup> Congress, House, Madeline K. Albright, "Myths of Peacekeeping," Statement Before the Subcommittee on International Security, International Organizations, and Human Rights of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, D.C., 24 June, 1993. U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 4, no. 26 (24 June, 1993): 464.
- <sup>69</sup> Peter Tarnoff, "U.S. Policy On Somalia," Statement Before The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., 29 July, 1993. U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 4, no. 32, (9 August, 1993): 23-24.
- <sup>70</sup> Quoted in Keith Richburg, "Criticism Mounts Over Somali Raid; 'Pack Up and Go Home' U.S. Troops Urged," *Washington Post*, 15 July, 1993, A21.
- <sup>71</sup> For more on the White House's inattention to events, see Halberstam.
- <sup>72</sup> Halberstam, 259.
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid, 260.
- <sup>74</sup> The Somalis fully recognized the lack of unity of command and effort among the UNOSOM II forces and sought to exploit it. One of Aideed's militia commanders in Mogadishu stated in an interview, "What we did was to concentrate our attacks on the Americans, and the forces who were taking their orders directly from the Americans like the Pakistanis. And we had some understanding with the other forces not to attack us and we would not attack them." Cooling, 101.
- <sup>75</sup> Murphy, 23.
- <sup>76</sup> Keith Richburg, "4 U.S. Soldiers Killed in Somalia," *Washington Post*, 9 August, 1993, A1.
- <sup>77</sup> Dempsey, 39.
- <sup>78</sup> John Lancaster, "U.S. Raid Was Based On Tip: Troops Miss Warlord Detain UN Workers," *Washington Post*, 31 August, 1993, A1.
- <sup>79</sup> Michael Gordon and John Cushman Jr., "After Supporting Hunt for Aideed, U.S. is Blaming UN for Losses," *New York Times*, 18 October, 1993, A1.

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<sup>80</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, 126.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, 260-261.

<sup>82</sup> For more on the history of Task Force Ranger and the Battle of Mogadishu Oct 3-4 see Mark Bowden, *Blackhawk Down: A Story of Modern War* (New York: Penguin Press, 2000).

<sup>83</sup> Delta Force had originally schemed a smaller raiding force of fifty commandos to get Aideed called "Operation Caustic Brimstone", but as summer passed and Aideed's SNA became more bold in its attacks, the plan was revamped with a much larger force under "Operation Gothic Serpent" which attached Task Force 160 (the Army's special operations aviation unit) to Delta Force.

<sup>84</sup> They were very few CIA operatives in Somalia, only about twenty in Mogadishu. Few of the agents' contacts provided useful target information, and most would not provide intelligence after dark (when Delta preferred to conduct operations) because they were too afraid to go into the streets at night. The chief agent running the operation shot himself in a game of Russian roulette only days after Garrison arrived. During initial raids, Tier One targets were also difficult for commandos to distinguish from other Somalis—at one point Delta soldiers ironically became convinced Aideed was working in the airfield mess hall where they were based. Aideed actually had not been spotted since July 28.

<sup>85</sup> The location was in the heart of Aideed's territory, with limited access roads, and very defensible. Montgomery warily told Garrison when briefed on the operation, "That's Indian country. That's a bad place." Montgomery quote from Rick Atkinson, "The Raid That Went Wrong," *The Washington Post*, 30 January, 1994, A-1, A-26.

<sup>86</sup> Dempsey and Fontaine, 63.

<sup>87</sup> For the overall picture of the Oct 3-4 battle see Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down* and Matthew Eversmann, *Battles of Mogadishu: First Hand Accounts From the Men of Task Force Ranger*. For the accounts of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain's Quick Reaction Force sent to fight its way to the crash sites, see Charles P. Ferry, "Mogadishu, October 1993: Personal Account of a Rifle Company XO," *Infantry* 84, no. 5 (September/October 1994): 22-31 and CPT Mark A.B. Hollis, "Platoon Under Fire: Mogadishu, October 1993," *Infantry* 88, no. 1, (January/April 1998): 27-34.

<sup>88</sup> COL. Larry Casper described the Somali militia tactics: "The Somali fighters are tenacious... but they don't close with you and destroy the enemy like we would. They just sit back and fire at you. And they don't stop." SFC Elroy Garcia, "We Did It Right That Night," *Soldiers* 49, no. 2 (February 1994): 17-20.

<sup>89</sup> Halberstam, 262.

<sup>90</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, 128.

<sup>91</sup> Halberstam, 262-263.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Dempsey and Fontaine, 40-41.

<sup>94</sup> "Two Killed In Somalia Are To Get Congressional Medal of Honor," *New York Times*, 15 May, 1994, A-5.

<sup>95</sup> Bowden, 419.

<sup>96</sup> Several parents of the slain Rangers were not placated by Clinton's evasions. Many expressed the belief that the President had failed to even pay attention to what was happening in Somalia and failed to give the troops there the proper support they needed. See Congress, Senate, "U.S. Military Operations In Somalia," U.S. Senate Hearings Before the Committee On Armed Services, U.S. Government Printing Office, 4, 7, 12, 13 October, 1993.

<sup>97</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, 128.

<sup>98</sup> Quoted in Clifford Krauss, "White House Tries To Calm Congress," *New York Times*, 6 October, 1993, A-3.

<sup>99</sup> Halberstam, 263-264.

<sup>100</sup> Doherty, 2751.

<sup>101</sup> Krauss, A-6.

<sup>102</sup> Halberstam, 265.

<sup>103</sup> James Bone, "Pressure Grows for U.S. to Stop Calling Shots in Somalia."

<sup>104</sup> President, Bill Clinton, Message To Congress, "Explaining Somalia To Congress" 13 October, 1993 in Alvin Z. Rubenstein ed., *The Clinton Policy Reader: Presidential Speeches and Commentary*, (Armouk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2000). Clinton and members of the administration would later even openly deny that they had ever promoted nation building as a policy in Somalia and elsewhere despite the overwhelming evidence that proves otherwise.

<sup>105</sup> Madeline K. Albright, "Yes, There Is a Reason To Be In Somalia," *New York Times*, 10 August, 1993.

<sup>106</sup> Halberstam, 264.

<sup>107</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, 128.

<sup>108</sup> Blaming the UN for the "get Aideed" policy was obviously in contradiction with the facts previously discussed.

<sup>109</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, 128-9.

<sup>110</sup> Congressman John Danforth said of Clinton's report, "This is not policy, its jibberish!" Pat Towell, "Behind Solid Vote On Somalia: A Hollow Victory For Clinton," *Congressional Quarterly Report* 51, no. 41: 2823.

<sup>111</sup> Democratic Senator Bill Bradley was equally confused by Clinton's double-talk in his address to Congress. "If our goal is to pressure and defeat guerrillas or to capture General Aideed, the new approach does not provide enough troops. If our goal is the establishment of a government and political stability, the new approach does not provide enough time". Carol Doherty, "Clinton Calms Rebellion on Hill by Retooling Somalia Mission," *Congressional Quarterly* 51, no. 40 (9 October, 1993): 2750-1.

<sup>112</sup> Clintons' arguments for a sustained military presence based on U.S. global credibility mirror those of Nixon and Johnson's in the later stages of the Vietnam War, which he had ironically ridiculed time and time again as an anti-war protester.

<sup>113</sup> How Clinton concluded that potential enemies would see a slightly delayed pullout in March instead of earlier as a sign of strength, as opposed to just throwing in the towel in Somalia, is open to speculation.

<sup>114</sup> For text of Clinton speech and report to Congress, see *Vital Speeches of the Day* 60, no. 2 (1 November, 1993): 34 and "Report on U.S. Military Operations in Somalia," U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 4, no. 43 (25 October, 1993): 747.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Doherty, 2750-1.

<sup>117</sup> The Oct. 15th compromise provision was part of annual defense appropriations bill (HR33116). The provision generally assured that all troops would be under direct US command structures, only defense rules of engagement would be undertaken, and that no funding would be forthcoming for Somalia operations after March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1994. In short, they would hunker down and do nothing outside of limited logistical support missions for the UN contingents until they left.

<sup>118</sup> Towell, "Behind Solid Vote On Somalia: A Hollow Victory For Clinton."

<sup>119</sup> Oakley's skill was invaluable, and he secured the release of the prisoners without making any concessions. Aideed took a huge political risk in giving away an important bargaining chip, as many Somalis wanted to exact as much revenge as possible after their heavy casualties and the damage caused in the Oct 3-4 battle. Aideed, however, didn't want to give the U.S. any excuses to target him again, and wanted to expedite a U.S. withdrawal and political negotiations in which he would have a prominent position. See Hirsch and Oakley, 130-132.

<sup>120</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, 134-5.

<sup>121</sup> The SNA was viewed by the UN and outside agencies pursuing negotiations as the main impediment to the entire process. By early 1994, the SNA was launching small attacks on its rivals and Aideed constantly tried to use a number of novel tactics to make the other factions believe the U.S. was now supporting him against UN wishes. See Hirsch and Oakley, 140-144.

<sup>122</sup> The addition of armor of the 64<sup>th</sup> Armor Regiment was a welcome sight for the lightly equipped elements of 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division in Mogadishu. Col Larry Casper, commander of the Army component of the joint task force reflected on the armor's impact, "I'm sure the Somalis have got to be impressed with it—it's big and heavy and makes funny noises and it's pretty good at stopping bullets. Armor has always brought to the battlefield a shock effect, I think it will here too." The SNA wisely never attacked the heavily fortified positions and avoided taking on the tanks, and thereby maintained the cease-fire. See SFC Elroy Garcia, "Hoping For the Best, Expecting the Worst: U.S. Forces in Somalia Wait for the March 31<sup>st</sup> Deadline," *Soldiers* 49, no. 2 (February 1994): 13-20.

<sup>123</sup> U.S. forces had faced little violence since October and pulled out easily. See John Cushman, "Out of Somalia: United Shield," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 121, no. 5 (May 1995): 129-130.

<sup>124</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, 146-148.

<sup>125</sup> Cushman, "Out of Somalia"

## CHAPTER 3

## Somalia: Hope Is Not a Plan: An Analysis of U.S. Policymaking in Somalia under Bush

*The grizzled sergeant instructing the new lieutenants in tactics at Fort Knox's Armor Course listened to the trainee's battle plan for the assault exercise and shook his head. He asked the unsure officer how he was planning on getting fire support when he needed it on his vulnerable left flank to avoid disaster in his attack. The young lieutenant shyly replied that he had only four tanks to cover the vast frontal area but he "was hoping maybe one of the other platoons would arrive in the right time where they were supposed to be". The sergeant stared at him coldly and educated him, "You need to take all the necessary steps to ensure the endstate of your mission. Hope is not a plan, son."*<sup>1</sup>

After reviewing the events of the humanitarian military intervention in Somalia, many questions immediately arise regarding policy formulation and execution, especially given the strange and confusing nature of events that unfolded during both the Bush and Clinton administrations. Why did the United States embark on a military operation of undetermined length and depth in Somalia? Was military policy primarily driven by television images and heart-wrenching press reports which soon became known as "the CNN factor"? Did the sheer volume and often sensationally driven style of modern news reporting commit the United States to rescuing failed states without serious consideration of the consequences of such emotional knee-jerk decision-making in foreign policy? How was this new forced humanitarian intervention policy crafted? Where did the policy go wrong? The answers to these perplexing questions revolve around the logical flaws in policymaking under both Bush who initiated a limited intervention, and under Clinton who experimented in nation-building. This chapter will analyze policymaking and execution of the U.S. military intervention in Somalia under the Bush administration; the factors that drove policy and why both administrations' approaches to saving Somalia failed.

U.S. policy failed in Somalia simply because the essence of the policy was not based on practical and obtainable national strategic concerns or goals. Instead, U.S. policy for Operation Restore Hope emerged as a vague, non-concrete, ad hoc policy under both Bush and Clinton. Policy was driven not by ends and means but by the factors of risk and obsession with image management rather than attempting to obtain concrete humanitarian results or matching the goals stated in the rhetoric used to justify the mission. Based on the unsteady foundations of post-Cold War multilateralism, collective security and Wilsonianism idealism, this muddled approach to intervention was further compounded by a flawed strategic and tactical execution of stated mission goals in political, economic, and military terms. Both administrations substituted short-term tasks and vaguely stated rhetoric shrouded in Wilsonianism for well-thought out and responsive strategy and planning. Failure was a high probability, if not inevitable, from the outset especially once the policy shifted to nation-building without public support behind it. The United States attempted to intervene in the chaos of Somalia with the idea that the venture could be done “on the cheap” and relatively risk free, and it was this risk-free/risk aversion mindset that would ensure peace enforcement policy in Somalia would surely fail against heavy and numerous obstacles including determined adversaries that could easily exploit such obvious weaknesses. The false notion that humanitarian intervention would present few real risks was soon made apparent, and the empty rhetoric and reactionary responses to images could not support the lack of solid policy formulation that would have been required to save Somalia from itself.

George Bush’s decision to send a military task force to Somalia in December 1992 to support the United Nations’ efforts to protect NGO food distribution and to inject new life into the shattered and fruitless attempts at creating a political solution between warring Somali factions

deserves serious scrutiny. As discussed in the first chapter, Bush explained to the public that he felt moved by the images of starving women and children and the reports of widespread devastation and chaos in Somalia and the U.N.'s inability to relieve the situation through the applied conventional means of humanitarian aid distribution. With little discussion with members of Congress, and against resistance by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the C.I.A., Bush committed a sizeable U.S. military task force to the U.N. efforts in Somalia virtually overnight. Although the intervention was supposed to be a limited humanitarian operation and was to be completed before Bush left office, it quickly became apparent that this was not going to be the case because the stated humanitarian, diplomatic, and military goals of mission could not be accomplished in such a short time frame. So why did Bush decide to ignore these factors and go into Somalia at all? What made Bush decide to invest hundreds of millions of dollars and put Americans at risk to salvage a floundering U.N attempt to save a country that had devolved into state of chaos and starvation?

The essential fault in Bush's decision to commit the U.S. to a military intervention in Somalia was that such a commitment was not grounded in anything concrete in terms of vital U.S. strategic interests. Instead the decision to intervene was an emotional reaction to a complex, but not too uncommon, post-Cold War situation of ongoing civil war and economic collapse. This emotional impulse was further fueled by Bush's desire to fulfill a yet still undefined position for the United States in "the New World Order." Bush wanted to maintain some sense of national credibility as the sole superpower after the demise of the Soviet Union and the communist threat by demonstrating American leadership toward producing a harmonious global community and collective action toward crises. Somalia may have seemed the ideal place to demonstrate this leadership. Bush's own personal ambitions to redeem himself after his failing bid for re-election



may also have been a factor in his decision-making, as another foreign policy success as a lame duck president could prove to be his final hurrah. Sustaining these impulses were the flawed assumptions by Bush and others that the United States was morally obligated somehow to immediately undertake the role of globocop and “do *something*/do *anything*” to relieve the situation beyond the current significant contributions of material aid and logistical support and revitalize the anemic U.N. operations centered in the pandemonium of Mogadishu.

The emotional impulses to take the lead in saving the starving masses coupled with the flawed assumptions that the U.S. was obligated somehow to take immediate action without any real debate or serious planning was not only purely reactionary and fairly rash crafting of foreign policy and use of the military; but this course of action was further then mistakenly anchored to the false notions that such an undertaking would be fairly low-risk and limited in size and scope. The idea that Somalia not only *should* be undertaken, but *could* easily be undertaken, was based on a vague and poorly defined assessment that such a large operation was without any real political or military risk. Operation Restore Hope only became a reality once General Colin Powell proclaimed the proposed humanitarian intervention mission possessed little inherent military risk and was thereby “doable”. The essential ingredients in the decision to intervene and commit a military force to the hostile areas of Somalia for an undetermined period of time gravitated on image (starving children), rhetoric (America must take its rightful place in the new world order) and risk (anything that can done easily with few casualties is worth doing).

Somalia was supposed to be a “feel good” exercise with very little risk involved, an attempt to instill two administrations with a sense of immediate purpose accompanied by international accolades in the messy post-Cold War period. Although the purposes for the intervention seemed clearly defined by Bush and Clinton, they in fact were not very clear once one recognizes the

inescapable fact that Somalia cannot be restored or rescued from itself without an indefinite life-support system from those willing to throw billions to dollars at the problem annually without significant long-term results. Worse yet, Somalia would then set a precedent for any state suffering under poverty or anarchy and the ongoing list of “something must be done” would grow *ad nauseam*. Intervening in Somalia would, as the events would unveil, change virtually nothing except to give rise to unrealistic expectations for Somalis and others like them that the international community was willing to overcome the high cost of all the political, economic, cultural, and military obstacles in order to rebuild fractured states and end civil wars. The United States government had no such will or desire (even under Clinton’s Wilsonianism) to undertake such a serious and draining commitment required to successfully complete such a monumental and costly task. Bush, Clinton, nor Congress had ever put such a priority on Somalia, despite the strained sense of urgency and flood of humanitarian rhetoric shrouding intervention as a natural function of the world’s sole superpower. It seems that either the policymakers were wholly ignorant to the realities of what it would take to “save” Somalia, or they chose to ignore those facts and pursue a large-scale intervention regardless of the situation they were getting themselves into. Or perhaps another possibility exists, in which both cases are true.

Both Clinton and Bush were given pessimistic assessments regarding intervention or expanding a relief operation into a nation-building project. Bush decided on a limited short-term relief operation (without providing an exit strategy) and Clinton decided to conduct an open-ended experiment in nation-building (without public or Congressional support). If saving Somalia (the goal) was such a remote possibility, why undertake such a fool’s errand? If knowing that massive U.S. commitment of men, material, and money required to deal with the key issues in Somalia would not be forthcoming, why take on the task? Bush and Clinton both

made continuous statements recognizing that the American public (and Congress holding the purse strings) was not going to tolerate a long or costly investment in Somalia, and both made numerous strong statements promising a timely exit. Both commanders-in-chief knew that the commitment necessary to fix the ills in Somalia was never strong or deep, and that the clock was ticking. They might have hoped intervening would make a difference, but were not ignorant of the fact that what was being done in Somalia was just a drop in the bucket, the UN had no chance of salvaging anything without an American-led coalition of the willing, and the country would quickly revert back into its chaotic and dysfunctional state without a strong military presence and ample economic aid. Ignorance, I argue, was not the reason why Bush and Clinton decided embrace the bottomless pit of Operation Restore Hope; the answer lies elsewhere. This chapter will analyze the formulation and execution of strategy, the flawed essence of both the UNITAF and UNOSOM operations, and the elements of rhetoric, political posturing, and risk aversion that lie at the core of U.S. policymaking in Operation Restore Hope.

As shown in the events described in the previous chapter, many mistakes were made and unintended consequences resulted in the humanitarian mission in Somalia. The main problem with U.S. policy in Operation Restore Hope and why it failed, however, lies within the *formulation* of the policy itself under both the Bush and Clinton administrations more than the numerous mistakes performed carrying out these policies. Although the poor execution of the policy contributed greatly to the failure in Somalia (discussed later) it was the poor planning and reasoning behind the policy itself that is the root cause of the fiasco. The foundations of the policy were incredibly weak and lacking in deep public support, and therefore were unable to support the far-reaching goals and withstand the numerous (inevitable) setbacks, wrong turns, and fumbles carried out during its execution. This policy formulation foundation was so weak,

that the shaky nation-building exercise later attached on top of the vaguely defined humanitarian intervention operation had absolutely no possibility of success and led to a U.S. foreign policy disaster.

The formulation of the policy obviously begins with the Bush administration and the decision by Bush himself to launch a U.S.-led UN military intervention into the chaos of Somalia. The simple explanation for Bush's decision to intervene is that Bush was moved emotionally by the plight of starving children and UN cries for help and was prompted to act, but this does not fully explain all the factors prompting Bush to commit a sizeable military force for a humanitarian intervention in a country with almost no strategic value. Nonetheless, Bush was heavily pressured by emotional arguments to take action from various different quarters, and the administration was profoundly pushed by the CNN effect and imagery, and became entangled in its own web of rhetoric of taking on leadership in the so-called New World Order.

Given the foreign policy goals, philosophies, and attitudes of Bush and his advisors discussed previously, the decisions involving intervention in Somalia fall loosely into the context of the opaque American foreign policy of maintaining stability and promoting global democracy under American leadership in the post-Cold War. As the crises in Iraq, Somalia and the former Yugoslavia unfolded, however, it quickly became apparent that Bush's concept for American policy was undefined, murky, and based more on vague Wilsonian rhetoric than clearly measurable goals directly tied to national interests. "Prudence and drift" were finding their way into the decision making process to deal with the humanitarian disaster in Somalia. The rationale for intervention was based on reacting and trying to diffuse political pressure more than attempting to accomplish goals anchored in U.S. national interests. A well-developed policy

process to match ends to means with a clear endstate for delivering relief and rehabilitating the nation without a government or a functioning economy was not developed.

One of the problems with the policy to intervene in Somalia from a *realpolitik* standpoint was that it did not fit into any regional context of U.S. foreign policy. Some critics argue that Bush had no real post-Cold War strategy, especially in the Middle East, and that Bush lacked a vision of America's role in the region.<sup>2</sup> With the Soviet threat no longer imposing on American interests there and Iraq soundly beaten in the 1991 Gulf War, "there seemed no one left to take us on"<sup>3</sup> in the Persian Gulf and East Africa. Bush seemed content to ride out the successful status quo policies of his predecessor, Ronald Reagan, but failed to see how changes in the post-Cold War would affect the ongoing struggle to influence peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors and the replacement of old communist backed authoritarian regimes with new ones.<sup>4</sup> If the Soviet Union no longer existed, then what were the dangers? Did they principally come from Iran or Islamic fundamentalism? Did Israel see the threat to its security the same way the United States did? Could Lebanon be restored to a state of peace? Had the Gulf War transformed the situation in the Middle East? How did these murky situations explain the curious reference the President made to not being able to guarantee an "era of perpetual peace" but only being concerned with "an enduring peace?" What did that ambiguous phrase *mean*?<sup>5</sup> The grand Gulf War coalition did not promote democracy and did not become a resource for the New World Order to dispose despotic regimes or even to help the Kurds with humanitarian assistance or military protection in northern Iraq.<sup>6</sup> The post-Cold War situation was anything but peaceful or orderly in the Middle East even after Saddam Hussein had been subdued, and there seemed to be no clear vision of American goals in the region beyond vague rhetoric promoting peace and stability provided by a newly regenerated gravitation towards collective security led by the

United States. Once called upon to deal with threats to the international community, this potential collective security alliance to punish unnamed future aggressors supported by the United Nations would be backed by superior American military forces. Theoretically, these American forces with their unmatched lethal technology would be respected and feared after having quickly decimated their Iraqi opponents in a matter of weeks while suffering amazingly few casualties. The mere threat of their deployment against aggressors was a tool in itself for American foreign policy in maintaining peace and stability in the Middle East.

The collective security philosophy looked viable on paper, but its oversimplifications of nations' willingness to punish abstract aggressors on the spot without regard to the risks and costs involved (which each potential ally would weigh quite differently) were apparent, even in the case of the United States. Bush himself had already shown in the Gulf War that he had serious limits as to what he was willing to commit to militarily and politically to promote democracy and topple totalitarian regimes that threatened the peace; he was willing to take few risks once military operations were under way. The coalition had successfully ejected the Iraqis from Kuwait, but did nothing to stop the tyrant Saddam Hussein from oppressing his own people and continuing to remain a threat to the region, albeit a reduced one militarily.

That the President had stopped the war when he did, that he silenced General Schwarzkopf when the desert hero suggested that the cease-fire had been premature, that he ought to been allowed to go to Baghdad and take Saddam prisoner, was part and parcel of a larger strategic error that no Republican dared acknowledge and that no Democrat knew how to exploit. The President had imagined that to enter Baghdad was to make the mistake the Israelis made in entering West Beirut: it would lead to wholly unacceptable numbers of American casualties. Given that prospect, and the understandable concern to give no further offense to the Soviet Union—to keep to the strict letter of the United Nations Security Council resolutions—it made sense for the American President to declare a cease fire when he did. What it would mean for the people of Iraq, for the Shiite minority, what it would mean for the Kurds, the most threatened ethnic group in that unhappy land, scarcely concerned him.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the rhetoric espousing promoting human rights and punishing aggressors, it was clear in the wake of post-war Iraq and the violent civil conflicts in Sudan and Lebanon, that the level of commitment to ensure peace and stability and promote democracy and human rights in the Middle East and East Africa was not very significant. Real action would only be made in anomalous conventional interstate situations, such as responding to the openly brutal occupation of an allied nation like Kuwait that had significant strategic and economic value. Future conflicts would also more likely to be intrastate civil fractures involving nationalistic or tribal warfare and violations of human rights rather than aggression via clear cut territorial invasions. Few opportunities in the future also would present such easy targets as a politically clumsy tyrant like Saddam Hussein, who would misread the situation and stupidly allow his enemies to marshal their forces and play to their military and technological strengths leading to the aggressor's quick demise. Such military fortune with quick decisive victory and few casualties is rarely found in the modern history of conflict and is likely not to be seen again in confronting powerful aggressors. Likely enemies in the Middle East will be able to inflict serious casualties on an intervening American or coalition force designed to topple regimes and impose cultural and political changes on unwilling societies if they are wise enough not to engage U.S. forces symmetrically. If anything, the conventional Gulf War had taught the Americans almost all the wrong lessons for the immediate post-Cold War period about the use of force, the calculation of risk and the casualty factor in war.<sup>8</sup> Intervention in the Middle East would likely never be as near idyllic as the campaign against Iraq turned out to be, and the use of overwhelming force would not be as readily available as it was in 1991 against Iraq.<sup>9</sup> Nor would many situations lend themselves to short term solutions using limited force as had been the case in Panama in 1989. Stephen Graubard observed, "Bush, however, could not understand (even after himself enduring

the 1985 Beirut fiasco in NSC meetings as Vice President) that American foreign policy could not be made on the cheap; a mindset which would never involve sacrifice or loss of American lives could never succeed in the Middle East.”<sup>10</sup>

It was the success of the Gulf War that enamored Bush and his advisors with collective action and the possibilities of new roles for the UN in the post-Cold War, and the quick acceptance of supporting UN collective security, peacekeeping, and humanitarian missions afterward seemed a readily acceptable vehicle for U.S. foreign policy that would garner bipartisan support within the bureaucracy, Congress and with the public. Graubard writes:

The homage the president paid to the United Nations and human rights seemed strange coming out of the mouth of a President who had done so little to concern himself with either over the past few years; still conversions were always possible, and the Democrats could not fail to be pleased to imagine one in the making. Yet both Republicans and Democrats waited in vain for the president to be specific.<sup>11</sup>

In essence, by embracing a shared role of maintaining world order, promoting democracy, and protecting human rights in a concerted effort with the United Nations and its member states, Bush was placing American foreign policy on a middle course between playing globocop and retreating to isolationism, but laid out no specific plan for achieving this position as the world's sole superpower. The means were described in terms of cooperation and collective action through American leadership, but the ends were still loosely described in Wilsonian rhetoric that neither greatly appealed to nor offended anyone. Patrick Glynn observed:

Bush chooses the middle ground between conservative isolationism that eschews foreign entanglements unless vital interests are at stake and a vocal liberal humanitarianism reluctant to set limits on the U.S. capacity to intervene; the struggle to save lives and maintain world order while avoiding endless entanglements around the globe.<sup>12</sup>

Beyond the grand coalition scenarios such as had been exercised in the Gulf against Saddam Hussein, Bush, however, was more reluctant to commit the United States to the expanding role



the UN had assigned itself in peacekeeping and the liberal experiment in engaging in peace enforcement and rebuilding collapsed states. The Bush administration supported traditional UN efforts to resolve the numerous ethnic and cultural conflicts erupting globally, but paid little more than lip service to movement to empower the UN to take on these new ambitious tasks. In this study of peacekeeping in the 1990s, Frederick Fleitz writes:

While the first Bush administration tasked Boutros-Ghali with crafting *An Agenda for Peace*, the document had little effect on its foreign policy or view of the UN. Bush officials had little real interest in UN missions much more ambitious than traditional peacekeeping efforts, although they were amenable to permitting U.S. troops to serve as traditional peacekeepers in limited circumstances.<sup>13</sup>

Bush also rejected the radical liberal idea of creating a standing UN force to police the world:

During Security Council debates in April 1992, the Bush administration opposed any initiatives to create an armed UN security force, fearing that new peacekeeping missions would further bloat an already inefficient bureaucracy and inevitably necessitate greater U.S. involvement.<sup>14</sup>

The Bush administration had supported the idea of collective action to maintaining stability and ending the rash of new nationalistic conflicts violently emerging in the early 1990s, but was not willing to create a UN army to do it, nor openly participate militarily in the large UN efforts in peacemaking in chaotic places like Cambodia and Zimbabwe.

Bush supported traditional peacekeeping roles, and limited participation for American troops and soldiers from other Security Council members. In most respects, however, UN peacekeeping missions deployed during the Bush administration honored traditional peacekeeping prerequisites, including a stable cease-fire, cooperation of the warring parties, and neutrality of peacekeepers... and only partially endorsed a conflict resolution role in peacekeeping.<sup>15</sup>

The idea, however, of putting limited U.S. troops into a traditional peacekeeping role also did not getting very far either. Michael MacKinnon states, “Bush saw an opportunity for the United States to take the lead in post-Cold War peacekeeping, but the U.S. operating under the Weinberger-Powell Doctrine, was not ready to take on the passive role of peacekeeping.”<sup>16</sup> In

August 1992, the Bush administration considered proposals to expand U.S. military support to the United Nations, including one to designate American soldiers for UN peacekeeping duty for the first time. Warren Strobel wrote in *The Washington Times*, “The initiatives were designed to boost American credibility within the world organization as it became more important to U.S. policy. The move was vigorously opposed by the Pentagon, which saw such operations as a diversion from its main mission to defend the country. Some State Dept. officials were also reportedly unenthusiastic.”<sup>17</sup> The notion of putting American troops in blue helmets appealed to few in Congress or the public as the news from Yugoslavia, Somalia, and Cambodia was increasingly negative. Soon after the press conference, many pundits “expected Bush to shy away from such a dramatic foreign policy step with a closely contested election six weeks away, and campaign aides reportedly urged Bush to focus on speeches with domestic appeal.”<sup>18</sup> The issue to tab U.S. troops directly for peacekeeping duties was not raised again by the administration outside of providing technological and logistical support on “as-needed” basis. The bottom line was that the U.S. supported and promoted the idea of collective security and peacekeeping under the UN, but rejected the idea of creating a UN army, committing large American military contingents to peace enforcement missions, or ultimately in the end, even putting a small number of troops under UN command in traditional peacekeeping operations. When it came to peacekeeping and collective security, the only leading the U.S. was doing in the New World Order was cheerleading as it sat on the sidelines, and allowed the UN under Ghali to begin to flounder and engage in material and operational overreach.<sup>19</sup>

By June 1992, Yugoslavia and Somalia were erupting in flames, the famine had reached its height with over four million estimated deaths and massive refugee displacements, but Bush faced no real pressure to change his policies.<sup>20</sup> In early 1992, even the UN itself had no

organizational consensus for an intervention, as those officials in touch with the administration regarding humanitarian relief were only requesting funding, aid, logistical support and hashing out the possibilities of launching a traditional peacekeeping operation on a small scale and maintaining the reconciliation efforts to get the warlords to come to some sort of cease fire accord. Only Ghali himself was calling for a massive injection of peacekeepers into Somalia to begin a nation-building operation, complaining that the Western powers had a racist view of humanitarianism, and that Somalia was being ignored while the Balkans became the focus of international attention. Ghali campaigned for a robust and immediate UN intervention in Somalia to alleviate the chaos and suffering there, even over the objections of those Muhammad Sahnoun, the principle UN official in Somalia who saw no function for a large peacekeeping force.

The Europeans came together in July 1992 and asked for the Security Council's blessing in sending forces to Bosnia, but Ghali opposed it, saying this is a rich man's war, why don't you care about Somalia. This is pure demagoguery. I was in Somalia at the time. We did not need troops. The worst came when we began to send troops.<sup>21</sup>

Despite his success as a respected negotiator, Sahnoun was removed by Ghali who saw him as an obstacle to his intervention and nation-building agenda in Somalia. Ghali and like-minded liberal humanitarians in NGOs and the U.S. State Department began to push for more direct U.S. involvement in the General Assembly and more specifically with the Bush administration. In July 1992 Bush was feeling pressure to help alleviate the famine but only sought to aid the UN in its current efforts and avoid any type of intervention. According to Brent Scowcroft, Bush's National Security Advisor, "there was no discussion of using U.S. force for any purpose at this point."<sup>22</sup>

Jon Western convincingly argues that Bush's decision to ultimately intervene in Somalia was derived directly from a struggle between "selective engagers" and "liberal humanitarians" within the U.S. bureaucracy, especially within the State Department. The liberal humanitarians

subscribed to the Ghali vision that a massive intervention in Somalia was now a moral necessity and could be effectively accomplished through the UN and the support of the United States and other member states. Western writes:

U.S. intervention in Somalia resulted from political interplay of competing foreign policy elites, who held different normative beliefs about when and where the United States should intervene and the cumulative pressure on the administration to act in both Somalia and Bosnia. Selective engagers, who dominated the Bush administration and the senior military officer corps, believed that U.S. military intervention should be reserved for those isolated cases when U.S. strategic material interests were directly threatened. Throughout 1991 and most of 1992, they opposed any form of U.S. military involvement in either Somalia or Bosnia—as well as other humanitarian crises. The central challenge to the selective engagers came from liberal humanitarianists who filled the ranks of humanitarian and human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and who supported military intervention to provide relief to aggrieved populations and to stop or prevent atrocities perpetrated against civilians. Selective engagers could frame Somalia and Bosnia as “undoable” conflicts framed with ancient ethnic and tribal hatreds and that no effective action could be taken. Relying on this portrayal, the Bush administration was successful in tempering calls for greater U.S. involvement ...as the crises persisted into the late summer and fall of 1992, liberal humanitarians and the media began to amass their own independent information about the conflicts. In each case, they started to challenge the selective engagers framing of the crisis... they argued that U.S. led interventions against ruthless elites manipulating civilians would quickly mitigate the humanitarian catastrophes.<sup>23</sup>

In the summer of 1992, pressure to get involved in Somalia increased. The Smith Hempstone cable describing the hellish conditions roused liberals in State, and was quickly leaked to the press. Liberal humanitarianist Congress members “led by Senators Nancy Kassebaum (R) and Paul Simon (D) conducted fact finding missions in June and July and reported the horrific conditions,”<sup>24</sup> and urged their colleagues to support sending an armed UN mission to the country.<sup>25</sup>

In addition, several international NGOs mobilized grassroots campaigns to lobby for a stronger response for Somalia. At the staff level, the result was bureaucratic deadlock. Some humanitarianists sought to put forward military options for providing relief, but selective engagers remained opposed, calling Somalia a “bottomless pit.”<sup>26</sup>

Despite the wave of “do something” sentiment, the Bush administration stood fast. Liberal humanitarianists in State including Herman Cohen complained that they had every proposal rejected, the military leadership made lame excuses, and that “there was no interest from above, especially from the President who paid no attention to them”.<sup>27</sup> Selective engagers in Bush’s political camp feared that liberal humanitarianists and hard-liners were altering public conception of the conflict in Bosnia (from an ethnic free-for-all civil war to a systematic oppression by the Serbs) and making the administration look callous in the face of an egregious humanitarian crisis.<sup>28</sup>

Western argues that the turning point in Bush’s decision hinged on revelations about the Bosnian conflict that changed policy on Somalia:

The exposure of the tragedies and concentration camps in Bosnia in August 1992 crushed all hopes of sitting the conflict out, and dissent and fragmentation within the administration over Somalia and Bosnia grew significantly. Liberal humanitarians in State and Pentagon began to leak information to the press. Bush and his advisors knew Clinton would try to alter public attitudes toward Bosnia and try to launch some military action there. Unable to control the spin on each crisis, Bush and Powell concluded that if the United States was going to intervene in response to humanitarian crisis, it would be Somalia and not Bosnia.<sup>29</sup>

With the pressure on the U.S. to take action somewhere, as shown previously, Bush began the increased aid to Somalia during the late summer. Unfortunately, these semi-successful measures to increase relief did not satisfy the growing number of liberal humanitarians who urged more direct involvement and to address more “root causes” for the collapse of Somalia beyond simple relief. The White House was being bombarded by NGO requests to take more action and newspaper columnists’ criticism that Bush was not doing enough and calling for a “shoot-and-feed policy”.<sup>30</sup> Meanwhile, international pressure mounted on Bush to take the lead on Somalia. Despite increasing material aid by millions of dollars, revamping diplomatic efforts at

reconciliation with the warring Somalia factions, and spending millions getting supplies to East African supply points using conventional relief venues, “Ghali reiterated his criticism of Bush administration because it was focused on Bosnian conflict in Europe and ignoring the more acute plight of millions of black Africans.”<sup>31</sup>

Meanwhile, the NGOs were pressuring Congress while they appealed to the Bush administration. Not openly criticizing Bush or his policies, they, however, constantly made the case that delivering aid was not enough to end the crisis and that force was necessary in order to distribute aid and protect food shipments. These statements made by the directors of the NGO and their like-minded State Department agencies, stressed a sense of urgency and almost sense of dire desperation to “save millions”. These advocates claimed that attempting to secure a negotiated cease-fire found in traditional peacekeeping a relief operations was a luxury that could not be afforded in such a widespread humanitarian disaster (although the famine had already peaked months before). The NGOs and their liberal allies in State were advocating a big peacekeeping intervention as the cure for Somalia’s ills. In a statement by Kevin Henry, Regional Manager for East Africa, CARE International, on Sept 16, 1992, he not only requests more resources and cash, and expansion of the airlift, but urged Congress to get the 3,500 UN peacekeepers being currently debated for deployment on the ground *immediately* as negotiations continued. Henry suggested that if that did not work, rapidly send in *more*. Henry rejected the traditional peacekeeping rule of securing a ceasefire first, claiming that it wasn’t feasible to wait on negotiations to act.<sup>32</sup> This was echoed in several statements before Congress by Andrew Natsios, Assistant Administrator, Bureau of Food and Humanitarian Assistance, U.S. Agency for International Development. Natsios claimed “we have to move and move quickly”, the U.S. cannot wait on a political solution, and that problem is not unsolvable, “we just need to get relief

inland.”<sup>33</sup> Exactly what kind of force being advocated by the liberals was unclear, and what exact role these “peacekeepers” were to play in “getting food inland” was not specified. Holly J. Burkhalter’s statement as Director of Human Rights Watch, typifies the nonchalance of NGOs pleading for Congress to take the risks of sending in a military force now-- essentially leaping before looking into the chaos of Somalia without even defining on what scale or what the true role of that force may be, or how it even relates to the role of the UN. “What is required is a *protective* force, not a peacekeeping force or an intervening force”, she says, “a large force to impose peace is not necessary, I’m suggesting something much more modest.” Burkhalter casually argued that the international community can’t be deterred by a few peacekeepers getting killed, because casualties occur in peacekeeping.<sup>34</sup> What was important to Burkhalter wasn’t what the force would actually accomplish, or how it would relieve the situation in Somalia, but a protective force would signal as a *demonstration effect* a true UN commitment to Somalia.<sup>35</sup>

Burkhalter’s and Natsios’ statements highlight the “do something, *anything*” pressures being brought to bear on Congress (and Bush) to intervene directly into Somalia which was agitating the conservatives in the Bush administration who resisted going in without a ceasefire in place. Robert Houdek, Deputy Assistant Secretary Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. State Department, told Congress, “one of the most frustration things I’ve encountered are Somalis here in the U.S. asking us *to do something*, (emphasis mine) take matter into hand. It’s the Somalis that need to start talking and resolving their issues. A political solution will create a better relief operation.”<sup>36</sup>

In August a joint resolution had passed calling on the President to take more action and Bush responded by again increasing airlifts. By mid-September, however, in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the NGOs were having their way, as more vocal members like Ano Houghton were rejecting the notion that it was not possible to directly intervene with a ground

force, saying that it was time to take some risks, and that “there are always reasons to say no, maybe we should start saying yes.”<sup>37</sup>

With heavy news coverage and the imagery of famine and starvation flooding the American media, the selective engagers were losing the ability to convince the public that it wasn't prudent to intervene in Somalia even with a UN peacekeeping force without a ceasefire in place, or that relief operations that aided NGOs were the only feasible method available. The administration seemed to lose confidence that the public couldn't see the realities as they saw them and were already buying into the liberal view perpetuated by the media. So they started to look for ways to shift to view that something could be done.

The shifts in the Bush administrations' policy on Somalia—first in August 1992 and then again in November 1992—came only in the face of mobilized political opposition. The persistence of the humanitarian crises in Bosnia and Somalia enabled the media as well as liberal humanitarian and hard-line opponents of the Bush administration to gradually collect information independent of the administration and mobilize their own advocacy resources. Second, the breakdown of executive cohesion within the ranks of the administration ultimately exposed alternative analytical narratives of each crisis.<sup>38</sup>

As the 1992 Presidential election drew nearer, pressure increased to take action:

Although there is no evidence that public opinion shifted toward greater support for direct U.S. involvement in Bosnia, on the eve of the 1992 National Republican Convention, the mobilized political opposition to Bush's handling of the crisis struck a nervous chord with Bush's advisors. Bush who had taken tremendous pride in his foreign policy accomplishments ... was being publicly castigated by highly respected foreign policy commentators.<sup>39</sup>

Bush was desperate to prove he was doing something, and he took steps that contradicted his stance on the issues and began disregarding a thoughtful or systematic policy process in exchange for reactionary measures:

In the midst of public furor over the disclosure of death camps in Bosnia, President Bush announced an abrupt shift in his Somalia policy and ordered C-130s to assist in providing relief to famine victims. The President also reversed his opposition to funding the deployment of 500 Pakistani peacekeepers to Somalia (normally peacekeepers were



volunteered annually not ordered up by the Security Council for specific missions); in fact, he announced the Pentagon would provide transportation for the 500 man team and their equipment.<sup>40</sup>

Western argues that Bush's shift on Somalia came on the eve of the Republican National Convention in order to respond to the backlash over Bosnia. Scowcroft later said, "we did not want to portray the administration as wholly flint-hearted realpolitik, and air airlift in Somalia was a lot cheaper [than an intervention in Bosnia] to *demonstrate* that we had heart".<sup>41</sup>

The airlift and policy reversal did not shield Bush from further criticism in the press and from the Clinton campaign charge that he wasn't doing enough to save the starving in Somalia, and that he was sitting on his hands while genocide was taking place in Bosnia. With his strongest suit (foreign policy) being effectively battered, Bush was flailing against Clinton's growing election momentum which fed on the idea that it was time for change and for Americans to focus on problems at home first.

The general public in the United States seemed ambivalent about the country's role in the new global climate. Public opinion polls revealed that domestic issues had become primary and foreign policy secondary. Since the latter was associated with George Bush, he was vulnerable to the agenda put forward by Bill Clinton...for these and other reasons Clinton defeated Bush in the 1992 elections and once in office he primarily focused on his domestic agenda...<sup>42</sup>

As polls had predicted, Clinton defeated Bush soundly on November 6<sup>th</sup> and Bush, shocked by the defeat, became a lame duck. In early November, unwilling to wait for the new Clinton administration to assume power in January, numerous NGOs issued public and private appeals to Bush to provide security measures against bandits interrupting relief supplies. Scowcroft reported that Bush, still in post-election depression, listened more to NGOs pleas and requested more study into taking action.<sup>43</sup> Western argues that soon after Bush lost the 1992 Presidential election, he essentially caved into the liberal humanitarianists and proceeded to draw up plans to intervene in Somalia, but with ulterior motives:

After the election, Bush and Powell concluded that liberal humanitarians would dominate the new administration and push heavily for U.S. intervention in Bosnia. Bush and Powell concluded that if the U.S. was going to intervene it would be in Somalia—not Bosnia. Somalia was the easier of the two missions.<sup>44</sup>

Two weeks after the election, and a day after Powell met with Clinton, the NSC Deputies Committee met to discuss the situation in Somalia. Three options were put on the table, in which the first option was to increase U.S. financial aid and a second to aid UN troops with logistical support but send in no U.S. ground troops. A third option, initiating a U.S.-led military intervention was not even raised for discussion. The next day Admiral Jeremiah shocked the meeting's members when he responded that if the third option were chosen, the JCS were ready to take on the job.<sup>45</sup>

Western writes that, "Prior to the November 21 deputies meeting, virtually no one in or out of the administration had expected that President Bush or his top political and military advisors would support a U.S. major humanitarian mission to Somalia".<sup>46</sup> In fact, the option of U.S. military deployment wasn't even on the agenda for the meeting. Four days later, with the Joint Chiefs preparing to back the decision to intervene, Bush ordered 1,300 Marines and 25,000 soldiers into Somalia spearheading the UNITAF mission.<sup>47</sup> Bush was ironically launching a major intervention into Somalia after losing, not winning, his bid for re-election.

If Western is indeed correct in his assessment of Bush's motivations, then one can also conclude that Bush failed in his goal to appease those demanding action be taken in Bosnia. Launching a mission in Somalia didn't stop the liberal humanitarianists from advocating a mission for Bosnia or attacking Bush as an uncaring, unfeeling bureaucrat who couldn't understand the moral necessities of ending the suffering and chaos in the Balkans, and only further instilled them with the false belief that such operations were easily made possible.

Patrick Glynn's article in *New Republic* reflects the liberal reaction to Bush's decision to do Somalia and avoid Bosnia:

The same reasons why Bush says no to Bosnia are worse in Somalia. Bosnia, was stable once, and has something to return to, Somalia has no status quo to return to. Why does the Bush administration make such an effort to make Somalia look "easy" and Bosnia so difficult? Why can't the same military effort and diplomatic clout be applied to Bosnia?<sup>48</sup>

A commonly held belief in understanding Bush's decision to intervene in Somalia was that he was pressured into action by constant negative television coverage. The "CNN effect" is loosely defined as the "shrinkage of time in which foreign policy officials must respond to world events that are instantly displayed on television screens" and effects a loss of policy control in which governmental decision-making process is accelerated (for good or ill) and that more effort is spent on worrying about how policies are to be explained and sold to the public than ever before.<sup>49</sup> Many critics have asserted that Bush and those in the administration were driven by "the CNN effect" and that Bush reacted to the images of starving children on television by launching a military intervention.

Warren Strobel, on the other hand, offers a convincing argument in *Late Breaking Foreign Policy: The News Media's Influence on Peace Operations*, that Bush was not directly pushed into action by daily television coverage of the humanitarian disaster, but it was certainly a factor in putting pressure on Bush in the summer and fall of 1992.<sup>50</sup> Strobel argues that media coverage of Somalia did not accelerate until *after* Bush began airlifts in August, and that television news reports, including CNN's twenty-four hour news format, peaked with the American decision to intervene and the injection of American and UN forces in December, and dropped off precipitously only within two weeks after Marines landed in Somalia.<sup>51</sup> The evidence suggests Bush was also personally affected by cable reports of the humanitarian disaster he was receiving from the State Department, horrific accounts given by NGO

representatives pleading with him to take action, and articles he was reading throughout the summer in *The New York Times*.<sup>52</sup> Authors have speculated as to what degree Bush was moved emotionally by the reports and images from Somalia based on his traditional Christian value systems and concern for those in need,<sup>53</sup> but the President himself said little at the time or since leaving office that offers more real insight to his decision making process. Only Bush himself knows how much sensationalized media coverage caused him to radically alter his position on intervention in Somalia in November 1992.

Careful study of the events of late summer and fall of 1992 does, however, give insight to Bush and the CNN effect. Conceding to Strobel's argument in *Late Breaking Foreign Policy* that graphic and repetitious television sympathetic coverage weighted toward "doing something" in Somalia did not directly change Bush's policies, I argue that Bush did cave into pressure from those especially within the administration and Congress that were convinced that the U.S. was morally obligated to take direct action in Somalia. Adhering to Western's thesis in *Sources of Humanitarian Intervention*, Bush was pressured by the liberal humanitarianists within the administration, who used "the CNN effect" to fuel their arguments, and was perhaps motivated by moral and emotional responses to the famine, but an additional factor comes into play not greatly addressed by Western. This is the perception factor, and the Bush "conversion" in regards to "the CNN effect" is a ready example how perceptions can often trump political realities. If the liberal humanitarians were already on board with intervention and were actively lobbying for more U.S. action as Western effectively conveys, and yet, "the CNN effect" had little known effect on Bush personally to change his position, what could have pressured Bush to entertain thoughts of more direct involvement after resisting such notions for months? I argue that the Bush administration misread the mood of the public, mistook the wave of short-term media

attention given to Somalia after the airlift began as a serious indicator that Americans were *highly* concerned with the plight of Somalis and righting their fractured state *and* expecting a quick and decisive response to ending the chaos. None of the few polls taken at the time, however, indicated that a majority of Americans shared the almost hysterical calls for military intervention being made by the liberal humanitarians (or their many allies in the media), and most approved of Bush's handling of the crisis with increases in aid and airlifts.<sup>54</sup> Most Americans, as Strobel and Western point out, believed that intervention in either Somalia or Bosnia would be futile, and even the later shifts Western describes that occur with the public perception of the Bosnian conflict and reports of genocide do not necessarily equate with how Americans felt about intervening in Somalia even if liberal humanitarianists framed them in similar terms. The problem for military policy in this case is that the Bush administration had wrongly *perceived* that Americans desired swift action be taken to end the humanitarian disaster in Somalia and that the U.S. should devote a major effort to end the famine and violence there when such was not the case. In fact, as time went on, Americans were generally growing more disinterested as similar stories appeared from Iraq, Sudan, Mozambique, and elsewhere and were already beginning to experience what is termed in peacekeeping as "humanitarian burnout". The administration had overestimated the support backing the few shrill liberal humanitarianists in Congress (who were obviously consumed by "the CNN effect")<sup>55</sup> because the media was engaging in story saturation for a very brief period. By October, Somalia had disappeared from the media map as the election heated up<sup>56</sup> but the *perception* that the public was still outraged and fixated on the tragedy was not reformulated within the administration during September and October as its focus was on Bosnia and the reelection. Bush made several comments during these events (and long after) that "everyone" in America had seen the ghastly images from Somalia

and were galvanized to act. This, however, was not the case. The media's eye had long since moved on by the time Bush seriously contemplated intervention in November, and the public's eye moved with it. Bush policymakers also misread the other key aspect of "the CNN effect". This aspect dictates as fast as a sensational story arrives, it quickly plays itself out, and with greater mass repetition, creates an inoculation effect on the public.<sup>57</sup>

The only organized pressure being applied to Bush to intervene by October was not from the media or the public, but from a small minority of humanitarian activists who were advocating a course of action that was anathema to the limited course of action Bush had held to for months. Bush and his advisors had failed to properly interpret the depth of the support of those clamoring for vague radical measures, and allowed their policy making process to be hijacked by their ideological opponents whose strongest bolt had already been spent once media coverage dwindled away. The Bush administration's misperception of the depth of public concern for Somalia (strong support for more aid but not necessarily for intervention) and the strength of the liberal humanitarianists hand in pressuring more action be taken by the U.S., started ungluing the President's policy and led to a cycle of weak and unsupported policy making.

There is no evidence indicating Bush's decision was backed by serious long-term planning, but rather more based upon a knee-jerk reaction to growing public criticism he wasn't doing enough to end starvation despite the relative success of the airlifts since August of 1992. Bush can certainly be credited for genuinely wishing to aid people in need and embark on a mission of morality, but it was the pressure to quiet dissension in an election year and the need to confront the image of indifference about starving African children that were the more immediate factors in pushing for military intervention. The policy became one more of fulfilling a political and strongly shared emotional need than solving any real problem of significant economic or

strategic consequence to the American people.<sup>58</sup> In short, Bush decided to deploy a significant military force to placate the public (which over time cared increasing less) and replace the images of starving Somali children and an uncaring conservative President with a robust and yet benign relief and peacekeeping operation under a multilateral UN banner. Saving Somalia wasn't the issue as much as attempting to look compassionate and seriously engaged in cooperative action to the American public, and the symbolism of the action was more important than the policy that was supposed to be driving it. Mary Stuckey and Frederick Antczak argue that the ad hoc reactionary approach to problems geared toward pleasing the public but not directly connected to a grander strategy was common in the Bush administration:

In adapting his style to the expectations and culture of television, Bush has assimilated much of the fragmented, disconnected style of MTV. Bush acts not to accommodate not a constituency, but an electorate mediated by polls. He is accountable not to the public, but to public opinion. Like MTV, Bush is subject to the variety of whims, inconsistencies, and short attention spans that increasingly characterizes the viewing audience, and thus the voting public.<sup>59</sup>

Although Stuckey and Antczak do not specifically mention Somalia, the model they provide in their study of Bush's presidency well describes the administration's approach to the crisis. Bush took action to placate the popular notion that "something had to be done" although these polls never included the insight as to what exactly could be effectively accomplished in the Horn of Africa beyond symbolic short-term relief operations that would not solve the systemic roots that led to the famine and chaos in Somalia.<sup>60</sup>

Once the administration had bought into the notion that "something" had to be done to further help Somalia beyond monetary, supplies and logistical aid, it had to explain or justify the choice to go beyond these conventional measures and launch a military intervention. This rhetoric became the foundation of the rationale behind such a costly and open-ended operation. Solid policy-making based on national interests became subordinate to the high-sounding but

substance-hollow language used by Bush. This language neither described why the United States had any business in Somalia (other than smoothing a Western elitist guilt complex) or why it was beneficial for the nation to embark on what may be a countless series of mercy missions across the globe all for the sake of an elusive world order or the whimsical expectations of multilateralism and collective security. The rhetoric espoused by Bush and his administration and the liberal humanitarianists illuminates the fuzzy nature of humanitarian interventions, and the difficulty in connecting “feel-good” foreign policy to the advancement of obtainable, measurable, national interests.<sup>61</sup>

In Bush’s December 4<sup>th</sup> address, he initiated the line of rhetoric that runs throughout the public discourse on American involvement in Somalia:

The people of Somalia, especially the children of Somalia, need our help. We’re able to ease their suffering. We must help them live. We must give them hope. America must act. In taking this action, I want to emphasize that I understand the United States alone cannot right the world’s wrongs, but we also know that some crises in the world cannot be resolved without American involvement, that American action is often as necessary as a catalyst for broader involvement in the community of nations.<sup>62</sup>

Bush also consistently emphasized that the mission would be quick and painless, was not open-ended, and that U.S. forces would only be utilized briefly to secure a hand-off to the UN.<sup>63</sup> Bush stated: “We respect Somali sovereignty and independence” and that the U.S. had no intentions to fight Somalis or dictate political outcomes. All of these statements, neutral and benign as they may seem, however, were either naïve or disingenuous and were contrary to the nature of military interventions. Somalis were treated by the UN as stateless victims who had little to no real say in UN plans to “redevelop” the Somali state (no sovereignty was recognized to respect), and power factions such as Aideed’s SNA that defied the UN/U.S. approach to distribution of economic and political power were considered obstacles to progress and soon targeted for marginalization in the reconciliation process (the UN was dictating political outcomes by



deciding how, when and who was participating in the reconciliation process). Somalia was treated as a de facto UN trusteeship, and the idea of creating an actual trusteeship never completely disappeared throughout the entire intervention, especially as the situation worsened in the latter stages. Dorcas McCoy writes, “The unfulfilled pledge to refrain from taking over the decision-making process can perhaps best be explained by the administration’s expectations that Somalis would quickly adhere to U.S. mandates.”<sup>64</sup>

Bush’s public reasoning for ordering in troops was that the U.S. tried to help through conventional means, but the situation was too chaotic, and the UN couldn’t cope with the problem. This reasoning then supposes that U.S. had to intervene since it was the only nation capable of doing so, and that a sole superpower’s responsibility involved carrying such risks. This is best described in McCoy’s essay, in which the Bush administration became enraptured with using rhetoric that carried on the idealism left over from the Cold War that dependent nations were inferior, incapable of resolving their own problems, and the imposition of American values on independent states was deemed necessary (Wilsonianism). This effort to promote the positive self-image of America and its role in the world is made evident in the constant use of phrases such as “world leader”, “family of nations”, “nurturing” and “promoting growth” and “spreading democracy” etc.<sup>65</sup> The rhetoric constantly reflects the idea that the intervention was (1) a moral obligation to save starving strangers (2) completely selfless, neutral and benign (3) a positive step toward collectivism and multilateralism (4) the implicit duty of the world’s sole superpower due to its unique capabilities. Bush used the statement on several occasions that, “we are doing God’s work and will not fail”<sup>66</sup> which also hints that military intervention was sanctioned by the Almighty and thus beyond scrutiny or possibility of failure. Ambassador Edward J. Perkins, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, made clear that the

U.S. position was in utter support of the UN mandates in Somalia and that the Somalia crisis represented a clear case for confronting “challenges to international peace and stability” and that providing a secure environment for relief operations (going beyond providing relief) was a clear necessity.<sup>67</sup> Perkins’ statement also highlights the notions of “demonstrating resolve” and other symbolic actions found in the rhetoric used to justify a military intervention in a place few Americans could find on a map prior to the media blitz in August.<sup>68</sup>

Other elements that found their way into the rhetoric used by the liberal humanitarianists and later the Bush administration were based on promoting the image of “a nation of doers” rescuing helpless mothers and children from “genocide”<sup>69</sup> in “the world’s worst famine.”<sup>70</sup> Graphic images of starvation, images of suffering, and misuses of the term “genocide” were pervasive in the rhetoric aimed at Congress to take action. Children were almost always immediately referred to when it came for advocates for rapid intervention to state their reasoning for such a course of action. In the Sept 16<sup>th</sup>, 1992 hearing before the House Subcommittee On Africa, *every* witness provoked the image of children within their testimony in a heart-wrenching anecdote which was met with a sympathetic response from committee members, even to the point where the Director of the Human Rights Watch dramatically declared that U.S. inaction to date had doomed Somalia and now “one third of its babies are dead”.<sup>71</sup> Bush was quick to embrace the rhetoric of saving starving children to defend the foundations of humanitarian intervention, when he answered criticism with rhetoric of feeling good about saving emaciated kids, explaining foreign policymaking as a response to imagery (the image of child victims and the self-image of a savior superpower that morally could take no other course of action):

...the agony one feels in one’s heart when you see those ghastly pictures of those starving kids...the pictures, by gosh, they just kill you, the little skinny arms. It just wrenches the heart of every American. But the good news is that those kids are getting any

nourishment are coming back. And I think we can take pride that once again we have stepped up to the lick log and done our share.<sup>72</sup>

By the time the operation was under way, Bush had honed the use of saving children as part of his Somalia rhetoric, and worked in the compassionate imagery into even more mundane events, constantly reinforcing the notion that military intervention was a necessary and just cause. At the National Christmas tree lighting ceremony on December 10<sup>th</sup>, Bush clumsily interjected another rhetorical pitch for the intervention after a few brief remarks about the holiday season. “May I simply say, let us think of the children of Somalia too, the children everywhere who live in fear and want”.<sup>73</sup>

The rhetoric promoted such a high-ground position that placed challenges to intervening, investing billions, and incurring great political and military risks as morally bankrupt and incongruous with America’s place in the New World Order. Who could argue with the desire to feed poor starving mothers, dying babies, and rail-thin children? Who would question a president’s decision to launch a military intervention of undetermined depth and length with vaguely defined goals in the face of a constant stream of altruistic motives to save poor helpless dependent states and maintaining world order within the structure of a benign “community of nations”? The rhetoric that matched the media images of untold suffering to the self-image of America’s premier and unique position in the world seemed almost unassailable, and these assumptions were never seriously questioned in Congress or within the administration. The acceptance of this image-driven rhetoric, and the passive nature in which Bush’s (soon proven empty) promises for a limited duration and level of involvement were consumed, were primary factors in the failure to craft a legitimate and manageable policy for Somalia.

The policy for intervention in Somalia was driven by rhetoric more than any definable interests and was left fairly unchallenged. Fulfilling the needs of rhetoric with foreign adventures that fail

to address national interests, however, makes a poor foundation for foreign policy or military operations and often leads to failure. Such was the case in Somalia, and historical lessons were readily available without having to look beyond Bush's own experiences in public service. Rhetoric and ambiguity helped confuse and defeat the Marines in Beirut in 1982 with mandates to "show the flag", "make a presence", "peacekeeping" and "interposition" that appeased diplomats, the UN, and the press but accomplished little and were not viable missions for ground commanders.<sup>74</sup> Bush perpetuated the unmanageable rhetoric in the same fashion by accepting the UN's overblown mandates but stating that "the mission is not open-ended".<sup>75</sup> By accepting the November State Department plan to create a U.S.-led UN force that would be quickly handed off to the UN, Bush acted to fulfill the rhetoric knowing that he cannot fulfill the promise to either end the famine or end chaos in Somalia before January 20<sup>th</sup> when Clinton took office.<sup>76</sup> Bush also firmly rejected Ghali's plan to engage in disarmament and nation-building, and would not help in any plans for nation-building if the UN attempted it, but utilized much rhetoric to support those efforts. Despite leading the intervention to save Somalia and "maintain stability" in the region, the Bush plan rejected the notion that the U.S. would be directly involved in Somalia's restructuring or economic resurgence from a collapsed state. Bush committed the U.S. to temporarily feed the helpless Somalis and protect food supplies from bandits, but to dump the problem on the same UN in two months-- the same organization which he previously admitted was unable to solve the problem on its own. In essence, Bush took action to fulfill the requirements of the rhetoric ginned up towards feeding starving children and taking its place as the world's leader in collective action against instability, but rejected most of the UN mandates designed to fulfill the specific needs of Somalia's dysfunctional state,<sup>77</sup> leaving the U.S. in an ambiguous position. Contrary to the public statements made by the Joint Chiefs at the time of the

decision, the U.S. mission was not well-defined—other than as a rhetorical humanitarian mission. As Herman Cohen recalled, there was no planning on anything of who was in charge or how order was to be reestablished, what to do once famine had been alleviated, or how the UN was to take over any of the operations or political movements the U.S. was hoping would occur. All these questions were left as “planning assumptions to be resolved once we hit the ground.” Cohen noted, “We really weren’t sure what we were doing”.<sup>78</sup>

Bush’s belief in global consensus building allowed for open-ended rhetoric that could be stretched to cover almost anything, and this combined with the co-opting of the liberal humanitarianists’ image-driven rhetoric to save the children from genocide led to a military intervention policy based on impulse that was not realistic or had clearly definable goals.<sup>79</sup> Fulfilling the rhetoric became the national interest (feeding kids and asserting America’s unique power importance to a world audience) and this could be done quickly with little effort or risk. Stephen Graubard argues in the post-Cold War, Bush’s “rhetoric committed himself to nothing that would require sacrifice from anyone”.<sup>80</sup>

Bush’s desire to save starving children was undoubtedly genuine, but it was also unmistakably reactionary, impulsive, emotionally based and poorly formulated foreign policy in which he rejected his initial realist views and adopted the liberal views of his political opposites. The policy was based on factors that could not have generated strong foundations for military intervention. One of the major factors for Bush’s reversal was pressure from the media, liberals in Congress, and some within the administration (especially the State Department) to react quickly.

Another factor was Bush’s desire to *demonstrate* that he was “doing something” about not only Somalia, but in his global strategy to “maintain global order”. In essence, Somalia had no

real strategic value in itself, but possessed a certain demonstration value. Committing troops to feed Somalis and prevent banditry of relief supplies while paying lip service to UN efforts to rebuild the country was a low-risk venture that would serve as an example of America's involvement in the world, its continued global reach militarily, and its benign commitment to human rights, multilateralism, and democracy. Ambassador Perkins statement to the UN on December 3, 1992 clearly paints the administration's belief in Somalia as a "challenge to global peace and security" and an opportunity to set a collective security precedent to demonstrate U.S. led resolve in combating disorder. Exactly what constituted disorder and how it was to be confronted was left ambiguous, but the administration's position was that intervention in Somalia would demonstrate America's commitment to maintaining global order through multilateral action.

Policies, however, that are designed around demonstrating commitment through force are usually shallow and lacking in realistic and measurable goals, lack public support once costs become apparent, and are often exploited by resolute enemies. Such was the case in Vietnam and Beirut, and many did not see the point to Bush's theatrics and demonstration of UN involvement in the Gulf War rationale either.<sup>81</sup> Making limited gestures to show one was serious was no substitute for full bore military actions aimed at achieving strategic goals that require no such communication effect. Somalia was a demonstration effort for Bush's New World Order, and it paralleled the vague and fuzzy nature of this vision in its execution.

Another factor that had nothing to do with strong policy formulation was not only the demonstration of the American strength in the world, but the image of Bush's strength after he lost the 1992 presidential election. Bush had always been wary of being seen as a "wimp" since his days as Vice President and bristled at criticism that he lacked the strength or courage to deal

with crises or adversity.<sup>82</sup> Much of this disparagement withered away after Bush successfully managed two major military operations in Panama and Iraq, but Bush always seemed eager to prove that he could take on any task and was strong and decisive when it came to foreign policy. The problem during the 1992 campaign was now one of Bush looking uncaring, unconcerned and out of touch with the events in Somalia, Bosnia and elsewhere. Bush's morality, integrity, and authority were now being questioned as these crises deepened and received increasing media attention, as the challenger Bill Clinton kept poking away at Bush, selling himself as a "doer" as Bush sat on his hands.<sup>83</sup>

Prior to the election in October, no one in the upper levels of the administration advocated going into Somalia, and the President was confident in his decision to portray himself as a leader prudently avoiding quagmires. Bush's decision in late November was a total rejection of a line he had held for over a year and the advice he was receiving from area experts. The Foreign Service Officers (FSO) for East Africa/Somalia argued *against* going in, favoring diplomacy and later supporting the widening airlift.<sup>84</sup> Although theft of supplies was a continuous major problem, armed intervention was not considered the best option available. As early as January 1992, the problem was described as more diplomatic than logistical, and some NGOs advocated just dumping the food in cities (as militia soldiers would end up with it anyway) and saturating the country with food until the famine passed would ease tensions and aid diplomacy.<sup>85</sup> The reports coming back from Somalia, media coverage, and growing Congressional attention pressured Bush to act, but it was the election that forced him to increase the airlift in August in order to demonstrate that he was "doing something".

Doing nothing would have been preferred, but, well, there were those horrid images on television every night, and everyone knew Bush's Democratic opponent strongly supported the UN. Was Bush really a heartless Republican, a rich old white guy willing to fight for oil but not bring food to black Africans? Already sinking in the opinion polls,

the president could hardly expect reelection by feeding such cruel perceptions. Feeding some Somalis seemed like a lot better idea.<sup>86</sup>

The problem for Bush was that although the airlift begun in August was proving somewhat successful, it didn't solve the chaos in country. Nor did it fix the perception Clinton and other liberals were perpetuating that he wasn't doing enough and that if the NGOs had to abandon Somalia due to the violence, failure to secure their humanitarian operations would be "a crime against humanity".<sup>87</sup> Airlifts, aid, and pursuing diplomacy with the warring factions, however, didn't create very dramatic imagery that sold Bush as a "doer", and it is the concern for image management that could explain why Bush chose the "sledgehammer" option rather than the minimalist or compromise approaches to intervention.

Bush's decision to go in after he lost the election was political, although it was seen as not being so at the time because it had no impact on voters.<sup>88</sup> Intervening militarily in Somalia with the "sledgehammer" maximal approach was about *producing an image* for Bush himself. Bush probably would not have gone into Somalia had he been reelected, and the lack of any serious discussion in NSA meetings prior to his defeat supports this hypothesis.<sup>89</sup> Bush administrators, however, were not content to simply mark time and look helpless in Somalia while they avoided pressures to get sucked into the Bosnian quagmire. They were looking for one last victory, to go out in a blaze of glory, and to prove that the sole superpower would not let people starve, especially at Christmas.<sup>90</sup> Even more so, Bush's decision was heavily based on his decision to control his image and project importance as a last gasp of a lame duck. Michael Wines writes in *The New York Times*:

Bush's defeat in the 1992 election led to the not uncommon desire of outgoing presidents to ensure that the history books remember him as a "decisive leader" as opposed to a "vanquished politician" unable to secure a second term in office.<sup>91</sup>



This effort to present a leadership image for political theater made one final curtain call when Bush visited troops against the advice of aides in January 1993.<sup>92</sup> Bush explained his visit in the same diffuse and emotional light as his overall image-based policy when he said, “my trip will show how *all* Americans *feel* for the people of Somalia.”<sup>93</sup> This statement was telling. Somalia was about doing something based on emotion rather than logic, to present an image that Americans cared, and that Bush himself, still the leader of the world’s sole superpower, cared too.

To intervene and save the Somalis from themselves, Bush again tried to form a coalition anchored by the UN as he had done in the Gulf.<sup>94</sup> The Security Council, long criticized for inaction, was all too happy to grant Bush a fig leaf for a U.S. intervention<sup>95</sup> as Ghali believed the Bush plan would stabilize the situation long enough to swing UN plans into action to “save” Somalia.<sup>96</sup> Despite Bush’s rhetoric about symbiotic multilateral cooperation, U.S. policies in Somalia were not identical to the UN resolutions that they signed off on, there was no discussion of nation-building or the question of partitioning Somaliland when Ghali agreed to the plan. Unbeknownst to Ghali and the UN, U.S. policies were not designed to solve Somalia’s problems but more to make them go away.<sup>97</sup>

Bush’s decision to discard the light (minimalist) option to simply support UN operations in a multilateral intervention and to select the “sledgehammer” approach of a strong U.S.- led force to secure and protect supply points and convoys, was also one that sheds light on the political posturing involved in the operation from both the UN and the Bush administration. Bush officials had already gotten an earful from liberal humanitarianists about sending in Marines to back the UN and restoring order since September, but had been warned then by experts and Congressional conservatives to think twice about trusting the weak-kneed UN to get anything

done or to have any staying power once the situation turned violent. Even Natsios himself, the biggest liberal promoter of increased humanitarian action in Somalia within the administration, warned against trying any type of peace enforcement mission as outlined in Ghali's new post-Cold War cornerstone, *An Agenda for Peace Preventive Diplomacy; Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*<sup>98</sup> as it would face the worst opposition by Somalis, have little support at home, and fail miserably.<sup>99</sup> Peace enforcement was not something the administration was willing to touch, and it was only content to discuss even traditional peacekeeping operations in Somalia as long as someone else was going to do them. Eagleberger's proposal to Ghali was a request to be "blessed off on" using American force more than an attempt to build a strong cohesion between U.S. and UN goals for Somalia, and Ghali likewise was delighted to use U.S. military muscle to force a breakthrough against the warlords and open the door to nation-building. Creating long-term peace or rebuilding society was tertiary to the administration's ambitions in Somalia, and Bush deferred "political" discussions about Somalia to the UN.<sup>100</sup>

Bush was adamant about leading a limited mission to just feed Somalis temporarily and hand off the mission quickly to the UN once U.S. forces had cowed the warlords and bandits. He said:

Our mission has a limited objective—to open supply routes, to get food moving, and to prepare the way for a UN force to keep it moving. This operation is not open-ended. We will not stay longer than necessary.<sup>101</sup>

The Bush plan was an exercise in theater based on producing an image that the U.S. was leading a coalition to maintain order and help African victims, and was already ducking questions of "what happens after we leave," and "when does nation-building begin"<sup>102</sup> by repeatedly claiming the mission was limited to feeding people and protecting relief efforts. The policy's key components were all geared toward producing an image of "doing something" immediately (if after a year had passed and the famine had long peaked can be considered "immediate"). The

components were as follows: agree to and promote all the UN resolutions to save Somalia from famine, “request” to launch a military intervention to secure food distribution points, play up the international nature of the mission, and yet ignore or reject the long-term elements of the resolutions outside of diplomacy and declare a limited mission sticking the UN with the long-term political and economic solutions that were the roots of the crisis and leaving Somalia to its fate. Bush could effectively feed the starving masses, declare victory and leave before his tenure ended on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1993.<sup>103</sup> Herbst notes that, the UN got stuck with Somalia because stopping theft (the primary justification for military force) was inadequate in relieving the suffering there, and the mission failed not because of nation-building but because the Bush plan was nothing more than political theater in which the U.S. ducked its responsibilities.<sup>104</sup> Bush was resolved to leave long term solutions to others.<sup>105</sup>

Bush wasn’t the only leader engaging in political theater when it came to rushing to Somalia’s rescue in December. The other members of the coalition followed suit, and the western European leaders were thinking along the same lines as Bush about making a quick show of it and getting out.<sup>106</sup>

One of the most significant factors in the formulation of the policy to intervene in Somalia was that despite the offhand comments couched in vague rhetoric made by the Bush administration, the United States had no strategic interests in Somalia.<sup>107</sup> Nothing in Somalia, nor anything rooted in the famine and the civil war occurring there, offered any economic or strategic opportunities for the United States nor posed a security threat to the nation or its allies.<sup>108</sup> The policy launched a major military intervention, spent billions of taxpayer dollars, and placed soldiers at risk with no foreseeable endstate and yet had no direct link to any strategic considerations whatsoever. The humanitarian rationale for the intervention was weak and lacked

deep public support, and the experiment to embrace enormous costs to help foreign victims and make symbolic gestures towards universal benevolence of the sole superpower was utterly contrary to how successful foreign policy is planned and conducted. Interests need to be served in foreign policy, not idealism and half-hearted demonstrations to promote a new world order that is left undefined and naturally defies a unified view of stability. The Bush policy to intervene in Somalia was flawed in its foundations because it ignored serving rational security interests in favor of humanitarian ones.

The rationale for claiming a military intervention in Somalia was in the national interest can be condensed into two elements, one based on Wilsonianism and the other liberal humanitarianism. These two elements fed off one another devoid of the realities of either global power relationships or the situation in the ground in Somalia. A developed critique of neo-Wilsonianism (the attempt to forcefully project American idealism, moralism, culture, democracy and its view of how nations should behave) is beyond the scope of this project. Suffice it say, however, that the progressive tenets surrounding Wilsonianism that dictate to the world how it should behave and emulate American culture are often interpreted as obnoxious and arrogant policies.<sup>109</sup> Overheated Wilsonianism was a driving force in the rhetoric and rationale for foreign policy in the post-Cold war under Bush and Clinton, and it was a flawed premise that led to failure in places like Somalia.

Bush's vision, as explained previously, was for a "New World Order" based on Wilsonian idealism, collective security (which served to supposedly lessen the costs of U.S. security) and American leadership in a system of "one a little more equal than the rest". Stability, maintaining the status quo, and fostering democracy were the objectives; although how to keep the world "stable" and avoiding change seem to reject a realistic view of international relationships

altogether. American foreign policy was somehow to be geared at stopping not only dangerous totalitarian regimes like Saddam Hussein's Iraq, but also in preventing or stopping civil wars, famines, and other common historical events that involved violence, death, destruction and chaos. Yet, there were no set criteria for what constituted American involvement and to what degree the U.S. government would commit itself to solving any given problem. Starving Kurds elicited a very limited U.S. response, but not violent civil war and refugees in Mozambique or famine in Sudan.<sup>110</sup> Somalia had no special rationale for intervention that other civil wars did not, other than the pressure that Bush was receiving from Ghali, the media, and the liberal humanitarians to do something about this high-profile tragedy that the UN was helpless to alleviate.

Bush claimed that deploying U.S. forces was necessary to "to avert related threats to international peace and security"<sup>111</sup> although he never even began to explain how a famine (which had five months earlier and was being rapidly reduced by massive aid and local agricultural upswings) and a complicated civil war (which still continues for twenty years at time of this writing) which never spilled across Somali's borders was even a *regional* threat, much less an international one. Somali's neighbors had long since sealed their borders before Bush even contemplated the airlift and the refugee flow had recessed by August as the famine abated in the South and Somalis trickled back to their villages. The civil war and banditry had little effect on anything outside of Somalia beyond the refugee camps being tended to by the same NGOs that were demanding the U.S. government get directly involved.

The only "threat" Somalia imposed on international peace was the *image* the chaos and suffering was creating in the face of designs that the Wilsonians and humanitarian liberals had for the post-Cold War world. Somalia was a high profile situation because of the media, and

ignoring it or taking traditional approaches to relief operations wasn't in keeping with the idealism of the liberals ready to use Somalia as a test case for assertive multilateralism, humanitarianism, and Wilsonianism. For Bush, Somalia seemed like a chance to again demonstrate his Wilsonian goals in a quick knock-out punch that would satisfy the liberals and project his stability and collective security agenda. Somalia had all the potential to "promote stability" enlarge "the zone of peace", help build and defend democracies and develop human rights.<sup>112</sup> This grandiose goal could be done on the cheap, as the mission was designed to be limited, the costs to be shared by other nations, and quickly handed off to the UN-- basically a demonstration of commitment to liberal idealism without assuming any real risk. Unfortunately, such a demonstration of vague and fuzzy objectives had little to nothing to do with securing or protecting resources, markets, military bases, technology, or potential allies. Rescuing Somalia had nothing to offer except the naïve hopes that the world would respond favorably to America's new Samaritan face, and that America's premier position could be protected via a "globocop" foreign policy which inviting others to join in and help with the collective lifting.

The liberal humanitarianists in Congress, the media, and elsewhere had even grander idealistic plans to use Somalia as a precedent and were determined that human rights now become the center of U.S. foreign policy, echoing Jimmy Carter from years earlier.<sup>113</sup> Although an in depth discussion of this liberal agenda is beyond the scope of this project, these ambitions of greatly increasing the power and authority of the UN, assertive multilateralism, and the compulsion to intervene in almost every intrastate and interstate conflict and human calamity cannot be overstated.<sup>114</sup> Another important factor coming into play was sense of anger or guilt liberal and African-American Congress members felt about how Africa was constantly placed on the policy backburner and now it was America's responsibility to take action after years of

neglect.<sup>115</sup> For the liberal humanitarianists, Somalia would be their first opportunity to get their agenda rolling inside U.S. foreign policy.

“Promoting democracy and rule of law” is the point where Bush’s Wilsonianism and liberal humanitarianists’ utopian desires to save the world from war and suffering crossed paths. As Ambassador Perkins justified the intervention as demonstrating a symbolic resolve against disorder and protection of human rights,<sup>116</sup> and Arnold Kantor, Undersecretary for Political Affairs further expounded, “human rights have been and will always be at the core of American foreign policy” and (in Somalia) “we cannot make a greater commitment to the defense of human rights than to put the young lives of our soldiers at risk to save the lives of others”.<sup>117</sup> Since there was no law and stability in the anarchy of Somalia, the situation fit both the desire to demonstrate a commitment to stability (globocop foreign policy) criteria as well as the rescuing the downtrodden (Mother Theresa foreign policy) desires of both the neo-Wilsonians and the liberals.

The justification of national interests in the Somali intervention by the Bush administration and the liberals who pressured for action are arguably so vague, idealistic, and wrapped in rhetoric that they serve no practical purpose. Especially given the fact that Bush was determined not to get deeply involved in helping the UN to restore Somali society, much less ensure that democracy took root in a nation that had virtually known none in its history. Somalis could be fed temporarily, bandits could be kept at bay, and reconciliation diplomacy would continue between the major factions, but that was all Bush was intending on doing. Restoring order in Somalia was a local byproduct of protecting food shipments, not a specified objective in areas occupied by coalition forces. There was no plan in place to end the violence or rebuild the economy; that was left to the UN. The so-called national interests that compelled U.S. forces to

go into harms' way were not seriously addressed in any fashion during Operation Restore Hope as the militias continued to do battle and "disorder" reigned. Bush eschewed nation-building, and wanted to get in and out quickly. Even Robert Gates, Director of the CIA, stated that the bleak situation in Somalia required long term solutions the Bush administration was not prepared to engage.<sup>118</sup> The stated national interests the Bush administration off-handedly espoused were not concrete but idealistic objectives, ones that were never even attempted on the ground.

The stated national interests in Somalia the liberals espoused were even more idealistic and unobtainable. Rebuilding Somalia and replicating such efforts at the scores of humanitarian disasters cropping up globally in the post Cold War was utterly utopian and immediately recognizable as unachievable. The U.S. military alone spent \$256 million in six weeks of operations in Somalia and the UN had spent close to double the same amount in Cambodia without result.<sup>119</sup> How the UN and its contributors were to sustain the unending aid and rebuilding of a viable Somali nation for years to come was not apparent to the liberals who constantly agitated that more be done in Somalia and dozens of other places without regard to costs and risks. For the humanitarianist liberals, despite how vaguely defined objectives were set, enormous costs and the utter repetitive failures of such actions, "doing something" to help victims became the national interest despite the sheer futility of such adventures.

Bush had been warned through several channels and much discussion took place in the public discourse not to fall into the liberal mindset of placing humanitarian desires and the ambitions of Ghali and the UN over national interests. As Walter Isaacson warned in *Time*, "random bursts of compassion provoking by compelling images may be compelling for charities, but are they the proper foundation for foreign policy?" and asked how the U.S. was planning to "rescue" Somalia and ignore the tragedy in Sudan?<sup>120</sup> George Kennan, the chief architect of U.S. containment



policy during the Cold War, openly criticized Bush's motivations for intervention for the "bottomless pit" of Somalia, and stated that we clearly had no interests there.<sup>121</sup> The conservative Jane Kirkpatrick likewise rejected liberal criticism of those who exercised caution and wished not to get involved were "isolationists", and the two positions were not simply conveniently interchangeable.<sup>122</sup> Members in Congress were agitated and perplexed as well at Bush's adoption of liberal ideals in foreign policy that had nothing to do with national interests. The respected Lee Hamilton, Democrat from Indiana and Chair of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, questioned why Somalia warranted intervention since so many other places suffered from similar fates. Toby Roth, a Republican Congressman from Alabama, was even more openly skeptical when he stated the UN was leading the U.S. down a path towards indefinite costs and commitments in Somalia and elsewhere. "Somalia has always been a basket case", Roth announced, and he questioned if "foreign policy is being driven by CNN?" Even some Democrats like John Murtha from Pennsylvania, were not convinced by the rhetoric and saw humanitarian interventions as a drain on the budget and military readiness in a world full of humanitarian disasters that would be continuous. "I see starving kids, but I don't see national interests."<sup>123</sup> It was about this time that Smith Hempstone, former U.S. ambassador to Somalia, warned that "we have no interests there" and Somalia would become a quagmire bogging the U.S. down into protracted guerrilla warfare.<sup>124</sup> The CIA was also advising against intervention.<sup>125</sup> Bush, however, ignored the warnings not to allow abstract moral notions to supplant national security interests.

Instead, in Somalia Bush embraced the vague rhetoric of Wilsonianism, fuzzy assertive multilateralism, and humanitarianism as a basis for foreign policy which was dysfunctional and not directly tied to U.S. interests.

Not only did the policy rely on contradictory American impulses, but it also ignored (intentionally or unintentionally) the international reality that other states had differing interests and values. An international coalition of like-minded states willing to support UN efforts consistent with America's own specific interests and preferences simply did not exist. The potential for trouble was clear to many foreign policy observers who questioned the policy's practical viability...rhetoric that is not matched to results. Open ended commitments to nations with no strategic value to the United States.<sup>126</sup>

In short, the foundations of Bush's policy were flawed and then failed because they were not tied to strategic national interests, but grounded in rhetoric and imagery that were more geared toward creating a "feel good" policy on the cheap and appeasing liberal critics that had bashed Bush for being out of touch and uncaring about the plight of the Third World, especially starving kids in Somalia. Intervening in Somalia was a quick and easy way for Bush to demonstrate that his Wilsonian New World Order was taking root on his way out of office, one that his successor was only happy to embrace as his own.

Somalia mirrored a primary mistake in Kennedy's counterinsurgency policy in Vietnam, in which the policy was direct violation of the principle of the objective-- efforts focused on achieving the abstract lost sight on the concrete.<sup>127</sup> Somalia's humanitarian demonstration as a test case paralleled the laboratory of Kennedy's counterinsurgency in which the objects were unclear, changing, and focused on immediate rather than strategic goals. In the case of Operation Restore Hope, the rationale for embarking on the mission and one of the key factors in Bush's decision in sending Eagleberger to propose the U.S.-led intervention was not based on strategic needs but on ease of operation. Intervening in Somalia was deemed appropriate foreign policy because Bush believed it could be done quickly, easily, and with little cost in a low-risk adventure. Somalia became "the doable war".

One final factor in Bush's decision to intervene in Somalia after resisting such suggestions for over a half a year was the acceptance of the idea of a peacekeeping and humanitarian mission by

the military, and the assessment by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) that the mission was militarily feasible. This was the final impediment to Bush's conversion to the liberal humanitarianists' view that intervention should and could be accomplished. Once Colin Powell and the JCS proclaimed the military could carry out a peacekeeping and relief mission to Somalia, Bush immediately sent Eagleberger to confer with Ghali and gave the order to intervene. The military, like their commander-in-chief, and done a policy reversal in December 1992 after months of resisting any suggestion of sending troops into Somalia. What made the military wholeheartedly accept a mission it had been resisting for almost a year?

To understand the sudden acceptance by the Pentagon to engage in peacekeeping, one must first look at the circumstances surrounding the military in the post-Cold War. In the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was intense pressure to downsize the U.S. military rapidly, to scrap building programs for numerous weapon systems, cancel huge projects for long overdue logistical upgrades, and make entire fleets, air wings, and divisions disappear in giant budget cuts. The process has already begun before Desert Storm, and in a tight economy, more cuts were already on the table.<sup>128</sup> The so-called "peace dividend" was a hot topic in Congress, as many Democrats sought to divert large sums of the treasury away from defense spending to domestic and social programs now that America's premier threat, the USSR, had become extinct. Experts warned that the post-Cold War world only brought about a greater variety of threats to American security, some of which were harder to detect, but the general conception held by the American public, especially those on the political left, believed that America was facing few viable threats and the military should be greatly reduced in size and its funding greatly diminished. Few even in the Pentagon refuted the logic of no longer needing the massive military structure used to counter the Soviets, but they did worry that the cuts would go far beyond what

was necessary to protect American interests and would seriously hamper the strategy to able to fight on two major fronts at the same time (the “two war” strategy), or the later modified version of this plan even to fight one major front and confront a smaller regional threat simultaneously (the “1½ war” strategy). Pentagon planners not only worried about budget and resource cuts, but also felt the need to justify the necessity of a large, well-equipped and highly trained force with global reach in an era that provided few opponents with comparable conventional capabilities. With the exception of an aggressive and recalcitrant North Korea, all America’s traditional adversaries were pretty much behaving themselves, especially once Iraq was quickly pummeled by sophisticated weaponry and skilled maneuvering in the Gulf War.

Pentagon planners feared the return of the hollow “Pentomic Army” of the 1950s,<sup>129</sup> which overly relied on nuclear weapons, limited sea power and air power to make up for the dangerously undersized land forces. The U.S. military was in need of a new *raison d’etre* in the New World Order to complement its traditional position and save it from more massive gutting, and began to reluctantly take on roles it had shunned such as drug interdiction and peacekeeping.<sup>130</sup> The Army, the largest of the services, was suffering from a sense of malaise and a loss of purpose as scores of brigades were forced to fold their proud colors and so was the first to contemplate a role for peacekeeping in the overall security strategy. The Army, whose institutional history dictated that it avoid “little wars” and counterinsurgencies since the mistake of Vietnam, and had developed a doctrine of utilizing massive force, maneuver and firepower which had displayed brilliantly in the Gulf. The Army, doctrinally speaking, didn’t engage in guerilla wars anymore and sought to avoid these attrition-heavy, politically messy, drawn out engagements at all costs. Unfortunately, these were the types of conflicts being waged in the late twentieth century, (with increasing frequency at that) and the Army was going to have to adjust

to these realities if it was going to resist further reduction and marginalization. “The Army was waking up and becoming willing to do windows”<sup>131</sup> and began to incorporate peacekeeping rules of engagement and doctrine into its operations and planning on conducting what it euphemistically labeled “Operations Other Than War” (OOTW) .

Where the Army went, the other services soon followed, as the Air Force and Navy found themselves also needing to protect air and sealift assets, Special Forces, as well as communications, intelligence and logistical resources from deeper cuts. The exception was the Marine Corps, who had engrained fighting guerilla wars and mixing with local conflicts into its psyche since engaging in the “banana wars” in Latin America the early 19th century,<sup>132</sup> and had little trouble accepting peacekeeping into its warfighting lexicon. The USMC was, however, unhappy with Bush’s “Base Force” plan which sought a reduced autonomous role for Corps, further budget cuts and projected overstretch. Reluctantly, the armed services accepted peacekeeping and OOTW as a part of their security portfolios, but they were clearly not doing so enthusiastically but instead rationalizing why they should be foreign policy tool of choice. “Peacekeeping isn’t a soldier’s choice, but only a soldier can do it.”<sup>133</sup>

Pentagon officials began to worry about overreach and endless commitments with U.S. forces losing their warfighting edge doing peacekeeping and becoming subservient to the UN to dutifully engage in countless civil wars. One Pentagon official lamented, “There is a disconnect between U.S. and UN humanitarian missions...the UN expects the United States to create peace”.<sup>134</sup> In theory, at least, the Pentagon out of necessity was willing to discuss and plan for peacekeeping, but it certainly was not embracing getting involved in civil wars. The Army’s endorsement of peacekeeping was reminiscent of its endorsement of counterinsurgency in the

early 1960s, the endorsement was *conditional* but not total, and like counterinsurgency, the Army was unhappy about what peacekeeping and OOTW would bring.<sup>135</sup>

These conditions were being laid out by the Chairman of the JCS, Colin Powell. Powell, a veteran of Vietnam, was heavily influenced by his experiences there and determined not to allow the strategic mistakes of the conflict to be repeated.<sup>136</sup> While working as an aide to Casper Weinberger, he helped to craft what became known as the Weinberger/Powell Doctrine which “consisted of a list of severe preconditions that must be met before U.S. forces are committed to battle”:

(1) the United States should not commit forces to combat overseas unless the particular engagement or occasion is deemed vital to our national interests or that of our allies (2) if the U.S. does commit troops, we should do so wholeheartedly, and with the clear intention of winning (3) the armed forces should have clearly defined political and military objectives (4) the relationship between ends and means must be continually reassessed and adjusted if necessary (5) there must be reasonable assurance we will have the support of the American people and their elected representatives in Congress (6) finally, the commitment of U.S. forces to combat should be a last resort. In succeeding years, another precondition became widely accepted as part of the Powell Doctrine—all deployments must have an “exit strategy”. The Powell Doctrine, which grew out of the debacle of Vietnam and was nourished by the military’s distaste for small wars, has come to stand for an all-or-nothing approach to warfare, with the ideal war being one in which the U.S. wins with overwhelming force, suffers few casualties, and leaves immediately.<sup>137</sup>

Powell was an extremely cautious and very political Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and his reluctance for committing U.S. forces to combat was well known during the Gulf War.<sup>138</sup> Powell maneuvered skillfully after the Gulf War to keep the Pentagon out of the peacekeeping game, aside for introducing some doctrinal planning which would probably never be needed if the stringent tenets of his doctrine were adhered to in using force. Powell was particularly unhappy about the wishy-washy nature of peacekeeping operations (PKO); he believed there was no

consensus within the U.S. government for doing them anyway and dismissed the humanitarian interventionists as advocating policies devoid of reality.<sup>139</sup>

In May 1992, the Pentagon publicly declared it was opposed to any open-ended commitments, and Secretary of defense Dick Cheney and Powell expressed views that were opposed to taking actions that invited a slippery slope approach injecting U.S. forces into messy civil wars like those occurring in Bosnia and Somalia.<sup>140</sup> The Pentagon under Powell officially opposed the proposal to turn designated U.S. units into UN peacekeeping contingents (“blue helmets”) in September 1992,<sup>141</sup> and the scheme stayed dead until Clinton took office. For over a year the JCS opposed intervention in either Somalia or Bosnia and had real sway over Bush in advising him not to do PKOs.<sup>142</sup> The JCS knew that they were going to have to conduct some peacekeeping in the near future, and it could not be avoided indefinitely, but they wanted to put it off for as long as possible and build in controls on missions and resources. One of the primary concerns for the Pentagon was that it would get stuck with all the costs of peacekeeping missions (including the inherent mission creep of nation building) and that would further wrack the defense budget.<sup>143</sup>

Powell was going to orchestrate these controls in the form of insisting on conditions adhering to his doctrine, and painting as gloomy picture about big operations such as Somalia and especially Bosnia as possible. Backed by his stature as one of the heroes of the Gulf War, he laid these conditions down publicly, outlining future use of the military in an article he wrote for *Foreign Affairs*,<sup>144</sup> almost as if he was throwing down a gauntlet to those who wished to challenge his expertise on the use of force. Powell couldn’t stop the civilians from pushing Chapter VII missions as foreign policy, but he could mitigate the risks they were imposing the military and U.S. security policy.

By June 1992, the JCS were firmly in lockstep with the Bush White House in claiming that getting involved in these conflicts in which combatants cannot be distinguished from civilians was a recipe for disaster and that Somalia itself was a “bottomless pit”.<sup>145</sup> When the liberal humanitarianists in the State Department and NSC began to hammer away about the necessity of U.S. intervention, the Pentagon resisted the ambitions of civilians who wanted to jump into the Balkan and Somalian quagmires. “We’re being asked to fix a civil war” the chiefs lamented about saving Somalis.<sup>146</sup> Powell warned against listening to the interventionists because the ethnic factions in Bosnia were willing to die for their political goals, the Europeans weren’t willing to use ground troops, and airstrikes wouldn’t work. For Powell, the “do something” attitude had already died in Beirut.<sup>147</sup> Admiral Jeremiah too voiced the JCS frustration with the liberal humanitarianists in the administration, “ [They] make unrealistic claims about what could be done with the use of force...they want us to volunteer military solutions to very complex political problems, and they want us to do it in a way in which no one gets hurt. It was just unreasonable.”<sup>148</sup>

The Joint Chiefs were not simply gun shy. As far back as January, experts warned against trying peacekeeping in Somalia saying “it will not be peaceful, peacekeepers will get fired on” and food supplies will get attacked.<sup>149</sup> Even those in favor of feeding Somalis on a large scale rejected the notion of a forced intervention, as Cohen warned Congress that success in such operations relied on the cooperation of the warring parties, as he explained, “The UN doesn’t fight its way in”. The JCS saw disaster on the horizon with assertive multilateralism, were doing everything they could to avoid what they saw was another Vietnam (or two) as the “do something” pressure grew throughout the summer of 1992.



When Bush ordered the airlift in August, the military did not resist the incremental policy toward doing more in Somalia (they did say no to helicopters which would be more vulnerable to ground fire)<sup>150</sup> but stood fast on its objections that Somalia was a much more serious quagmire than the interventionists were selling the administration and Congress. The military was extremely loyal to Bush especially after the Gulf War, and respected him for never micromanaging them and giving them winning wars with few casualties,<sup>151</sup> and were uncomfortable denying him anything. If anything, they hoped it would alleviate the pressure to get more directly involved, but unfortunately, the airlifts only caused greater media coverage and brought more focus on Bush's resistance to direct intervention. Bush responded to the quickly growing media and NGO pressure by calling an interagency meeting to discuss options short of intervention. In the weeks that followed, the State Department constantly pitched all sorts of alarming interventionist ideas which were seen by the Pentagon as jumping headfirst into the quagmire.<sup>152</sup>

The military was still opposed to going in and Powell and the JCS asked tough questions about a Somali intervention that the liberals had trouble responding to: "What would constitute success? How do we stay out of the civil war? How many lives will it cost? What prevents Somalia from unraveling again even if we can fix it?"<sup>153</sup> The JCS reported to Bush that the UN request to insert 4,400 troops into Somalia was not enough to conduct adequate famine relief operations, and at least a force of 12-15,000 was necessary just to secure key logistical points, and more to get food inland-- perhaps over 20,000. The JCS high troop estimates helped diffuse pressure on Bush. Scowcroft believed that the JCS had artificially inflated the estimates to convince Bush and the public to reject intervention, but knew that no one could challenge them on these assessments.<sup>154</sup>

Western writes, “As the cumulative pressures for action in Bosnia escalated, General Powell embarked on an unprecedented campaign to keep U.S. troops out of the conflict”.<sup>155</sup> In an extensive interview with the *New York Times* on September 27, Powell complained about the interventionists trying to suck the U.S. into Bosnia and Somalia, and compared their ideas about using symbolic force and airstrikes to the same mistakes that had led to the disasters in Vietnam and Beirut. Powell stated, “As soon as they tell me it’s limited, it means they don’t care if you achieve a result or not. As soon as they tell me it’s ‘surgical,’ I head for the bunker”.<sup>156</sup>

Feeling pressured for solutions and fearing Bush was might be swayed by State and the media, DOD starting writing its own more conservative proposals to get food aid flowing again, and Powell directed General Joseph P. Hoar at SOUTHCOM (Southern U.S. Forces Command) to devise a more muscular plan to aid the UN/NGO efforts.<sup>157</sup>

Jon Western’s article, *Sources of Humanitarian Intervention*,<sup>158</sup> provides a compelling argument as to what turned Powell and the Joint Chiefs around and made them state in November that they “could do the job” if ordered. Western writes that Powell and the JCS decided under continuing pressure that Somalia was “doable” if Bush ordered it, because sending 30,000 men into the open Somalia desert was much more palatable than sending 300,000 into the complicated Balkan conflict. The JCS determined that Bush could possibly cave into pressure to intervene in one or both conflicts sooner or later, but the real worry came with what the new administration who had promised heavy engagement would bring. After several meetings with President-elect Clinton, Powell was assured that Clinton (a pure liberal Wilsonian who espoused Carter-styled human rights rhetoric) would push the U.S. into getting involved politically and taking sides in Bosnia. Clinton asked Powell irritating questions about making symbolic gestures such as airstrikes “that wouldn’t hurt anybody”<sup>159</sup> and how soon they could get troops into

Bosnia. Powell feared Clinton would launch on a “feel good” mission immediately but “played it cool trying not to appear too negative”.<sup>160</sup> The JCS of staff were frustrated at both the current and the incoming administration, “everybody wants us to do something, although they can’t figure out what.” Despite his constant resistance and pessimistic reports to the NSA, Powell knew that Bush could order the military to do Somalia anyway. Powell at least trusted Bush to allow the military to match the effort to mission<sup>161</sup> and perhaps reasoned that it was better to do a limited mission under Bush in Somalia than an open-ended one in Bosnia *and* Somalia under Clinton.

The JCS rationalized that a limited famine relief operation was manageable and it would stifle the liberal humanitarianists’ attacks on the administration, reducing the chances of getting pulled into the Balkans. Intervention in Somalia they believed could be undertaken if U.S. objectives stuck to just sending and protecting relief efforts and avoided taking sides in the local power struggles. Like a minefield, the JCS were looking at ways to simply negotiate or breach this risky obstacle rather than trying to actually accomplish any definable endstate that served U.S. interests. A limited mission to feed people for a few months could prove easier than dealing with the ethnic nightmare in former Yugoslavia. Reluctantly, Admiral David Jeremiah on November 21 announced, “we can do the job” if the President ordered it, but the JCS cautioned it would be risky given the chaos and massive amounts of weaponry awash in Somalia. Although nothing had changed politically or militarily in Somalia, the military was now saying Somalia was now “doable” after a year of saying it wasn’t. Western notes, “that the mission seemed ‘doable’ is suspect; it only became ‘doable’ in the context of not doing Bosnia.”<sup>162</sup>

Scowcroft and the rest of the administration was shocked how fast Powell had shifted gears. Powell moved decisively to try to steer the policy in the direction he thought it should go once Bush made the decision. Powell’s biggest fear was that Somalia would leave the door open for

Bosnia, and he did not want anything left on the table that would obligate the military to perform another huge humanitarian operation in the future or be placed in a situation in which civilians would micromanage strategy. The Pentagon only took on the mission on the condition that State and the UN stayed out of the way.<sup>163</sup> Powell also demanded that the mission should adhere as closely to the principles of the Powell Doctrine, which he felt agreed in principle to Bush's "limited" mission plan. Bush's decision to utilize the "sledgehammer" approach suited Powell's concern for use of overwhelming force. Bush's stated limited goals, which were basically to protect food, workers, and key infrastructure assets suited Powell's belief in clearly stated military objectives. Powell also requested that the White House sell the public on the Somalian mission in order to garner more public support, and even gave it the name "Operation Restore Hope" for spin value.<sup>164</sup>

Powell took steps to ensure the mission stayed limited and took steps to try to avoid mission creep. CENTCOM, now tasked with conducting theater mission operations, told the JCS that intervening in Somalia was a very bad idea, and requested that it be even *more* limited in size and scope.<sup>165</sup> The CENTCOM plan removed all Civil Affairs and Military Police units from the brigades slated to be deployed, made sure the Army Reserves were kept on the shelf,<sup>166</sup> and it was CENTCOM that dictated to the UN what mandates and operations would be undertaken in support of the UN resolutions. In the UN's case, beggars could not be choosers, but the UN was clearly unhappy that the U.S. was only sticking to limited humanitarian goals and forgoing nation-building. The liberal humanitarians and the UN (especially Ghali) were furious when CENTCOM refused to get involved in disarming the Somali militias, but Bush supported his generals in the idea that disarmament was not realistic or in keeping with the limited nature of the U.S. mission. The military also rejected UN and State pleas to send units to safeguard

refugees on the borders. The military didn't want to get bogged down with policing, paying for missions under eroding budgets, and there was nothing to liberals could do under Bush to make them. The JCS were unwilling to expand beyond the limited mandate they had volunteered themselves for, and have to stay in Somalia any longer than it had to.<sup>167</sup> Powell's conditions for Somalia were based on a quick, limited, defined mission with no obligations to do more.<sup>168</sup> Powell had used risk avoidance to slow down and limit real action in Somalia.<sup>169</sup> Powell, who had become very influential in policymaking, couldn't prevent an invention, but he had done everything in his power to influence where and how the U.S. was going to engage in humanitarian interventions.

Although Powell had engineered the Somalia humanitarian intervention into his doctrine, he could not make a square peg fit perfectly into a round hole. The Powell Doctrine was not adhered to in many respects, and the hybrid version that was utilized was part of the flawed policy foundation. The mission as drawn up contained many fundamental shortcomings in strategic terms. There was no fundamental strategic goal or interest to be measured and achieved, the ends did not match the means, there was no real exit strategy, and public support was generally disconnected.

One of the biggest problems with Operation Restore Hope (or for any humanitarian intervention for that matter) is that the goals don't match any definable military objectives. "Create a peaceful or safe environment" and "feed hungry people or reduce the suffering" are not measurable tactical or strategic missions, but vague directives to perform *tasks*, not accomplishable military objectives. Humanitarian interventions inherently have an unclear purpose, produce inappropriate missions for military forces, and have constantly changing objectives. Contrary to what Powell and Bush stated, the mission was not clearly defined, the

planning did not provide a timetable or an endstate. It set a dangerous precedent for further ad hoc interventions, and replaced national interests with idealism. It also wasn't going to change anything long term in Somalia. "The lives that we save in Somalia will continue to be lived in a brutal environment. We are not bringing Jefferson to Somalia, we are bringing food. We are not reforming, we are rescuing."<sup>170</sup> Richard Haas, who writes with considerable State Department and academic experience, writes that, "Rescuing" is not a clearly definable objective, and it is costly. For any viable strategy to work interests must outweigh costs<sup>171</sup> -- and the U.S. had no interests in Somalia other than to demonstrate its humanity and premier position in the world.

The stated U.S. objectives in Somalia also created a conflict of interests within themselves. Humanitarian relief, national reconciliation, military security, and policing contradicted the purposes of one another. The intervening force could not insert itself in the midst of civil war, push everyone aside and dictate power dynamics and still act as the benign neutral helping hand in putting together a government and deciding who would be empowered and who would be ostracized. Aideed and the SNA were never willing to accept this outside interference (why should they?) and they threw a wrench into the works. Aideed had already been labeled in Congress as an obstruction to UN efforts long before mission had even started, and the ensuing policy attempted to either ignore or push the powerful warlord aside.<sup>172</sup> The UN quickly threatened his power base and unwittingly chose sides in the civil war against an enemy who was willing to bide his time until opportunities presented themselves. The U.S. didn't go into Somalia to engage an enemy, but to avoid creating conflict with multiple potentially hostile factions. The tactical strategy to try to cow the warlords with U.S. firepower had no political goal to meet through achieving military objectives. It was contrary to the Clausewitz's principles, to hinge action on passiveness and tactically focused activities. The peacekeeping operation mirrored

Vietnam (the very thing that ironically shaped Powell's rationale) in it was a *defensive* strategy based on a negative aim. Like Vietnam, the U.S. was playing for *time* rather than space, conceded any initiative to the enemy, to create some form of demonstration effect to create an image of "stability".<sup>173</sup>

Another fundamental flaw in the military policy was that ends and means were not matched. Powell insisted on a sizeable force for Somalia, roughly 30,000, but even that was far too small to cover most of the country and contained mostly support troops and an extremely limited number of troops dedicated to war operations, or what is known in military parlance as "trigger pullers". If one or more of the warring factions decided to resist UN actions, or violence escalated to the point that UN troops could not conduct operations in key areas, there was little the limited U.S. presence could do about it strategically.

As early as December 17, 1992 testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee showed that the thinking behind a limited mission to get the ball rolling for the UN was lacking in clarity and, and based too much on hope rather than taking logical progressive steps in tangible management. It was clear that there was no troop rotation plan, the UN was purposely delaying U.S. withdrawal, and mission creep was already taking place as nation building was becoming inherent in humanitarian operations. Rep. Toby Roth (Republican from Alabama) voiced the skepticism of many committee members when he not only questioned the UN's ability to bring in enough troops to relieve U.S. forces, but in the UN's ability to get anything useful done at all. Rep. James Oberstar (Republican from Minnesota) agreed with the assessment of the UN's fragile volunteer force, and stated he had concerns about getting out, and said besides feeding people temporarily, the military mission wasn't really accomplishing anything. Oberstar keenly noted that the "thugs were just melting into the shadows" for the time being, but

“who’s going to deal with them when we leave?” Roth added, “the longer we stay the worse it gets”, noting that the Somali gunmen and warlords weren’t really going to disarm despite any negotiations, and he was displeased to hear that the administration was sticking to the heavily rhetorical line that the U.S. would stay “as long as it takes” which he equated to a misguided U.S. adventure. “I see our policy as being very nebulous” he noted gloomily.<sup>174</sup>

Roth was proven right. The U.S. had no plan, except to hope to hand the mission off to the UN as soon as it could, a mission which the UN alone was not militarily capable of taking propriety of as long as the Somali factions were at war, especially since the Pentagon refused to engage in large-scale disarmament. The U.S. avoided engagement with its large UNITAF force, and sought only to feed people temporarily and quickly get out; leaving the UN and the smaller UNOSOM force with the mess in Somalia, which it was ill-equipped to deal with. The U.S. force did not fix or even abate the civil war, and left the enemy untouched and unhindered leaving them more confident to strike later against a weaker force. The means did not match the ends to the policy.

Another key main problem in Operation Restore Hope was that it violated another one of Powell’s conditions. There was no exit strategy, and Powell knew it.<sup>175</sup> The question was left unresolved. The Bush team acknowledged within two weeks that a pullout by the inauguration was unfeasible and made vague references to getting out by May.<sup>176</sup> Bush aides also stated that the Somalia intervention was a political agenda that president-elect Clinton would not be able to abandon, and insinuated that Clinton would likely not be up to the task<sup>177</sup> but nonetheless they left it to him to figure out the details how to get out. The plan to shift a peace keeping mission to a lighter UN force after UNITAF extricated itself banked on negotiations that would get the Somalis to disarm themselves (an overly optimistic assumption if there ever was one). Since



these ongoing negotiations were yielding few positive results, they could not be seriously constituted in any exit strategy for the limited UNITAF mission. Getting out had nothing to do with meeting any stated goals, but simply waiting for the fumbling and erratic UN to relieve the U.S. force. This, however, was another problem and further complicated the issue of not having an exit strategy.

The Bush administration could not set a pullout timetable and was content to keep the matter ambiguous as possible. Congress itself could not get straight answers from the administration about when U.S. troops would hand off the mission to the UN, or how that was to be accomplished. Success, they were told, hinged upon quickly handing the mission off to the UN for a peacekeeping mission. Congress, however, had already been repeatedly told by Houdek that there was no peace to keep, the UN would not impose peace on Somalia, and yet no one will do a peacekeeping mission without a cease-fire agreement and an open-ended commitment.<sup>178</sup> There was no lasting cease-fire agreement, and the commitment was obviously open-ended, and Congress was left wondering how long it was going to take to get UN troops in place to relieve American forces in the “clearly limited” mission.<sup>179</sup> The bulk of U.S. forces could not be withdrawn until the sluggish UN could get volunteer contingents to replace them. The U.S. had no direct means of controlling this key process towards extricating itself and just assumed a major element of its exit strategy would be fulfilled by others, hoping everything would work itself out at some point in the near future. Meanwhile, the costs increased as the UN continually delayed the handoff and mission creep was pulling the U.S. into unwanted nation-building tasks. Getting out, as predicted by Powell and Kennan, wasn’t proving as easy as getting in. The U.S. couldn’t just walk away from Somalia as planned. Oakley warned Bush that in order to prevent a return to the chaos, the UN was going to have to place a minimum of 20,000 troops for a long

term in Somalia and that the U.S. would have to commit several thousand American troops in reserve if needed with 8,000 logistical troops to support them.<sup>180</sup> Since UN troops were incapable of maintaining order on their own or conduct major logistical support operations to sustain themselves, U.S. troops could never completely pull out. Although the issue was addressed within the administration and in Congressional committees, there was no viable exit strategy. The U.S. was now stuck holding the UN's hand in Somalia as long as a sizeable UN force was deployed there.

Support for the conversion to peacekeeping and humanitarian rescue were at best tenuous, and this key element of a successful foreign policy was missing. Congress was not giving clear signals to the Bush administration about intervention, although the most vocal liberal advocates such as Rep. Donald Payne (Democrat, New Jersey) and Senator Nancy Kassebaum (Republican, Kansas) were not shy in pushing their humanitarian agenda. Congress had demanded the State Department do something to address the growing crisis throughout 1992<sup>181</sup> but the pressure from the liberal humanitarianists, fueled later by the CNN effect, caused most in Congress to accept the conventional wisdom that the administration was not doing enough. This intensified as the election drew nearer and the airlifts began in August. Congress was highly reactive to what it perceived was a strong mass "feel good" movement to feed Somalia, and this reaction by Congress in turn helped shape public opinion with spin.<sup>182</sup>

Bush did not request Congressional authority (nor was he required to) to launch a military intervention in Somalia, and Congress did not even officially sanction the Somalia operation until February 1993. Although partisan bickering over the War Powers Act later ensued in early 1993,<sup>183</sup> Congress made it clear during UNITAF that they weren't questioning Bush's authority to use force, including the Republican selective engagers<sup>184</sup> and the liberal Democrats<sup>185</sup> who

feared another Presidential Vietnam-styled abuse of power.<sup>186</sup> Humanitarian concerns were used as justifications to shelve the issue, and Congress abdicated its oversight role in the decision to use force. Congress did nothing to challenge Bush's actions or even Clinton's later conversion of the mission to nation building. Congress supported a limited humanitarian mission under Bush, and blessed a Chapter VII mission under Clinton with little floor debate. Despite the strong reservations of conservatives who feared the slippery slope of assertive multilateralism, (as Murtha stated, "I see starving kids, I don't see national interests,")<sup>187</sup> Congress generally simply accepted what was handed to them by the media and then by Bush. The policy direction of Congress in Somalia was to just go with the flow and to accept a rudderless policy "driven by oozing sentimentality in the global information age".<sup>188</sup>

Public support was overestimated by both Bush and Clinton (and many in Congress) throughout almost all of Operation Restore Hope. No evidence ever showed that the public had shifted to a desire to intervene rather than to continue airlift and support operations. The public sent mixed signals about helping Somalia and so did the polls. Pundits saw what they wanted to see in the polls, the liberal humanitarianists were bashing Bush for inaction before the intervention, but the public itself was divided and confused over the U.S. role in Somalia.<sup>189</sup> The consensus of the media and liberal humanitarianists for an intervention, however, did not translate into a mandate from the public. Bush also did absolutely no public preparation for the use of forces in a hostile environment<sup>190</sup> which was another indication the strategic planning was incredibly negligent and taking great leaps to assume that the public was completely on board in jumping headfirst into peacekeeping and the dangers of the Somali civil war. Bush made the statement that "All Americans feel for the Somalis and their conditions" prior to his visit there,<sup>191</sup> which was a reasonable conclusion if not a slight overstatement that Americans wanted the

government to help feed the Somali population, but not about launching a large military intervention . The public, however, did not support prolonged, open-ended, or risky operations for humanitarian goals.<sup>192</sup> Bush had calculated correctly (following Powell's "doable" line of thinking) that the Somali adventure during the remainder of his term would be low-risk and the public would support or at least be apathetic towards his brand of "drive-through" humanitarian engagement. Public opinion on the use of force in Somalia was confused, erratic and would prove increasingly fickle. Public support was not connected to the strategic planning, because it was not accurately gauged--it was *assumed* based on image-driven sentimentality rather than interests. In successful military operations, interests must outweigh costs in the public's eye, and this calculation was discarded in the policy formulation process because the costs were ignored and the interests did not exist.

Although the American intervention under UNITAF fit many (but hardly all) of the lofty criteria of the Powell Doctrine and claimed to be doing so much in the way of saving lives and restoring Somalia, it actually was accomplishing little and the mission process was not under control.

UNITAF created enough security to distribute aid, but little else.<sup>193</sup> UNITAF made the warlords back off, but freelancing thugs came out of the woodwork to prey upon areas receiving aid. NGOs complained that strong military presences in the larger coastal cities only forced weaker factions and bandits to plunder the outlying areas in the interior.<sup>194</sup> Food was being protected, but much of it still eventually ended up in gunman's hands once it left the distribution points, and large quantities of food stuffs found their way to local markets to be resold at high prices in their original containers.

Food was effectively being brought inland, but banditry still reigned. It was too hard for the military to catch groups of thieves and hijackers because these criminals had no central structure to go after, and wouldn't fight when confronted and they simply ran away.<sup>195</sup> The passive Rules of Engagement (ROE) created by the military only made matters worse. Correctly assessing that a passive military presence would not overly agitate the local population, the military also encouraged the thugs and bandits to simply continue to plunder but as long as they avoided direct lethal confrontation with UNITAF forces. The ROE were drafted in a language that was based upon the principles of peacekeeping and self-defense, and allowed little in the way for taking direct action to promote security. Gunmen were soon made confident that American soldiers would not challenge them and unarmed civilians showed little respect or fear either. Soldiers became frustrated as the Somalis continued to test the limits of what U.S. forces would tolerate, even to the point of stealing the sunglasses off their faces and occasionally pelting patrols with rocks. Verbal threats did not work against hordes of thieves at food points, and restraint only encouraged the Somalis to try more mischief. Thieves were often captured but immediately released as UNITAF had no capability to hold prisoners and Resolution 794 gave no authority to detain civilians.<sup>196</sup> Trying to prevent theft was impossible, as the Somalis felt no fear or remorse stealing from *kaffirs* (unbelievers) who refused to punish thieves or respond to provocations. It was part of their culture. Ambassador Hempstone warned the administration about this, "In the old days, the Somalis raided for camels, women, and slaves. Now they raid for camels, women, slaves, and food."<sup>197</sup> UNITAF could protect the food pipeline but do little else. Had UNITAF been an occupying force, it could have imposed law and provided general security to the population<sup>198</sup> but that was not the plan. UNITAF was drawn up to be a non-confrontational force,

which served the immediate purposes of getting in and out of Somalia faster, but lost credibility with the gunmen and militias it was supposed to intimidate.

Like the military, UN agencies were also frustrated with dealing with the ungrateful Somalis and failing to find lasting solutions to stimulating economic activity as alternatives to simply handed out food. “Many Somalis thought foreign aid should be an outright gift.” The UN attempted to give “an equitable distribution of jobs in a place where half the population was openly hostile yet still expecting its fair share was extremely difficult.”<sup>199</sup> UN and NGO workers were constantly plagued with theft, graft, and even extortion from Somalis hired on to aid missions. Bribing local militias was usually necessary the easiest way to conduct humanitarian operations without major confrontations, despite the fact that aid distribution benefited everyone including the gunmen. Feeding thousands and trying to put the Somalis back on their feet economically wasn’t affecting the dog-eat-dog mentality of the population during UNITAF. All the generosity aside, the Somalis gave no indication they were about to change their self-destructive ways for anyone and no real progress was made in ending the chaotic culture and “bringing them back into the family of nations”.

The UN resolutions designed to create a political solution were also achieving little under UNITAF. It was commonly held that an outside force could not impose peace on Somalia, and it was up to the Somalis themselves to work out their differences for themselves. This, however, never materialized in anything other than warlords making empty promises and attending useless peace conferences. The UN had been trying to encourage a cease-fire and a national reconciliation process, but had made little headway as an outside force before UNITAF arrived. Once on the ground, diplomacy through Oakley initially yielded temporary gains for UNITAF, as Aideed and Mahdi agreed not to attack the peacekeepers and to disperse their heavy

weapons.<sup>200</sup> This kept the intervention non-confrontational during UNITAF, but did nothing to solve the civil war or end the chaos occurring across the country. Initially, fifteen factions agreed to a ceasefire and to disarm and to establish a Somali police force, but none of this ever took place. Despite the inability to get the warlords to do anything substantial, Robert Houdek only reported to Congress that “broad but uneven progress” was taking place in reconciliation talks.<sup>201</sup>

The UN made it clear it was not in Somalia to impose a settlement<sup>202</sup> and spent the course of UNITAF bargaining with those that had no interests in making peace. The UN and U.S. State Department were forced to deal with the warlords in seeking diplomatic solutions, although in doing in so, they were legitimizing them in the process and excluded the Somalis not controlled by them. The UN had no real plan beyond trying to get the warlords to agree to stop fighting<sup>203</sup> and the warlords only wanted rewarded for their cooperation.<sup>204</sup> Aideed in particular enjoyed putting the UN over a barrel and forcing concessions from them whenever he could, and he had to be at the center of any settlement or else he would assuredly attack UNITAF forces.<sup>205</sup> The bigger problem, however, was that no clan really wanted national reconciliation, only recognition as the legitimate leadership of any new Somali state. Partition was also immediately ruled out<sup>206</sup> since the UN has a unrealistic built-in aversion to redrawing borders on maps since the 1975 Helsinki Conference. The warlords used the negotiations as a means to manipulate the UN, and drive wedges between the American and UN positions on reconciliation. Aideed established an agenda in which the warlords would call the shots by agreeing to a disarmament which never occurred but gave him a pivotal protected “cooperative” position in the negotiations. He then successfully “began amplifying Somalia misgivings about the UN in order to marginalize the UN in favor of the United States who he regarded as a more potent, although

more corruptible, backer.”<sup>207</sup> Aideed and other key SNA leaders insisted on UN neutrality while playing for U.S. support of their own clan “which was incompatible with equilibrium among clans”.<sup>208</sup>

Once Aideed ascertained the U.S. was not going to back his power play and could not be manipulated into promoting his clan into a prominent position to seize authority, he was prepared to take alternative measures. After a promise to place Kismayu under his influence and take it away from Colonel Morgan was reversed, Aideed staged protests to split UN cohesion over the peace process. The UN had no plan how to handle Aideed; it lost the strategic initiative under UNITAF and left Howe to later stumble towards an open confrontation with him when it had few resources and little political will to deal with him under UNOSOM II. Aideed felt no need to cooperate any longer as futile UN reconciliation efforts looked like weakness to him and weren't putting any new territories on his plate. By January 1993, Aideed wanted UNITAF out and was preparing to attack the weaker incoming UNOSOM II force if his position was not respected.<sup>209</sup> The warlords, Aideed in particular, were not only not buying into national reconciliation-- they were doing everything they could to prevent it. Although the optimistic UN and U.S. planners couldn't see it, most Somalis in position of power could not stomach the idea of neutral political system<sup>210</sup> and the political efforts being made under UNITAF were simply a futile waste of time.

Most of the immediate diplomacy with the factions revolved around an attempt to get the warlords and their gunmen to mutually disarm, which never occurred under UNITAF or UNOSOM II. One of the most prominent debates among scholars of the Somali intervention is the key issue of the decision not to forcefully disarm the factions under UNITAF. Liberal humanitarians have used the decision to not disarm the Somalis as the pivotal reason why the intervention failed, while selective engagement critics find such assumptions to be based upon



unrealistic expectations and a ready excuse to disguise the inherent flaws of assertive multilateralism.<sup>211</sup> The importance of this issue in the context of the discussion here is not whether or not it would have been beneficial, but rather that it is further evidence indicating that the administration did not care to involve itself in activities which would (or would not) change the situation in Somalia in the long term.

The disarmament issue is the make-or-break point in the U.S. policymaking process, and the Bush administration wasn't interested in addressing the breakdown of the Somali state and its ongoing civil war. Bush wanted to address famine and the horrible *images* it was producing with *images* of a robust humanitarian intervention led by a powerful yet compassionate United States. Ending violence between Somali factions was secondary, ancillary, but certainly not critical to UNITAF's goals or anything thereafter. The problem was that it was a primary goal for Ghali and the UN. Ghali had convinced the Security Council to do a peace enforcement mission which was laid out in Resolution 794, but he had no control over U.S. military policy. Ghali accepted Eagleberger's terms for a U.S. -led intervention, but he immediately told Washington he wanted disarmament and mine clearing to become part of the UNITAF operation, which would mean a long stay for the Americans. CENTCOM convinced the president not to try to disarm the factions because a coercive disarming policy would require "a Gulf War size force", they would have to take on the whole population at once, and would ignite Islamic fundamentalism.<sup>212</sup> State also complained that Ghali kept "moving the goal posts" once the U.S. agreed to go in and reiterated the U.S. was only performing a limited mission.<sup>213</sup> Ghali later commented that it was the U.S. that was the problem in formulating cohesive policy, as the administration waffled over everything and backed off promises to help UN long term operations, stating "you can't trust the U.S."<sup>214</sup> Ghali's lofty (if not unrealistic) expectations of what military intervention could

accomplish in rebuilding Somalia was not on the American policymaker's itinerary, and he overestimated and then became embittered by the extremely limited action the U.S. was actually going to take surrounded by so the impressive fanfare imagery created by Operation Restore Hope.

With lawlessness unchecked, political reconciliation unfolding as an elusive fantasy, and disarmament made highly unlikely without the large UNITAF force to kick start it, the limited intervention in Somalia was accomplishing very little other than temporarily feeding people. Even this noble endeavor seemed futile, which Hempstone dryly noted, "The kids you save from starving to death in 1993 could starve to death again in 1994, unless we are prepared to remain..."<sup>215</sup> The two-month operation was already costing taxpayers over \$1 billion and climbing, and wasn't accomplishing anything beyond creating symbolism that neither addressed nor benefited U.S. national interests. The only aspect of the policy that seemed to play out as advertised (other than the inherent no-risk philosophy underlying it) was the fact that it was limited in design and soon the mess in Somalia would be the UN's problem.

Unfortunately, the Bush plan to transition the operation to the UN was not realistic, and the quick hand-off plan was more fantasy than solid policy planning. The U.S. also did not create a more stable Somalia to turn over to the UN because the mission was strictly limited to protecting food and based on practicing risk aversion so the local population wouldn't fight U.S. forces.<sup>216</sup> Bush overestimated the UN's ability to take over such a large and complex operation, and the U.S. became stuck in Somalia just as Ambassador Hempstone had warned. UNITAF had been given specific tasks, but mission creep with nation-building was already setting in because UN units were incapable of fulfilling key tasks or they hadn't arrived as scheduled.<sup>217</sup> The UN had trouble matching promises for contingents to putting boots on the ground, quotas weren't being

met, delays compounded, and the quality of the small contingents arriving was often quite poor.<sup>218</sup> The new UNOSOM II command kept begging the U.S. to leave equipment and units behind, and pushed for further delays of units already scheduled for departure.<sup>219</sup> The Americans had set themselves up for two bad choices: pull-out as planned and leave the weak UN force to fail or commit deeply to the ongoing and unlimited UNOSOM II mission which Ghali wanted to transform into a nation-building project.<sup>220</sup> Rep. Lee Hamilton summed up the policy problem of staying succinctly: “If we tie the withdrawal of American troops to political stability that opens the risk of quagmire.”<sup>221</sup> By convincing themselves that the mission was to be limited and quickly handed off to the UN (which was incapable of receiving the mission on its own) the U.S. was stuck and an increasing number of units and costs would have to be contributed indefinitely. Despite the effort to tailor Operation Restore Hope to the Powell Doctrine, the Bush policymakers failed to achieve one of its most basic premises. UNITAF did not have an endstate.

The limited venture of UNITAF turned out to be much ado about little. As George Kennan argued as the operation was being undertaken, the policy was designed to treat the symptoms rather than the causes of Somalia’s ills, and it would end up becoming an open-ended commitment to spend billions there while the U.S. faced deficits at home.<sup>222</sup> Diplomacy for national reconciliation or even creating a basis for clan equilibrium was proving pointless, as no faction was willing to share power and no settlement would work without full disarmament which would require taking on a nation of insurgents, warlords, and bandits. Since the Bush/Powell plan was based on risk-aversion, nothing was done about the civil war or state of lawlessness even to the point of passivity which encouraged Somalis to see how far they could test U.S. soldiers’ restraint and judge American resolve to utilize force.

American foreign policy in Somalia under George Bush was built on the unsteady foundations of Wilsonianism and multilateralism, and was designed to be a quick-fix to counterbalance the imagery of starving people with an image of a powerful caring nation feeding the victims of famine. Rhetoric and humanitarianism fueled the reactionary and unsupported policy that ignored national interests and warnings not to step into the quagmire of Somalia, and Bush attempted to mitigate the risks inherent in his flawed policy by practicing risk-aversion through a supposedly limited mission that accomplished very little for fulfilling the UN resolutions or rebuilding the Somali state. U.S. policy in Somalia wasn't supposed to do any of that-- it was supposed to get in, look good doing it, feel good about saving strangers, and get out without doing anything that would ensue taking any real risks or keeping the U.S. committed to rebuilding Somalia. None of these things being done in Somalia would have any lasting positive effect or served any U.S. national interests. This wasn't foreign policy; it was pure political theater based on imagery and risk aversion.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Conversation witnessed by the author during a military field exercise in 2002. U.S. Army Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) even at the lowest levels are trained to instinctively plan for each phase of the operation, plan on contingencies, and to expect to operate in less than perfect situations.

<sup>2</sup> For more on Bush's foreign policy, see Stephen R. Graubard, *Mr. Bush's War: Adventures in the Politics of Illusion* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), John Robert Greene, *The Presidency of George Bush* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2000), Ryan J. Barilleaux and Mary E. Stuckey, ed. *Leadership and the Bush Presidency* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1992), Ryan J. Barilleaux and Mark J. Rozell, *Power and Prudence: The Presidency of George H.W. Bush* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2004).

<sup>3</sup> Graubard, 167.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 169.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 175.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 169.

<sup>8</sup> For more on casualties and the impact on U.S. military operations in the modern era, see Adrian Lewis, *The American Culture of War: The History of U.S. Military Force from World War II to Operation Iraqi Freedom* (New York: Routledge, 2007), Daniel Bolger *Death Ground: Today's American Infantry in Battle* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1999), Richard N. Haas, *Intervention: The Use of Military Force in the Post-Cold War World* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 1999) and MG Robert H. Scales Jr., *Yellow Smoke: The Future of Land Warfare for America's Military* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003).

<sup>9</sup> Many of the units used in the Gulf War, especially those of the armor-heavy VII Corps, along with numerous air wings were quickly dismantled in defense downsizing, which was spun to the public in corporate speak by Pentagon planners as "rightsizing." The cuts in infantry forces continued under the next two administrations creating a critical shortage for future ground operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

<sup>10</sup> Graubard, 172.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 168.

<sup>12</sup> Patrick Glynn, "Why Africa?" *New Republic*, 28 December 1992, 20.

<sup>13</sup> (Fleitz, 98) Frederick H. Fleitz, Jr., *Peacekeeping Fiascos of the 1990s: Causes, Solutions, and U.S. Interests* (Westport, CT: Praeger Press, 2002), 98.

<sup>14</sup> Jon Western, "Sources of Humanitarian Intervention: Beliefs, Information, and Advocacy in the U.S. Decisions on Somalia and Bosnia," *International Security* 26, no. 4 (Spring 2002): 112-142.

<sup>15</sup> Fleitz, 104.

<sup>16</sup> Michael G. Mackinnon, *The Evolution of U.S. Peacekeeping Policy Under Clinton: A Fairweather Friend?* (London: Frank Cass, 2000).

<sup>17</sup> Warren Strobel, "Bush Ponders Sending Troops as Peacekeepers," *The Washington Times*, 18 September 1992, A7.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> For more on UN operations and increasing missions in the 1990s, see Ramesh Thakur and Carlyle A. Thayer ed., *A Crisis of Expectations: UN Peacekeeping in the 1990s* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995), William J. Durch, ed., *The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping: Case Studies and Comparative Analysis* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), William J. Durch, *UN Peacekeeping, American Politics, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), Andrzej Sitkowski, *UN Peacekeeping: Myth and Reality* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), and Nicholas Wheeler, *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>20</sup> Western, 123.

<sup>21</sup> Muhammad Sahnoun and Joe Stork, "It's Difficult to Point to a Situation Where Armed Intervention Represented a Solution: An Interview With Muhammad Sahnoun," *Middle East Report* no. 187/188: 28-33.

<sup>22</sup> Western, 125.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 117-118.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Congress, House, Select Committee on Hunger, *Humanitarian Tragedy in Somalia: Hearing before the Select Committee On Hunger*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 30 January, 1992.

<sup>26</sup> Western, 124-126.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 128.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 140.

<sup>30</sup> Peter J. Schraeder, "From Ally to Orphan: Understanding U.S. Policy toward Somalia after the Cold War," in James M. Scott, ed., *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 338.

<sup>31</sup> Western, 135.

<sup>32</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Crisis and Chaos in Somalia: Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 16 September 1992, 71-72.

<sup>33</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, *Administration's Plan for Continued U.S. Military Participation in Somalia*, 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 21 October, 1993, 19.

<sup>34</sup> Congress, House, Select Committee on Hunger, *Humanitarian Tragedy in Somalia: Hearing before the Select Committee On Hunger*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 30 January, 1992, 35.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 21.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 4-5.

<sup>37</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Crisis and Chaos in Somalia: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 16 September 1992, 27.

<sup>38</sup> Western, 139.

<sup>39</sup> Western, 128.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 130.

<sup>41</sup> Based on Jon Western interview with Brent Scowcroft. Ibid, 130.

<sup>42</sup> Scott, 321.

<sup>43</sup> Western, 136.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 118.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 136.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 112.

<sup>48</sup> Patrick Glynn, "Why Africa?" *New Republic*, 28 December 1992, 20.

<sup>49</sup> Warren Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy: The News Media's Influence on Peace Operations* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 4.

<sup>50</sup> See Warren Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy: The News Media's Influence on Peace Operations* and Eric V. Larson, *Casualties and Consensus: the Historic Role of Casualties in Domestic Support for U.S. Military Operations* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1996).

<sup>51</sup> Representatives of NGOs testifying in Congress complained that nobody cared about Somalia before August and that the media only sticks around for sensational stories. They also noted that as a rule, as humanitarian relief organizations performed better saving people, the less coverage they got. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Crisis and Chaos in Somalia: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 16 September 1992.

<sup>52</sup> See Warren Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy*, Steven Livingston and Todd Euchas, "Humanitarian Crisis and U.S. Foreign Policy: Somalia and the CNN Effect Reconsidered," *Political Communication* 12, no. 4 (October-December 1995), 425.

<sup>53</sup> See Ryan J. Barilleux and Mark J. Rozell, *Power and Prudence: The Presidency of George Bush* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M Press), 2004 and John Robert Greene, *The Presidency of George Bush* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press), 2000.

<sup>54</sup> For information on polls on Bush and Somalia see Strobel *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy*, Robert Greene, *The Presidency of George Bush*, and Louis J. Klarevas, "Trends: The United States Peace Operation in Somalia," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 64, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 523-540.

<sup>55</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Crisis and Chaos in Somalia: Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 16 September 1992.

<sup>56</sup> Strobel, 136.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Schraeder writes, "In both cases, White House recognition of popular discontent with existing policies allowed a certain degree of latitude in fashioning an appropriate policy response. Although domestic discontentment formed the backdrop of the policy and in some sense restrained the range of choices available to Bush and Clinton, both White House decisions nonetheless demonstrated the importance of presidential politics in understanding the final

policy choice. This constraint was perhaps more evident in the Clinton decision due to the president's desire to ensure his reelection in 1996, whereas Bush's decision was geared toward how his administration would be remembered, given the fact that he had lost the 1992 presidential elections. Peter J. Schraeder, "From Ally to Orphan: Understanding U.S. Policy toward Somalia After the Cold War," in James M. Scott, ed., *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War World*.

<sup>59</sup> Mary Stuckey and Frederick J. Antczak, "Governance as Political Theater: George Bush and the MTV Presidency," in Ryan J. Barilleux and Mary E. Stuckey, ed., *Leadership and the Bush Presidency: Prudence or Drift In an Era of Change?* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1992), 24.

<sup>60</sup> For concise polling information on Somalia see Louis J. Klaravas, "Trends: The United States Peace Operation in Somalia," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 64, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 523-540.

<sup>61</sup> See Richard Haas, *The Reluctant Sheriff: The United States After the Cold War* (New York: Council of Foreign Relations, 1997). Haas strongly presents a Realist approach to foreign policy which is highly critical of "feel good" humanitarian interventions requiring a strong military presence, stating "foreign policy is not therapy," 133.

<sup>62</sup> President, George Bush, "Transcript of President's Address on Somalia," *New York Times*, 5 December, 1992, A4.

<sup>63</sup> President, George Bush, "Address to the Nation: Humanitarian Mission to Somalia," *U.S. Department of State Dispatch* 3, no. 49, (7 December, 1992): 865.

<sup>64</sup> Dorcas Eva McCoy, "American Post-Cold War Images and Foreign Policy Preferences toward 'Dependent' States: A Case Study of Somalia," *World Affairs* 163, no. 1, (Summer 2000): 39.

<sup>65</sup> See McCoy, "American Post-Cold War Images and Foreign Policy."

<sup>66</sup> President, George Bush, "Address to the Nation: Humanitarian Mission to Somalia."

<sup>67</sup> State Department, Edward Perkins, Statement by the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations before the UN Security Council: *Humanitarian Crisis in Somalia*. *U.S. Department of State Dispatch* 3, no. 50 (14 December, 1992): 877.

<sup>68</sup> Also see Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Crisis and Chaos in Somalia: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*. NGOs pressured Congress to take actions for pure demonstration value in September, 1992.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> See Jon Western, "Sources of Humanitarian Intervention: Beliefs, Information, and Advocacy in the U.S. Decisions on Somalia and Bosnia," *International Security*.

<sup>71</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Crisis and Chaos in Somalia: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 33.

<sup>72</sup> President, George Bush, "Question-and-Answer session in Grand Rapids, MI, 29 October, 1992. *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, George Bush 1992-1993*, Book II, August 1, 1992-January 20, 1993, (United States Government Printing Office, 1993), 2084.

<sup>73</sup> President, George Bush, "Remarks on Lighting the National Christmas Tree" 10 December, 1992. *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, George Bush 1992-1993*, Book II, August 1, 1992-January 20, 1993, (United States Government Printing Office, 1993), 2182.

<sup>74</sup> See Daniel P. Bolger, *Savage Peace: Americans at War in the 1990s* (Nacato, CA: Presidio Press, 1995) and Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York: Perseus Books, 2002), 205.

<sup>75</sup> Bolger, 284.

<sup>76</sup> John R. Bolton, "Wrong Turn in Somalia," *Foreign Affairs* 3, no 1. (January/February 1994).

<sup>77</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, "*Somalia: Prospects for Peace and Stability: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs House of Representatives*, 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 16 March, 1994. See Payne's statement on Bush's flawed policy to ignore Clarke's advice and to work separately from UN.

<sup>78</sup> Jon Western interview with Cohen, "Sources of Humanitarian Intervention: Beliefs, Information, and Advocacy in the U.S. Decisions on Somalia and Bosnia," *International Security*: 115-116.

<sup>79</sup> Assertive multilateralism had something in it to please almost everyone. See Jennifer Sterling-Folker, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Assertive Multilateralism and Post-Cold War U.S. Foreign Policy Making," in James M. Scott, ed., *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 278.

<sup>80</sup> Graubard, 166.

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<sup>81</sup> Fleitz, 97.

<sup>82</sup> See John Robert Greene, *The Presidency of George Bush*, Ryan J. Barilleaux and Mary E. Stuckey, ed. *Leadership and the Bush Presidency*, Ryan J. Barilleaux and Mark J. Rozell, *Power and Prudence: The Presidency of George H.W. Bush*, and Martin J. Medhurst, ed., *The Rhetorical Presidency of George H.W. Bush*, (College Station, TX: Texas A&M Press, 2006).

<sup>83</sup> For election impact on Somalia policy see Jon Western, 127 and Schraeder, 353.

<sup>84</sup> Schraeder, 337.

<sup>85</sup> Congress, House, Select Committee on Hunger, *Humanitarian Tragedy in Somalia: Hearing before the Select Committee on Hunger, House of Representatives*, 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 30 January 1992.

<sup>86</sup> Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 385.

<sup>87</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Crisis and Chaos in Somalia: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 61.

<sup>88</sup> See statement made by Rep. William F. Goodling (PA) who claimed it was apolitical because the election had passed and “we had no interests there other than humanitarian”. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Crisis In Somalia: Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 17 December, 1992, 18.

<sup>89</sup> Schraeder, 338.

<sup>90</sup> See Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 280 and Lance Morrow, “In Feeding Somalia and Backing Yeltsin, America Discovers the Limits of Idealism,” *Time*, 18 October, 1993, 38-49.

<sup>91</sup> Michael Wines, “Aides Say U.S. Role in Somalia Gives Bush a Way to Exit in Glory” *New York Times*, 6 November, 1992, A8.

<sup>92</sup> Russell Watson and Thomas de Frank, “A Farewell Tour,” *Newsweek* 121, no. 2, (11 January, 1993), 16.

<sup>93</sup> President, George Bush, “Presidents Remarks on START II and Somalia Trip,” *U.S. Department of State Dispatch* 4, no.1, (4 January 1993): 5.

<sup>94</sup> Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 283.

<sup>95</sup> Fewer than half the troops arriving by Jan. were foreign, most sent token forces. See Jonathan Stevenson, “Hope Restored in Somalia?” *Foreign Policy*, Issue 91, (Summer 1993): 138-154 and Ted Galen Carpenter, “Foreign Policy Peril: Somalia Set a Dangerous Precedent,” *USA Today Magazine* 121, no. 2576, (May 1993), 10.

<sup>96</sup> Bolton, 60-61.

<sup>97</sup> Comments based on Fleitz’s views of peacekeeping policy in *Peacekeeping Fiascos of the 1990s*, 169.

<sup>98</sup> United Nations, Boutros-Boutros Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventative Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping: a Report of the Secretary General Pursuant Adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council*, 31 January 1992. Available at <http://www.un.org/docs/SG/agpeace.html>

<sup>99</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Crisis and Chaos in Somalia: Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*.

<sup>100</sup> Walter S. Clarke, “Testing the World’s Resolve in Somalia,” *Parameters* no. 10, (Winter 1992-1993): 42-58.

<sup>101</sup> Galen, “Foreign Policy Peril.”

<sup>102</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Crisis and Chaos in Somalia: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*.

<sup>103</sup> It was stipulated in Eagleberger’s meeting with Ghali that if Clinton disagreed with the plan they would withdrawal immediately after January 21st. Clinton quickly publicly endorsed the mission in early December, making the Jan 19<sup>th</sup> deadline a moot point.

<sup>104</sup> Walter S. Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst, ed., *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Intervention* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 242.

<sup>105</sup> Clarke, “Testing the World’s Resolve in Somalia.”

<sup>106</sup> The Americans weren’t the only humanitarians planning on making a show of it and quickly extricating their forces. Many of the European contingents, especially the French, were transparent in their desire to perform political theater through a short demonstration of humanitarian intervention. See Walter S. Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst, ed., *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Intervention*.

<sup>107</sup> For DOD stated objectives, goals, and interests see Kent H. Butts, “The DOD Role in African Policy,” *Parameters* 23, no. 4, (Winter 1993): 459-73.

<sup>108</sup> Since 2007, much has been made of the Al Qaeda connection in Somalia and its threat to national security, which to date of this writing the impact remains fairly obscure and speculative. No strong arguments have emerged linking the events of Operation Restore Hope to combating elements of radical Islamic fundamentalism during the operation. As noted in Chapter 1, Somalia is not a very fertile environment for foreign based radical Islamic



widespread movements, but its continuous isolated and lawless state allows all sorts of undesirable elements to take refuge there. If anything, the intervention inflamed anti-Western/anti-American sentiment, and Al Qaeda introduced a serious presence long after the mission, not before Bush's decision to intervene. Linking an Al Qaeda threat to a security consideration for undertaking or continuing Operation Restore Hope in 1992-1994 is not chronologically logical, as no strong threat was assessed until at least 2003. For appearance of Al Qaeda in Somalia see Alex Perry, "Remember Somalia?" *Time* 170, no. 24, (10 December 2007), 50-55.

<sup>109</sup> For a treatment of modern American foreign policy as a continuation of moral foundations, images and idealism, see Tony Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

<sup>110</sup> See Gary T. Dempsey and Roger W. Fountaine, *Fool's Errands: America's Recent Encounters with Nation Building* (Washington, D.C.: Cato Institute, 2002) and Dennis C. Jett, *Why Peacekeeping Fails* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

<sup>111</sup> President, George Bush, "Humanitarian Aid to Somalia," *Communication from the President of the United States Transmitting his Report Regarding the Humanitarian Crisis in Somalia, Pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2151 NT*, " 5 January 1993.

<sup>112</sup> See Michael E. O'Hanlon, *The Art of War in the Age of Peace: U.S. Military Posture in the Post-Cold War* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1992).

<sup>113</sup> Maina Kiai, "Perestroika's Impact on Policy Toward Somalia," *TransAfrica Forum* 7, no. 1 (Spring 1990): 17.

<sup>114</sup> For more on the flaws of liberal multilateralism and commonly made excuses for failed interventions, see Gary T. Dempsey and Roger W. Fountaine, *Fool's Errands: America's Recent Encounters with Nation Building*

<sup>115</sup> *The Crisis In Somalia: Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 17 December, 1992, 3.

<sup>116</sup> State Department, Edward Perkins, Statement by the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations before the UN Security Council: *Humanitarian Crisis in Somalia. U.S. Department of State Dispatch* 3, no. 50, (14 December, 1992): 877.

<sup>117</sup> State Department, Arnold Kantor, "America's Commitment to Human Rights: Address at Commemoration of Human Rights Day," Washington D.C., 10 December 1992. *U.S. Department of State Dispatch* 3, no. 51, (21 December 1992): 904.

<sup>118</sup> Elaine Sciolino, "Doubts at CIA," *The New York Times* 2 December, 1992, A18.

<sup>119</sup> See Gary T. Dempsey and Roger W. Fountaine, *Fool's Errands: America's Recent Encounters with Nation Building*.

<sup>120</sup> Walter Isaacson, "Sometimes, Right Makes Right," *Time* 140, no. 25, (21 December, 1992), 82.

<sup>121</sup> George F. Kennan, "Somalia, Through a Glass a Darkly," *The New York Times*, 30 September, 1993, A25.

<sup>122</sup> Jean Kirkpatrick, "Somalia; Audition of Clinton Foreign Policy," *Human Events* 53, no. 44, (30 October, 1993): 12.

<sup>123</sup> Pat Towell, "Suffering Spurs Unprecedented Step as U.N. Approves Deployment," *Congressional Quarterly* 50, no. 48, (5 December, 1992): 3761.

<sup>124</sup> Smith Hempstone, portions of cable to U.S. State Department printed for publication, "An Ambassador's Warning: Think Three Times before You Embrace the Somalia Tarbaby," in *U.S. News and World Report*, 14 December, 1992, A8.

<sup>125</sup> Elaine Sciolino, "Doubts at CIA," *The New York Times*, 2 December, 1992, A18.

<sup>126</sup> Found in Jennifer Sterling-Folker, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place," 278, citing Evan Thomas "Playing Globocop," *Newsweek*, 28 June 1993, 21, 278 and Michael Elliot, "High hurdles and Low Moans," *Newsweek* 11 October 1993, 39.

<sup>127</sup> For discussion of Vietnam, risks, and national interests see Thomas Richard McIntyre, *One Body at a Time: The Political Economy of Vietnam Combat Death*, Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1987.

<sup>128</sup> For defense planning in the 1990s see Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Defense Planning for the Late 1990s: Beyond the Desert Storm Framework*, (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institute, 1995).

<sup>129</sup> For more on the weak ground defense structures prior to the Vietnam War see James Dunnigan, *Dirty Little Secrets: Military Secrets You're Not Supposed to Know* (New York: Quill/Martin, 1990) and Adrian Lewis, *The American Culture of War: The History of U.S. Military Force from World War II to Operation Iraqi Freedom*, (New York: Routledge, 2007).

<sup>130</sup> For more on the U.S. military and peacekeeping see Richard Haas, *Intervention*.

<sup>131</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, *Making the Corps* (New York: Touchstone, 1997), 78.

<sup>132</sup> For analysis of American "little wars" and the U.S. military see Boot, Haas, and Bolger.

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- <sup>133</sup> Ricks, 268.
- <sup>134</sup> Matthew Williams, "Somalia Like War Zone as U.S. Downplays Attacks," *Air Force Times*, 28 June, 1993, 28.
- <sup>135</sup> See McIntyre, *One Body at a Time: The Political Economy of Vietnam Combat Death*, Boot *The Savage Wars of Peace*, and Lewis *The American Culture on War* for U.S. Army historical attitudes regarding counter-insurgency and Operations Other Than War.
- <sup>136</sup> For more on Colin Powell, see Howard Means *Colin Powell: A Bibliography*. (New York: Ballentine Books 1992), and David Roth, *Sacred Honor: A Bibliography of Colin Powell*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993).
- <sup>137</sup> Boot, 318-9.
- <sup>138</sup> Howard Means, *Colin Powell: A Biography*.
- <sup>139</sup> Halberstam, 251.
- <sup>140</sup> Western, 133 and James A. Baker with Thomas M. DeFrank, *The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War and Peace* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995), 368-9.
- <sup>141</sup> Strobel, "Bush Ponders Sending troops as UN Peacekeepers."
- <sup>142</sup> Anthony James Joes, ed., *Saving Democracies: U.S. Intervention in Threatened Democratic States* (Westport, CT: Praeger Press, 1999).
- <sup>143</sup> MacKinnon, 54.
- <sup>144</sup> Colin L. Powell, "U.S. Forces: The Challenges Ahead," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 5, (Winter 1992/3): 32-45.
- <sup>145</sup> Western, "Sources of Humanitarian Intervention".
- <sup>146</sup> Oakley, 37.
- <sup>147</sup> Farkas, 104 and Powell, 291.
- <sup>148</sup> Interview with Admiral Jeremiah found in Western, "Sources of Humanitarian Intervention," 132.
- <sup>149</sup> Congress, House, *Humanitarian Tragedy in Somalia: Hearing before the Select Committee on Hunger*, 30 January, 1992 and Congress, House of Representatives, 27.
- <sup>150</sup> Western, "Sources of Humanitarian Intervention".
- <sup>151</sup> Bolger, 282.
- <sup>152</sup> Western, "Sources of Humanitarian Intervention."
- <sup>153</sup> Bolger, 282.
- <sup>154</sup> Western, Sources of Humanitarian Intervention."
- <sup>155</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>156</sup> Quoted in Michael Gordon, "Powell Delivers a Resounding 'No' on Using Limited Force in Bosnia," *New York Times*, 28 September, 1999, 1.
- <sup>157</sup> MacKinnon, 59.
- <sup>158</sup> Western's article is heavily referenced here because his argument parallels one the major themes of this chapter. Western makes an excellent argument for Bush's decision to intervene militarily in Somalia as a quick political solution to avoid intervention in Bosnia.
- <sup>159</sup> Powell, 562.
- <sup>160</sup> Western, "Sources of Humanitarian Intervention."
- <sup>161</sup> Bolger, 282.
- <sup>162</sup> Western, "Sources of Humanitarian Intervention."
- <sup>163</sup> Interview with Pentagon official with author Walter Clarke found in *Learning from Somalia*, 18.
- <sup>164</sup> Western, "Sources of Humanitarian Intervention."
- <sup>165</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>166</sup> Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, *Operation Restore Hope, The Military Operations in Somalia: Hearing before the Committee on Armed Services*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2nd sess., 9 December, 1992.
- <sup>167</sup> Clarke and Herbst, *Learning From Somalia*, 91-2.
- <sup>168</sup> Eric Randsdell and Carla Anne Robbins, "Operation Restore Hope: Feeding the Hungry in Somalia May be the Easy Part for America," *U.S. News and World Report*, 14 December, 1992, 26-30.
- <sup>169</sup> Edward Lutwak, "Unconventional Force," *New Republic* 4 (January 25, 1993): 22.
- <sup>170</sup> "Into Africa," *New Republic*, Issue 27, (28 December, 1992): 7.
- <sup>171</sup> See Haas, *The Reluctant Sheriff and Intervention*.
- <sup>172</sup> See Congress, House, *Humanitarian Tragedy in Somalia: Hearing before the Select Committee on Hunger*.
- <sup>173</sup> MacIntyre in *One Body at a Time* makes the connection in Vietnam with casualties and political demonstration effects.

<sup>174</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Crisis in Somalia: Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong. 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., December 17, 1992.

<sup>175</sup> See Powell's bibliography, *Sacred Honor*.

<sup>176</sup> Galen, "Foreign Policy Peril."

<sup>177</sup> Bush earlier referred to Clinton as a foreign policy "bozo" who had less foreign affairs savvy than Millie the White House dog, an opinion which was widely shared. See Watson and DeFrank, "A Farewell Tour."

<sup>178</sup> Congress, House, *Humanitarian Tragedy in Somalia*: Hearing before the Select Committee on Hunger.

<sup>179</sup> In an argument with Rep. Donald Payne who advocated staying as long as it took the UN to bring peace and stability to Somalia, and Herman Cohen who defended a mission estimate lasting until mid-1993, Roth exclaimed, "Our policy is shifting all over the place". In the Senate, Strom Thurmond, Sam Nunn, and John Warner were already getting frustrated with the ambiguity of the planning and how little control the US had over the process of peace enforcement and the exit strategy. Thurmond asked, "What do we do if they are not ready to go in when we are ready to pull out?" LTG Brandtner and James Woods, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, answered that U.S. forces stuck there until they did show up and they were *assuming* they would be ready as promised by Ghali. See Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, , *The Crisis in Somalia: Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Affairs* 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 17 December, 1992 and Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, *Operation Restore Hope, The Military Operations in Somalia: Hearing before the Committee on Armed Services*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 9 December, 1992.

<sup>180</sup> See Peter J. Schraeder From Ally to Orphan" in *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War World*, James M. Scott, ed., Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998, 340 and Francis A. Kornegay, Jr., "Africa in the New World Order," *Africa Report* 38, no. 1 (January/February): 13-17.

<sup>181</sup> See Clarke, *Learning from Somalia*, and Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Crisis in Somalia: Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> session, 17 December, 1992 and Congress, House, Markup before the Subcommittee on Africa, *Concerning the Crisis in Somalia; To Establish a South African-American Enterprise Fund; To Preempt State and Local Sanction Measures Against Namibia; and Liberian relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Act of 1991*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 16 June, 1992.

<sup>182</sup> For more on how Congress shapes public opinion, see Ralph G. Carter, "Congress and Post-Cold War U.S. Foreign Policy in Scott, ed., *After the End*, 118-119.

<sup>183</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Crisis in Somalia: Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 17 December, 1992.

<sup>184</sup> Sen. John Murtha and Sen. Larry Pressler expressed concerns about the U.S. shouldering 80% of the costs "playing the Santa role" but did not resist the mission.

<sup>185</sup> Rep. John Lewis (a well known pacifist), Sen. Paul Simon, and Sen. Nancy Kassenbaum took credit for "waking Bush up" and the Black Caucus were delighted to see U.S. force being used for "the first time to save Africans".

<sup>186</sup> Pat Towell, "Suffering Spurs Unprecedented step as U.N. Approves Deployment," *Congressional Quarterly*, 5 December, 1992: 3759.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> Walter Isaacson, "Sometimes, Right Makes Might," *Time* 140, no. 25 (21 December, 1992), 82.

<sup>189</sup> Western, "Sources of Humanitarian Intervention" and Doherty, "Defining the National Interest: A Process of Trial and Error."

<sup>190</sup> Stevenson, "Hope Restored in Somalia?"

<sup>191</sup> President, George Bush, "President's Remarks on Start II and Somalia Trip."

<sup>192</sup> See James M. Lindsay, "Cowards, Beliefs, and Structures: Congress and the Use of Force" in H.W. Brands, ed., *The Use of Force after the Cold War*.

<sup>193</sup> Clarke, "Testing the World's Resolve in Somalia."

<sup>194</sup> Randsdell, "Strangers in a Strange Land."

<sup>195</sup> Stanton, Martin N., "Lessons Learned from Counter-Bandit Operations," *The Marine Corps Gazette* 78, no. 2, (February 1994): 30-32.

<sup>196</sup> F.M. Lorenz, "Law and Anarchy in Somalia," *Parameters* (Winter 1993): 27-39. Military power was virtually made impotent by the mission parameters and ROE and in many cases was not employed at all to control the population even in regards to blatant criminal activity. These facts are utterly ignored in neo-liberal scholarship claiming the intervention was a return to Western imperialism. Sherene Razack's *Dark Threats and White Knights*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) serves as an example of an emotional yet unfounded racially-based argument being made in utter defiance of the facts on the ground operations and ROE in place.

<sup>197</sup> Interview with Hempstone in Randsdell and Robbins, "Operation Restore Hope."

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<sup>198</sup> Lorenz, "Law and Anarchy in Somalia."

<sup>199</sup> Fritz J. Barth, "A System of Contradiction: United Nations Operations, Somalia," *The Marine Corps Gazette* 82, no. 4, (April 1998): 26-29.

<sup>200</sup> The plan to place heavy weapons in cantonment areas monitored by the UN was largely ineffectual.

<sup>201</sup> State Department, Robert Houdek, Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, Statement before the Subcommittee on Africa on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, *Update on Progress in Somalia*, 17 February, 1993, Washington, D.C. *U.S. State Department Dispatch* 4, no. 8 (22 February, 1993): 99.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> Clarke, "Testing the World's Resolve in Somalia."

<sup>204</sup> Randsdell, "Strangers In a Strange Land."

<sup>205</sup> Clarke, "Testing the World's Resolve in Somalia."

<sup>206</sup> Major John Antal and Captain Robert L. Dunaway, "Peacemaking in Somalia: A Background Brief," *Marine Corps Gazette* 77, no. 2, (February 1993): 38-43.

<sup>207</sup> Stevenson, "Hope Restored in Somalia."

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Aideed would have certainly been removed by his clan had he failed find ways to thwart UN efforts at equilibrium among the clans and take advantage of his rivals. See Clarke, "Testing the World's Resolve in Somalia."

<sup>210</sup> Stevenson, "Hope Restored in Somalia."

<sup>211</sup> For more on this debate see Dempsey and Fountaine, *Fools Errands*.

<sup>212</sup> James Wyllie, "Somalia: State Disintegration and Regional Stability," *Jane's Intelligence Review* 5, no. 2, (February 1993): 71-72.

<sup>213</sup> See Lance Morrow, "In Feeding Somalia and Backing Yeltsin, America Discovers the Limits of Idealism" and John Bolton, "Wrong Turn in Somalia."

<sup>214</sup> Morrow, "In Feeding Somalia and Backing Yeltsin, America Discovers the Limits of Idealism."

<sup>215</sup> Randsdell, "Strangers in a Strange Land."

<sup>216</sup> Ken Menkhaus, "Getting Out vs. Getting Through: U.S. and U.N. Policies in Somalia," *Middle East Policy* 3, (1994): 146-162.

<sup>217</sup> John M. Taylor, "Somalia: More Than Meets the Eye," *Marine Corps Gazette* 77, no. 11, (November 1993): 74-77.

<sup>218</sup> Many showed up without equipment of any kind. The OAU was useless in raising contributions from African nations, only Nigeria sent a sizeable force of 1,000.

<sup>219</sup> Lorenz, "Law and Anarchy in Somalia."

<sup>220</sup> Conservative estimates at the time foretold at least five years of *aggressive* operations would be necessary to bring about a semi-peaceful situation in Somalia at a cost of \$10 billion a year. Cambodia, in comparison, was costing \$2 billion annually.

<sup>221</sup> Eric Randsdell and Carla Anne Robbins, "Operation Restore Hope: Feeding the Hungry in Somalia May Be the Easy Part for America."

<sup>222</sup> George Kennan, "Somalia: Through a Glass Darkly," *New York Times*, 30 September, 1993, A25.

## CHAPTER 4

No Adult Supervision: Clinton Administration Foreign Policy, UNOSOM II,  
and Nation-Building in Somalia

*“I’m often asked, ‘Does this administration have coherent, well-planned and clearly articulated foreign policy?’” said Rep. David R. Obey, D-Wis. “And my response to that question has been that if they do, they ought to be locked up.”<sup>1</sup>*

When George Bush left the presidency in January 1993, the U.S. policy in Somalia shifted radically from a limited humanitarian mission to full-blown experiment in nation building under the Clinton administration. Although the Bush administration was incrementally engaging in Wilsonianism and dabbling in the untested waters of peacekeeping by intervening militarily in Somalia, the main thrusts of the policy were actually geared to avoid larger risks in the Balkans and to engage in a temporary exercise of image management to demonstrate American strength and goodwill in the post-cold war world. Many of those aspects of American policy in Somalia would remain with the incoming Clinton administration, but would also be accompanied by much bolder assertive multilateralism and an attempt to promote the agenda of UN Chapter VII mandates as a basis of international conflict resolution, even those that only pertained to intrastate insecurity and “failed states”.

As the Clinton administration often correctly claimed, it had inherited Somalia policy not crafted it. Clinton’s public statements about “focusing on the economy like a laser beam” and wanting to avoid dealing with foreign policy as much as possible can be taken at face value, but Clinton did consult with Bush in December 1992 and was briefed by the CIA on operations there before taking over the Presidency, and could never make a valid claim to have been blind-sided by last minute actions taken by Bush at the end of his term. Clinton publicly stated that he supported Bush’s decision to go into Somalia at the time,<sup>2</sup> and he later reaffirmed that position

on several occasions even as he announced the plan to end the operation in late 1993. Although he did inherit the intervention from Bush, it is not reasonable to assume that it was a course of action that was utterly alien to the Clinton foreign policy strategy for the post-Cold War world. In fact, Clinton had often criticized Bush relentlessly during the campaign for not doing enough to resolve humanitarian crises in Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti, and elsewhere. It is very probable (especially given Clinton's later track record) that had Clinton already been in office in December 1992, he would have responded to Ghali's requests for aid and intervention as readily as Bush had done, if not more robustly. While it is true that the Clinton administration did not make the decision to intervene in Somalia, nor craft initial policy goals towards a limited military intervention, they were certainly in total agreement with their predecessors that did make the decision to go in and would have responded in a similar manner to the expanding humanitarian crisis.

The more important issue in examining Clinton's policy in Somalia was not that he simply inherited a policy he agreed with in principle and wished to maintain, but that he wished to expand it into a full-fledged nation-building project and for all practical purposes, abandoned the Bush notion that the intervention was to be limited in size and scope to a short-term relief operation. The Clinton administration jumped head-first into turning Somalia into a muscular exercise in "saving failed states" and ramping up the status and power of multilateralism and the United Nations as one of the key elements of Clinton's Wilsonianism foreign policy. Complicating the matter, as seen unfolding in the cascading series of events in Somalia, was the inattention the President was paying to Somalia and his reluctance to actively engage in foreign policy while still adjusting himself to the demands of his new office. Somalia policy quickly eroded into a situation akin to trying to put out a serious fire next door while watching television

-- turning on the hose and blindly pointing it out the nearest window towards the fire until hopefully something good happens. Unfortunately, in Somalia, the hose of funding and resources did get turned on, but the flames of violence and economic decay were not extinguished and more harm than good came from the effort. Clinton's failure to focus on the events in Somalia and his inability to lead his free-lancing subordinates in clear cut directions cost the administration any chances to gain the initiative in Somalia over the warlords and led to series of disastrous missteps. If Clinton's Wilsonianism had any chance of prevailing in Somalia, it had to be a concerted driven and focused effort. U.S. foreign policy intermingled with the even more chaotic U.N. bureaucracy and the numerous contributing states, however, was anything but cohesive and focused.

Naturally, as the policy was poorly defined and managed from the top, the execution of the policy in Somalia would fall short as well. The diplomatic effort to end hostilities between the warring factions and to end the runaway problem of militia violence and the predatory nature of the warlords was not successful, and not strongly tied into military operations beyond the misguided and fruitless effort to hunt Aideed. Knee-jerk reactions to Aideed's predictable resistance to forcing him out of power trumped the big-picture approach led by Oakley when the ill-conceived Pakistani raid on Radio Mogadishu went awry. In Clausewitzian terms, the military actions being taken before and after the raid did not strongly match the desired political endstate and often directly contradicted them. U.S. policy boiled down to inadvertently joining a multi-factional civil war without desiring to take sides or to seriously take on those that chose to fight and kill Americans.

The U.N. force not only refused to back any of the major warlords to bring the others to heel, it also had no concept of brushing them all aside all at once. It became evident that there was no

real chance of reconciling the long embedded rivals and layers of hatred and competition between clans and sub-clans. The United States and United Nations were unwilling to exert enough military force or immediate pressure to crush the militias and force their Westernized vision on the warlords and ad hoc street thugs in rebuilding the Somali state. The political will, and perhaps the resources, to take on such a massive task never existed. The military was kept under tight reins under fairly restrictive Rules of Engagement (ROE) and never had anywhere near the amount of troops necessary to pacify such a large country, especially the highly volatile and heavily populated urban areas (controlled mostly by Aideed) around Mogadishu. It is possible that the warlord forces could be militarily contained, whittled down and marginalized, but never completely eliminated without an all-out national commitment made to defeating them and rebuilding Somalia. This course was never feasible. Even just containing or using attrition to control the warlords would take much more force than would ever be utilized, perhaps a commitment of 50-100,000 rotating every year with a large supplement of support personnel and limited off-shore naval assets, not to mention an army of civilian aid and development workers who would also need to be protected and supported. This commitment would not even cover the entire country, and simply be adequate enough to establish and control key distribution and economic areas with a mobile force to interject power into rural areas as needed. To engage and destroy the majority of the warlords who resisted the intervention would require a massive force, much larger than the fairly successful UNITAF task force that was just able to secure relief zones and escort convoys. Ending sectarian violence and reestablishing order in Somalia would require a large force and an annual commitment costing billions and lasting for untold years. Forces deployed there too would have to have a far less limited ROE and be able to engage in more counterinsurgency and marshal law operations to root out and kill the militias and free-lance



bandits still vying for power and disrupting the rebuilding process. Unless a large enough force could be utilized and given free reign to conduct warfighting operations, the Somalis were never going to quit clawing away at each other and undermining the international efforts to aid the population. Ghali was right in believing that the Somalis had to be disarmed in order for intervention to succeed, but flawed in thinking that it was possible to disarm them all at once without backing a side. In short, what needed to be done to execute Clinton's and Ghali's vision of policy in Somalia could and would not be done.

Instead a small force was left to implement the impossible task of "maintaining security" and establishing peace in a place that had known none for decades. This small force was crippled by the weaknesses of the multilateral nature of the operation, limited resources, lack of clear cut direction from above, and the imposition of attempting to do more with less for an administration more concerned with *crafting an image of progress* than dealing with real obstacles in dealing with the political and economic quagmire of Somalia.

The U.S. military operated superbly given these conditions, but it did not act flawlessly. U.S. tactical intelligence was abysmal and its' heavy-handed and mostly ineffective raiding tactics conducted after June 1993 played into Aideed's hands. Despite claims to the contrary of winning the Battle of Mogadishu, it failed to defeat Aideed's forces in October once they came out of the woodwork to fight, although the military did inflict heavy punishment. The amazing kill ratio (perhaps as high as 200-1) did not change the outcome. The American generals did not seize the tactical initiative and put Aideed on the ropes, but were instead themselves ambushed and only able to adroitly fight their way out of the chaotic urban ambush in the hellish maze of the Bakara Market area and prevent a bigger disaster.<sup>3</sup> Aideed simply outgeneraled his U.S. adversaries on the ground, and properly used tactical and strategic integration to defeat his enemy and achieve

his political goals. The U.S. military's tactical failure in October 1993 was definitely aided by the sheer military negligence of the Clinton administration in denying armor and AC-130 Specter gunships to Montgomery, but only the ground commanders have themselves to blame for falling into Aideed's trap by ignoring the warning signals in the first place. The only element that performed well in the October battle against Aideed were the soldiers and officers themselves operating on the ground and in the air at the lower tactical levels-- not their higher leadership. The performance of the infantry, Special Forces, pilots, and support personnel was exemplary. Accompanied with U.S. firepower capabilities, these warriors were able to inflict heavy damage on the enemy and extract American soldiers from the trap. Overall, however, the military execution of the hopelessly flawed political policy was tactically weak in planning, failed to parry the moves of the opposition, and unable to overcome the massive odds stacked against using a military solution to solve the entangled web of power and violence in Somalia.

Although the military planners stumbled, they could hardly be culpable for being asked to do the near impossible while having one hand tied behind their backs. The fault lay not with the military conduct of Operation Restore Hope, but in the nature of the wishy-washy and flighty nature of conducting aggressive foreign policy and military interventions with little vision, leadership, and political spine.

Although an in-depth discussion of Clinton's foreign policy is beyond the scope of this project, a brief discussion of its major components is essential in order to understand the Somali intervention and its disastrous outcome. U.S. policy in Somalia and Bosnia were the first real tests for the Clinton administration after criticizing Bush during the campaign and promising a different approach in foreign affairs. Clinton's approach to Somalia, and the counterproductive policies conducted during the operation were a direct result of the weaknesses of the

administration's hopeless adherence to liberal idealism which was unabashedly Wilsonian in rhetoric and goals. Complicating this ideological approach that ignored the harsh realities of places like Somalia and Haiti, was the dysfunctional nature of the Clinton White House which pushed policies that were not well planned or thought out, were often contradictory with one another, frequently publicly flip-flopped, and were not based on national interests or any truly measurable qualities beyond moralistic arguments placing the United States in an obligatory position to right the wrongs in the world. Making matters worse, policymakers in the administration did not work harmoniously or in synch with one another, and in fact, often worked at cross purposes or were happily oblivious to what other key components in the administration were pushing forth as the agenda. Clinton himself took almost no leadership of his national security staff, and naively thought that his mostly inexperienced team led by a few old Carter administration era liberals could perform autonomously.<sup>4</sup> When things went wrong (and they often did) Clinton blamed everyone but himself and became even less accessible to his cabinet leaving them to sort things out for themselves. Foreign policy under the Clinton administration in the first term was a disorganized and directionless mess.<sup>5</sup>

No other modern president ever inherited a stronger, safer international position than Bill Clinton. The Cold War was over, the major threat to American security for fifty years had been vanquished, Saddam Hussein had been subdued, and the remaining threats seemed manageable.<sup>6</sup> Clinton won the election against Bush promising to focus on domestic issues, but he also promised to "lead a global alliance for democracy"<sup>7</sup> Clinton echoed Kennedy's call "to bear any burden" in the cause to "build democracy and freedom."<sup>8</sup> Bush, a realist, had wanted to keep global disorder at bay while Clinton, the idealist, suggested taking on an entirely new global mission to spread democracy, confront human rights violators, and impose a moralistic direction

on American foreign policy.<sup>9</sup> The Clinton administration's goals for maintaining the status quo of the American superpower position in the world were no different than those of Bush,<sup>10</sup> but they were unspoken and shrouded in even more rhetoric regarding promoting democracy, stability, and economic growth globally.<sup>11</sup> "Democracy enlargement" was the theme, based on the assumption that a growth in the number of democracies would limit wars and terrorism and thus make America more secure; and America was in a unique position to lead the effort to transform nations to a more suitable status.<sup>12</sup> It was pure Wilsonianism; but Clinton and his cabinet were even more ambitious than just traditional Wilsonianism and democratic expansion in their idealism:

Clinton's foreign policy, in other words, had gone far beyond the Wilsonian project of spreading democracy and good government. America's moral purpose and economic and military might, he had come to believe, should be used to remedy political, economic, and other societal ills around the world. It was indeed an example of what one historian called "global meliorism", which is defined as foreign policy centered not on security issues that could endanger Americans directly, but on trying "to make the world a better place". For Clinton, that meant not only continued nation building, but other efforts as well... (including) the establishment of what can be described only as global welfare programs.<sup>13</sup>

Clinton and Vice President Al Gore possessed an extreme faith in social engineering ala Progressivism and believed that everything violent in history was preventable, everything was solvable, and everything happening in the world was an American national security concern.<sup>14</sup> The administration emphasized humanitarian concerns over strategic ones, and focused more on the importance of market development, trade, and democratic enlargement over security concerns.<sup>15</sup> Human rights being the basis for action abroad, any situation anywhere involving any violation of human rights or internal disaster were applicable for American intervention. The policy had no center or geographical hierarchy, ignored national interests as a basis for consideration, and defined few realistic political or fiscal boundaries.

A major tenet of Clinton's foreign policy was the radical attempt to further empower the UN to new levels, expand peacekeeping and peace enforcement, and to subvert much of U.S. foreign policy to the will of the international community. Clinton moved to promote his agenda in approving a draft of PRD-13 crafted by Deputy National Security Advisor Samuel Berger in which the United States would contribute troops for peacekeeping duty and would engage in interventions to combat "sudden and unexpected interruption of established democracy or gross violations of human rights".<sup>16</sup> This meant that American troops would now fall under the control of foreigners while serving almost outside the U.S. military (without their consent) in a UN rapid reaction force. It also meant and that the U.S. would be committing troops without the approval of Congress or the public into an untold number of conflicts dictated by the desires of the UN. PRD-13 was a direct assault on American sovereignty and met stiff resistance in Washington.<sup>17</sup> Oblivious to the resentment such actions caused in a public who saw nothing worthwhile in abdicating foreign policy to non-American decision-makers to avoid the burden of taking risks, Secretary of State Warren Christopher proudly stated that the administration had listed as its accomplishments "taking the lead in passing the responsibility (of world peace and stability) to international bodies." Critics blasted the administration's belief that a strong United Nations was critical to U.S. national security, and ridiculed the notion that a conflict *anywhere* somehow immediately translated into a threat to national security. Allowing the ever-shifting and ambiguous collective will of the highly dysfunctional the United Nations to direct the focus of American foreign policy was reckless; as neither the highly flawed institutional organization of the UN nor its multitude of anti-American or poverty-stricken members have any proprietary concerns for the United States and its national interests. The policy was based more on the

misguided feelings of privileged guilt<sup>18</sup> rather than rational thought, creating a “Mother Theresa-feel-good policy” that put the U.S. at risk:

The administration has demonstrated a will to make the U.N. secretary general’s priorities its’ own... the Clinton Administration defines its foreign policy and dissolves the national interest as traditionally conceived... The reason the Clinton Administration’s foreign policy seems indecisive is that multilateral decision-making is characteristically complicated and inconclusive. The reason Clinton policy seems ineffective is that UN operations—in Bosnia or Somalia or wherever—are characteristically ineffective.<sup>19</sup>

When PRD-13 was leaked in the press, Congressional and public reaction was almost completely hostile, the Pentagon was highly agitated, and divisions even appeared among Clinton’s advisors over the issue of building a UN army to conduct assertive multilateralism and contracting out the U.S. military to don blue helmets under foreign command.<sup>20</sup> Subsequent drafts of PRD-13 watered the military measures down to basically voluntarily committing American troops to a Wilsonian human rights crusade under UN auspices on a case-by-case basis rather than earmarking them specifically for peacekeeping, but the directive would still be institutionalizing peacekeeping as a national responsibility and a direct and necessary function of the U.S. military and U.S. security policy as a whole. As Somalia heated up, the administration tried to accelerate getting PRD-13 into a finalized form to officially commit the United States to assertive multilateralism, but the disaster in Mogadishu in early October stopped the liberal agenda almost dead in its tracks.<sup>21</sup>

Trying to convert the U.S. security mission to assume assertive multilateralism under international collectivism was certainly a monumental if not overly ambitious task for the most skilled statesman. By personality and experience, however, Bill Clinton was not well suited for the task of recreating a new world order. His supporters pointed out that he was a quick study, but he was also impatient with dissent and quick to blame others for his failures.<sup>22</sup> Clinton had learned to capitalize on promoting style over substance,<sup>23</sup> excelled as a master politician at

protecting his own personal position rather than sacrificing himself for the greater good, and had a hands-off style in leading foreign affairs that negated any possibilities for great international vision or leadership as president. He delegated almost everything, ignored vital international developments, and made foreign policy an extremely low priority. He began by shifting U.S. policymaking to obtaining UN consensus on key issues, thus undermining the U.S.'s unique position of leadership as the world's sole superpower. He believed that by adopting assertive multilateralism as a low-cost strategy, low-priority issues would be handled by the Security Council and more significant actions would be settled by collective action, leaving him free to ignore foreign policy and focus on domestic issues<sup>24</sup> while still promoting a liberal Wilsonian agenda abroad. William Hyland writes:

The President and his advisors were comfortable with flashes of Wilsonian rhetoric; indeed they were determined to pursue its lofty goals. His interest in foreign affairs was greatly overshadowed by his preoccupation with domestic concerns. His advisors, however, mistook this as a green light to pursue their own policy predilections. When their views clashed with the real world, they needed the firm support of the President. Clinton, however, was not inclined to run political risks for policies he never fully embraced.

Clinton naively believed he could pretty much ignore foreign policy unless it directly affected domestic politics (such as the Haitian refugee problem). After promising to tackle the pressing domestic issues he campaigned on, foreign policy was an inconvenience to Clinton and became a low priority. The administration, however, bristled whenever Clinton was regularly criticized for ignoring foreign affairs, and Clinton continually denied he was insulated from them.<sup>25</sup> The evidence indicates otherwise, however, as Congressional Democrats and key advisors reported having limited to no access to the President or direction on foreign policy. Secretary of Defense Les Aspin had virtually no access even as the situation deteriorated in Somalia, and Clinton ignored CIA warnings about the SNA plans in September, 1992.

Communications Director George Stephanopoulos and Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot both later reported that Clinton made little time to discuss foreign policy issues and rejected their efforts to focus his attention there. Stephanopoulos reported that Clinton wasn't paying any attention to the Black Hawk raids or the Russian coup attempt "until they appeared on CNN" because he was consumed with fighting non-pressing ideological verbal battles with conservatives over abortion and "not caring about children".<sup>26</sup> Clinton paid little attention to the avalanche of UN Resolutions being passed that equated to American belligerency in the Somali civil war<sup>27</sup> and allowed the situation to evolve into a series of miscalculations that could have easily been avoided. Incredulously, after being informed about the Mogadishu battle Clinton was shocked and enraged at his advisors for "not keeping him informed". Clinton loudly complained to Tony Lake that "it looks like we weren't paying attention!"<sup>28</sup> which of course, *he* was not, and somehow that blame should be laid to rest on someone else.

Besides choosing to marginalize his participation, Clinton had other insurmountable personal weaknesses that crippled his approach to foreign policy. As Dick Morris noted, Clinton had two mindsets: Boy Scout (the idealist) and the politician.<sup>29</sup> The "boy scout" always made a big show about his passionate caring liberal agenda until the political heat intensified and then the "politician" would take over and reverse himself on the issue to protect his attempt to maintain a political safe overall centrist position.<sup>30</sup> These mindsets allowed Clinton to react with great sound and fury to emotional crises such as Cambodia, Liberia, and Rwanda, but then quickly abandon these causes when he was required to invest any political capital in them or to take any real political risks.

Clinton's relationships abroad got off to a bad start. Clinton eventually charmed many foreign dignitaries, especially like-minded liberals from the large socialized states of Europe, but



he began by snubbing many foreign leaders for months after taking office. The mood was sour on the administration in many foreign capitals, and the glib manner in which Clinton approached his Western counterparts when he did interact with them did him no favors. Like Woodrow Wilson, he failed to impress anyone with his foreign policy credentials but had no compunction to instruct foreign leaders on matters regarding the proper conduct of international relations, especially in regards to their moral obligations to former colonies. He did an especially poor job dealing with many European heads of state; first brushing them off, then rudely dictating to them, and finally acquiescing to them completely over the worsening crisis in the Balkans.<sup>31</sup>

The administration also did a poor job building bridges in the foreign policy community in Washington. Clinton emanated a sense of arrogance that he and his advisors could create policy to solve complex problems “on the fly”<sup>32</sup> with ad hoc trial-and-error schemes that rejected traditional approaches;<sup>33</sup> the idealistic administration members were generally soon regarded as “arrogant crusaders with an “*us vs. them*” mindset by traditional Republicans and Democrats alike.<sup>34</sup>

Clinton had organizational weaknesses that undermined his international ambitions, and he stumbled immediately after taking office, further limiting his ability to conduct effective foreign policy. Unlike Ronald Reagan who had a “hit the ground running” approach and quickly dismantled his campaign organization to build an administrative staff, Clinton kept his intact although few had any real experience in national government, especially in foreign policy. The Clinton administration attempted to duplicate its campaign strategies to bypass the national press corps whenever possible and create a grossly asymmetrical relationship with the press and public to best serve their agenda, and the strategy backfired. “By transferring campaign policy to the presidency, it was clear that the Clinton administration misunderstood presidential

communication.”<sup>35</sup> Clinton set a large agenda without priorities and raised huge expectations in speeches and interviews<sup>36</sup> which he couldn’t possibly fulfill. Clinton took months to fill many executive branch appointments, and his youthful staff showed their inexperience on a daily basis, fumbling in basic executive branch tasks; gaffs which the ever- watchful press was happy to report.<sup>37</sup>

Clinton also squandered his limited political capital (he had only won 43% of the popular vote and had a slim party majority in Congress) by issuing controversial Executive Orders allowing military hospital abortions and the RU-486 abortion bill, and pursuing legislation on the Family Medical Leave Act that Bush had previously vetoed.<sup>38</sup> Clinton was then hopelessly bogged down in the controversial issue of openly allowing gays in the military which resulted in the passing of the infamous “don’t ask-don’t tell” policy,<sup>39</sup> and his controversial attempt to create a national socialized medicine system under the supervision of First Lady Hillary Clinton. Clinton’s attempts to engage in nation-building in Haiti and Somalia where the United States obviously had no strategic interests squandered more political capital with the public and patience soon ran out with expensive idealistic adventures abroad as budgets at home were being cut left and right. Clinton’s heavy-handed leftist agenda angered centrists in Congress, hurting his chances to get other legislation passed, and he ignored Congress completely on foreign policy matters. Clinton’s “First 100 Days” was a disorganized failure, and the administration was overwhelmed with the overly ambitious agenda it had set for itself and dealing with the bridges it had burned for itself in the process.

One of the major flaws in Clinton’s foreign policy beyond its overly ambitious idealism was the President’s reluctance to take charge. Besides not paying much attention to foreign policy, Clinton lacked the national experience to take on the mantle of leadership of complex

international crises, and certainly never placed himself in the driver seat of the effort to transform the new world order along the lines that his administration's rhetoric promoted. The administration's policy was erratic week to week, and both parties in Congress complained about Clinton's lack of leadership and his disinterest in clearing up the conflicting messages of the foreign policy staff.<sup>40</sup>

Clinton also was commonly criticized for lacking the fortitude of leadership, as he had a near obsession with doing the popular thing but sporadically and hesitantly stumbled from crisis to crisis with no real vision, always trying to pick the lowest risk option for himself.<sup>41</sup> To avoid risks and ensure his own popularity, Clinton obsessed over polls and presidential approval ratings. Dick Morris, Clinton's secret political advisor, stated, "Clinton lived for polls—he needed their approval and vindication... he obsessed over public opinion, he was a prisoner of the polls."<sup>42</sup> Although maintaining public support is an essential element, constantly reacting to the latest changes in media polls was not conducive to guiding long-term foreign policy.

Clinton couldn't take the lead on many issues because he was too engrained with being the politician unwilling to take risks upon himself, which cabinet members quickly discovered. "Getting Clinton to agree on an issue was one thing; getting him to take action was another."<sup>43</sup> Clinton was a great practitioner of political theater, as Stephanopoulos noted, "Clinton learned to separate what was right from what would work," and became a master of settling for compromises when stiff political resistance appeared which created abrupt policy shifts which resolved little, satisfied no one, and in many cases left the situation in a more sorry state than beforehand, but he could claim them as personal triumphs in pushing his agenda forward. The issue of gays in the military, the lengthy withdrawal from Somalia, and the intervention of Haiti serve as ready examples. Most memorable for Clinton's presidency was his penchant for

scandals. He often found himself entangled in scandals involving questionable moral choices or legal violations but never felt obligated to change his reckless self-indulgent behavior, even after his impeachment. “He’s so sure that he can talk his way out of anything that he doesn’t worry about the consequences.”<sup>44</sup> Despite several disruptive scandals, Clinton always managed to avoid most consequences and effortlessly deflected criticism, and became known as a master of knowing how to “spin” almost any situation to divert any serious questioning of his ability to govern. Ironically, Clinton maintained ridiculously high job approval ratings with ridiculously low trustworthy and personal ratings. Many Americans didn’t seem to care about his untrustworthiness or the scandals as long as they perceived he was doing well working on issues that mattered to them. Clinton was virtually invincible as long as the economy boomed.<sup>45</sup> Despite the criticism, policy fiascos, and scandals Clinton never broke stride. “Clinton’s shamelessness was the key to his success.”<sup>46</sup> Although these traits worked for Clinton the nimble politician who excelled at saving his own skin and removing his lack of integrity from the issue in numerous situations, they were horrible drawbacks for presidential foreign policy leadership. Clinton’s anti-military persona coupled with his untrustworthiness made the public perception of success in military crises or leading assertive multilateralism very unlikely.<sup>47</sup>

Clinton also lacked discipline and this set the tone for the White House. He refused to stay on schedule, was late for most appointments, including with key foreign leaders.<sup>48</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Colin Powell, White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta, and others complained Clinton’s meetings were excessively long, undisciplined and unproductive, mostly because Clinton “loved the sound of his own voice”.<sup>49</sup> Fueling his lack of discipline, Clinton also had strong and unhealthy sense of entitlement that eroded the foundations of leadership in crises. When things went awry and Clinton faced harsh public criticism, he flew into rages with his

subordinates and blamed others for his own mistakes, and frequently complained he never got any credit for his “accomplishments” in the media. Halberstam notes Clinton’s flaws possibly had much do with his generational outlook:

As the first baby-boomer president, he was bright and talented, but (his critics) believed, spoiled. Like many boomers his expectations outweighed his sense of obligation.<sup>50</sup>

Clinton always put foreign policy in the context of himself first and this fatal flaw often emerged during crises including the fall of Srebrenica. After being continually humiliated and made ineffectual by the Serbs, UNPROFOR (United Nations Protection Force) was on the verge of pulling out of the former Yugoslavia, and the lack of coherent policy in Bosnia was coming to fruition, he exploded. “*I’m getting creamed!*” Clinton ranted, and “why aren’t my people doing more for *me?*” He demanded Lake create a new policy that would somehow reverse the situation but wouldn’t take too many risks which could cost him the 1996 election.<sup>51</sup> His selfish reaction to the Mogadishu battle and his decision to intervene with airstrikes in Bosnia just before French President Jacques Chirac challenged his leadership and almost took the initiative away from him<sup>52</sup> were similar motivations based on promoting or protecting his leadership image (even when he couldn’t or wouldn’t lead). His primary concern was his always *himself*, which should be the last concern of any military commander or public servant entrusted with leadership.

In addition to his shortcomings in leadership qualities, Clinton was not a successful fit as commander-in-chief and Clinton’s relationship with the Pentagon was uncomfortable and lacked a sense of professionalism as well. Publicly, Clinton’s awkwardness with the role of commander-in-chief was a frequent news item, symbolized by his inability to salute properly<sup>53</sup> and his reluctance to embrace the military functions of the office. Many in the Pentagon soon developed the view that the former war protester Clinton and his liberal staff (none of which had ever served in the armed services) were purely anti-military and disdained the Department of Defense

so much that “they had the feeling the White House wanted the Department of Defense to cease to be a part of the U.S. government.”<sup>54</sup> Briefings involving the Pentagon were respectful on the surface, but tense. Senior advisor Sydney Blumenthal believed that “Powell saw Clinton as an interloper who supplanted” Bush, and felt “he was always playing on the other team.”<sup>55</sup> The doves in the cabinet (especially Tony Lake), treated Powell and his staff with almost open contempt.<sup>56</sup> Unlike Scowcroft’s tightly ordered NSC meeting, Lake ran the undisciplined and overstaffed meetings more like an open-mike seminar that marginalized the military’s objections to unrealistic expectations on the ground. Powell and the military planners were constantly frustrated with White House amateurs who would not understand that were limits to what military force could do in humanitarian interventions especially if the administration wasn’t willing to take serious political risks. Powell lamented, “The Clintons seemed to have no regard for consequences,”<sup>57</sup> and he worried about getting sucked into quagmires repeating the mistake of Vietnam, in which misguided civilians would engage in fruitless undeclared wars circumventing the public will. Powell’s successor, John Shalikashvili, had a better personal relationship with the administration, but had almost no influence over decisions made on Bosnian or Haiti policy.

If the radical foreign policy shift had any chance to be successful under the new administration with a disconnected president who was lacking in foreign policy leadership, it would need strong participants in the cabinet and staff in order to carry it through to any level of success. Unfortunately for Clinton, this was not the case. The cabinet he chose was undisciplined, overly idealistic, and did not function coherently together. In addition to retaining too many of his inexperienced campaign staff as advisors, Clinton engaged in an exercise in political theater by announcing his cabinet would “look like America,” meaning his choices

would be primarily dictated by gender and race first rather than purely by qualifications and experience. This allowed the press to keep score on his choices,<sup>58</sup> and his selections seemed more like affirmative action appointments as the controversies surrounding Zoe Baird and her replacement choice Kimba Wood<sup>59</sup> for Attorney General blew up in Clinton's face. Clinton still insisted on putting a woman in the position, and successfully appointed the abrasive Janet Reno-- whose controversial tenure was marked by the fiascoes of the botched federal sieges at Ruby Ridge in Idaho and the Branch Davidian compound at Waco Texas.

Clinton also appointed Madeline Albright as U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations. Albright too was woefully under qualified, and would prove to be a key element in the administration's core dysfunctional nature as pacifists who advocated the use of aggressive force to save nations from themselves. Although consistently described as a "brilliant" academic by liberal policy wonks, she had no foreign policy experience beyond low-level liaison work during the Carter years and had spent most of her energies in the later years of her life as a quiet Democratic Party underling affiliating herself with the misfortunes of politicians such as Ed Muskie, Geraldine Ferraro, and Michael Dukakis. Outside of some possible academic attributes stemming from ties with Zbigniew Brzezinski and strong personal connections to scores of party insiders, Washington academics, and liberal journalists; she had no hard qualifications to place her in the top diplomatic post. Clinton selected her to represent the U.S. simply because "she was a passionate and articulate advocate of democracy and freedom,"<sup>60</sup> and he elevated the U.N. representative position to a cabinet post. Once appointed, the empowered Albright carried her gender as a big chip on her shoulder, was territorial and overly sensitive to criticism making her difficult to deal with. She was a zealot for assertive multilateralism, the primary motivator for nation-building experiments in Somalia and Haiti, and was the Clinton's mouthpiece for selling

Wilsonianism and American benefice to the General Assembly. Albright was also fanatically hawkish about using military force to punish human rights violators regardless of the long-term consequences and harangued Powell and others for not beginning immediate bombing of the Serbs during the siege of Sarajevo. Worse yet, Albright was a true institutionalist,<sup>61</sup> one who believed that the United States should abdicate its special position to act unilaterally and act only in conjunction with the consent of the global community under collective security. Like many of the foreign policy agencies under Clinton, Albright operated almost independently of any foreign policy direction from the White House adding to the confused and contradictory nature of the administration's foreign policy. Clinton completely sanctioned Albright's idealist rhetoric, but her strongest institutionalist position to create a UN army under the control of the Secretary General was quickly abandoned by Clinton as a political expediency after the grand experiment to save Somalia disintegrated. Undeterred by harsh realities flying in the face of globalism, Albright continued to push for more assertive multilateralism and nation-building in Haiti, Bosnia, Rwanda, Liberia and elsewhere despite the string of failures these policies brought.

Warren Christopher, a less radical selection, was appointed Secretary of State. Christopher was a career professional, but was a stronger bureaucrat than a visionary and was ill-suited for the uncertain atmosphere of the post-Cold War. He was known to be better at "cleaning up messes" than having international foresight. He also lacked a strong leadership presence, and was once characterized him as "Dean Rusk without the charisma". Insiders stated Clinton chose him because of his passive nature, as he didn't want a strong Secretary of State to challenge him on foreign policy.<sup>62</sup> Christopher's lack of a strength allowed Albright to frequently freelance the American position on Bosnia which conflicted with guarded positions of the State Department.



Christopher later became frustrated with the administration's lack of direction and numerous scandals and resigned in 1997. He was replaced by Madeline Albright.<sup>63</sup>

Anthony Lake was chosen National Security Advisor. Lake was extremely well qualified and experienced, but he was a Wilsonian idealist who anguished over America's role in Vietnam as "an imperialistic quagmire" and determined to swing American foreign policy radically to the left in favor of assertive multilateralism. He was a firm advocate that abstract moral notions supplanted national interests and he scorned realism.<sup>64</sup> Besides being a hopeless idealist, Lake was also regarded to be overly ambitious, territorial, arrogant, and inflexible, and coveted his control over access to the President on foreign policy matters. Leon Panetta, Stephanopoulos and other White House staff soon felt alienated by Lake, claiming that NSC was "separated by a moat from the rest of the White House."<sup>65</sup> The Pentagon complained that the NSC staff was disorganized and uniformed, and that meetings held by Lake were like "group therapy sessions" that failed to present traditional options formula approach that left Clinton free to avoid making timely decisions. Sandy Berger functioned as Lakes' more practical Deputy who served to temper Lakes' idealism somewhat, and later was appointed as NSA in 1997.<sup>66</sup> Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State, remained one of the few solid foreign policy anchors in the administration.

Clinton appointed James Woolsey as Director of the CIA after one interview with little preparation or indication to Woolsey himself that he was a candidate for the position.<sup>67</sup> Woolsey's limited background as a lawyer made him unqualified to lead American intelligence strategy and his administration of the CIA was not successful. Woolsey, despite his best efforts to perform his duties and keep CIA involved in policymaking, was basically ignored by the President.<sup>68</sup> He soon resigned after an uncomfortable tenure and returned to practicing law.

Equally unfortunate was the choice of Democratic Congressman Les Aspin as Secretary of Defense. Aspin lacked the discipline and personality to head the large and contentious bureaucracy, and the immediate controversy Clinton created by pushing gay and gender issues in the military unhinged any chance of Aspin building a stable basis for leadership in the Pentagon. The Democratic Congress efforts to slash DOD's budget as part of the so-called "peace dividend" made long-term planning difficult, and few trusted Aspin to protect the services from deeper cuts. Aspin's position as a cabinet member was quickly made untenable, as the Clinton administration created an atmosphere of disdain for the military establishment while simultaneously threatening the JCS with a sense of "imperial overreach" through peacekeeping and assertive multilateralism. The Mogadishu debacle and poor health quickly shortened Aspin's unhappy tenure at the Pentagon. After making Aspin the major scapegoat for Somalia, Clinton replaced him with William Perry in early 1994.

Clinton was also not-so-secretly advised by political operative Dick Morris. Morris scoffed at Lakes' idealistic vision of apolitical solutions for foreign policy, and adroitly advised Clinton on how best to maintain his political prowess. Clinton valued Morris' advice, as Morris was known for his shameless pursuit of political practicality and expediency, and he served Clinton's insatiable political ego to bend and manipulate the public will to his own. Morris close association with Republicans made him unwelcome in the White House by all but Bill and Hillary. Although Morris was a key (and often decisive) political advisor on matters regarding everything from Haiti and Bosnia to nuclear proliferation, his input was to be strictly unofficial. To thinly maintain appearances that he was only a polls and strategy analyst, Clinton cautioned Morris, "never to discuss foreign policy when anyone is around".<sup>69</sup> To this end, Morris built a network of staffers to secretly feed Clinton foreign policy advice that protected the source of the

information. Morris' limited presence, however, as a pure political mercenary made him appear as a shadowy dark force moving uninvited among the liberal inner circle, and his special access to Clinton threatened the White House advisors, and sowed further seeds of discontent among them.

The First Lady's interjection into policy and her influence on the President was another wild card that further complicated that matter of crafting and maintaining coherent and foreign policy in a White House that absolutely no cohesion beyond shared ideological idealism. Little is known how much influence Hillary Clinton had on foreign policy, but she was often in attendance and voiced her opinions when Morris and Clinton discussed key issues while other advisors were notably absent. Blumenthal and Stephanopoulos also report that Hillary had enormous influence over the President's daily agenda and who had access to him. Hillary's views on Somalia are yet unknown, but she was against the rush to intervene in Haiti.<sup>70</sup>

Overall, Clinton's foreign policy team simply had too many weaknesses, too many drawbacks, too much idealism, too little experience, and too many internal divisions to craft effective policy-- much less to envision, construct, maintain and elicit public support and funding for radical shift in U.S. foreign policy in the post-Cold War. What the administration needed most was vision and leadership, and not only was Clinton not providing it-- he was ducking it. The inadequacies of the Clinton administration's foreign policy would come to fruition in Somalia, and the disaster there has to be laid on the door of the White House.

Despite the inherent weaknesses of the President and his foreign policy team, the Clinton administration possessed no lack of confidence about its abilities to transform the world and its faith in assertive multilateralism. Undersecretary for Political Affairs, Arnold Kantor, laid out the administration's aggressive intentions in a speech shortly following the election, spelling out that

human rights would be at the core of U.S. foreign policy. Kantor outlined that the development of democracy and free markets was essential, and that violators of human rights would be punished. Somalia, he said, presented no better case in defending human rights which “could not be more plain or more dear.”<sup>71</sup> Soon after taking office, Clinton ordered a study on peacekeeping to put U.S. troops under UN command as Ambassador Albright began making overblown rhetorical statements to embark on nation-building in Somalia in the “unprecedented task of restoring an entire nation” and “returning it to the community of nations”.<sup>72</sup>

The public would accept an intervention project in nation-building because U.S. troops were already in place; but Somalia was just a small piece of the global project. Lake and Albright, knowing that the State Department had the most to gain from assertive multilateralism, sold the concept to the public as an alternative to the U.S. having to take on the role of unilateral globocop to maintain global stability, hawking a foreign policy “on the cheap” through an empowered UN and collective action. The Pentagon knew, however, that the military would be carrying the aggressive humanitarian intervention burden and reacted coldly to idea that collective security and assertive multilateralism would prove more beneficial stating “they would embroil us in many things we shouldn’t be involved with.”<sup>73</sup> Clinton and his team, however, desperately desired to embroil themselves in any aspect of what they viewed as violations of human rights and give the UN unprecedented levels of authority to intervene in the internal affairs of states. Like Woodrow Wilson’s paternal approach to foreign policy, Clinton’s administration was going to determine which “bad” governments needed a lesson in democracy and human rights; and if they refused to behave after much scolding, force could be used to rectify the situation and reinstitute a more suitable government that adhered to modern Western democratic ideology. Adding a new twist, Clinton’s Wilsonianism would seek to place a global

community stamp on these adventures and attempt to somehow come to the aid of any population sustaining any form of suffering whether it be caused by natural or man-made disaster in the name of promoting global stability and unity.

Clinton wanted to ride the wave of globalism peaking in the early 1990s for his Wilsonian foreign policy, and rely on international NGOs and IGOs (International Government Organizations) to facilitate breaking down traditional barriers held by sovereign nations to promote “globo-economic” and political reforms.<sup>74</sup> The UN would be the centerpiece of these efforts. Little would deter such a haughty crusade, as Clinton had no inhibitions against the use of force<sup>75</sup> and the administration scoffed at the notion of needing public consensus (or Congress) as a perquisite to take action<sup>76</sup> and simply ignored the signs of lack of public support for peacekeeping.<sup>77</sup> The agenda was one of aggressive multilateral engagement to rid the world of human rights violations which left little to no room to maneuver U.S. foreign policy when the harsh realities of places like Somalia and Bosnia shattered such sentimental worldviews.

Clinton and his team had staked themselves to the rhetoric of assertive multilateralism and nation-building, starting with the failed state of Somalia. American focus on Africa was rare, but now humanitarian interests overshadowed strategic ones, and the U.S. plan was to encourage democracy and stability wherever it could although Africa was overpopulated, over-armed, and economically a mess.<sup>78</sup> After supporting and then inheriting the Somalia humanitarian mission, Clinton had to salvage Somalia or be blamed for returning it to chaos,<sup>79</sup> so it made for any easy choice. Clinton accepted the Bush doctrine of “doability” and compounded the problem of producing measurable results with the use of overblown rhetoric<sup>80</sup> about restoring the Somali economy and recreating a national government through reconciliation diplomacy and “bottom-up” national political participation. The incoming administration publicly hinted at nation-

building acknowledging a long term stay in Somalia may be unavoidable and “measured in years, not months”<sup>81</sup> Somalia was being moved forward as the first experiment in nation-building.<sup>82</sup>

On February 17, 1993, Clinton’s deputy assistant for African affairs, Robert Houdek, pitched the switch from producing a secure environment for relief operations to nation-building to the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa. Ghali and Albright quickly pushed through resolutions to begin UN nation-building in Somalia.

Within days of Houdek’s testimony the United Nations proposed a \$253 million rehabilitation package for Somalia. The package included large-scale public works projects to rebuild roads, clear irrigation canals, and construct sanitation facilities. It also included \$20 million for vocational training for Somalia’s fighters if they laid down their weapons, and another \$20 million for seeds and basic tools for Somali farmers as well as assistance for nomadic herders to rebuild their stocks of camels, sheep, goats, and cows. By March, the Clinton administration had initiated plans to send as many as 60 U.S. Agency for International Development and U.S. Foreign Service specialists to Somalia. Their job would be to fan out to Somalia’s cities and towns where they would establish reconstruction projects and help rebuild local governments.<sup>83</sup>

With the passage of UN Resolution 814 in March, 1993 the United States officially handed responsibility of Somalia back to the UN making it the sole authority in the operation. The UN conducted a brief handoff ceremony and the White House had a ceremony on the lawn to commend the returning UNITAF leadership. “The public thought it was over,” LTG Thomas Montgomery remembered,<sup>84</sup> but Clinton had simply ended relief operations and abdicated most of the control of nation-building to the UN.

Without consulting Congress, however, Clinton ended the withdrawal of the remaining American troops scheduled to leave under UNITAF and committed them to the UN operation. Albright announced that the U.S. would leave behind an 8,000 strong contingent to support UN nation-building and security operations along with a 1,000 Quick Reaction Force (QRF) to back

up peacekeepers. Contrary to what Bush had envisioned when launching the intervention, the U.S. did not effectively hand-off the operation to the UN so it could extricate most American troops after short-term relief operations. Clinton had technically handed off control to the UN but had likewise committed American troops and resources in Somalia indefinitely as the largest contributor of the collective effort.

The administration failed to examine forces necessary for UNOSOM II, and thought it could use what was in the UN pipeline.<sup>85</sup> As detailed in Chapter 2, the U.S. hoped nations would volunteer contingents to replace American troops, but that was this wholly unrealistic. Foreign contingents were small, poorly trained, poorly equipped and none of them had the technological or logistical capacity to fulfill the multiple roles the Americans were undertaking. Contingents arrived months late in only fractions of what was promised, or not at all. There was no troop rotation plan. Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston, in command of the U.S. Marine Expeditionary Force and the U.S. ground commander in Somalia, would never have the situation pitched to Congress earlier<sup>86</sup> in which he could pull out U.S. troops. The U.S. would have to carry the operation on its shoulders either in terms of support or combat operations against the warlords or else the mission would fail. American troops were stuck in Somalia indefinitely as the foundation of the peacekeeping force performing nation-building.

The administration was naïve to think it could put Humpty-Dumpty back together again, and naïve to think it could quickly transform the mission to nation-building and quickly hand off the mission to the UN.<sup>87</sup> The administration had no strategic plan, and the military success of UNITAF had been quickly squandered by replacing it with a much weaker and more political fragile UN force that sought to dictate the economic and political structure to the aggressive clans and sub-clans of well-armed Somalis. The administration, however, arrogantly ignored the

advice of experts like Oakley who warned that nation-building would be incongruent with Somali power relationships, would anger them and would fail.<sup>88</sup> “They will outsmart us on their own turf,” he cautioned, but the threat of quagmire was brushed off by the assertive multilateralists.

None of the paternal efforts being made in Somalia would deter future aggressors, nor alter regional security interests in the Horn of Africa bringing any future dividends to the bigger U.S. security picture or topple any dominos towards advancing human rights. Geopolitically, paving a road of “stability” in Somalia was a true cul-de-sac that went nowhere. Even the aid being spent in Somalia was “a mere drop in the bucket” in which the wily gunmen often found numerous ways to siphon off from international do-gooders pouring in under nation-building.<sup>89</sup> As noted in Chapter 3, the nation-building project was having very little positive effect on either the political or economic structure of the collapsed state.

The administration did not understand that defense cuts loomed that made supporting indefinite and costly UN military adventures unreasonable, especially when the conflict in the Balkans seemed to forebode much more important consequences for national security interests and higher risks that the administration couldn’t get a grasp on. The administration had an elitist outlook on spending for peacekeeping, one that seemed to strangely conceive of a consensual national public obligation to sacrifice billions of dollars annually to finance the reconstruction of nation states devoid of any strategic interests in order to satisfy the demands of assertive multilateralism. In 1996, for example, Albright, while requesting another \$402 million to cover the rising costs of peacekeeping, smugly dismissed the cost as “the price of a movie ticket for every American;”<sup>90</sup> assuming of course, that *every* American wished to sacrifice their next trip to the cinema so that the idealists could attempt to involve themselves more deeply in the



forsaken corners of the world and create new money pits to attempt to remold the unwilling and ungrateful foreign masses.

The speeches in the UN, in interviews, and testimony in Congress are telling of the attitudes of Albright as the spokesperson of the administration for nation-building and peacekeeping. Despite the obvious failures of peacekeeping, the administration was still hawking engagement and aggressive Wilsonianism. By the time Albright was making the “price of a movie ticket” pitch, Somalia was abandoned, the \$3 billion intervention in Haiti had produced few positive results after two years, and the situation in Bosnia was proving to be an endless adventure in costly containment and peacekeeping which spilled over into more commitments in Macedonia and Kosovo. Assertive multilateralism and abdicating foreign policy to the UN was never accepted by the public, and U.S. peacekeeping was rejected by a majority of the population after the disaster in Somalia. No matter how badly nation-building and assertive multilateralism had failed to deliver as promised, the administration always portrayed them as limited accomplishments and endeavored to repeat idealistic policy elsewhere despite the total lack of public support to fund such adventures.

Congress never played a pivotal role in Somalia policy, but only acted as an occasional fiscal brake on Clinton’s expanding appetites for assertive multilateralism and peace enforcement. In keeping with its traditional role, Congress did not advocate a specific policy. Congress also did not condemn the administration’s peacekeeping policies until 1994, and then only weakly. Clinton simply vetoed institutional measures designed to reign in his attempts to use the military for UN missions,<sup>91</sup> and Clinton ignored Congress completely when it came to foreign policy. Congress did nothing to challenge the use of troops in Somalia under Bush or Clinton, and as long as operations remained low cost and low-risk, Congress did not seriously question the

policy<sup>92</sup> until it was too late. Committees generally only asked standard questions of those reporting to them and very little debate ensued over the use of the U.S. military in peacekeeping or Clinton's plans with assertive multilateralism. The legislature simply abdicated its traditional responsibility and took on a passive role in foreign policy. Rep. Lee Hamilton (R-IN) remarked that Congress was simply ceding foreign policy to the President and surprisingly, "that's what many members want to do."<sup>93</sup> Money rather than strategy seemed the only concern for Congress in foreign policy. Peacekeeping grew in the federal budget, but aid to Russia was the main priority. Little debate ensued to question the administration's assumptions regarding Lake's vision of "democracy enlargement" and Albright's scheme for assertive multilateralism as valid approaches to global security strategy. House Republicans could not convince their colleagues that outside of funding for Russia, Clinton was misreading the international situation<sup>94</sup> and plunging the U.S. toward a sentimental nosedive into needless conflicts and unmanageable costs. Conservatives warned that Clinton was bent on advancing multilateralism with the United States left "handing out blank checks for unspecified UN peacekeeping adventures around the world,"<sup>95</sup> but as the minority party in Congress, there was little Republicans could do about it.

Clinton's "free pass" on foreign policy was due to his party's control of Congress until 1995 and Clinton's slippery avoidance of the issues in the press early in his presidency. The majority Democrats, after twelve years out of power, wanted to ensure that their new president got his "honeymoon period" in foreign affairs, and dampened conservative dissent on assertive multilateralism.<sup>96</sup> Clinton's freedom to maneuver, however, would only last as long as nothing seriously went wrong or became too costly. Assertive multilateralism, however, promised both for a Congress looking to cut budgets, not increase them. Assertive multilateralism soon invoked all sorts of cost and commitments, none of which warmed centrists and conservatives in either

party as the administration's plans unfolded. Incrementally and almost immediately, budget restrictions undercut Clinton's liberal ambitions to replace American unilateral power with UN authority and conduct nation-building. Congress didn't want to pay for another army run by the UN and didn't buy into widely expanding USAID and expanding the State Department<sup>97</sup> to help the underprivileged nations find democracy and McDonald's. In an era of budget cuts, Congress was in no mood to spend billions for funding lengthy lists of UN operations and programs that were stymied by an inept and overblown bureaucracy; not to mention the long laundry list State was also proposing unilaterally to fund its Wilsonian agenda. Billions would be spent in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and elsewhere, and by 1994, Sen. Jesse Helms (Republican from North Carolina) was vowing to end aid being wasted down "foreign rat holes" and "to bust up that fairyland"<sup>98</sup> of foreign policy geared around UN nation-building.

While Democrats sought to protect Clinton and keep Republicans in check, few saw any strategic benefit in putting U.S. troops into peacekeeping roles and paying to endlessly drag the U.S. into every global conflict, as Rep. Toby Roth (R-WI) called it a "death by a thousand knives".<sup>99</sup> The rhetoric of burden sharing was also quickly rejected. Congressmen soon lamented that State Department promises about UN contributions were delusional as the U.S. was going to have to "pick up the tab" for "astronomical costs" to put places like Somalia "on the dole".<sup>100</sup> Promises from Ghali and the UN for troop contributions were quickly proven hollow as well. The U.S. was doing most of the heavy lifting itself and funding it as well, and what was worse, it seemed like it was going to be stuck doing it indefinitely. Clinton failed to convince Congress why it should commit large portions of a shrinking budget to an international organization which proposed nothing but more obligations and higher costs to fulfill down the road.

Clinton and his administration failed to line up support for their idealist policies and continued to alienate the legislature with an elitist approach that disregarded opinions not in accordance with their own preconceived notions of the role of the U.S. in the international community. By February 1993, Congress was realizing the UN had already far past the point of global overreach, with “too many missions, too many troops, with too much cost” while Clinton, Albright, and Ghali were talking about undertaking even more aggressive assertive multilateralism in the immediate future. Lawmakers who worried about peacekeeping eroding the defense budget and troop readiness or had objections to handing over control to the UN were labeled as “isolationists.” The pronouncement of PDR-13 attempting to put U.S. troops in blue helmets as UN peacekeepers by presidential decree was a direct assault on Congressional authority and the inherent national security role of the military, and met heavy resistance. Clinton’s further attempts to cut Congress out of aid planning also angered the Hill and Clinton’s pro-UN agenda was losing support rapidly on both sides of the aisle. Typical of those that resented Clinton’s abdication of American security policy to the international community, Rep. Dan Burton (a Republican from Indiana) argued that Clinton had “bought off on the UN’s agenda without objection and without thinking about the long-term cost... the military is not a welfare agency, and our defense budget is not a foreign aid program.”<sup>101</sup> As Somalia turned into an open-ended commitment, Clinton fumbled in Bosnia over lift-and-strike, and Haiti was placed on the “democracy enlargement” and nation-building agenda; Congress by mid-1993 slowly realized it was going to have to rein the administration’s reckless policies in at some point and regain some voice in foreign policy. The inaugural honeymoon period in foreign policy finally came to an abrupt end when Congress lost its patience over the fiasco in the streets of Mogadishu.

Congress never questioned launching the humanitarian mission to Somalia or attempting to rebuild Somalia, but it was unhappy with the idea of continuing to pay for relief.<sup>102</sup> Committee hearings exposed the uneasy feeling that Clinton could keep troops there indefinitely without its approval, as well as the dangerous precedent it set for the unlimited use of U.S. force under assertive multilateralism. Immediately the point was raised that UN Security Council Resolutions did not authorize U.S. constitutional authority to use force. Bitterness also evolved as Clinton never consulted with Congress on any of the resolutions that committed the U.S. to rebuild the shattered Somalia society or to engage in counterinsurgency operations. Discussion toward invoking the 1973 War Powers Act simply broke down along partisan lines and unfortunately never changed the course of the administration's elitist attitude that congressional approval for nation-building or even aggressive peace enforcement was unnecessary. Ironically, the Democrats (who had crafted the bill to reign in a president's ability to make war on his own and had traditionally wielded it in the face of almost every military action from Beirut to the Gulf War) rejected the utility of the legislation to protect Clinton from the same scrutiny; all while they strangely maintained the law was somehow not fundamentally unworkable and should not be revoked.<sup>103</sup> Between February 1993 and September 1993 fifteen bills and resolutions were introduced calling for a pullout but were killed by the Democrats. More attempts to limit operations in Somalia also met Democratic interference which narrowly defeated measures simply to introduce more floor debate or set timetables. The Clinton administration continued unabated in its Somalia policy.

As time wore on, however, Congress grew more restless with the administration's routine reports that painted a rosy picture of peace talks and continued rhetoric about "rehabilitation" and dumping more millions into the nation-building project even though images of starving kids

had long since faded from television screens. Reports refuted the administration's claims that the majority of Somalis were cooperative and that the risks of the peace enforcement operation were low. Aideed was threatening to fight any UN trusteeship plans, and few had any faith in the UN to have enough capability to control him without a long-term U.S. deployment. Despite the increasing attacks on patrols, sniper fire and violent protests, the administration refused to designate Somalia as a "hostile environment" even after war was unofficially declared on Aideed and the SNA and combat raids became a daily occurrence.<sup>104</sup> The outlook was looking more pessimistic, and the administration was looking out more and more out of touch. Nation-building in Somalia was looking to become more expensive and risky, the two things Congress wasn't going to stand idly by and passively accept for long.

By August, Clinton's aloof assertive multilateralist position was being challenged from not only Republican opponents of globalism, but from within his own party. The threat to Clinton's protected position to wage unlimited peacekeeping emerged from the Democrat's battle over their own promised post-Cold War "peace dividend," and suddenly Clinton lost the luxury of Congress funding operations in Somalia without much scrutiny. The fire walls that had protected the State Department and Pentagon from deep cuts to pay for the growing deficit had expired. In the guns and butter debate over deficit reduction, even liberal legislators knew cutting defense spending too deeply would hurt the economy and jobs,<sup>105</sup> and now the Democrats could no longer have it both ways. The endless drain of nation-building adventures was an easy target for spending cuts, one that would have few passionate defenders who placed peacekeeping as a priority over domestic spending or keeping American bases and defense plants opened. Sen. Robert Byrd, who had already broken with Clinton over continuing the humanitarian mission but had failed to cut off funding for operations, led the charge to bring Clinton's foray in Somalia to

heel. Congress hadn't even debated Somalia since May, but with the deficit battle in full-swing, Byrd pushed for debate on a Congressional control of the operation. Byrd succeeded and Congress asked Clinton to finally report and officially seek specific authorization to keep troops in place past November 15th. Clinton, however, simply ignored the request.

Further debate was preempted by the battle in Mogadishu in October, which sent Congress into a frenzy to dismantle Clinton's stubborn plans to stay in Somalia. There were no calls to retaliate against Aideed or to pursue his capture, only to withdrawal immediately and the end the experiment. When Aspin and Christopher testified before Congress, accounts described the event as "feeding frenzy" in which Congressman cut into the administration's messengers who looked hopelessly lost and incapable of explaining how a small group of outnumbered peacekeepers became involved in taking on the masses of Mogadishu. Members found Aspin's testimony about UN obligations for nation-building and the obsession over chasing a warlord utterly incoherent, and were aghast when the administration sheepishly asked Congress to help it find a new policy. "Never before have I heard a more confused, disjointed, vague defense of American foreign policy in my professional career," remarked one member of Congress.<sup>106</sup>

Clinton weakly tried to defend his decision to stick to the nation-building project and tried to shift policy away from confronting Aideed, but to no avail. Democrats sought to protect him from Republican assaults on his competence after the details of the fiasco quickly unfolded, but still wanted the U.S out of Somalia as bad as their opponents did. After floundering in a rhetorically-laced attempt to sell the importance of finishing the work of "saving Somalia," Clinton abandoned his agenda, and unashamedly attempted to claim the UN had duped the U.S. into nation-building. He invoked his considerable political skills and proposed his own withdrawal timetable lasting six months that was designed to save face for himself and

supposedly buy time to get the UN to find new troops to replace the Americans. In rejecting Byrd's call to pull out by December 1<sup>st</sup>, and accepting the Clinton proposal that lacked any military or political practicalities, Congress had let Clinton off the hook. By granting Clinton the leeway to pullout on his own terms rather than their own, Congress allowed Clinton to "manipulate the will of Congress to avoid a straightforward vote"<sup>107</sup> on his policies and his performance in Somalia.

The strong desire to address the large scale human tragedy or to give birth to assertive multilateralism perhaps blinded leaders to the political and military realities that doomed Operation Restore Hope to failure. In initiating an unprecedented policy of *peacemaking* that went well beyond the scope of traditional peacekeeping, the United Nations and the United States involved themselves directly within the political struggle for Somalia and taking on roles that they had no political will or resources to fulfill. Both governments had deluded themselves into thinking that they were capable of dictating the power equation without resulting to overwhelming military force by relying on the flawed concepts of nation-building. Both Washington and the UN were naïve to think that the Somali clans and warlords were going to embrace Western traditional institutions, discard the way of the gun, forgive enemies, and accept foreign paternalism. The Somalis had manipulated many foreign powers throughout the Cold War, and were no means respectful of multinationalism or the well-intentioned designs of outside powers (including superpowers). The Somalis respected only brute force, did not fear war or death, and had known nothing but conflict and violence for more than two decades. To the Somali clans and militias, the architects of nation- building were nothing but arrogant meddlers to be casually exploited and then eventually driven out. Whatever power equations were to be resolved, there were only going to be resolved by Somalis themselves, and this is



what eventually came to be the case despite expending years of effort, millions of dollars, and several soldier's lives. In this light, it is quite apparent it was the Somali warlords who established and carried out successful policymaking, not Washington or the UN Security Council.

The primary fundamental reason nation-building could not succeed in Somalia was the simple truth that the UN institutionally was utterly incapable of undertaking such monumental tasks, a fact that the liberal assertive multilateralists in New York and Washington stubbornly refused to accept.<sup>108</sup> The UN and its member states, including the United States, lacked the political will to make the sacrifices necessary to conduct nation-building and peace enforcement in Somalia, or for that matter, anywhere else that possessed any sense of political or military risks. The overblown, under-funded, and undisciplined bureaucracies of the UN organization made it unfit to undertake the vast complexities necessary to transform a failed state, much less one as chaotic and culturally inconducive to outside influences as Somalia. There was little unity of purpose, especially between the U.S. and the Secretary General. Even after Clinton bought totally into the concept of nation-building that Bush had rejected, the U.S. and the U.N still pulled in opposite directions. The UN wanted to perform a coercive Chapter VII mandate relying on U.S. power, while the Americans just wanted to produce imagery towards supporting UN nation-building while finding a way to get out of Somalia without the whole operation falling apart. On the ground, contingents in Somalia had little cohesion and almost no military integration, and the Frankenstein command structure imposed by the Pentagon was a direct violation of the military principle of objective, especially in the face of the hostile Somali environment. Nothing about the Chapter VII mandate, the mission it was supposed to conduct, or those tasked to carry it out had any elements within themselves that could be considered strengths in a military intervention.

All the elements of UNOSOM II were in fact, glaring political and military weaknesses that a determined opponent could exploit.

First and foremost, the UN really had no idea what it was trying to do in Somalia, and the evolutions of the UNOSOM, UNITAF, and UNOSOM II missions from peacekeeping to peacemaking simply confused the efforts to help the Somalis even further. UNOSOM's operational mandate "was vague, changed frequently during the process and was open to a myriad of interpretations."<sup>109</sup> The problem began when Ghali started pushing for a renewed UN presence in Somalia after traditional peacekeeping was proving useless, and began the incremental process of developing a Chapter VI mandate under UNOSOM I. When the Western nations failed to respond very enthusiastically and were focused on the deteriorating situation in Yugoslavia, he ramped up the humanitarian rhetoric accompanied by accusations regarding ethnic prejudices. Ghali's pleas for international involvement to save floundering NGO humanitarian operations found a receptive audience in the post-Cold War environment, creating an opportunity for nations to engage in collective security and pay homage to supporting human rights without having to undertake such burdens alone. Optimism towards the UN and the international community finding resolutions to conflicts was strong based on the seeming success in Cambodia and elsewhere. Faith in the confidence that Ghali and the UN exuded to increase peacekeeping operations in size and scope was misplaced, however, and accepting the illusion that UN could conduct Chapter VI (much less Chapter VII) mandates was irresponsible. There was too much belief in a magical UN presence that would solve the impossible and "political decisions easily became tantamount to self-deception."<sup>110</sup>

Somalia was Ghali's Chapter VII guinea pig and the assertive multilateralists' experiment in nation-building. The Security Council failed to temper the Secretary General's grand designs,

especially once the Clinton administration took office and Madeline Albright stood in lockstep with Ghali's visions of intervention and ending human suffering anywhere it could be found to exist. It was under Bush, however, that Ghali was first emboldened to jump into Somalia under the weight of American power through UNITAF and reach far beyond the realm of traditional peacekeeping and relief operations. Although Ghali had gotten his wish with the American-led effort to intervene in Somalia, he and the assertive multilateralists missed a crucial reality check. The creation of the almost purely unilateral UNITAF force itself was an admission that the UN could never do the job, handle big missions, or deal with complex conflicts.<sup>111</sup> Without large scale American forces and financing, assertive multilateralism was only a hollow shell.

Since American power lay at the base of any large-scale interventions, U.S. and international agendas had to be highly synchronized in order to succeed in interventions. In Somalia, this was not the case. Beyond providing relief, Bush and Ghali had no unity of purpose in their agendas for Operation Restore Hope. Clinton bought into the ideology of nation-building but avoided foreign policy, ignored Somalia, and feared expending political capital on nation-building. As shown in Chapter 3, Bush only wanted to perform a quick relief mission, avoid entangling commitments, and pull the U.S. out of the operation by handing it off to the UN. This incongruity between the U.S. and Ghali's vision for the intervention was the linchpin for the continuous schizophrenic nature of the mission. The U.S. wanted to perform some humanitarian political theater and support multilateralism and get out quickly without much risk or cost; thereby conducting foreign policy on the cheap. The UN wanted to take on new roles that empowered itself and allowed it to rebuild nations, conduct collective security, and perform peace enforcement policy. Without U.S. financial backing and military participation, this was impossible. The weak contingent of patchwork international contingents relied on a large U.S.

force in Somalia for survival of the mission. Without a strong enough UN force to hand off the mission to, however, the U.S. could never get out of Somalia and avoid having to carry on the costs of the operation indefinitely-- unless it was willing to accept responsibility for the UN's failure. The U.S. and the UN had trapped each other in Somalia with no unity of purpose beyond the rhetoric of nation-building: a crusade which neither had the resources or the political will to accomplish.

The Bush administration worried about the lack of an endstate for the mission and the fear that U.S. troops would be hopelessly stuck in Somalia propping up the UN, but it satisfied itself with the notion that it could declare victory, hand off the mission to new volunteer contingents, and go home leaving the UN and president-elect Clinton to sort out the mess. Once UNITAF began operations, however, matters became more complicated. Ghali became too empowered and exceeded the mandate the U.S. had agreed to participate in and pushed hard for disarmament and regional political restructuring geared toward national reconciliation.<sup>112</sup> A flurry of UN resolutions poured out as Clinton took office, and the new changing mandates for UNOSOM II were hopelessly out of touch with the realities on the ground. Most of the nation-building resolutions were written based on the widely optimistic assumption that UNITAF had created "a secure environment" (which was bickered over but never defined) and that a smaller peacekeeping force could resume peace enforcement. This was utter fantasy. UNITAF had used a medium-sized force to match very limited relief criteria, and had rejected disarmament and nation-building. The new UNOSOM II mission was designed to use a small and fragile force to enforce a coercive policy of nation-building via assertive multilateralism. UN policy was transforming into pure idealism. UNOSOM II was overly ambitious and weak. This strategic

confusion followed by the collapsed of political will when risks and casualties emerged was UNOSOM II in a nutshell.<sup>113</sup>

Ghali had guessed wrong that the U.S. would jump in and beef up UNOSOM because of the efforts it had already expended in Somalia.<sup>114</sup> He was also wrong in assuming he could get UNITAF to spread out and start disarming the Somalis that UNOSOM II could be a smaller, lighter force. By March 1993, this clearly wasn't happening, so Ghali called for a bigger force to disarm the country and start aggressive nation-building under Resolution 814. The nation-building programs being discussed for the whole country were impossible and the UN lacked any real plan at all for creating a secure environment necessary in which to carry these projects out. The UN was overstretched as peacekeeping operations were already going broke by 1993, and the UN did not tailor troops to meet the mission but rather simply taking whatever they could get. The UN allowed the mandate change without having the resources, and no one in the Security Council challenged the policies, and Albright and Clinton embraced them. The goals of nation-building were not clearly articulated enough for nations to pay the price over time to bring them to fruition.<sup>115</sup> The UN operation in Somalia was a clear case of mismatching goals and assets.

The UN had no plan at all how to deal with the civil war, but it was still bent on coercively disarming the warlords and militias and attempted an aggressive show of force campaign which led to the ambush of the Pakistanis and an even further extension of hubris in the passing of Resolution 837. Hillen notes:

The U.S. excused itself from a costly operation by setting a limited objective that required only selective disarmament. In this, it assured success by using overwhelming force to achieve a clearly circumscribed goal. The UN, because it was hoping in vain to expand UNITAF's goals neglected to plan for a comprehensive disarmament plan to support UNOSOM II's ambitious mandate. As a result, UNOSOM II went off half-cocked and precipitated a violent backlash from local factions that it could not contain.<sup>116</sup>

The UN had turned itself into a belligerent force unwittingly when it sought to enforce its policies on the SNA, and had gone to war with Aideed without realizing it when it passed Resolution 814, but Aideed certainly did.<sup>117</sup> Once cooperation was abandoned for coercion, the policy would fail without overwhelming force. Unfortunately no one, especially the Americans, wanted to commit firepower or allow what was sent to be used effectively for fear of collateral damage and bad press. Most contingents were barely suited for traditional peacekeeping, much less peace enforcement operations, and were small in number and had limited roles. U.S. forces staying on for UNOSOM II comforted the allies, however the QRF itself was only a bone thrown to the UN to plug the gaps, but ended up being the main combat force. The UN and their American backers “had joined a civil war on the cheap”.<sup>118</sup>

After the Mogadishu battle, the UN passed Resolution 897 lowering expectations of nation-building, ended the policy of coercion, and the UN returned to a policy of cooperation; but it was a moot point. Security had disintegrated; without protection NGOs had long since packed up, and contingents were leaving without replacements. UN troops simply hunkered down in defensive positions while negotiations continued and the UN returned to a path of accommodation with the factions. Nothing more was accomplished in Somalia. Peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and nation-building had all come to naught. UN assertive multilateralism policy was a disastrous bust.

Coercive multilateralism and nation-building also relied on diplomacy. Coercion was part of the strange and counter-productive “two-track” approach the UN attempted in Somalia under UNOSOM II in which it tried to negotiate with warlords but also attempted to target them at the same time. Traditional peacekeeping negotiations under UNITAF were believed to be counterproductive because it legitimized the warlords and pushed a policy of accommodation to

decrease the risks in force protection. With the coercion policy of UNOSOM II, that outlook changed and uncooperative warlords in the diplomatic process would be punished. After provoking Aideed by raiding the radio station resulting in the ambush on the Pakistanis, Ghali was focused on making an example of those that dared to challenge the UN and kill peacekeepers. Aideed was targeted with much bluster and rhetoric that turned military operations into a fruitless manhunt. Success in removing Aideed was expected to clear the obstacles to UN efforts to end the chaos through diplomacy and create a national reconciliation process. UN military strategy was supposedly designed to marginalize or isolate Aideed, not to destroy the SNA, but its failings only served to turn Aideed into a local hero while plunging the UN into the civil war.

Diplomatic efforts in Somalia with the other factions, however, were as flawed as the military strategies behind them. UN/U.S. efforts to work with Somalis to establish a lasting peace through diplomacy was a running joke based on the flawed concepts of peacemaking. A lasting ceasefire, much less a peace settlement was unlikely with all the factions involved, especially since the UN couldn't follow or could categorize all the complex relationships between the clans and factions.<sup>119</sup> U.S. envoy Robert Oakley made some minimal progress in establishing high-profile meetings with the warlords, but from the start negotiations were flawed. Western negotiators tried to force through solutions and did not respect Somali customs and peacemaking known as *shir*. The highly educated and well-paid UN officials refused to bend to the ways of the Somalis<sup>120</sup> and insisted on dictating almost every aspect of the process to the Somali factions. The Somali delegates simply exploited the situation without cost to themselves.

The Somalis had no idea, intention, or even understanding of what the international community was so keen on. The lack of what a Western magistrate would call "proper procedure" invalidated in [the Somali participants'] eyes the meaning of the whole process. The collected their per diem for sitting in Addis Ababa, went shopping, met their

friends living in exile in the Ethiopian capital, and went home. As one of the participants... was to remark: “the speeches were nice, the slogans were really good but the whole thing was quite meaningless.” They had no feeling that they had actually pledged anything by putting their signature on a UN sponsored document they had been asked to sign.<sup>121</sup>

Civil affairs efforts to convert the Somalis at the grass roots level to embrace nationalism and democracy were at times just as comical as the diplomatic circus. One blunder included the distribution of millions of propaganda leaflets from the air that mistakenly translated the English words “United Nations” into the Somali words for “slave nation.”<sup>122</sup> Despite all the goodwill being conducted through food distribution, repairing the infrastructure, and providing some employment opportunities; the majority of the Somali population never demonstrated a desire to build a new society under foreign tutelage. Even in the limited operational areas, UNOSOM had little impact on the society, the majority of the population seemed content to ignore the foreigners or to exploit them anyway they could through theft or other means. “The Somalis treated us as people to be gulled and taken advantage of,”<sup>123</sup> one American remembered. In a place where “the entire country revolved around the plunder of food”<sup>124</sup> the effort to win hearts and minds changed nothing.

No diplomatic effort, civil works, or information campaign could have made any difference in creating a new society, as the warlords and their *qat*-addicted henchmen weren’t about to allow themselves to be disarmed or weakened in their struggle against their rivals. Even if one were miraculously imposed, none of the factions had any faith that a settlement would survive the minute the UN left. The warlords were all convinced that final control was predicated upon outlasting their rivals, not upon mutual cooperation. Even if “victory” over fellow rivals was placed out of immediate reach, no warlord was about to put himself at the mercy of others based on some vague notions of building a peaceful transitional or coalition government. Even if the



warlords would have been so miraculously enlightened, there was still the matter of the tens of thousands of gunmen running the streets. The *mooryans* served the warlords because they gave them *qat*, food, weapons, as well as provided them with a means to survive serving in an elevated *machismo* position in the chaotic society. For the Somalis, survival was never negotiable. The warlords and the *mooryans* thrived in a state of chaos; working towards peace was anathema for them.

The UN bureaucracy from Ghali on down to the officials in Mogadishu just didn't get how Somalia worked or how good intentions and creating stability were seen as so irrelevant there. As one officer put it, "Somalia rejected society, and seemed to delight in any small victory over it."<sup>125</sup> The UN didn't seem to understand how unwelcome they were and how unimpressed the Somalis were with their designs on reconstituting a national government. One aid worker noted, "The one thing Somalis could do most easily without was a national government, the one thing the international community seemed bent on giving them."<sup>126</sup> The Somali clan leaders didn't care about joining "the community of nations," or investing themselves in schemes that involved redeveloping a viable economy unless it benefited them directly. Interventionists were all just foreigners to be ignored, exploited, or fought if necessary, even if it was only for minimal gains. Somalis only respected brute force, not good intentions, and resented any outside encroachment on their local power structures. The UN was just seen as another clan, "a big, dumb clan of infidels"<sup>127</sup> who had ulterior motives to humanitarianism to meddle in their affairs. The Somalis naturally distrusted Ghali (who had ties to the ousted Barre regime,) other Arabs, and the Italians, and were always paranoid that any plans disarm the factions and create national government structures were seen as attempts to re-colonize Somalia or empower their enemies.

UNOSOM didn't seem to understand that its mere presence was not going to end the struggle for power or change the destructive and aggressive nature of Somali culture.

The UN planners also didn't understand that it wasn't going to get peace without real military leverage, but it convinced itself that it did. UN planners didn't understand that it was war rather than famine that had caused Somalia's downfall and that warlords weren't interested in political reconciliation or nation-building. The Somalis were also not intimidated by the threat of UN power. The warlords sensed weakness when UNITAF shifted to UNOSOM II, and were ready to test the small force if provoked. It was inevitable with coercion policy that there would be a confrontation. By focusing operations around Mogadishu, the UN empowered Aideed who could exploit the influx of supplies in his territory and attempt to manipulate the UN to his advantage. The UN unloaded their nation-building agenda in his front yard, and this was a costly mistake. Aideed was tougher and smarter than the UN, and he outmaneuvered them at every turn. Aideed began acting as the UN's steward, and then turned anti-UN when they excluded him from a peace conference because he had held one on his own. Aideed, whose name means "one who tolerates no insult," didn't respond favorable to pressure, and when he felt cornered he intimidated clans from participating in negotiations. Aideed was convinced the UN was his enemy. He did not fear U.S. intervention; his only worry was that the UN might back his rival Mahdi and the U.S. would support the decision leaving him politically adrift after the UN mission inevitably left. The UN and soon viewed him as the obstacle obstructing the whole operation and provoked him with the raid on Radio Mogadishu. Going after him and taking on the SNA had many bad possible consequences, but nobody asked about them beforehand.<sup>128</sup> The military operations designed to capture him or marginalize his power base failed to nab him or draw out his forces. In the heavy-handed effort, Aideed became an anti-colonial hero to the

population and the UN lost the any claim it may have had on the moral high ground of humanitarian intervention. Impartiality in peacekeeping could not coincide with a policy of assertive multilateralism and nation-building which dictated power formulas through coercion and force.

Impartiality (a key component in the agenda of peacekeeping) was lost once the UN changed the mission toward hunting Aideed. The Somalis viewed the peacekeepers as just another clan or faction in the endless struggle. These events, however, underscore a more basic problem with forced intervention and UN nation-building policy:

It is impossible for an intervening party, acting alone or in concert with others, to keep nation building activities from altering the power calculations of rival factions that are still maneuvering to outlast each other, as they were in Somalia. Invariably, something the outside party does will be seen to benefit to one side's interests and a danger to the others. Ten years before Mogadishu, the consequence of that problem was painfully demonstrated in Beirut, and like in Beirut, the lesson was the same: Nation building is a fool's errand when no political will exists among the warring sides to reconcile and when the cost of influencing political outcomes—intentionally or unintentionally—exceeds the threshold of what the American public are willing to tolerate.<sup>129</sup>

The notion of impartial intervention is delusional, because the intervention will factor into who will rule afterward.<sup>130</sup> In a target country where people have been killing each other (often for years) to determine these outcomes, combatants will never react passively to peacemakers if a settlement leaves them too short of their war aims or without the ability to outlast opponents in cases of long-term stalemate. Deadly resistance can be the only logical alternative to those being denied rule after the fighting stops, and intervening outside forces are no more immune to it than any of their traditional enemies would be. Why Washington believed that the Somalis would be so awed by a small and limited UN military operation that injected a vague foreign solution on the lengthy struggle for power could only be explained as an act of arrogance, hubris, and stupidity. UNITAF went fairly smoothly because Powell's belief that the Somalis would be awed

by a larger force restricted to temporarily distributing humanitarian aid was essentially correct, especially given the fact that Aideed and the other warlords were content to wait UNITAF out. The overwhelming force benefit, however, did not carry over into UNOSOM II once the mission was expanded to nation-building and consequently entering into the power struggle while simultaneously the military resources steadily *decreased*.<sup>131</sup> The Somalis tolerated and even happily exploited the peacekeepers when the operation was limited to aid distribution leaving the political status quo fairly unchanged. The warlords, clans, and street mobs acted decisively against the peacekeepers only *after* the U.S. fully entered into the power struggle between the Somalis by targeting Aideed.

In the end, the policy in Somalia mirrored the fundamental mistakes of Vietnam. The U.S. government ended up following the exact same path it set out to avoid from the outset of the operation. *Success ultimately hinged on military pacification* that could not be achieved without using much greater force and demonstrating greater political and national will. While policymakers agonized over getting sucked in, they still avoided making realistic concrete steps to expedite success or to articulate a reasonable exit strategy especially after UNOSOM II was initiated. Despite several statements made by the Pentagon and the White House to the contrary, the mission was nothing but open-ended, as Hoar's pleas to the Pentagon in September of 1993 reflected. Nation building, however, by its very nature is a wholly open-ended endeavor; *there never is a feasible exit strategy* because one has to prop up something that doesn't already exist in the hearts and minds of the targeted population. The Clinton administration bought into and helped propagate the delusion of partial intervention and nation-building policy in Somalia and the administration became entangled with UN incompetence in policymaking.

The essence of policy for Somalia under the Clinton administration unfolded as promoting nation-building as a goal and becoming entangled with the confusion of UN policymaking. This approach also was embedded with the underlying desire of manufacturing such neo-Wilsonian idealism by performing a “dog-and-pony show” and practicing as much risk avoidance as possible. The goals for Somalia were devoid of the consideration of concrete national interests, and worse yet, there was no continuity or cohesion within the ranks of the administration conducting the policy. It was policy without substance or direction.

Bush and Clinton had spoken repeatedly about the New World Order with the assumption that in cases of assertive multilateralism the United States could rely on cooperation from the global community. Clinton and other liberals further envisioned a bigger and more powerful UN could take some of the heat off the U.S. as the sole super-power, and as Senator Joseph Biden (Democrat from Connecticut) put it, collective action would serve in “burden and risk sharing.”<sup>132</sup> The concept was heavily flawed, as the UN was nowhere near capable of undertaking such lofty duties, even as it enthusiastically wrapped itself in assertive multilateralism under Ghali’s direction. Albright was the chief culprit in dumping assertive multilateralism onto a UN which couldn’t handle it, and in turn abdicated American responsibilities as a superpower toward international peace enforcement and nation-building as the key agendas for conflict resolution. Assertive multilateralism (a term coined by Albright) was nothing but the Western powers unwillingness to make sacrifices, and a convenient way to “fob off the Bosnians and Somalis on the United Nations”. As one UN diplomat noted, “peacekeeping wasn’t so much policy, but an absence of policy.”<sup>133</sup>

In line with his desire to reduce foreign policy to a distant consideration to domestic issues, Clinton abdicated policymaking to the UN and decision-making under these policies to his

independently-minded subordinates. The entire notion of participating in collective security via an empowered UN while ignoring foreign policy almost completely was an abdication of power and responsibility. Buying into the concepts of assertive multilateralism and nation-building, Clinton handed Somalia policy off to Ghali and the UN to be administered by Special Representative Jonathan T. Howe (from the U.S. State Department) in Mogadishu. Howe supposedly answered to Lake and the State Department, but Lake and Christopher paid no attention to Somalia for eight months.<sup>134</sup> The UN was supposedly in charge but was bureaucratically a mess and forced to look to the Americans for direction but often only received confused signals. The Europeans quickly surmised the Americans didn't know what they were doing, and refused to follow their lead once the conflict heated up with Aideed. In short, nobody was driving the train.

Despite Powell's warning to him that "we can't make a country there" and that the U.S. would get bogged down under Ghali's plan,<sup>135</sup> Clinton was determined to proceed with nation-building in Somalia under UNOSOM II. U.S. pressure got UNOSOM II created quickly, although many in the UN were uncomfortable taking over a Chapter VII mission under UN Resolution 814.<sup>136</sup> Clinton removed all the deadlines for U.S. troop removal and Albright backed every one of the seventeen resolutions flowing like a broken water main from the UN to transform Somalia. While bypassing Congressional approval, nation-building activity would continue at least two years under UN Resolution 865, mainly conducted by U.S. agencies and military units. By pursuing the transformation of the limited humanitarian operation under UNITAF into a peace enforcement and nation-building, "the Americans had declared victory and backed blindly into a buzz saw."<sup>137</sup>

The UN/U.S. relationship was not clarified from the start. Diplomatically, Oakley was the chief negotiator in the process, but had no actual authority to deal with the factions; that was Ismat Kittani's job at the UN.<sup>138</sup> Militarily the Americans were obviously in charge, but had created a befuddled and dysfunctional command structure to give the UN the appearance of command while ironically denying American ground commanders any control of international contingents. UNOSOM II had no template for operations like UNITAF had, everything was done on a trial-and error basis and incongruities between U.S. and UN were often geared toward a "worry about it later" approach.<sup>139</sup> Where the U.S. position and authority ended and where the UN's began was often left confused and undefined.

With the creation of UNOSOM II, and the U.S. locked itself into a contradictory policy for itself in Somalia. The UN obviously couldn't handle the task, and the U.S. was unwilling to invest too much effort in the nation-building adventure because there was no will or consensus in the post-Cold War to do it. The U.S. saw the commitment to Somalia as endless, and didn't want to be part of the huge mission to make nation-building work. The U.S. wanted it both ways—it wanted the UN to succeed in an expanded mandate it couldn't handle alone but it wanted to wean the UN off dependence on the United States. The U.S. had conflicting goals: to create UN success somehow through less and less U.S. involvement, but UNOSOM couldn't even function without a large U.S. presence. Clinton feared inheriting Somalia and having a failure sticking to him,<sup>140</sup> and hoped that he could pay lip service to nation-building without taking any real risks or make too many sacrifices before handing off the mission completely to the UN. Resolution 865, however, which committed U.S. forces to serve as the bulk of peacekeeping force, revealed that there was no multilateral system without the U.S. carrying it on its back and a large American force would be required. As long as UNOSOM II existed, it was going to rely on an American

commitment or fail. The notion of a hand-off was unfeasible. The U.S. had chained itself to the corpse of UN assertive multilateralism in Somalia.

The UN's perspective was somewhat different. Ghali felt that the Bush had led the charge into Somalia, but refused to perform the necessary steps to disarm the factions and begin the steps towards making real peace saddling the UN with the contradictions. With Clinton, Ghali found an advocate of nation-building, but one who paid little attention to Somalia, put undue attention to military solutions, and had generated little faith that the U.S. wouldn't pull out at any given point regardless of the situation it left behind in Somalia.<sup>141</sup> The Clinton administration had handed over control of policy to the UN, and had promoted peacemaking and nation-building, but had only committed itself to the bare minimums to keep the mission afloat. The UN operation barely had enough to do a traditional peacekeeping mission, and felt as if the Americans had led them out on a precarious limb with assertive multilateralism in Somalia, and greatly feared the U.S. would leave them holding the bag. Their fears were indeed validated once the shaky UNOSOM II structure was tested and failed and the Americans subsequently "abandoned the remaining UN troops after October 3<sup>rd</sup> like an unwanted pet at Yellowstone."<sup>142</sup> The relationship between the UN and the U.S. was poorly defined, lacked congruity, and failed to outline clear objectives in which both organizations would commit themselves. Trust and cohesion were absent in their dual policy role and in the end, both would blame the other for the failure in Somalia.

When the twenty-four Pakistani peacekeepers were killed after their raid on Radio Mogadishu, UN Resolution 837 was passed to take revenge on Aideed and the SNA and remove them from the power equation in Somalia. The resolution did not call for immediate action, but implied taking steps to capture Aideed. The resolution was fully supported by the administration, but



DOD and the JCS were not consulted regarding this policy change. Special Representative Howe was instrumental in creating the shift, as he pushed Lake to retaliate against Aideed and after another ambush of Moroccan troops he distributed his infamous wanted posters around Mogadishu and creating a warrant for Aideed turning the warlord into a modern day Robin Hood to the Somalis. Howe requested Rangers for the expressed purpose of going after Aideed, and meanwhile employed the small QRF in a constant combat role to repeatedly hit the SNA. Howe and Ghali convinced the administration that claimed that the peace process could not continue with Aideed on the scene, and he was determined to get him. Howe and Ghali both wrongly assumed that they could capture Aideed in a few weeks and that militarily the SNA would be a pushover. Howe's personalization of the conflict had turned policy in Somalia in a dangerous direction. U.S. policy in Somalia had gone from relief to counterinsurgency, "from Red Cross to Green Berets within six months."<sup>143</sup>

With the passage of Resolution 837, the UN had now taken sides in the civil war and lost its legitimacy as a peacekeeping force. In following the UN's lead initiated by Howe's personal determination to eliminate Aideed, the U.S. had played into the power struggle, and the dual track diplomacy it was initiating to make war on Aideed while acting as a neutral arbitrator in national reconciliation was hopelessly contradictory. Once the U.S. had chosen to take on Aideed, the Somalis became sympathetic to him as a "David vs. Goliath hero"<sup>144</sup> and the Americans were successfully labeled as imperialists making the area of operations become much more hostile. Sensing the Americans' weakness for casualties, Aideed's plan quickly became to kill as many Americans as possible.

After the ambush of the Pakistanis, the Clinton administration was very vocal about taking aggressive action and protecting the role of peacekeepers through the use of force, but no one

seemed to understand that a major policy shift was occurring or how hard it would be to capture Aideed.<sup>145</sup> Albright argued attacking and disarming the SNA was the only solution to “creating a secure environment” and doing anything less was a form of “appeasement”.<sup>146</sup> Clinton reaffirmed the UN resolution to retaliate in a public communication on July 1, 1993, in which he invoked all sorts of rhetoric about saving Somalis from warlords, spreading democracy, and gave glowing reports about how well the UN had restored order and started the peace process. Clinton agreed with Ghali that the UN’s *credibility* was at stake and that the U.S. had to *demonstrate* its determination to promote peacekeeping and the ideals of Chapter VII interventions. It was pure hubris. Clinton, Ghali, and the nation-builders were determined to prove that no one had the right to challenge UN authority, much less resist coercion and nation-building through violence.

Clinton used language equating Aideed to an unruly child testing the limits of his parents:

American policymakers typically described the conflict as one in which the United States would have to put the Somalis on restriction, curtailing their bad behavior and sending a message of threat to its neighboring siblings. President Clinton stated “the trick” to policing Somalia was learning how to do it without in any way rewarding the kind of behavior we have seen that would spread among all the warlords who have been essentially “playing by the rules.” These comments represent perceptions of superior U.S. military capabilities, as well as a simplified view of Somali political strictures in which a small group of decision makers are negatively affecting the decision making process and cause its overall inefficiency.<sup>147</sup>

The Americans were being demonized by the Somalis, but the White House was ignoring the danger and CENTCOM was still taking the warlords very lightly expressed high optimism that Aideed would still be captured. The attitude of the ground commanders in Somalia was one of surprise that given the overwhelming superiority of American forces, why Aideed hadn’t simply just surrendered.<sup>148</sup>

Aideed, however, wasn’t impressed by his arrest warrant or very intimidated by American force and refused to behave accordingly as the nation-builders had anticipated.

Aideed surely didn't appreciate American style niceties. He did not retain counsel or begin polishing up his depositions. Instead tipped off by Howe's public bluster, the SNA leader vanished into the backstreets of Mogadishu.<sup>149</sup>

Strategically, all the SNA had to do was to hold out against UN to win any military confrontation. He continued to incite street protests, demonstrations, used the SNA and local militias to harass UNOSOM efforts, and waited for opportunities to ambush the peacekeepers and create casualties. Since the Americans had almost no worthwhile tactical intelligence or allies in Mogadishu, he easily evaded capture making the Americans look even more impotent. Since the UN didn't have the force or political will to back up its policy of coercion, it was only a matter of time before Aideed would find the right situation to embarrass his new enemies.

There was little consensus over the decision to go to war with Aideed. Powell had agreed to send Task Force Ranger with the recommendation that there was a 50% chance of capturing him, but only 25% chance of getting him alive and warned that the repeated failures to capture him only raised his stakes.<sup>150</sup> Clinton agreed, but stated that he had faith in Lieutenant General Hoar the commander of CENTCOM to get the job done. Oakley openly disputed the decision to hunt Aideed, and warned that the focus on him was undermining the entire reconciliation process. Craig Crigler, former U.S. ambassador to Somalia, also warned, "We've allowed ourselves into getting suckered into choosing good guys and bad guys" and that brute force was not the proper approach to the complex civil war in Somalia.<sup>151</sup> The UN was of no help in clarifying the situation, as it spent months in a bureaucratic tangle debating whether it was even *legal* to capture Aideed or to kill civilians in the effort. The knee-jerk reaction by Howe, Ghali, and Clinton to focus on Aideed as the primary obstacle to success in Somalia continued unabated with little direction or cohesion.

As the situation intensified over the summer, the policy shift toward hunting Aideed was unraveling the entire nation-building project. Pacification was not occurring even in relatively quiet areas south of Mogadishu, and humanitarian operations dwindled as UNOSOM took on more and more military tasks in confronting Aideed. NGOs complained that their security had greatly reduced, the European allies were angry about the policy shift and increase in violence and removed the humanitarian focus of the mission. American failure to capture Aideed as promised was undermining UN credibility and encouraging the militias to confront the peacekeepers. The SNA divided the city into defensive sectors, created a crude communications network, stockpiled RPGs, and moved in 1,000 regulars and mobilizing 12,000 clan allies under Colonel Hussan Grumale<sup>152</sup> in order to trap the UN and produce the desired American casualties. Nation-building was quickly being reduced to counterinsurgency.

While Aideed prepared for battle, the administration continued to undercut military capabilities in order to reduce perceived political risks to itself. The administration feared that sending in more troops or heavy weapons would contradict the false *image* that the UN was capable of handling the mission on its own, nation-building was on track, and that American troops would be quickly phased out of the operation. Since Congress wouldn't fund major troop increases and the administration was more interested in presenting an image of progress and increasing security in Somalia, Clinton decided to reject his generals' rational requests for armor and AC-130s to aid in force protection. Hoar likewise rejected the initial request for artillery to make up for the UN's woeful shortage of manpower, claiming it would cause too much collateral damage.<sup>153</sup> Powell didn't override the artillery request, but he did pursue the armor issue with Aspin. Aspin, who was becoming increasingly frustrated with the lack of direction with policy, submitted the request to the White House staff who brushed him aside without letting him talk to

Clinton directly about it. Aspin, was being frozen out of the policy process by the NSC staff leading Aspin to simply tell Powell, “It ain’t going to happen”.<sup>154</sup> Further requests up the chain from Montgomery were simply ignored because no answer from Clinton would be forthcoming, but it would Aspin who would be eventually scapegoated for denying troops the protection they needed and creating more casualties that could have been prevented had the Americans had their own armor. The cause of those casualties and the failure of the October 3<sup>rd</sup> raid can be directly traced to the failed policies and attempts to avoid making serious decisions in the highest levels of the White House. Heavy emphasis was placed in military planning on limiting collateral damage and civilian casualties and especially on avoiding American casualties; in essence, to make surgical war on Aideed but perpetuate the image of success and pacification. The administration’s risk avoidance mentality was sending it on a collision course with Aideed’s plan to kill Americans and run the UN out of Somalia.

On August 8<sup>th</sup> a landmine blew up an American humvee killing four soldiers prompting Clinton to approve Powell’s reluctant recommendation to send Delta Force into Mogadishu to capture Aideed. Clinton later defended the decision claiming that the thought it was only a police action that the UN couldn’t do on its own and was incidental to the primary mission.<sup>155</sup> Oakley realized the futility of hunting Aideed so unsuccessfully while contemplating no other alternative courses of action, but Clinton wanted to punish Aideed and demonstrate to the warlords who didn’t “play by the rules” the UN had imposed on them. Hoar objected to the use of Delta Force, arguing that this independent force would create friction in the command structure and have very little chance of succeeding.<sup>156</sup> Powell reluctantly agreed for the need to use Special Forces, but he and Aspin were already feeling that it was time to get out of Somalia all together before things

got even worse. After much indecision, Clinton sent Delta under General Garrison to capture Aided using Special Forces tactics and attached them to Task Force Ranger already in place.

Howe pushed Montgomery to have the Rangers put into action almost immediately to support Delta's special operations. The well-publicized Delta raids on SNA strong points that produced few results (beyond stirring up bad press and agitating the Somalis) had no effect on changing the policy that allowed CENTCOM a free reign to launch raids. After a series of disappointing raids to catch Aided, the administration amazingly boasted to Congress and the media that it was "breaking Aided's back" and "putting him on the run" and assessed that Aided was rapidly losing power and "it is just a question of time" before he would be caught or surrender--none of which were even remotely true assessments.<sup>157</sup> The SNA actually took few casualties and showed no signs of capitulation but instead launched more street demonstrations and moved more weapons into the city. The Somalis launched small ambushes on UN patrols which created a "tit-for-tat" pattern of violence, which was successful in getting many contingents to hunker down in their compounds. Violence was heating up as more U.S. raids met increasing reactionary fire, but Aided was nowhere to be found.

On August 22<sup>nd</sup>, another command-detonated mine exploded caused four American casualties. News of this attack sent Clinton into a rage which revealed the hubris behind the policy to fruitlessly chase the warlord. Clinton, sounding remarkably like Lyndon Johnson during the Vietnam War, ranted at advisor George Stephanopoulos:

"We're not inflicting enough pain on those fuckers. When people kill us, they should be killed in great numbers. I believe in killing people who are trying to kill you. I can't believe we're being pushed around by these two-bit pricks."<sup>158</sup>

Clinton was frustrated by his inability to use minimal risk-free force to cow the warlords and his inability to make an example of Aided. The demonstration effect was backfiring on him.

The coercive military policy was not producing legitimacy for assertive multilateralism and UN Chapter VII collective security mandates instead it was proving how contradictory and futile they were. Clinton was increasingly faced with two poor options, either use more force and take on the SNA or to bail out. Neither option seemed very appealing. Clinton retreated into avoidance mode and focused his attention elsewhere to allow his unsynchronized NSA staff deal with the issue, in which they followed suit. No one was really in charge; Howe was left to figure out things on his own, Oakley wasn't even contacted by the White House as the situation deteriorated, Montgomery was getting no support in a rapidly degrading security situation, and Garrison was left to practically free lance executing a military policy which was counterproductive to the stated goals of the UN. Only Les Aspin was left begging for restructuring the uncontrollable policy and trying to create cohesion, but no one in the White House was listening.

The UN was forcing the American's hand and creating more pressure to take on Aideed. Mission creep was reaching its height in Somalia. The QRF was not being used as an off-shore emergency force as planned help facilitate a staged U.S. withdrawal, but was instead engaging in almost daily combat in Mogadishu. The UN had no other units or air assets capable of anything beyond garrisoning and simple patrolling duties suitable for traditional peacekeeping. Only the Americans had the units and logistical support capable of conducting offensive combat operations, and they had barely enough to try to conduct limited raids but not take on an entire faction in the civil war. Brought in as the new muscle of the UN, Garrison was "authorized to get Aideed," but he said he "just didn't think (the raids) would lead to open warfare."<sup>159</sup> Why Garrison, the administration, or the UN failed to see how such actions would not lead to open warfare are simply beyond comprehension. Garrison and others later testified that the mission

had *not* changed; it was simply following under the current mandates. The plan to chase Aideed thus became a cyclical argument based around justifying Chapter VII mandates and “creating a secure environment,” and demonstrating UN authority<sup>160</sup> which seemed to ignore the fact that risks had been greatly increased and they had entered the civil war against one of the clans. The administration accepted mission creep because without carrying the weight of the mission, the mission would certainly fail and ultimately expose the illusion of assertive multilateralism. It was more important to continue pursuing an illogical and dangerous course than to question the idealistic rhetoric and emotional foundations of the flawed policy.

By September, the objectives of the intervention were clearly off track, and policy had become hopelessly muddled and fragmented as the Pentagon and the State Department were making no real attempt to coordinate their efforts. Robert Gosende, Oakley’s replacement, was urging Clinton to back off the unsuccessful manhunt. Since Aideed had not even been spotted since July 28<sup>th</sup> it seemed unlikely that a quick military solution was forthcoming. The administration was smelling failure and began waffling and talking again about a “two-track approach” attempting to get Aideed to return to negotiations while still targeting him for capture. AC-130 gunships, the one thing Somali warlords feared and respected, were foolishly removed to entice Aideed to negotiate. Aideed now sensed weakness; he secretly reinforced SNA strength in Mogadishu and continued to defy the UN while remaining in hiding. Unable to locate Aideed and completely unaware of Aideed’s military build-up, Garrison resorted to targeting Aideed’s lieutenants based on the dribble of intelligence on hand (the increased raids had actually caused intelligence from informants to dry up quickly).<sup>161</sup> Lacking much intelligence information, Garrison had to act with minimal preparation which worried him. “Going into the Bakara



Market, we'll win this gunfight but we could lose the war,"<sup>162</sup> he prophetically lamented to his officers.

It was this situation that prompted the raid on the Olympic Hotel on October 3<sup>rd</sup> that led downing to the Blackhawks and the subsequent battle in the streets of Mogadishu. Powell had just retired and did not approve the raid, but later stated he would have only allowed it to be conducted at night when U.S. night-vision technology that provided a substantial tactical advantage. Hoar at CENTCOM also did not approve the raid but it had been personally approved by Clinton, who believed that a big street battle was unlikely because "I thought we'd get him on the move."<sup>163</sup> The daylight raid was a mistake, Garrison had underestimated enemy forces, and Delta supported by the few Rangers and the QRF lacked the conventional forces to support them in a large scale straight-up fight. Planners made absolutely no contingency planning if anything went seriously wrong. The raid strategy was supposed to avoid the risks of conventional combat, which was very wishful thinking to believe that a full-confrontation with the SNA could be avoided while trying to capture its leadership. Clinton had gambled and lost thinking that capturing Aideed without taking on the whole SNA straight on could turn the tide in Somalia. Like Jimmy Carter in Iran, Clinton had banked a failing policy on a raid to obtain "a win on the cheap."<sup>164</sup>

The political strategy behind ordering the raid had little to recommend it and was unlikely to produce a solution to Somalia even had Aideed been captured. The UN policymakers were still operating under the assumption that capturing Aideed would end resistance to UN coercion and produce a more stable environment in Mogadishu. They strangely assumed that no one in the SNA could replace him or that none of the other warlords would pounce on such an opportunity to either attack their weakened opponent or seize Aideed's politically successful anti-UN mantle

for themselves. The UN actually had no plans what to do with Aideed if they even caught him, and was still debating whether it was even legal to put him on trial. The concept to treat Aideed like a common criminal to be cornered and arrested “smacked too much of *Dragnet* and not what was really going on here—war.”<sup>165</sup>

Chasing after Aideed also made little tactical military sense either. The Somalis had demonstrated that they engaged in disorganized guerilla warfare, and contrary to consensual belief that Aideed was the “gravity of resistance,”<sup>166</sup> there was no military “center of gravity” to go after in the shifting clan and militia environment of Mogadishu.<sup>167</sup> The logic of trying to use a small force to catch the former police chief of Mogadishu hiding in the center of the largest warlord’s clan-controlled neighborhoods with virtually no military intelligence (or compromised intelligence) was “like Coyote and Roadrunner”.<sup>168</sup> UNOSOM knew this raid was a plan that would find them diving into the middle of a hornet’s nest, but it was obsessed with capturing Aideed and his lieutenants and further trying to bully the SNA with a show of force. “We wanted to make him feel threatened in the northern area,” Lt. General Sheehan later try to explain, but he could not explain why they casual in provoking him on his own turf after he had demonstrated his prowess in conducting urban warfare.<sup>169</sup> Military planning was from top-to-bottom based on the concept of a win on the cheap; a small elite force capturing its primary leadership in the heart of its own territory and quickly escaping. Instead, the Rangers fell into Aideed’s well-planned trap-- cutting off the outnumbered Americans and surrounding them with growing swarms of angry fighters. The October 3-4 firefight quickly began to parallel the Battle of Little Big Horn.<sup>170</sup>

The initial phase of the raid captured a few of Aideed’s lieutenants, but missed the prime target by two minutes and initiated a full-scale ambush by the SNA and local militias which produced a

bloodbath in the streets killing eighteen Americans and wounding several more in the process. Most of the casualties occurred after the initial phase of the raid was over and the Americans had to fight their way in and out of the crash sites after being cut off. The decision to reject the requests for armor came back to haunt everyone involved. Unnecessary casualties were taken as the light-skinned vehicles of the QRF rescue force were shot to pieces, and significant delays occurred in getting the Pakistanis and Malaysians to employ their armored vehicles in the rescue effort. Aideed's forces suffered greatly with perhaps over 1,000 killed and many more wounded in action; losses he could ill afford. The extreme losses inflicted on the SNA was not exploited, however, as the administration had finally woken up to the fact that there was no military solution in Somalia, no way to "win on the cheap," and there existed no political will to back the coercive policy of assertive multilateralism and nation-building through limited war. In acknowledging this, Clinton quickly rejected the generals' calls to go after Aideed and finish the job. He finally understood that getting Aideed wouldn't fix Somalia, a fact that was confirmed when Aideed was killed several years later.<sup>171</sup>

The political fallout for Clinton's failed policies, however, was immediate. The administration's competence was challenged, and calls for immediate pull-out resonated in Congress and in the media. The "minimal risk" assessments of nation-building and chasing Aideed fed to Congress and the public turned out to be wrong and purposefully misleading. "The American public expressed revulsion at the grisly film footage of half-clothed American corpses being dragged through the dirt."<sup>172</sup> The testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee of Captain James Smith, a retired Vietnam War veteran who lost his son Jamie in the Mogadishu battle, encapsulated the reaction to the mess in Somalia:

On October 12, 1993 Jamie was buried at Fort Benning. Immediately after the services, I met with some of the veterans of the Mogadishu battle. They had bandaged arms, casts

on their legs, walked with crutches, and were in wheelchairs. We talked for several hours. I left that meeting with three firm beliefs. The first, my son's death served no purpose. Second, the Rangers had been betrayed, denied proper combat support, unreliable UN allies; disaster was preordained...<sup>173</sup>

The national mood was angry: Americans were thoroughly disgusted with Mother Theresa foreign policy and watching soldiers dying trying to save ungrateful strangers. The nature of the disjointed and drifting policy was quickly exposed in the media hot on the trail of the jarring fiasco. Clinton immediately tried to deflect full responsibility and all that week blamed his advisors for not keeping him informed. He insisted he was blind-sided by the NSC team and was not fully briefed on the mission.<sup>174</sup> He convinced himself, as only Clinton could do, that he was a victim of unfortunate circumstance, and equated himself to his hero, Kennedy. Clinton later wrote, "The battle of Mogadishu haunted me. I thought I knew how President Kennedy felt after the Bay of Pigs. I was responsible for an operation I had approved in general but not the particulars."<sup>175</sup> When asked why he was approving raids while sending Jimmy Carter to negotiate with Aideed in September, Clinton could not explain his schizophrenic policies but only lamely suggested later to Carter that that he "did not want to micromanage the military and had intentionally remained disengaged from military matters in Somalia".<sup>176</sup> Clinton's irresponsible and self-serving actions set a new low point in the standards of accepting the responsibilities of the Commander-in-Chief.

Clinton initially attempted to salvage nation-building in Somalia, primarily based ironically on the same demonstration-based arguments about not abandoning allies and "upholding democracy against aggressors" he had railed against as a Vietnam War protestor. Such futile arguments revolving around saving the integrity of UN peacekeeping and U.S. exceptionalism carried no weight with the public who still saw no difference between peacekeeping and combat and had yet to hear a reasonable explanation why the U.S. was spending billions of dollars simply so the

UN could remain involved in this strategically worthless country. Political pressure, however, quickly sent Clinton into a series of policy reversals as he wasn't about to spend any serious political capital on the lost cause of Somalia, especially as he had Wilsonian designs on Haiti and Bosnia. In creating his own pullout schedule lasting six months precipitated by the infusion of a large but purely defensive force, Clinton escaped the Congressional noose and any more embarrassment. The pullout salvaged Clinton's personal political position, but was also the signal that he had abandoned his own policies and delivered an American rejection of the UN resolutions to rebuild Somalia.

Clinton characteristically undertook very little personal responsibilities for the administration's failures and Somalia's return to obscurity and hopelessness. He blamed his advisors and the UN for policy failures and inconsistencies, and denied that assertive multilateralism and peacekeeping were ever at the center of his policies in Somalia.<sup>177</sup> Clinton's evasions and excuses served as poignant reminders of the essential truth to American military policy in Somalia-- "our soldiers were heroes; (and) our leaders were cowards."<sup>178</sup>

Few lessons surrounding the policy debacle seemed to stick after the fiasco in Somalia. Although the Clinton promptly dropped the public promotion of nation-building after the Mogadishu battle, unfortunately the administration never questioned the validity or success of the concepts of nation-building, assertive multilateralism, and extending democracies. Clinton believed that conditions for success with nation-building were better in Haiti and Bosnia, and the Wilsonian rhetoric began anew. The very next day after American troops were withdrawn from Somalia under a national sense of frustration and defeat, U.S. naval forces arrived off the coast of Port-au-Prince to force intervention on another unwilling population that also had no

foundation for democracy. The outcomes there were predictable as well, as years of “democracy at gunpoint” and international parenting again yielded few positive results.

Although UN and Clinton policymaking was hopelessly flawed and failed miserably in Somalia, the question remained whether the military aspects of the operation had failed along with the entire intervention. Military analysts and first hand accounts, although universally correct in heralding the efforts of the soldiers involved in Operation Restore Hope, are generally too generous in regarding operations in Somalia as a success, especially those in Mogadishu. Mark Bowen’s final assessment in *Blackhawk Down*, for example is especially flawed in weighing military outcomes.<sup>179</sup> Despite the dedication and heroism of the troops in Somalia, the mission overall was a military as well as a political failure. This failure was caused by the impossible nature of the mission’s stated goals and the political restraints put on military action, rather than due to the actions of the military forces or their commanders.<sup>180</sup> As Daniel Bolger wrote, “Mogadishu looked like a bottomless pit of woe, unfixable by any known means short of mindless thermonuclear erasure.”<sup>181</sup>

Nonetheless, the mission was a military failure because tactical goals were not accomplished and an early withdrawal (strategic retreat) was imposed by the success of the enemy whose main goal was to cause unacceptable U.S. casualties. Only a tiny percentage of weaponry was seized and almost no heavy weapons fell into UN hands. No major warlords were decisively defeated or disarmed, and no warlords suffered any permanent loss of territory or major resources before the withdrawal.

Although the military accomplished a great range of projects involving rebuilding the collapsed infrastructure, administering health care, and protecting food shipments and aid workers, these efforts can only be seen as temporary successes at best. These projects failed to

turn the majority of the population against the warlords or convert them toward a new nationalistic/democratic orientation (“winning hearts and minds”). Since the military sources focus on these efforts as indications of a successful operation overall, their arguments are unconvincing in determining a final positive assessment of military actions. “Soldiers did everything asked of them; the problem was policymakers weren’t asking them to do the right things.”<sup>182</sup> Everywhere the soldiers operated it was hot, dirty, and dangerous. The situation was so confused and ambiguous, and the environment was anathema to fluid military operations. Young corporals had to decide who was hostile and who wasn’t, and far too often firefights started over soldier’s inability to communicate with the locals. Troops quickly began to resent the Somalis attitudes as being ungrateful, untrustworthy and increasingly hostile. Allied contingents were also of little help in “creating a secure environment” multilateralism promised. Most were often unfit for operations or, like the Italians, practiced risk aversion policies that played into the warlords’ hands and helped drive divisions in the coalition.<sup>183</sup> The American troops did do an amazing job in dealing with the overwhelming task of attempting to rebuild the collapsed Somali nation, but no rebuilding effort (as the UN and White House frequently announced) could produce results success without a meaningful political solution. Unfortunately for the U.S. military, this necessary key ingredient in making military success possible was missing, albeit through no fault of the military.

The few “traditional” military actions during Operation Restore Hope were also failures overall, although again the military sources generally report these missions to be successful. Several times the U.S. military was embarrassed when it raided supposed warlord strong points only to discover they destroyed NGO warehouses or captured UN aid workers. Heavy casualties inflicted on Somali militiamen in these raids were militarily advantageous, but politically

damaging to the UN effort as a controversy arose over many possible civilian deaths.<sup>184</sup> Aideed used these bloody encounters to bolster his popularity and to whip up anti-UN and anti-American fervor among the residents of Mogadishu. Aideed was not cowed, and the Somalis did not fear the Americans who saw themselves as the invincible heroes of the Gulf War who saved Kuwait. They did not know those Americans-- they only knew Americans as the people that had funded Said Barre and who had soldiers who avoided fights and didn't act like warriors.<sup>185</sup> Although the U.S. operations against Aideed weakened him militarily, he was still able to evade capture and still hold off his rivals. The White House and Pentagon overstated their success in destroying Aideed's infrastructure, and perhaps were seduced by their own rhetoric and need to explain to the public and Congress the ever-increasing cycle of violence that was spiraling out of control in the summer and fall of 1993. Despite the violent engagements, Aideed succeeded in conducting a successful low-intensity guerrilla war and outlasting his American opponents. In the light of this analysis, the military operations against Aideed cannot be deemed successful in strategic terms. A military solution seemed out of reach for an operation that was calculated on taking few casualties or taking serious risks that would compromise the false political image of success for civilian policymakers.

The intense battle of Oct. 3-4 in Mogadishu is also heralded as a success by most of the military sources, including Bowden who intensely focuses on this event in *Blackhawk Down*. After capturing two of Aideed's lieutenants, the Americans lost two helicopters and eighteen soldiers were killed with seventy-six more wounded. Somali casualties were perhaps as great as 1,000 dead and ten times that many wounded.<sup>186</sup> Despite the overwhelming tactical defeat inflicted on Aideed's forces, the battle was a strategic victory for the warlord because of its political implications. American firepower and heroism won the day, but the images of dead



Americans being dragged through the streets the next morning by joyous Somali crowds were too much for the American collective psyche to bear. The images were more powerful than a tactical American victory. It was a classic case of winning the battle but losing the war.

But did they even win the battle? Arguably, the Americans were actually defeated tactically as well in the huge firefight despite the casualty ratios. Aideed was the military victor on October 3-4 because he implemented a successful *tactical* plan that would result in a swift *strategic* victory. Aideed boasted for months that killing a few peacekeepers would drive the UN out of Somalia, and he needed a way to entrap them in order to inflict the necessary casualties. Aideed envisioned the circumstances of the downed Blackhawk battle and its consequences after the American demonstrated a repetitive pattern during their successful heliborne raids. Aideed coordinated a strategy in which his soldiers would use RPGs<sup>187</sup> to shoot down an American helicopter and force the Americans to try to protect it on the ground. His strategy worked (twice) and his militia forces (and street mobs) were able to converge on the crash sites quickly and inflict the level of casualties that he predicted would break the American's will to stay in Somalia. Although the Americans skillfully escaped the *full* weight of the trap and inflicted ungodly punishment on his troops, Aideed still won the most important tactical prize in any battle—a decisive strategic outcome. Although the Americans were not destroyed, demoralized, or completely routed, Aideed's military plan was a success while concurrently the American plan had failed once the Blackhawks were shot down. Therefore the U.S. military cannot claim the battle as a tactical victory, much less a strategic one.

The “Blackhawk Down” battle with Aideed's militiamen was the result of a series of errors by Garrison and those that planned/approved the raid set in a situation that made success an unmistakable long shot. There was no plan to back up the QRF if things went wrong. Intelligence

was so poor that chasing after Aideed in the Bakara market seemed like the only opportunity to get him, and even worse, Guimale's defensive reinforcements went totally unnoticed. Guimale later told a reporter that the Americans had used repetitive tactics, were overly reliant on helicopters and were easy to ambush.<sup>188</sup> Garrison missed the signals, and ignored the warnings we was getting that the SNA was planning to use RPGs to shoot down a hovering helicopter during a raid.<sup>189</sup> Strong evidence also suggests that spies inside UNOSOM II headquarters were tipping off the warlords too. The daylight timing of the raid also threw away the American's nighttime tactical advantages, but Clinton approved it anyway because Garrison said the last three raids had gone well and this factor wouldn't be an issue.<sup>190</sup> Garrison lost strategic surprise in special operations when the U.S. announced they were going to attempt to capture Aideed. He lost operational surprise when Delta's repetitive raiding tactics were eventually parried and the downed helicopter forced them to lose the essential elements of speed and surprise when the force was bogged down around the crash sites.

At the ground level, however, the Rangers were not militarily defeated, demoralized, or routed in battle after they pulled themselves out of the inner city; in fact, many of them were anxious to go out the following day and press the attack. The impending attack, however, was cancelled after the White House saw the fateful images on CNN, and the process of withdrawal was initiated. Ironically, the battle was immediately lost in Washington the next day by bureaucrats and politicians, not in the streets of Mogadishu by soldiers under fire. Many of those later interviewed from Task Force Ranger stated that they left Somalia feeling bitter and frustrated, but not defeated. Most expressed anger at the administration for not letting them "finish the job and get Aideed".<sup>191</sup> The general feeling from General Garrison on down within the task force was that they were poised on the brink of crushing the Somali militiamen the next

day if the battle been allowed to follow its natural military course and not been cut short by Washington.

All the military sources consulted in this study saw the Oct. 3-4 battle as a defeat in political rather in military terms. The military didn't feel that it failed in its numerous missions in Somalia, including taking on the warlords. Military sources maintain that the battle demonstrated the lack of American will, because the original mission objectives were met (capturing enemy personnel) and the trapped forces successfully fought their way to safety and inflicted enormous casualties upon the enemy. These sources also state that although the American casualties were tragic, one cannot realistically expect to conduct ongoing dangerous missions without expecting losses. Notably, there also seems to be an absence within these first hand accounts of any sense of blame. Although the lack of political will is argued to be the cause of the speedy and untimely withdrawal from Somalia, there seems to be a sense of sympathy with the common public notion that America had no real strategic interests in Somalia. Those in the military who had served in Somalia seemed to accept the opinion being expressed back home that there was nothing in Somalia for Americans that was worth filling a lot of body bags.

Although the veterans of Operation Restore Hope eschewed pointing many fingers, the political blame game eventually turned toward the American generals. Analysts, however, are split on their views of American military leadership in Somalia. General Garrison's conduct of the Oct. 3-4 battle in Mogadishu is a subject of scholarly debate. It is almost certain after weighing Bowden's reconstruction of events in *Blackhawk Down* and Congressional hearings following the battle, that Garrison has been assigned far too much blame for the casualties that resulted and too many unrealistic "only if" scenarios were used to critique his decision making processes. Likewise, Garrison's own written statements are laced with certain misleading

statements that mask certain unpalatable realities that occurred during the chaotic firefight.<sup>192</sup>

Although Garrison had acted with a certain effective level of skill commanding the battle, he was quickly removed from command perhaps, because as an honorable commander, he accepted the blame for the failure of the raid he ordered and he became an easy target. Clinton later wrote in his autobiography that he did not blame Garrison for the failed raid. Clinton, however, did little to defend Garrison or prevent his removal, allowing him to become somewhat of a scapegoat as a matter of course.

Although he accepted the responsibility, Garrison did not make crucial errors that led to the large number of American casualties, nor was he at fault for the debacle in Somalia. The problem with competency in leadership was found much higher up the chain of command than with Garrison, Montgomery, Hoar, or even Powell. The administration's affinity for finding scapegoats (Garrison, the UN, and later Les Aspin) was shamefully transparent, but helped Clinton obscure his flawed policy and lack of leadership in military and foreign affairs. The fact remains that it was his pursuit of flawed concepts of nation building (and subsequent transformation of the operation into a manhunt for the "outlaw" Aideed), not a lack of armored vehicles or any other issue that forever doomed the already unstable Operation Restore Hope.

Aideed too can be accredited with outwitting his UN and American opponents, and formulating a successful policy to return Somalia to the lawless state it was in before the intervention. Aideed patiently waited for the inevitable casualties to be inflicted in accordance with his plan. Aideed ironically made no secret of his plans, as he boasted to Oakley, "I studied Beirut and Vietnam; I know that all I need to do to send you home is to kill some Americans."<sup>193</sup> He then demonstrated the will to suffer serious setbacks to bring his plans to fruition, while the American will to get the warlord in order to facilitate rebuilding the collapsed state quickly

crumbled once heavy fighting started. As Alexander George noted, “U.S. action was always hesitant and delayed, and he knew it.”<sup>194</sup> He effectively gauged his enemy’s tactics, and responded to them effectively, and turned a tactical defeat into a strategic victory. Politically, Ghali and Clinton were no match for him, and U.S. policy quickly turned into simply clumsily reacting to his initiatives, some of which were nothing short of genius. Without a single aircraft, he managed to achieve air parity on the battlefield by simply writing the UN in August that he possessed shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles—the UN pulled out all its helicopters the next day.<sup>195</sup> He was savvy enough to declare a cease-fire soon after the October 3<sup>rd</sup> battle and released the prisoners he had taken, thus removing the biggest reason preventing the Americans from leaving. He maneuvered to bring a bulk of the local population on his side through exploiting American mistakes, and he effectively split the UN coalition which had little unity of objective and no serious political will to match his own faction’s determination to win the power struggle. In the end, his strategies worked and it was the humiliated U.S. that was escorting him and flying him to the peace conferences in Addis Ababa. Aideed realized better than Clinton that the lofty goals behind forced intervention and nation-building would be abandoned once the price of putting on political theatre got too high, and he simply waited for the right opportunity to inflict casualties and unravel the weak threads of assertive multilateralism.

Much of the policies and decisions of the Clinton administration in Somalia were based on maintaining desired images and emotionally reacting to images rather than calculated planning. U.S. policy in Somalia both Bush and Clinton was based on an impulse to construct an idealistic policy driven by the generous feelings of the privileged which was pumped by imagery.<sup>196</sup> Emotion, television images, and short attention spans played an intricate role in shaping policy as much as nation-building and assertive multilateralism and the two forces became inseparable.

Idealism was driven by emotional pictures—starving kids demanding the U.S. help intervene, poverty wracked streets and civil war demanded the U.S. help save “failed states,” and children dancing on a destroyed American helicopter as the bodies of American pilots were dragged through the streets demanded the U.S. get out of Somalia. The administration self-image of America’s role as a parent teaching the world how to take care of its troubled siblings while patting itself on the back for saving starving children was pure liberalism<sup>197</sup> in which “the whole thing was pure altruism, Dr. Feel Good making a house call.”<sup>198</sup> Somalia was supposed to be benign, clean, and easy as warlords would be trusting of UN neutrality and benevolence and cowed by the image of U.S. firepower. American imagery quickly switched from going in as Mother Theresa to switching to John Wayne<sup>199</sup> as the dangers of Somalia were downplayed until hunger and sickness were replaced by Aideed as the enemy. Aideed, the most powerful warlord and leader of the largest faction in the civil war, was then dismissed with rhetoric painting him as a “thug”; a nuisance to be treated as a common criminal that the policymakers in the UN and Washington claimed to be rapidly reducing to insignificance and were on the verge of “arresting” some time in the immediate future. The Mogadishu battle came as a complete shock, as the realities of joining the civil war against Aideed contradicted the images perpetuated by the administration and reported by a passive media of progressive nation-building and restoring order. Somalis were almost always placed in an image of passive victims who were grateful to accept the gift of UN restructuring of their fractured country. To listen to the media in 1993, “we were running a soup kitchen and handing out good cheer when disgruntled locals emerged from some unforeseen hellhole”<sup>200</sup> and somehow Americans were plunged into a desperate firefight in the streets of Mogadishu.

Emotionalism and imagery were the most crucial factors in the decision to go after Aideed and rapidly shift Somali policy. Clinton, Howe, Albright, and Ghali were all incensed that Aideed was not only openly challenging UN authority, but he was resisting their coercive military force designed to marginalize him or control him with his own troops and resorted to violence. The consensus was that Aideed had to be hit after he ambushed the Pakistanis (who were innocently doing “a ‘routine’ weapons inspection” at a sensitive SNA installation at 5:00 A.M.) because an image was at stake—the UN could not be made to look like easy targets. UN credibility was constantly pitched as the necessity of taking on Aideed, which made no sense in the context of traditional peacekeeping, because the UN was supposed to act as an arbitrator of disputes, not a belligerent. Under assertive multilateralism, however, maintaining the image UN credibility was crucial because the entire concept of assertive multilateralism was constructed on the foundation that the UN was the ultimate authority in which no nation had the legal right to defy, much less resist. Albright also harped on the importance of challenging aggressors and not allowing a course of action that created a UN image of appeasement. This overblown rhetoric designed to send a message demonstrating unquestionable UN coercive authority led to the truckload of immediate resolutions that essentially ended any semblance of UN neutrality and took the UN to war with the SNA.

Imagery further effected policy once the UN decided to go to war with Aideed, and the administration’s concerns with controlling that image seriously hampered their chances of success and greatly increased the risks to soldiers on the ground in Somalia. The administration was overly sensitive to fears regarding collateral damage and civilian casualties and the images they portrayed in the media, and took steps to make sure military operations were as small scale as possible. Military risk was increased to limit the war image by removing assets that could

create too much collateral damage.<sup>201</sup> Hoar recommended against the C-130 gunships, and Powell agreed that the image of wrecked buildings after raids looked bad on TV.<sup>202</sup> They were removed as an enticement to get Aideed to negotiate, but policymakers also feared that they would cause too much damage in an urban environment that would create more negative images in the news. Artillery was also denied because it was deemed too messy. Armor, which would have proven a critical asset in the Mogadishu battle, was approved by Powell but squashed by the White House because it didn't want to create an image that it was escalating U.S. troop involvement in UN operations. Undersecretary of Defense Walter Slocombe tried to explain later, that sending armor "presented in the context, a more aggressive, a more offensive, a more aggressive, if you will, U.S. role."<sup>203</sup> Downplaying the realities of U.S. involvement in carrying on the fruitless and counter-productive war against Aideed was more important apparently than increasing the military's chances in getting results. The administration wanted to go to war with Aideed, but was willing to put troops at risk on the ground because it didn't want to make a mess for the cameras and thus destroy the image of UN pacification in Somalia.

Promoting the image of UN credibility and power (even if little of either actually existed without U.S. control) was a major factor in the Clinton administrations approach to Somalia, even as it was planning to abandon the UN operation. The administration repeatedly equated the necessity of maintaining the American commitment to UNOSOM as a national imperative to serve "as a deterrent to those who oppose us". Even as the Clinton was pulling the plug, he still spoke of supporting UN efforts to save Somalia because it was "America's responsibility as world leader" to promote "burden sharing" and feeding the hungry and rescuing the oppressed. Clinton wanted the U.S. to keep flipping the bill for UNOSOM even if it was unwilling to participate militarily because he wanted to protect against the images of Somalia returning to its



pre-intervention state and saddling him with images of failure and defeat. The administration argued continuously about the importance of protecting the image of UN peacekeeping and authority, and to protect the image that despite everything that went wrong leading to the fiasco in Somalia, there was still somehow nothing fundamentally wrong with the UN's fundamental approach of assertive multilateralism.

The Somali operation ended on this desire to promote imagery as policy. A year after the last U.S. units left Somalia to a dwindling and helpless UN force, fifty U.S. Marines stayed to guard the remnants of the diplomatic team still engaged in the futile UN mission to broker a peace agreement between the warlords. It was part of Clinton's determination to support the doomed UN mission that lingered for eighteen months after the American military withdrawal, in which he had previously failed to persuade Congress that peace could be made if the U.S. would give the UN enough time. The fifty Marines guarded the shell of the embassy (which had long since been sacked and abandoned during the 1991 civil war) to symbolize an American presence in UNOSOM and a commitment to the peace process. Soon it was too dangerous for the diplomats to remain when the warlords battled over the area, and they left until the situation stabilized. The Marines stayed on. Trapped in the perimeter of the embassy, they received sniper and mortar fire almost daily; and being so few in number were in great danger of being overrun and wiped out. Learning of this, the Senate Armed Services Committee was aghast at the stupidity of the administration and demanded the immediate extrication of the Marines. To the very end, the administration based its poor decisions on promoting and maintaining imagery of a U.S. commitment to UN credibility in peacemaking and nation-building, even when such concepts were devoid of every reality in Somalia.

In the end, despite its attempts to control imagery and distort reality, it was the power of images that also undid the administration's fragmented nation-building policies and attempts to minimize political risk. Peace enforcement and taking on Aideed turned the UN from neutral humanitarians into coercive belligerents, creating a negative image of being a weak collection of neo-imperialists to the Somalis. The interjection of Task Force Ranger to hunt Aideed made U.S. troops look like "airborne bullies" of the UN, and their inability to capture him while suffering such setbacks as raiding UN buildings only made them appear less formidable than advertised and made the warlords even less fearful of UN coercion. The image of Durant's bruised face as a captive on the covers of *Time* and *Newsweek* promoted him as a hero, but also incited emotions that the U.S. leadership who put the soldiers in that situation were incompetent and shamed the nation. The pictures of the Somalis dragging the dead pilots through the streets desecrating their bodies created a powerful image of military humiliation and failure. The pictures of Somalis themselves were all too reminiscent of Vietnam in which it became impossible to know who the enemy was; the enemy didn't wear uniforms, they were of all ages and gender, and again appeared as ungrateful peasants "who turned on us for trying to save them". The supposed victims of war and famine the Americans were trying to feed were killing their soldiers and gleefully desecrating their bodies for the cameras. Senator Phil Gramm poignantly noted what the public was generally thinking when he said "The people who were dragging the bodies of Americans around didn't look too hungry..."<sup>204</sup> The cycle of humiliation was later completed when images appeared. The graphic pictures depicting humiliation of American soldiers followed by images of the arrival of caskets and of the United States absurdly flying its enemy Aideed to peace conferences in Kenya after the Americans had returned to a reconciliatory policy. The relatively few casualties were forever linked to these powerful images of futility and

humiliation, which made Clinton's appeals for staying the course with UNOSOM and making further sacrifices in Somalia seem ridiculous. The power of imagery had turned on the Clinton administration and helped unhinge the experiment in nation-building in Somalia. Somalia soon became the place where good intentions and incompetence met centuries of hatred.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Carol J. Doherty, "Defining the National Interest: A Process of Trial and Error," *Congressional Quarterly* 52, no. 11, (26 March, 1994): 754.

<sup>2</sup> Clinton sent a public statement of support for the U.S. operation and praised Bush for his leadership "on this important humanitarian effort." Don Oberdorfer, "Bush Sends Forces to Help Somalia," *The Washington Post* 5 December, 1992, A1.

<sup>3</sup> It is unlikely that had Clinton not ended the battle by ordering a pull-back, that the available forces been able to capture Aideed or rescue Durant in continued operations, but certainly would have meted much more punishment to Aideed's weakening forces.

<sup>4</sup> From a results-based standpoint, few could look to the passive Carter administration as a source of inspiration and success in foreign policy. The Carter administration had an abysmal foreign policy track record. The Soviets successfully encroached on U.S. interests during this period with near impunity, the U.S. military fell to an unprecedented low in readiness and morale, the fall of the Shah of Iran and consequent long-term hostage situation, and the failure of a Wilsonian human-rights based foreign policy in Latin America agenda highlighted the weaknesses of Carter's administration.

<sup>5</sup> Few foreign policy scholars would argue otherwise, although those supportive of Clinton offer a variety of excuses for these failures. Even members of the administration later described the disorganized nature of foreign policy as somewhat dysfunctional, highly idealistic, overly ambitious, and lacking attention from the President. Clinton himself later wrote in his biography, *My Life*, that he didn't pay as much attention to foreign affairs as he should have and that he overestimated what be accomplished in a short time frame. Bill Clinton, *My Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> Hyland, *Clinton's World*, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Remarks by Bill Clinton to the Foreign Policy Association New York, 1 April, 1992 found in Hyland, 13.

<sup>8</sup> Bill Clinton, "Inaugural Address," 20 January, 1993 in U.S. State Dept. *Dispatch*, 25 January, 1993.

<sup>9</sup> Hyland, *Clinton's World*, 18.

<sup>10</sup> Michael O'Hanlon, *Expanding Global Military Capacity for Humanitarian Interventions* (New York: Brookings Institutions Press, 1993), 11.

<sup>11</sup> For a detailed description of the foreign policy foundations of the Clinton administration, see Remarks by Tony Lake, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, John Hopkins University, *From Containment to Enlargement*, 21 September, 1993.

<sup>12</sup> See Thomas Carothers, "Democracy Promotion under Clinton," *The Washington Quarterly*, Autumn 1995: 13-25 for an analysis of Clinton's enlargement policy.

<sup>13</sup> Dempsey and Fountaine, 158.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 159.

<sup>15</sup> See Kent H. Butts, "The DOD Role in African Policy," *Parameters* 23, no. 4 (Winter 1993-4): 59-73 and Thomas Carothers, "Democracy Promotion Under Clinton," *The Washington Quarterly*, Autumn 1995: 13-25 and State Department, Secretary Warren Christopher, Statement Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, *The Strategic Priorities of American Foreign Policy*, Washington, D.C. 4 November, 1993, and Anthony Lake, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Address at the School of Advanced International Studies, *From Containment to Enlargement*, John Hopkins University, Washington D.C., 21 September, 1993. Found in U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 4, no. 39 (27 September, 1993): 658.

<sup>16</sup> Barton Gellman, "Wider UN Police Role Supported," *Washington Post*, 5 August 1993, A-1.

<sup>17</sup> See Stewart M. Powell, "American Troops, American Command," *Air Force Magazine*, January 1994, 46-49. The byline reads "The notion of turning U.S. forces over to UN field command sank like a big rock."

<sup>18</sup> Lance Morrow, "In Feeding Somalia and Backing Yeltsin, America Discovers the Limits of Idealism," *Time*, 18 October, 1993, 38.

<sup>19</sup> Jean Kirkpatrick, "Deferring U.S. Policy to the U.N.," *Human Rights*, 11 September, 1993, 15.

<sup>20</sup> Jennifer Sterling Folker, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place," in James M. Scott, ed., *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998).

<sup>21</sup> For detailed discussion of this process, see Michael G. MacKinnon, *The Evolution of U.S. Peacekeeping under Clinton* (London: Frank Cass, 2000).

<sup>22</sup> Hyland, *Clinton's World*, 26.

<sup>23</sup> See Robert E. Denton and Rachael L. Holloway, ed., *Images, Scandal, and Communications Strategies of the Clinton Presidency* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003) and Howard Kurtz, *Spin Cycle: Inside the Clinton Propaganda Machine* (New York: The Free Press, 1998).

<sup>24</sup> Jennifer Sterling Folker, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place," 297.

<sup>25</sup> See Clinton, *My Life*, 502. This, however, like many other statements in his bibliography, contradict.

<sup>26</sup> George Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human*, 213.

<sup>27</sup> Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 296.

<sup>28</sup> See George Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human*, 219 and David Halberstam, *War In a Time of Peace*.

<sup>29</sup> Dick Morris, *Behind the Oval Office*, 13.

<sup>30</sup> Clinton's abrupt shift to center prior to the 1996 campaign was a key factor in his re-election and his continued high approval ratings.

<sup>31</sup> The situation infuriated Christopher and Richard Holbrooke who were straining to deal with the crisis in the former Yugoslavia. A frustrated Christopher eventually had to instruct the President that American obligations in NATO went far beyond consultation with the allies, and that U.S. leadership was a prerequisite to action with the Europeans, not merely following them. Clinton rejected the notion. Strobe Talbot, a guilt-ridden dove who in 1990 blamed the continuation of the Cold War on the United States, advocated pulling out of Europe completely while Albright wanted to jump into the middle of the Yugoslavian civil war immediately regardless of NATO sentiments. The administration had no cohesive vision of American leadership in Europe whatsoever.

<sup>32</sup> Clinton insiders invited the press to see how they could successfully tackle complex issues during late night "bull sessions" while eating boxes of pizza, much like they had done to cram for exams in college. See Eleanor Clift, "Happy Campers at the White House," *Newsweek* 121, no. 9 (1 March, 1993), 26. For insight on the chaotic situation from Leon Panetta, George Stephanopoulos, Dee Dee Myers, and other White House insiders see: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/clinton/chapters/3.html>

<sup>33</sup> Part of the arrogance of the Clinton team was not only their own inflated egos, but in their overestimated belief in Clinton's abilities. "The president was so talented, so politically skillful, he and the others around him believed, that he could come to a meeting at the last minute, well briefed by his staff, and make the right calls on issues of foreign policy." Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace*, 241.

<sup>34</sup> See Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace*.

<sup>35</sup> John D. Tedesco, "Clinton's Public Relations Nightmares Begin," found in Robert E. Denton, ed. *Images, Scandal, and Communications Strategies of the Clinton Presidency*, 55.

<sup>36</sup> Charles O. Jones, "the Clinton Presidency: The First 100 Days," in David Abshire, ed., *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency*, 44.

<sup>37</sup> Ironically, Clinton blamed the Washington press corps (who adored him for the most part and defended him vivaciously) for contributing to many of his failures in his first one hundred days and claimed that their interpretation of his accomplishments was unfair. See Bill Clinton, *My Life*, 513 and Tom Matthews, "Clinton's Growing Pains," *Newsweek*, 3 May, 1993, available from <http://www.newsweek.com/id/119571?tid=relatedcl>.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Under the previous long-standing practice, homosexuals were forbidden to join or remain in the military, although a small number did secretly. Under the new policy, a compromise that satisfied neither side of the issue, homosexuals would no longer be required to reveal their sexual orientation as long as they did not engage in "blatant homosexual activity" and it would be illegal to question military service members about their sexual preferences or discriminate against suspected homosexuals.

<sup>40</sup> See Carol Doherty, "Defining the National Interest."

<sup>41</sup> Hyland, *Clinton's World*, 203.

<sup>42</sup> Dick Morris, *Behind the Oval Office*, 11, 247. Clinton's leadership according to the latest polls was a common refrain during his presidency, one he continued to deny. Clinton said in his bibliography that he did view polls but, "I didn't make decisions based on polls." (see pg. 645)

<sup>43</sup> See David Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace*.

<sup>44</sup> See George Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human*, 218-228.

<sup>45</sup> Denton, *Images, Scandals and Communications Strategies of the Clinton Presidency*, 12-13.

<sup>46</sup> See George Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human*.

<sup>47</sup> Polls during Clinton's presidency indicated a sense of anxiety rather than confidence involving success in military activities. In Somalia, Bosnia and later Kosovo, this was especially the case. This was radical reversal of the confidence levels Bush maintained during operations in Panama, Somalia, and the Gulf War.

<sup>48</sup> In international summits Clinton was often extremely late to arrive, making the other dignitaries wait on him and become further agitated about American arrogance. See Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace*.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. Also see Colin Powell, *My American Journey*, George Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human* and Sydney Blumenthal, *The Clinton Wars*.

<sup>50</sup> Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace*, 301.

<sup>51</sup> For the infamous “putting green” explosion of July 19, 1994, see Halberstam 316-317.

<sup>52</sup> The decision to intervene in Bosnia after a year and a half of dithering came only once the UN threatened to pull out and the Serbs had overrun considerable territory and conducted ethnic cleansing. French President Jacques Chirac announced that Clinton’s policy was akin to appeasement, forcing him to order a French pullout because they were only ones willing to stand up to the Serbs. Insulted by the attack on his leadership and obvious impotence, Clinton was resolute to save his public image before Bosnia collapsed and Chirac pointed a finger of blame at him. Clinton preempted Chirac by launching a tough-talking but low-risk plan to utilize limited NATO airstrikes and giving indirect support to the Croatians and Bosnian-Muslims by lifting the arms embargo to the Balkans (which Clinton had vehemently opposed).

<sup>53</sup> Stephanopoulos wrote about Clinton’s comically sloppy salute, “The tips of his fingers would furtively touch his bowed head, as if he were being caught at something he wasn’t supposed to do.” George Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human*, 132. Ironically, since no in the administration had any military experience, it was decided that Tony Lake, the known pacifist, would teach the President because he had been in Vietnam with the State Department and had at least frequently witnessed saluting. See Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace*, 241.

<sup>54</sup> *New York Times*, 28 October, 1996 A-1. Found in Jennifer Sterling-Folker, “Between a Rock and a Hard Place.”

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 60. Strangely, Powell wrote nothing but praise about Clinton in his bibliography *My American Journey* and states that he generally admired the President, but noted his lack of experience and understanding of foreign affairs especially in regards to the use of military force.

<sup>56</sup> Powell’s assistant, LTG Barry McCaffrey (a three-time Silver Star winner who was permanently disfigured in Vietnam and later led a crack division in the Gulf War) was rudely treated by a youthful White House staffer while walking in the West Wing. “He said, ‘Hello, there’, to which she replied with an upturned nose, ‘We don’t talk to soldiers around here.’ ... the young woman’s comment rocketed back to the Pentagon and whipped through the place like a free electron.” Colin Powell, *My American Journey*, 581.

<sup>57</sup> See Halberstam, *War In a Time of Peace*.

<sup>58</sup> Charles O. Jones, “Clinton’s First 100 Days.”

<sup>59</sup> Controversy surrounded both choices, as candidates who were nominally qualified but were both liberal idealists and women. Both nominees were discovered to have employed illegal immigrants. Baird surprisingly refused to step aside (even after White House requests, but not from Clinton himself) until the issue wore itself down and her rejection was a foregone conclusion.

<sup>60</sup> Bill Clinton, *My Life*, 455.

<sup>61</sup> Richard N. Haas, *The Reluctant Sheriff: The United States After the Cold-War*, 91.

<sup>62</sup> Halberstam, 174.

<sup>63</sup> Richard Holbrooke, who was the natural heir apparent to lead the State Department after a stellar career, was shoved aside for Albright. Holbrooke was infinitely more qualified and had recently brokered the Dayton Accords (bringing a lasting peace settlement to the Balkans) which Clinton ironically constantly promoted as his own personal accomplishment. Clinton and his feminist supporters described Albright’s appointment as “a heroic accomplishment” because it was the first time that a woman held the post.

<sup>64</sup> Hyland, 23.

<sup>65</sup> Dick Morris, *Behind the Oval Office*, 245. Also see George Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human*.

<sup>66</sup> Berger, like many of the Clinton staff, found himself involved in numerous controversies. Most notably, he engineered “Operation Desert Fox,” the controversial (and ineffectual) December 1998 bombing of Iraq which perfectly coincided with the Congressional vote to impeach Clinton over the Lewinsky scandal. In 2005, he pled guilty to illegally removing Clinton-era documents from the National Archives.

<sup>67</sup> Clinton’s first choice, Dave McCurdy, declined.

<sup>68</sup> When a plane crashed into the White House, staffers joked that it “must be Woolsey trying to get in to see the President.” Lake denies Woolsey was shut off from Clinton and had all the access he needed, but also still maintains that Clinton ever ignored or was sheltered from foreign policy either. See PBS *Frontline*, “The Clinton Years: Interview With Tony Lake,” at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/clinton/interviews/lake.html>

<sup>69</sup> Dick Morris, *Behind the Oval Office*, 249.

<sup>70</sup> Noted in Taylor Branch, *The Clinton Tapes: Wrestling History with the President* (NY: Simon and Schuster, 2009), 188.

<sup>71</sup> Arnold Kantor, Undersecretary for Political Affairs, Address at the Commemoration of Human Rights Day, *America's Commitment to Human Rights*, Washington, D.C., 10 December, 1992.

<sup>72</sup> See Hyland, *Clintons World*, 55-56. Albright quoted in John R. Bolton, "Wrong Turn in Somalia," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 1994.

<sup>73</sup> Anonymous Pentagon official quoted in Eric Schmitt, "Somalia's First Lesson is Military Caution," *The New York Times* 5 March, 1995, 1.

<sup>74</sup> Steven W. Hook, "The White House, Congress, and the Paralysis of the U.S. State Department after the Cold-War," in James M. Scott, ed., *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War*, 320.

<sup>75</sup> Stated in Sydney Blumenthal, *The Clinton Wars*, 60. It was ironic that as a former war protester and peace activist, Clinton ordered the use of military force more than his three predecessors combined.

<sup>76</sup> Fleitz, *Peacekeeping Fiascos in the 1990s*, 180.

<sup>77</sup> Dempsey and Fountaine, *Fool's Errands*, 30.

<sup>78</sup> Kent Butts, "The DOD Role in African Policy."

<sup>79</sup> Ken Menkhaus, "Getting Out vs. Getting Through: U.S. and U.N. Policies in Somalia," *Middle East Policy* 3, (1994): 146.

<sup>80</sup> See Patrick Glynn, "The Doable War," Glynn argues there was nothing "doable" about Somalia. He also notes that the administration hypocritically talked tough about taking action in Bosnia and "applying the weight of American and diplomacy" and influence to stop the destruction-- but actually did nothing.

<sup>81</sup> Clinton aide quoted in Bruce W. Nelan and Michael Duffy, "Today, Somalia...", *Time* 140, no. 25, (21 December 1992), 4.

<sup>82</sup> Clinton also argued that Bosnia was an important cause because "we had to show the Muslims that the United States cared and respected Islam" and that interventions reduced these populations gravitation toward terrorism. Bill Clinton, *My Life*, 685. It can reasonably be extrapolated from these statements that Clinton probably held the same views regarding the Somalia's Muslim culture as well.

<sup>83</sup> Dempsey and Fountaine, 31.

<sup>84</sup> Frank G. Hoffman and Charles Borchini, "One Decade Later: Debacle in Somalia," *Proceedings* 130, no. 1: 66. January, 2004.

<sup>85</sup> Oakley, 152.

<sup>86</sup> See Congress, House, Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Affairs House of Representatives, 102<sup>nd</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> session, December 17, 1992.

<sup>87</sup> Frank Hoffman and Charles Borchini, "One Decade Later: Debacle in Somalia."

<sup>88</sup> Oakley, 58.

<sup>89</sup> Frank Hoffman and Charles Borchini, "One Decade Later: Debacle in Somalia."

<sup>90</sup> Madeline Albright, *Remarks at the UN*, "The UN, the U.S. and the World," found in U.S. Dept. of State *Dispatch*, 23 September, 1996.

<sup>91</sup> Evelyn Farkas, *Fractured States and the U.S. Foreign Policy: Iraq, Ethiopia, and Bosnia in the 1990s* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 105.

<sup>92</sup> Carroll Doherty, "Foreign Policy: Is Congress Still Keeping Watch?" *Congressional Quarterly* 51, no. 4, (August 21, 1994): 2267.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ralph G. Carter, "Congress and Post-Cold War Foreign Policy," in James M. Scott, ed., *After the End*.

<sup>95</sup> Statement of Rep. James M. Hansen, (UT) in Pat Towell, "'No' to Response Funds," *Congressional Quarterly*, 51, no. 37 (September 18, 1993): 2479.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Jennifer Sterling-Folker, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place," 299-306. Congress wanted to greatly cut these departments along with USIA and USACDA. Clinton vetoed the cuts, but the budgets eroded anyway without funding.

<sup>98</sup> See Steven W. Hook, "The White House, Congress, and the Paralysis of the U.S. State Department after the Cold-War," in James M. Scott, ed., *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War*, 312-320.

<sup>99</sup> Statement by Toby Roth, Congress, House, "The Crisis in Somalia."

<sup>100</sup> From Congress, House, Committee on Hunger, *Humanitarian Tragedy in Somalia: Hearing before the Select Committee on Hunger* 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 30 January, 1992 and Congress, House, Hearing before the Committee

on Foreign Affairs, *The Crisis in Somalia*, 17 December, 1992 and Congress, House, Hearing before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 103<sup>rd</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> session, 17 February, 1993.

<sup>101</sup> Congress, House, "The Crisis in Somalia."

<sup>102</sup> Dorcas Eva McCoy, "American Post-Cold War Images and Foreign Policy Preferences toward 'Dependent' States," *World Affairs* 163 Issue 1, (Summer 2000), 39.

<sup>103</sup> See Carroll Doherty, "On Somalia, War Powers Law Becomes GOP Weapon," *Congressional Quarterly* 51, no. 43 (30 October, 1993): 2987.

<sup>104</sup> Due to this false pretext to protect the administration from the War Powers Act, none of the soldiers serving in wartime situations in Somalia could be officially recognized with Army combat awards and survivor benefits, including those killed in action. Even Michael Durant's prominent status as a POW was not recognized to publicly downplay the realities of U.S. engagement in the civil war there.

<sup>105</sup> Carroll Doherty, "Foreign Policy: Is Congress Still Keeping Watch?"

<sup>106</sup> Quoted in Thomas Ricks, "Defense Secretary Aspin Draws Heaviest Fire as Criticism Mounts Over U.S. Role In Somalia," *Wall Street Journal*, 8 October, 1993, A-16.

<sup>107</sup> Quote by Rep. Doug Bereuter in Carroll J. Doherty, "Contrary Paths to Peacekeeping Converge in Wake of Violence," *Congressional Quarterly* 51, no. 39: 2655.

<sup>108</sup> Nation-building has yet to work anywhere but its horrendous track record has not subdued its most ardent supporters enthusiasm to embark on such adventures or to defend its historical failures. See Dempsey and Fountaine *Fool's Errands and Fleitz Peacekeeping Fiascos of the 1990s*.

<sup>109</sup> "Comprehensive Report on Lessons Learned from United Nations Operations in Somalia," Lessons Learned Unit, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, December 1995, paragraph 10 found in Dennis C. Jett, *Why Peacekeeping Fails* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 40.

<sup>110</sup> Quote from MAJ General Van Horn in 1967 referring to the UN debacle in The Congo which also perfectly described the situation in Somalia. Found in Thomas H. Hayden, "Somalia: What Went Wrong?" *Marine Corps Gazette* 78, no. 9 (September 1994): 50-2.

<sup>111</sup> John Hillen, *Blue Helmets: The Strategy of UN Military Operations*, (London: Brassey's, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2000).

<sup>112</sup> See Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 289.

<sup>113</sup> Hillen, *Blue Helmets*, 211.

<sup>114</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope*, 154.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid, 158.

<sup>116</sup> John Hillen, *Blue Helmets*, 220.

<sup>117</sup> Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 329.

<sup>118</sup> Daniel P. Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 330.

<sup>119</sup> See Paul F. Diehl, "With the Best Intentions: Lessons From UNOSOM I and II," *Studies in Conflicts and Terrorism* 19, no. 2 (1996): 153-157.

<sup>120</sup> Dempsey and Fountaine, 46.

<sup>121</sup> Clarke and Herbst, 242.

<sup>122</sup> Donatella Lorch, "Army's Team 'Marketing' Job is Selling U.S. Role", *New York Times*, 27 December, 1992, A-10.

<sup>123</sup> Statement by Captain Stanton, U.S. Army, in Martin Stanton, *Somalia on \$5 a Day: A Soldier's Story* (Navato, CA: Presidio Press, 2001), 277.

<sup>124</sup> Clarke and Herbst, 242.

<sup>125</sup> Martin Stanton, *Somalia on \$5 a Day*, 264.

<sup>126</sup> Thomas R. Mockaitis, *Peace Operations and State Conflict: The Sword or the Olive Branch?* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999), 71.

<sup>127</sup> Gerard Prunier, "The Experience of European Armies in Operation Restore Hope," in Clarke and Herbst, ed., *Learning From Somalia*, 140.

<sup>128</sup> Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 299-300.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid, 52.

<sup>130</sup> See Richard K. Betts, "The Delusion of Impartial Intervention", *Foreign Affairs* 3, no.6 (November/December 1993).

<sup>131</sup> Committee members in the Congressional hearings investigating the events Oct 3-4 were very adamant about this paradox of expanded mission coinciding with force reduction. See Congress, Senate, Hearings Committee on Armed Services, *Current Military Operations In Somalia: Hearings of the Committee on Armed Services*, 4, 7, 12, 13 October, 1993.



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- <sup>132</sup> Dorcas Eva McCoy, "American Post-Cold War Images and Foreign Policy Preferences toward 'Dependent' States," *World Affairs* 163, no. 1 (Summer 2000): 39.
- <sup>133</sup> John Hillen, *Blue Helmets*, 241.
- <sup>134</sup> Peter J. Schraeder, "From Ally to Orphan: Understanding U.S. Policy toward Somalia after the Cold War," in James M. Scott, ed., *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War*, 339.
- <sup>135</sup> Colin Powell, *My American Journey*, 565.
- <sup>136</sup> Hillen, 188.
- <sup>137</sup> Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 294.
- <sup>138</sup> Clarke and Herbst, *Learning from Somalia*, 49.
- <sup>139</sup> Ibid, 168 and Hillen, 193.
- <sup>140</sup> Schraeder, "From Ally to Orphan," 341.
- <sup>141</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope*, 107.
- <sup>142</sup> Stanton, *Somalia on \$5 a Day*, 291.
- <sup>143</sup> Charles Krauthammer, "The Immaculate Intervention," *Time* 42, no. 4 (26 July, 1993), 78.
- <sup>144</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, 123.
- <sup>145</sup> Ibid, 118.
- <sup>146</sup> Hyland, 79.
- <sup>147</sup> Dorcas Eva McCoy, "American Post-Cold War Images and Foreign Policy Preferences towards 'Dependent States.'"
- <sup>148</sup> Statement by ground commander GEN Steven L. Arnold found in Dorcas Eva McCoy, "American Post-Cold War Images and Foreign Policy Preferences towards 'Dependent State.'"
- <sup>149</sup> Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 301.
- <sup>150</sup> Bill Clinton, *My Life*, 550.
- <sup>151</sup> Quoted in Keith Richburg, "UN Helicopter Assault in Somalia Targeted Aideed's Top Commanders," *Washington Post* 16 July, 1993, A1.
- <sup>152</sup> Rick Atkinson, "The Raid That Went Awry," *Washington Post*, 30 January, 1994, A1.
- <sup>153</sup> Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, *Current Military Operations: Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services*, 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 4,7,12,13 October,1993, 87-98.
- <sup>154</sup> Powell, 586.
- <sup>155</sup> Clinton, *My Life*, 553.
- <sup>156</sup> Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 306-308. Hoar was proven right, as Delta's independence from the chain of command in theater (both U.S. and UN) and its separate ROE made command and control difficult and was shown to have a negative impact on the battle.
- <sup>157</sup> Rhetoric from the administration and military spokesmen was outlandishly arrogant and unrealistic given the limited number of small raids being conducted and the reluctance to produce civilian casualties and collateral damage. Aideed's losses in these raids amounted to a small handful of men and a few small stores of military equipment he could easily replace. Some of the raids netted nothing, including the humiliating and the "capture" of UN aid workers and destruction of an NGO warehouse that August.
- <sup>158</sup> Stephanopoulos, 214.
- <sup>159</sup> See Senate, Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services, *U.S. Military Operations in Somalia: Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services*, 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 12, 21 May, 1994.
- <sup>160</sup> See Congress, House, The Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Recent Developments in Somalia: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., July 29, 1993.
- <sup>161</sup> Ken Menkausk, "Getting Out vs. Getting Through."
- <sup>162</sup> Rick Atkinson, "The Raid That Went Awry," and Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 313.
- <sup>163</sup> Clinton, 552.
- <sup>164</sup> Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 329.
- <sup>165</sup> Ibid, 301.
- <sup>166</sup> Statement made by General Garrison in Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, *U.S. Military Operations in Somalia: Hearing before the Committee on Armed Services* 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., May 12, 21, 1994.
- <sup>167</sup> Paul Diehl, "With the Best Intentions: Lessons From UNOSOM I and II."
- <sup>168</sup> Daniel Bolger, *Death Ground*, 204.
- <sup>169</sup> Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, *Current Military Operations: Hearing before the Committee on Armed Services*, 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 6 August, 4, 7, 12, 13 October, 1993, 42.

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<sup>170</sup> Bolger, *Death Ground*, 208.

<sup>171</sup> Clinton, *My Life*, 552.

<sup>172</sup> Bolger, *Death Ground*, 256.

<sup>173</sup> Statement of Captain James H. Smith, (U.S. Army, Retired) in Senate, Committee on Armed Services, *U.S. Military Operations in Somalia: Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services*, 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 12, 21 May 1994, 74.

<sup>174</sup> Stephanopoulos, 215.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>176</sup> Jimmy Carter quoted in Larry E. Joyce, "Remember the Losses—and Lessons—of Somalia," *The Wall Street Journal*, 3 October, 1994, A20.

<sup>177</sup> Hyland, 59.

<sup>178</sup> Ralph Peters quoted in G.E. Willis, "Remembering Mogadishu," *Army Times*, 12 October, 1998, 16.

<sup>179</sup> Bowden, although an excellent writer and researcher, admits his ignorance in military matters.

<sup>180</sup> Peacekeeping operations and their inherent policing nature are not traditional functions of the military, and the recent adaptation of U.S. forces for these roles has been a hotly debated topic. Peacekeeping duties by their very nature restrict normal warfighting capabilities and strategies of military forces and arguably are ill suited for combat units and the conducting of decisive operations against hostile forces.

<sup>181</sup> Bolger, *Death Ground*, 228.

<sup>182</sup> Stanton, xi.

<sup>183</sup> Italy had obvious independent agendas in its former colony, and The Italian contingent essentially operated with little regard to UN direction and only took its orders from Rome. The Italian soldiers often bribed the Somali clans not to attack them, and often warned the militias ahead of time regarding patrols etc. to avoid confrontations (and performing their assigned tasks). When the Nigerian troops that replaced the Italian contingent could not afford to continue paying the bribes, they were immediately ambushed.

<sup>184</sup> Sources conflict over the casualties and collateral damage inflicted in these raids, and some military sources still refute the mistargeting of NGO facilities.

<sup>185</sup> Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 284.

<sup>186</sup> These numbers are difficult to ascertain given the chaotic situation. Most sources do not include separate casualty figures for civilians. After the record of behavior of the street mobs and militia attacks since July, U.S. military sources logically stopped making such impossible distinctions in reports and purposefully labeled all hostile opposition as combatants. Critics of U.S. military operations in Somalia condemned this practice.

<sup>187</sup> Rocket propelled grenade: a cheap but effective bazooka-like weapon of Soviet bloc manufacture.

<sup>188</sup> Atkinson, "The Raid That Went Wrong."

<sup>189</sup> This fact came out in Congressional hearings, although Garrison denied knowing about the plan to shoot down a helicopter with RPGs. He also strangely claims the force was not pinned down, which makes no sense. See Congress, Senate, Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services, *U.S. Military Operations in Somalia: Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services*, 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 12, 21 May, 1994.

<sup>190</sup> Clinton, *My Life*, 551.

<sup>191</sup> See Bowden, *Blackhawk Down*.

<sup>192</sup> Some of the questions that surrounded the battle's official investigation were the cooperation of UN commanders to extricate the trapped Rangers and the absence of American armor in the battle. The Congressional hearings illustrate the process in which Garrison had requested armor and more troops for operations against Aideed earlier in the month, but the requests were denied by the Pentagon. See Congress, Senate, Committee Hearings on Armed Services, *Current Military Operations In Somalia: U.S. Senate Committee Hearings On Armed Services*, 4, 7, 12, 13, October, 1993.

<sup>193</sup> Robert Oakley interview with Blechman and Wittes found in Alexander L. George, "The Role of Force in Diplomacy," in H.W. Brands ed., *The Use of Force After the Cold War* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2000), 88.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>195</sup> John R. Murphy, "Memories of Somalia," *Marine Corps Gazette* 82, no. 4 (April 1998): 20-25.

<sup>196</sup> Lance Morrow, "In Feeding Somalia and Backing Yeltsin, America Discovers the Limits of Idealism."

<sup>197</sup> For more on American parental self-images, see Dorcas Eva McCoy, "American Post-Cold War Images and Foreign Policy Preferences Toward 'Dependent States': 39.

<sup>198</sup> Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 277.

<sup>199</sup> Lance Morrow, "In Feeding Somalia and Backing Yeltsin."

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<sup>200</sup> Bolger, *Savage Peace*, 105.

<sup>201</sup> See Congress, Senate, Hearing before the Committee on Armed Services, *Current Military Operations: Hearing before the Committee on Armed Services*, 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 6 August, 4, 7, 12, 13 October, 1993, 42.

<sup>202</sup> Sean D. Naylor, "Report: Washington Held back Gunships," *Army Times*, 16 October, 1995, 24.

<sup>203</sup> Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *U.S. Participation in Somalia Peacekeeping: Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations*, 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 19 and 20 October, 1993.

<sup>204</sup> For more on the power of imagery and Somalia see: Cori Dauber, "Image as Argument: The Impact of Mogadishu on U.S. Military Intervention," *Armed Forces and Society* 27, no. 2 (Winter 2001): 205.

## CHAPTER 5: The Illusion of Saving Democracy in Haiti

*“(Peacekeeping efforts in Haiti) were comedy of tragic errors because of a conceptual vacuum and an especially incoherent policy that included restoring a madman to power and trying to build democracy and a free market economy in a Fourth World country.”<sup>1</sup>*

In September, 1994 President Bill Clinton authorized the invasion of the Republic of Haiti on the island of Hispaniola in order to return the deposed President Jean-Bertrande Aristide to power. Aristide had been removed by a military coup in 1990, and Aristide and others had been lobbying for years for the United States and the United Nations to rectify the situation and restore the popularly elected leader’s government. The coup was followed by a series of bloody retributions against Aristide’s faithful followers, and human rights abuses in the tiny impoverished nation had attracted notable attention especially among neighboring Caribbean nations and later in the American media. Drawing sharp focus to the abuses under the brutal military-led regime was the plight of tens of thousands of refugees, who fled the island nation in a growing flotilla of old boats, rafts, and other unseaworthy vessels; most of which were heading for asylum in the United States. Thousands of these refugees were being rescued daily by the U.S. Coast Guard in order to save them from certain death on the high seas, and controversy ensued over the growing number of Haitians being supported and processed in overflowing camps at the U.S. military facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The Haitian crisis unfolded during the second half of George H.W. Bush’s presidency and like Somalia, was a foreign policy issue inherited by Clinton. Although under Bush the United States condemned the coup and instituted a policy of restoring Aristide to power, little was accomplished in this regard as the military junta under Lt. General Raoul Cedras refused to relinquish power. Bush was saddled with the boat people crisis, and took steps to keep Haiti as

low-key an issue as he could, but the situation made him more politically vulnerable in an election year. Candidate Bill Clinton and his liberal allies attacked Bush for being insensitive and “cruel” for not resolving the crisis and for rejecting the influx of thousands of Haitian refugees. Bush left office in January 1993 without making any progress toward restoring democracy and supporting the growth of a free market economy in Haiti. Incoming President Clinton promised dramatic changes in policy towards restoring Aristide and driving the junta from power, as well as offering hope for the impoverished people of Haiti.

The basic pillars for both Bush and Clinton’s policies toward Haiti were restoring Aristide to power and injecting more foreign aid into Haiti. Both administrations were fixated on the notion that democracy had been unnaturally interrupted in Latin America, and for Haiti to lose its constitutionally elected president was a blow that could not be tolerated for philosophical reasons and supposedly pragmatic reasons. The problem was that both administrations had succumbed to idealism supported by overheated rhetoric and both had rejected the realities of the history and culture of Haiti. Bush’s idealism was far more limited than Clinton’s, but both presidents and their administrations created neo-Wilsonian policies in Haiti which disregarded Haiti’s historical cultural dysfunction towards democracy and political stability. This disregard for important realities in favor of Wilsonian idealism caused another important factor in policymaking to be overlooked—namely, the United States had no real stake in Haiti, and no national interest could be served getting involved in either supporting an unstable anti-American president-in-exile or in again engaging in any form of nation-building.

This chapter will outline the course of Haiti’s dysfunction with democracy and earlier American attempts to save Haiti from itself. The 1990 coup and American policy under the Bush administration towards restoring democracy to Haiti will also be examined. What can be

best taken way from these lessons is that U.S. involvement in Haiti offered few benefits and fewer solutions to Haiti's cycle of violence, instability, and abject poverty.

Haiti's history has never been a happy or productive one, and democracy and widespread economic opportunity have never taken root in this culture. Discovered by Columbus in 1492, the French gained control of the Western half of Hispaniola from Spain in 1697 and turned it into a profitable plantation colony through the widespread importation of African slaves.<sup>2</sup> The Haitians revolted against white rule during the turmoil of the French Revolution, but meant little to the United States:

The Haitian revolution, which followed the U.S. revolution by only a few years, attracted much attention but little empathy in the United States. Pervasive racial prejudice, sharp cultural differences, and bloody turmoil of the French Revolution blinded most Americans to the historical import of events in the Caribbean. Only in a single fleeting moment did the first revolutionary republic in the New World demonstrate any benevolent concern for the second. In September, 1799, as Haiti's "great liberator" Toussaint Louverture struggled to put down a domestic threat to the new revolutionary order in Haiti, President John Adams shipped military supplies to him as a gesture of support. In exchange, Port-au-Prince was opened to American business interests and Toussaint pledged to curb pirating. The United States subsequently stood aside as Haitians fought to assert their independence from Napoleonic France.<sup>3</sup>

Haiti's revolution mirrored the angry bloodbath witnessed in France, but unlike the French, the Haitians never restored political balance by falling back upon the need to rebuild a national consensus. Haiti achieved independence from revolutionary France but "the legacy of the Haitian revolution, however, was mass illiteracy and a racial caste system."<sup>4</sup>

Even the total overthrow of white rule could not wipe away the obsession with color in Haitian society. A century before its revolution, Haitian society contained three classes of people: the *grand blancs*, *petit blancs*, and the *gens de couleur*. If the white population of the first two groups recognized social distinction between themselves based on wealth, the third group was marked by its mixed European and African ancestry. The mixed blood or mulatto population exercised the political rights of free Frenchmen, shared in the wealth of the country, and owned slaves...the only population excluded from wealth and society was the large mass of black slaves, many recent arrivals from West Africa.<sup>5</sup>

Despite its racial divisions, Toussaint instituted a *levee en masse* and captured the entire island of Hispaniola with 20,000 while successfully playing the Spanish and British off one another to keep them from seizing France's lost colony. Toussaint, however, declared himself military governor for life in 1801 and began to attract new political enemies. The next year, Napoleon sent an army of 17,000 men to reclaim Haiti, and Toussaint was tricked into a diplomatic meeting and captured and deported to France. Resistance continued under other leaders, and the French withdrew in 1803 after being ravaged by yellow fever and guerilla warfare.

In 1804 Haiti declared its independence, but the mulattos effectively gained control of the political apparatus and perpetuated the plantation system by exploiting the larger, but disorganized and uneducated African labor class. Jean-Jacques Dessalines, an illiterate general under Toussaint, led a successful revolt against mulatto rule proclaiming himself governor general for life, but was murdered in 1806. General Henry Christophe, a black who had fought with the French to relieve Savannah in the American Revolution, assumed power in 1807, but was only able to hold onto half the country against a mulatto rival government under General Alexandre Petion. Haiti was reunified in 1820 under Jean-Pierre Boyer, and was even able to hold the entire island until 1843 when the Dominican Republic was established.<sup>6</sup> In Haiti, "a deep chasm persisted between the small wealthy mulatto elite and the impoverished black peasantry. Meanwhile mismanagement and periodic rebellions fostered a steady erosion of the civic ethos and the entrenchment of strongman politics. The resultant chaos contributed to an attendant decline in living conditions".<sup>7</sup> "The French speaking mulatto elites held the black population in the deepest contempt, a feeling returned by the vast-majority of illiterate Creole-speaking blacks".<sup>8</sup> The elites controlled the National Assembly, monopolized all wealth, and used the majority black population as muscle in power struggles amongst each other. Between

1843 and 1915 there were over 100 civil wars in Haiti and the government had twenty-three heads of state, of whom fourteen were deposed and only one served a complete term of office.

The usual revolt was an elite-financed, often elite-led, uprising of the black, Creole population of the north and east against the mulatto elite faction holding power in Port-au-Prince. This uprising was usually supported by the regime's opponents in exile or in Port-au-Prince. This pattern continued until 1991 when the elites, fearful of populist President Jean Bertrand Aristide, financed a military coup.<sup>9</sup>

If anything, the early history of Haiti demonstrated that the republic was built upon an unstable cultural and economic foundation and that continued generations. The perpetuating dysfunctional nature of Haitian society went relatively unchanged for over two hundred years.

Growing American influence over the Caribbean in the 19<sup>th</sup> century made little impact on Haiti. Although American commercial ties to the fledgling republic persisted, the United States paid little attention to Haiti. America only recognized Haiti during the American Civil War in 1862, once the objections of southern legislators were no longer a factor. U.S. policy toward Haiti only went as far as to maintain trade and to curb the outside influences of foreign powers, especially Germany. The strategic importance of Haiti was elevated after the construction of the Panama Canal in 1914, and American concerns about German expansion into vulnerable areas of the Caribbean were heightened especially after Haiti underwent a series of violent political unrest between 1911 and 1915. During this brief period, Haiti went through seven Presidents, the last, Guillame Sam, was murdered causing massive street violence. President Woodrow Wilson's policy to intervene in Latin American countries that "needed to place their house in order" was implemented. U.S. Marines were dispatched to protect American property and restore order, and the United States imposed a new treaty on the new President Philippe Dartiguenave providing for extensive American intrusion into the Haitian economy. Haiti became an American



“protectorate” with a relationship to the United States comparable to those of Nicaragua, Panama, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic.

The Marines established small garrison posts across the country in an effort to maintain political and social order as President Wilson decreed that the United States would control Haitian customs and manage its treasury, particularly focusing on the problem of foreign debt payments. The Americans also undertook a true Progressive project in Haiti, as they fixed roads, bridges, and ports, established schools, and improved sanitation and water supplies in an effort to relieve suffering, modernize the infrastructure, and help Haitians learn how to eventually become more self-sufficient and economically stable. Efforts were made to fix Haiti’s broken infrastructure and corrupt institutional practices, but limited nation-building under Wilsonianism, however, was not a successful approach. According to a study of U.S. military operations in Haiti:

The United States, however, did make a reasonable effort to bring improvements to Haiti, even if those improvements did not necessarily fit comfortably into the native culture. Because U.S.-engineered social change threatened to disrupt the prevailing social order, Haiti’s upper class proved uncooperative.<sup>10</sup>

Especially egregious to the elites was the concept of incorporating widespread education and literacy, which they viewed as a threat to their monopoly on power. A cultural divide seemed almost surmountable between the Haitians and their American occupiers, as few Marines spoke Creole or attempted to understand Haitian customs and traditions. It soon became apparent that the Americans were imposing its values on the Haitians in the classic Wilsonian fashion. Racial prejudice played a role as well, as many Americans found contempt for Haitian leadership and the black population as a whole, while the mulattos resented the arrogance of their white occupiers which ironically placed them in the same position that they had put the majority of black Haitians for centuries. Despite this cultural rift between them, the majority of Haitians

initially tended to accept the occupation and the institutional changes that preserved some direct elections and reduced banditry and street violence. The Marines meanwhile over time were successful in training gendarmes from the local population to take on civic policing roles, which helped legitimize the rule of law, and helped distance the Marines from getting overly involved in local petty tussles and having to police the populations entirely by themselves.

Despite the presence of a popularly elected government and a growing Haitian police force, resistance to American occupation soon emerged especially in rural areas. The Marines encountered assorted bands of *cacos*, mercenary fighters from the interior of the country who typically found employment in the country's internal struggles.<sup>11</sup> The *cacos* were ill-trained and poorly armed, and were seriously outmatched when they dared to engage Marines too openly. Insurgent activities were sporadic and usually limited to raiding and harassment tactics, which rarely seriously threatened American control of the populated areas or persuaded the whole population to rise up against American rule. Marines did well with their limited numbers hunting down and keeping *cacos* off balance but the rough terrain, however, allowed the *cacos* to melt into the jungle-choked mountains and continue to survive until other opportunities availed themselves for more criminal or military activity. Marines often engaged in fairly successful counter-insurgency operations, but found the most effective method of control through bribing resistance leaders or directing limited public works projects into certain areas.

Two serious *cacos* uprisings took place in 1916 and again in 1919, when Marines killed 1,840 *cacos* in almost continuous anti-guerilla warfare. The uprising eventually faded after when the detested practice of conscripted labor for rebuilding mountainous roads was eventually ended and Marines later rooted out *cacos* bases in the mountains of those who wished to continue resistance. Further operations to pursue the insurgents were halted, however, as Washington was

anxious to stabilize the situation, prevent having to commit more troops, and end the stream of negative publicity. Despite effective responses to guerilla threats, the rebels always seemed to survive somehow, and as in all insurgencies, it was difficult to discern friend from foe and many Marine atrocities were reported during these uprisings. These reports gave a further black eye to the paternal nature and moral justifications of the Wilsonian crusade to save the Haitians from themselves.

After the First World War, President Harding restructured the occupation to make it appear less heavy-handed, but justified its continuation by the delivery of a loan to stabilize Haiti's debt. The Marines focused their attention from counter-insurgency towards expanding their efforts in creating the gendarme, and training a new national defense force to maintain internal order known as the Garde d' Haiti. The Garde was greatly expanded in the early 1930s, and trained to undertake anti-smuggling, road building, prison supervision, providing security for tax collections, controlling airfields, and other important tasks. Pay in the Garde was good for Haitian standards and discipline and morale was generally high among the ranks. Marine trainers were generally pleased with the results as Haitian soldiers assumed more responsibilities, and organized banditry dropped off the scale by 1932. To ensure better leadership, officers were selected by competitive examination and trained at the Ecole Militaire, and focus was placed on building up a base of reliable non-commissioned officers reflecting the traditions of the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps. The Garde proved successful in centralizing authority within the country and linking it to a standardized military institution, which in turn, gave Haiti some much-needed stability.

Problems governing Haiti, however, still persisted. The elected Haitian leaders during this period lacked any real power, as Haitians well knew it was the Marines that actually

administered the country not their presidents. Violent factionalism, crippling poverty, and numerous strikes continued to be facts of life in Haiti despite the stabilizing influence of American rule and limited democracy. After a student strike resulted in Marines firing into crowd of protesting Haitians in December 1929, the nominal Haitian government starting distancing itself from the Americans. President Hoover quickly called for a commission to study a plan to withdraw as part of his movement towards “good neighborliness” in Central America and the Caribbean. U.S. interest in Haiti had been waning over the years anyway, and the American government had grown tired of supporting an ungrateful population that resisted modernization and reform.<sup>12</sup> Spurred on with the onset of the Great Depression, it was decided to start cutting the Haitians loose and incrementally hand power over to their government. In August 1934, the last Marines left Haiti and the mandate to stand watch over the Haitian Republic’s internal affairs was officially ended in 1936 as part of Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor policy’s termination of “protectorates” in the region. The United States, however, did not completely relinquish its hold on Haitian fiscal affairs until 1947, thirteen years after the Marine’s departure.<sup>13</sup>

Overall, the American programs to assist Haiti left a checkered legacy. Americans sought to modernize the Haiti infrastructure and create a foundation of modernization and stability. While efforts to distribute food and provide limited medical assistance were welcome and useful in the short term, the drive to remake Haitian government left much to be desired; especially as American control of the economy and civic administrative functions left the Haitians unprepared to run their own affairs once they had left.<sup>14</sup> The most successful aspect of the American occupation was the creation of a foundation for a professional military designed to maintain internal order, which proved one of the few stabilizing factors in the Haitian political equation.

This however, would not be enough to reform Haiti's cultural currents that fostered corruption, violence, poverty, and inequality.

During the 1940s and 1950s a relative calm prevailed, and Haitian politics reverted to its accustomed pattern. Economic crisis, corrupt and mildly repressive rule, social stagnation, and pompous, officially declared nonsense held sway. Self-serving dictators posing as benevolent Presidents were norm, but none more delusional than General Paul Magliore who held the presidency from 1950-1956. Using typical Haitian strongman politics with a mix of the theatrically bizarre, Magliore's absurd notions of politics included using public broadcasting to promote comically twisted rhetoric designed to make himself into a modern folk hero. Magliore repeatedly proclaimed himself an equal of Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar, and who was able to guarantee liberty simply by flashing his enrapturing smile upon any of the downtrodden masses he encountered. Magliore's inability to deliver much beyond over-the-top self-promotion forced him to lose the presidency in the 1956 election to a candidate who promised the black majority a new vision.

The inauguration of the widely popular President Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier in 1957 ushered in a new era. Duvalier, a former physician and public health bureaucrat, promoted a strange mix of mysticism, voodoo, and spiritual reverence for Africa that ingratiated him with the black majority. Despite his trumped up rhetoric and far-flung populist philosophies, freedom and equality, however, were not at hand. Gradually, paranoia, and a willingness to rule by terror became trademarks of his long presidency. In 1966, he declared himself president for life. Fully cognizant of the role of the army in politics, Duvalier reorganized the politico-military balance of power by creating a Palace Guard in 1959 under his exclusive control. To curtail the independence of the Army, he purged the officer corps in 1961 and closed the Ecole Militaire

and appointed officers directly himself. Duvalier further strengthened his grip on power with the founding of the Tonton Macoute (a Haitian militia). This ill-trained body was a group of roaming thugs which eventually outnumbered the army and carried out any dirty task thrown its way to eliminate elite dissent or political opposition. The Tonton Macoute created the illusion to the majority of blacks that Duvalier had swung the balance of power away from the army and the elites and was meeting out long-overdue justice. In reality, Duvalier played the factions off one another and consolidated more power for himself.<sup>15</sup> “Duvalier also effectively manipulated American anti-communism to elitist financial and material support, much of the latter in the form of weapons. Later, in 1971, the U.S. financed an anti-insurgency force known as the Leopards”.<sup>16</sup> The Leopards were used to root out potential political enemies in rural areas, and actually did more harm than good in pressing the American cause in suppressing pro-communist sentiment among Latin American populations. Between the Tonton Macoute and the manipulation of the Army and the Americans, Duvalier was successfully able to undercut any opposition and terrorize Haiti unchecked.

In 1971, Duvalier passed his power unconstitutionally to his son, Jean-Claude, in a farcical referendum in which voters supposedly voted 2,391,916 to 0 in favor of the transition of power. Just months later, Pap Doc died and Jean-Claude was given the reigns of power, which he didn't seem to effectively grasp:

Jean-Claude Duvalier, also known as “Baby Doc”, took little interest in the art of government, even for the purpose of maintaining his own power. Tossing a \$2 million wedding for his bride, Michelle Bennett, who just happened to be the daughter of a rich mulatto, eventually helped undermine his popularity. When swarms of Haitian refugees in small vessels began making their way across the Caribbean in significant numbers, Duvalier's extravagance attracted unwanted international attention. In the meantime, U.S. media interest focused on corruption and prevalent squalor in Haiti, arousing public pressure on the American government to withdraw support.<sup>17</sup>

Support for Baby-Doc eroded from all sides. Anti-regime conspiracies hatched among Haitian officers and widespread unrest soon broke out across the country in the mid-1980s. Duvalier seemed disinterested in his precarious position, and spent much of his time traveling lavishly abroad doing little to address the situation. “Duvalier, sensing the inevitable and lacking the will to resist, resigned in 1986 and departed Haiti for a life in exile”.<sup>18</sup>

The end of the Duvaliers hardly changed Haiti’s prospects for stability and prosperity. The notion of the “predator state” was forever engrained in Haitian government, and Haiti was ruled by a series of corrupt officials jockeying for temporary power interspersed with short periods administered by weak interim presidents and bickering juntas. Most Presidents only lasted a few months, none more than a year. Yet another interim president appointed following the ouster of Prosper Avril, however, eventually yielded to the popular desires for a national election in 1990.<sup>19</sup> The Bush administration praised the election, culminating in Vice President Dan Quayle’s speech to the Haitian National Assembly telling them, “Welcome. Welcome for the first time, and finally, to the great family of the democracies.” Quayle saluted President Aristide and Prime Minister Rene Prèval, and praised the December 1990 election as “the first free, peaceful, and unquestionably legitimate elections in Haiti’s history.”<sup>20</sup>

Jean-Bertrand Aristide was a popular figure among Haiti’s poor, and was an outspoken critic of the caste system that dominated the nation’s history. Once a relatively obscure Catholic priest who worked with the homeless and orphans in La Saline, Aristide had emerged as a prominent figure in 1986 by virtue of his public criticism of the Duvalier regime. Moreover, his ability to survive multiple assassination attempts built up his mystique among Haiti’s poor.<sup>21</sup> In the political arena, Aristide condemned capitalism and invoked a strange mix of Marxism, voodoo, and Catholicism and was highly critical of the United States. Many Westerners who had met him

reported that he was mentally unbalanced. His inflammatory rhetoric alienated Western governments and Haitian moderates, and he recklessly sought to marginalize the Army from its traditional role in government and announced massive cuts in the military to undercut their position in Haitian society. Unsurprisingly, Aristide was soon removed by a military coup led by Lt. General Raoul Cedras on September 30, 1991. Aristide escaped to Venezuela and briefly settled in several countries before achieving asylum and settling in a plush penthouse in New York City. Haiti's coup might have been easily ignored until a flotilla of "boat people" soon captured international attention as many Aristide supporters fled persecution in Haiti heading for Florida.<sup>22</sup>

Within days, Bush condemned the coup and officially recognized Aristide as the only legitimate President and backed the OAS call to restore him to power. Bush condemned the coup plotters for acting unconstitutionally, and called for a halt to street violence. Bush immediately suspended all foreign aid to Haiti, and stated, "This junta will be treated as a pariah throughout the hemisphere—without assistance, without friends, and without a future."<sup>23</sup> The administration claimed that the coup was an assault and a "test of the democratic community and of the Organization of American States" and vowed that "those that threaten democracy will not go unpunished." The White House went as far as to say that the failure to return democratic rule to Haiti would threaten the security of the United States<sup>24</sup> a view quickly adopted by the Clinton administration the following year.

The assertion that the coup and the sudden removal of democracy in Haiti was a threat to the region was based more on hubris and emotion rather than on factual analysis or good common sense. The assumption was that Latin American democracies, suddenly freed from the pressures of the Cold War and the threat of communist subversion, would be vulnerable to their militaries.



Supposedly, the example of Haiti would encourage Latin American militaries to follow suit especially if the Americans stood idly by and did nothing. Both the Bush and later the Clinton administration espoused these beliefs publicly. The problem is that these assumptions were proven false, even during the lengthy period between Aristide's ouster and the invasion. No Latin America countries experienced serious coups, much less ones that would have been inspired by the chaotic circles of almost continuous Haitian power struggles. Haiti was virtually politically and economically insignificant, even in the Caribbean, and had a distinctively different culture than the rest of the region. Haiti's latest overthrow in its violent and unstable history would have raised little concern had it not been for its timing. With the end of the Cold War and the recent demise of the Soviet Union, the democracies were understandably riding a wave of euphoria filled with a sense of self-affirmation that imbued them with a smug sense of self-righteousness. The rhetoric of the post-Cold War, as examined earlier, was driven by the vision that totalitarian regimes, of all types, not just communist ones, would find themselves marginalized and fading into obscurity as the wave of democracy and cooperative internationalism assumed its "natural" and "rightful" position in the New World Order. This myopic view, driven by extreme optimism and hubris was a factor in determining the importance of the Haiti coup. Democratic leaders, unwilling to fathom the possibility of a set-back in the vision of dominos toppling into newly freed states, were driven to restore the "lost democracy" in Haiti. Haiti, by Quayle's own admission, had never really had a democracy until a few months ago, and that was suspect as well. The mattered little, however, to acolytes of the New World Order. After incessant chirping throughout 1991 that only Castro's Cuba remained as the only undemocratic regime in Latin America, the members of the OAS took the coup as a personal affront even though it had absolutely no bearing on any economic or strategic relationship to any

of them, perhaps because they took so much pride in administering and monitoring the “historic” 1990 elections. Ironically, many of these nations which had struggled with the fundamental tenets of democracy and human rights for decades, suddenly found religion and demanded Haiti, the poorest of and most unstable of them all, follow suit after only a few months under the shaky Aristide regime. The violence in Haiti only fueled this hubris, as it combined the neo-Wilsonian fervor with the self-righteous global humanitarian movement that was spilling out in the post-Cold War era. Haiti had nothing to do with regional security; it was more about refusing to accept a setback in the march toward democratic globalism and the promotion of self-righteousness.

While the administration attempted diplomacy with the junta to restore Aristide, Aristide showed nothing but ingratitude even in public. He claimed that Washington masterminded the coup that removed him, and he urged his supporters in the U.S. not to vote for Bush in the upcoming elections. Bush officials protested the statements, and claimed that Aristide refused to do “anything constructive, but is convinced that Clinton will win and that will change everything for him, so he just waits.” Aristide further ruined American-led negotiations with the junta when the administration floated the idea of a peaceful return to power and an amnesty for the coup plotters, but Aristide went on television promising that they would be punished regardless of American promises. Negotiations naturally collapsed. Aristide learned little from the experience, however, calling for “Democracy or death!” and restating punishment for the military leadership in a speech at the United Nations days later. Aristide’s arrogant and unproductive behavior only reinforced the view that he was an inflexible and vindictive crusader.<sup>25</sup>

The United States, despite the ingratitude and poisonous stupidity of Aristide, was determined to return him to power. The State Department harped on American and OAS

commitment to the 1990 election, and mentioned that the U.S. had actually forgiven \$99 million in debt only one day before the coup to support the new government (a poor investment if there ever was one, even if the coup had not taken place the corrupt regime would have surely squandered the gift). The administration was content to allow the OAS drive policy, as the thirty-four members recently passed a unanimous vote in June to “defend democracy whenever it was threatened in the hemisphere” known as the Santiago Resolution. In the first week of October immediately following the coup, Bush suspended all assistance, blocked the transfer of ammunition to Haiti, and froze Haitian assets in coordination with the OAS. On October 8<sup>th</sup>, the OAS passed a resolution for a trade embargo, which Bush enacted under an executive order. The sanctions were porous, and purposefully excluded all types of food and medicinal shipments as to inflict too much suffering on the population. State further called for U.S. citizens to leave Haiti, which numbered about 8,300 (half were estimated to have already left since the coup). The sanctions were designed to cripple Haiti’s economy and force the junta to negotiate, but officials stated that there were no guarantees of success and that “order and authority could break down in Haiti”. The outlook for returning Aristide to power did not look promising. As Bernard Aronson, Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs pronounced:

“We face many difficult choices in our policy in Haiti—none attractive; all fraught with difficulty and risk. But the one choice that democratic community and the Organization of American States never contemplated was to stand by and do nothing when Haiti’s first democratically elected government was violently overthrown”.<sup>26</sup>

Despite the swift action of the Bush administration in coordinating with the OAS, many in the liberal media were not satisfied that he was doing enough. Despite Bush having to deal with bigger problems such as the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the negotiation of nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Republics, problems with North Korea, and the post-Gulf War, the assertive multilateralists and extreme progressives on the political left continued to pound away at Bush for

not solving all the complex issues of sovereignty and democracy. They were especially critical of Bush's predilection to interfere with the internal affairs of Iraq and Kuwait, but not China and Haiti. They were especially vocal in their assumption that the loss of Haiti's nine-month old democracy was a threat to democracy everywhere in the region and that a bloodbath was inevitable. Laying this all on Bush's feet, the liberal media left their readers with the impression that if Bush failed to remove the junta by force if sanctions failed, that he was a traitor to his own New World Order agenda.<sup>27</sup>

Although the liberals were certainly overstating the facts and judging him by their own idealistic agendas, they were catching Bush flatfooted politically. Once again, Bush was trapped by his own rhetoric about creating stability and spreading democracy, and had been chained to the OAS pronouncement that Latin American democracies were somehow now magically immune to reverting back to their historical non-democratic states once ballot boxes were uncrated. Bush was sitting back and hoping for an opportunity or a change in circumstances. This prudent course, however, only invited criticism from liberal idealists in the mainstream press and Congress who painted him as a hypocrite to his own vision. Bush instead focused on the critical issue of aid to Russia, and was attacked for promoting stability over values in numerous global crises.<sup>28</sup> Haiti was just another case in point. Bush agreed with the idealists that restoring democracy in Haiti was in the national interest, but not enough to use military force.<sup>29</sup> He preferred instead to use diplomacy and economic sanctions, but this course was commonly characterized as doing nothing.

Bush did follow through with sanctions, signing an executive order placing an embargo on Haiti effective on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Venezuela, Haiti's main supplier of oil and petrol, joined the embargo. The administration reported that the embargo and freezing of Haitian assets was having

an immediate effect, as the government there had no hard currency and gasoline rationing began immediately.<sup>30</sup> The only problem there was that the shortages increased Haiti's poor desire to leave their decaying country. Reacting to the growing number of boat refugees (reaching 2,000 by November 18<sup>th</sup>) Voice of America Creole broadcasts were also made urging the Haitians not to take the sea, as those rescued would not be brought to the United States for asylum.<sup>31</sup> The State Department announced that "we do not believe that those individuals returned to Haiti will be subject to persecution there. There is no history of such persons being persecuted."<sup>32</sup> After processing, only fifty Haitian applicants met the criteria for asylum, the rest were returned.

The boat refugees, however, continued to come in overloaded and unsafe vessels unfit for the high seas even if there was no place for them to go. The administration wanted to discourage people from taking such risks and from necessitating so many rescue efforts by the U.S. Coast Guard, and above all it wanted to avoid any actions that "would encourage more Haitians to risk their lives by boarding unsafe vessels in the belief that this would ensure them passage to the United States." Efforts to get other OAS nations to take refugees met little progress, as many Caribbean islands were already teeming with illegal Haitian immigrants who had been trickling in for years.<sup>33</sup> The United States itself had 1.2 million registered Haitian immigrants, and probably half again more that were in the country illegally. The refugee problem was growing serious, and the United States felt no special obligation to take in any more Haitians simply fleeing poverty. The best course, the administration reasoned, was to return stability so aid could be resumed to Haiti.

By February 1992, the administration was discovering that its "persistence and patience" strategy was not producing results and was now finding itself more and more on the defensive trying to explain its policy. To deflect criticism that the administration was "cold and uncaring",

the State Department began selling Haiti as a major concern, claiming a “humanitarian obligation” to take action because of the plight of the poor boat people and the abject poverty in Haiti. Also the crisis in Haiti was labeled a “pragmatic” concern based on security issues supposedly aroused when Haitian democracy was thwarted. Officials explained that the loss of a democracy in the hemisphere was not only intolerable philosophically to the administration, but the coup was labeled dangerous because it would embolden other Latin American militaries to launch coups as well. Furthermore, the administration outlined its previous commitment to Haiti before the coup detailing the millions of dollars of American assistance to the impoverished society and the cooperation with the OAS to monitor the 1990 elections. Haiti was sold as not only a humanitarian concern, but as an ongoing political investment that could not be abandoned.<sup>34</sup> This aid could be continued once order was restored.

This reasoning for the policy, however, was not built upon anything concrete. The “pragmatic” rationale of reinstating Haitian democracy and thus thwarting Latin American coups was simply based on unsubstantiated assumptions by State echoing the fears of OAS leaders. Secretary of State James Baker invoked Haiti as an “object lesson” in protecting democracies, creating a new but unsubstantiated domino theory. Inaction in Haiti, he stated, would make the OAS 1991 Santiago Declaration come off as “an empty threat” to those that could upset the democracy applecart.<sup>35</sup> Events did not bear this out, however, as no militaries were inspired by the obscure Haitian junta to overthrow their elected heads of governments. “Protecting democracy and human rights” as a policy foundation was problematic in this situation as well. Baker and his staff knew Aristide was reputedly “anti-American” and possibly involved in drug trafficking. Restoring him to office based on concerns for human rights was “a weak sell” because Aristide and his followers were little different than their political opponents when it

came to corruption, violence, and intimidation. The administration rationalized, however, that for better or worse, Aristide received 67% of the vote, and that defending the concept of democracy was paramount even if it was impossible to distance themselves from supporting the eccentric priest. Making U.S. policy totally subordinate to the overly idealistic OAS 1991 Santiago Declaration was deemed imperative; therefore, bowing to OAS desires, Baker and Bush deemed it irrelevant that restoring Aristide was not beneficial to U.S. interests, or that he was a poor choice to guide Haiti. Simply because he was elected he had to be restored, despite the realities of the gloomy history of Haitian democracy and his short and turbulent term in office. No other options were considered. Policy was not being driven by logic or even U.S. interests, but instead by ideological intangibles premised on the demonstration effect and the domino theory which obviously did not pan out.

The “humanitarian obligation” rationale for policy given by the administration to not only aid refugees but to uplift Haiti from its poverty and economic malaise was suspect as well. The humanitarian obligation toward “ending economic misery and authoritarian brutality” in a country that had known nothing but misery and brutality was not only wildly idealistic, it was heavily reminiscent of the outmoded ideologies of the White Man’s Burden as well as promoting the belief that Haitians were incapable of reform without sizable outside interference. This rationale resembled that used by Woodrow Wilson, who demanded Haiti get its house in order or face intervention for its own good. As was the case in 1915, however, even that drastic approach would only impose stability but do little to address the abyss of Haiti’s poverty. Intervention, however, was not considered by Bush, as Haiti was deemed not worth the risks and costs, and any occupation would obviously have to be a long one which was politically unacceptable.<sup>36</sup>

There were limits to Bush’s idealism. Highly laced in neo-Wilsonian democratic rhetoric and

high-sounding humanitarian concern, none of the rationale provided by policymakers seemed to have anything realistically associated with national interests or seemed to provide any new solutions toward dealing with Haiti's perpetual state of dysfunction. The rationale instead only revealed a firm adherence to the ideals Wilsonianism masked as humanitarian concerns designed to placate the public.

Critics of the policy were quick to point out that Bush seemed to be talking out of both sides his mouth when it came to the welfare of the Haitians. More charges surfaced claiming the embargo was flawed and the refugees were being unfairly treated. The embargo, they claimed, was too soft, aimed at the poor, and that after many U.S. businesses had complained, companies were now allowed to circumvent the restrictions. Worse critics charged that boat refugees were being racially discriminated against when it came to Bush's tough stance on granting asylum. The Bush administration defended its policies by going on the counterattack. Donna Hrinak, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Caribbean and Mexican Affairs, took the point in addressing the critics of the policy in a statement on February 19th:

We have heard criticism that the embargo against Haiti had affected the wrong people—that it hurt the poor and left the regime and its supporters unscathed. More recently, we heard accusations that the administration bowed to pressure from the American business community in deciding to ease the embargo...we retargeted the embargo. We did not lift it. We will now permit, on a case-by-case basis, companies in the offshore assembly sector (the so-called 807 companies) to ship components to Haiti and bring finished products back to the United States. These components and products do not enter Haitian commerce—Haiti simply provides the labor to assemble them. Our action does not open or resume commerce with Haiti.<sup>37</sup>

Although Hrinak admitted the embargo had not produced the desired results, she advocated its continuance as an “effective instrument of pressure against the illegal regime.”

Hrinak also undercut charges of a racial indifference and immigration prejudice without addressing them directly by reminding them that over million Haitians were allowed to



immigrate to the U.S. (over 140,000 in the last decade) which was equal to one-sixth of Haiti's population. The flood of immigrants, Hrinak pointed out, began long before the coup as 22,000 Haitians were interdicted at sea in the past ten years, including 1,351 during the brief Aristide regime. The vast majority of boat people, she explained, were "economic migrants," not political refugees in fear for their lives as reported by the press. The millions of accepted Haitian immigrants seemed proof enough against the strange racial conspiracy charges being leveled against the government. Hrinak stated that the solution to the economic migrants called for a return to the ongoing effort to restore democracy and to continue to aid in Haiti's economic development, not a massive restructuring of the established immigration criteria.<sup>38</sup>

As the immigration debate ensued, more refugees took to the seas heading for Florida. In May, over 13,000 boat people were rescued and taken to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba for processing. Oddly, despite mainstream press reports claiming that thousands were fleeing certain torture and death at the hands of the Cedras regime, refugees that attempted landing in Guantanamo or Florida but ended up elsewhere accidentally made no attempt to stay in those countries and also refused safe haven in Honduras or Venezuela. This proved the exodus was more economically driven, not the result of a human rights crisis. Bush correctly deduced that aiding the refugees was creating a magnet for more to make the journey and attempt to live in the U.S., and that the point of maximum capacity for caring for thousands of refugees had been reached which required a change in policy. Overwhelmed with the increasing numbers of Haitians at Guantanamo, Bush issued an executive order on May 24<sup>th</sup> permitting Coast Guard vessels authority to return Haitian refugees directly to Haiti instead of taking them to Guantanamo.

Once word got back to Haiti, the numbers of refugees dropped significantly from thousands interdicted each month to only a few dozen. There were no reports of mistreatment of returnees

by the Red Cross and UN monitors requested by the U.S., so there was no moral or legal obligation pertaining to 1951 UN Convention and the 1967 Protocol on the Status of Refugees to continue to shelter them on U.S. soil while they applied for asylum. The UN Security Council upheld the decision. (Note this didn't stop several radical leftist organizations from attempting to sue the U.S. government for their violation of refugee rights on behalf of several immigrant applicants. None of them were successful.) Claimants could still apply for asylum at the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince, but none would be processed after attempting to sail into American ports or after rescue at sea.

Even as the refugees dwindled in number, Bush was still vulnerable because the embargo wasn't working as the junta continued to stand firm. The international community's commitment to firm rhetoric was not matched by strong political actions, and the embargo had failed to budge the junta from power or get them to accept proposals for a large multilateral mission to monitor human rights and political progress. The poor, who had overwhelmingly supported Aristide, ironically suffered the most from the sanctions. In contrast, the embargo merely inconvenienced the elites who supported the coup. Some anti-interventionist conservatives joined liberal humanitarian voices that the embargo should simply be allowed to expire after the U.S. presidential election, which perhaps was designed to give Bush a graceful way out if he won or take the burden away from Clinton if he became President. Aristide and the Congressional Black Caucus, however, demanded a firmer stance and deeper sanctions, and other critics complained that Bush caved into business interests that were exempt from the embargo, and should have done more to sever diplomatic ties and seize the personal assets of coup supporters. Despite the successful steps in ending the flood of refugees, there was no movement toward restoring democracy to Haiti and fulfilling promises to return economic aid to the suffering masses. Worse

yet, the sanctions seemed to be affecting the wrong people. The embargo and failure to deal with the junta effectively was being labeled a Bush failure.

After the forced repatriation order went into effect, criticism against Bush continued despite the fact that his decision swiftly ended the boat people problem. With the images of the refugees clinging to swamped boats at sea missing from the news, the Haiti situation was in danger of losing its sensationalism. Democrats didn't want to lose an opportunity to hit Bush on foreign policy in the election and simply criticizing the embargo was insufficient. Other accusations surfaced, complaining that the U.S. allowed itself to have conflicting interests in helping Haiti because the White House was simply motivated by the need to control a Haitian exodus and feared alienating conservative voters in immigrant burdened Florida during the election season. These complaints boiled down to slinging mud at Bush for supposedly promoting a self-serving and racist policy towards Haitians. The liberals' claim, however, that U.S. policy was racist and historically discriminatory against Haitians was totally unfounded; Haitians were already the fifth largest immigrant group accepted by the U.S. in the previous ten years, and over 10,000 applications were processed during the period of the exodus.<sup>39</sup> These facts, however, were ignored in the mainstream press, and the Haiti issue was used to paint Bush as cold, uncaring, out of touch (and perhaps racist) during the 1992 presidential campaign.

Idealist emotionalism aside, there was little Bush could do about Haiti beyond continuing the embargo as specified in the OAS resolutions. Bush was content to let the OAS lead the agenda, but outside having a consensus on principles, the OAS was inert. The member states all agreed that Aristide should be returned to power and that a democratically stable Haiti was preferable. Few in the OAS were comfortable with Aristide's revolutionary views or were anxious to see his return, but they were more concerned with allowing Haiti's tiny 7,000 man

army thwart the collective will of the thirty-four member states. Moreover, the OAS leaders felt it necessary to generate a strong response for the return of military coups in case any other Latin American militaries had any similar ideas. Haiti's political problems seemed intractable, but it was believed that only international involvement could ease the country back toward legitimate constitutional government. In essence, the Haiti crisis could neither be simply ignored nor could the junta be tolerated especially if it refused to accept international monitors and aid agencies. The OAS had a goal (restoring democracy and stability) and means toward obtaining that goal (restoring Aristide and the constitutionally elected government) and the consensus to achieve these, but the members of the organization, including the U.S., lacked any real desire to get too deeply involved in Haiti.

But although at first this small, insignificant country seemed an easy place to take a stand for democracy, its lack of any democratic tradition made it far more resistant to foreign political engineering than OAS leaders anticipated. Good intentions, bold rhetoric, and limited economic pressure have proven inadequate and many OAS members remain unwilling to consider the use of harsher measures, such as a full blockade or military intervention...although OAS leaders support the concept of a large multinational mission to monitor human rights and establish a more secure climate in Haiti, they fear that an armed intervention or peacekeeping foray would drag the OAS into a lengthy, unpopular, and extensive military occupation, uncomfortably reminiscent of the Marines role in Haiti from 1915 to 1934.<sup>40</sup>

The member states of the OAS, and the United States in particular, were unable to proceed any further in their idealistic designs on Haiti *because none of them had any real stake in Haiti to begin with.*

Having fallen in line with the sentiments and limitations of the OAS, the Bush administration looked increasingly impotent as more reports continued to come in about the increased levels of oppression and violence against those who refused to support the Cedras regime. By August 1992, as the one-year anniversary of the coup approached, the U.S. Permanent Representative to the OAS, Luigi Einaudi, could only complain that "time was running out" for a peaceful solution

as the OAS sent another delegation to negotiate with the junta. Little hope remained, however, as neither they nor Aristide showed any flexibility in creating an environment for a transition to create a viable government. A continuation of the status quo, Einaudi warned, would only cause more suffering for the Haitian people and reduce the chances for any future democracy but he offered no new approaches.<sup>41</sup> During the fall of 1992, after cutting the flow of 39,000 refugees since the end of the coup, the administration turned its attention to larger foreign crises and a hotly contested election campaign. The Bush administration seemed ready to give up.

Candidate Bill Clinton pounced on Haiti as an opportunity to bash Bush, claiming that if he were in office he would “turn up the heat” on Haitian authorities and grant temporary shelter to most refugees. Few in Congress backed this position, as most were swayed by the administrations’ arguments that it had taken the necessary measures to prevent refugees from engulfing southern Florida.<sup>42</sup> Clinton labeled Bush’s refusal to grant refugees temporary asylum “cruel” and promised to give them refuge until democracy could be restored in Haiti. Clinton also promised to restore Aristide to power, although there was no real political pressure on him to do so. Clinton, however, never elaborated on how this restoration would be accomplished.<sup>43</sup>

Once in office, Clinton would find (as was the case in all foreign policy issues) that crafting and administering an effective policy in Haiti as President was much more difficult than throwing barbs at Bush as a candidate. Clinton would reverse himself on several occasions, and his administration also wallowed in ineffectual rhetoric coupled with little action in Haiti. Clinton and his staff, however, had not abandoned the overblown Wilsonian rhetoric. It echoed from the Bush administration about the importance of restoring democracy to Haiti, and clung tenaciously to the policy of restoring Aristide to power. This approach to addressing the situation in Haiti was amplified many times by the administration’s devotion to the tenets of assertive

multilateralism and nation-building which would lead to an intervention in Haiti. Another fiasco in peacekeeping was in the offing, this time aimed at the perpetual state of Haitian poverty and disorder.

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>2</sup> Historical background of Haiti found here is compiled from numerous sources, most notably Walter E. Kretchik, Robert F. Bauman, and John T. Fishel, *Invasion, Intervention, "Intervasion": A Concise History of U.S. Army in Operation Uphold Democracy*. (U.S. Army and General Staff College Press, Ft. Leavenworth Kansas, 1998), also available from: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1998/kretchik/chapter1.htm>. Also see Gary T. Dempsey and Roger W. Fountaine, *Fools Errands; America's Recent Encounters With Nation Building*, Michael S. Laguerre, *Voodoo and Politics and Haiti*, (NY: St. Martins, Press, 1989), Ludwell Lee Montague, *Haiti and the United States 1714-1938* Durham, (NC: Duke University Press), 1940.
- <sup>3</sup> Kretchik, 1.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid, 2.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid , 5-6.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid, 4.
- <sup>8</sup> Thomas K. Adams, "Intervention in Haiti: Lessons Relearned," *Military Review* 76, no. 5: 45.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> Kretchik, 4.
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- <sup>12</sup> Adams, 54.
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- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> Kretchik, 10.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
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- <sup>20</sup> U.S. State Department, Vice President Dan Quayle, *Democracy in Haiti: Vice President Dan Quayle Address before the National Assembly of Haiti*, Port-au-Prince, 9 August, 1991. U.S. State Department *Dispatch* 2, no.34 (26 August, 1991): 635.
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- <sup>22</sup> Ibid, 11.
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- <sup>24</sup> Howard French, "U.S. Keeps Eye on Haiti, but Action Is Scant," *The New York Times International*, 8 October, 1992, A9.
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- <sup>26</sup> U.S. State Department, Bernard W. Aronson, Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, *Restoring Democracy to Haiti: Statement before the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs of the House Foreign Affairs Committee*, Washington DC, 31 October, 1991. U.S. State Department *Dispatch* 2, no. 44, (4 November, 1991): 814.
- <sup>27</sup> See Charles Lane, "Why the Coup Matters: The Toppling of the Caribbean's Infant Democracy Poses a Test for George Bush's New World Order," *Newsweek*, 14 October, 1991.
- <sup>28</sup> William G. Hyland, *Clinton's World: Remaking American Foreign Policy*, 9.
- <sup>29</sup> James A. Baker III, *The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War and Peace 1989-1992*, 602.
- <sup>30</sup> U.S. State Department, Department Spokesman, *U.S. Embargo on Trade: Statement released by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs/Department Spokesman*, Washington D.C., 29 October, 1991. U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 2, no. 44 (11 November, 1991): 816.
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<sup>35</sup> Baker, 601-2.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> U.S. Department of State, Donna Hrinak, *Restoring Democracy in Haiti: Persistence and Patience*.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> U.S. Department of State, Brunson McKinley, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Refugee Programs, *U.S. Policy on Haitian Refugees: Statement before the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs and on International Operations of the House Foreign Affairs Committee*, Washington, D.C., 11 June, 1992. U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 3, no. 24 (15 June 15, 1992): 472.

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## CHAPTER 6

## Spinning to Restore Democracy: Haiti Policy under the Clinton Administration

*“Constitutions are only paper, but bayonets are steel.”*  
 ---Old Haitian adage

Despite the overwhelming use of Wilsonian rhetoric by the Clinton administration, restoring democracy in Haiti was never a lasting or even a realistic goal. As this chapter will show, the Clinton administration's plan to restore democracy in Haiti was aimed at producing more symbolism than substance, and its objectives were purposely rooted in playing domestic politics rather than being designed to craft an effective direction in American foreign policy or to meet tangible goals towards U.S. strategic interests. Clinton's desire to restore democracy to Haiti was never linked to addressing serious long-term issues that plagued Haiti, and the Clinton policy toward Haiti was more predicated on producing a demonstration effect about supposedly “securing democracy” and protecting Clinton's credibility than on producing lasting concrete results. Image management, not global strategy, dictated the course of Haitian policy. Clinton was quickly pulled into the Haitian situation not only because of strong domestic political pressure, but also because he had trapped himself within the web of his own overblown Wilsonian rhetoric about protecting democracy. He sought to extricate himself just as quickly from the situation without imposing any risks upon himself. As economic sanctions produced negative results throughout 1993-4, a military invasion of Haiti was deemed an almost risk-free solution to the situation, and the mentality of the low-risk military humanitarian intervention that had produced the debacle in Somalia was shamelessly again embraced by policymakers.

Even if the administration refused to invoke the term “nation-building” after the debacle in Mogadishu, it still fundamentally embraced the tenets of international collective security and neo-progressivism for failed states, if not what Senator Jesse Helms, a long time critic of foreign

aid programs, dubbed, “a global welfare system with the U.S. paying most of the bill.” Much like Somalia, Haiti, however, was not a viable candidate for nation-building and was as dysfunctional and divided as anything experienced in Operation Restore Hope. Haiti was not as politically divided amongst as many warring factions, but still had its own brand of violent power struggles between old order elites and angry masses as well as a whole host of political factions engrained in the use of murder, violence, and intimidation. This situation was compounded by the eccentricities of a culture heavily isolated from most of its Caribbean neighbors, embedded with bitterness toward foreign interference, and which embraced the oddities of a strange mix of Christianity and voodoo creating a very erratic and skewed value system amongst the seven million inhabitants. Haiti was also one of the poorest nations in the world, and was by far the poorest in the Western Hemisphere with little hope of recovery. Haiti was a mess both economically and as a barely functioning state apparatus, and the complicated mechanics of nascent democracy alleviated none of these horrendous circumstances. The only positive comparison to Somalia was that there was no famine and no ongoing civil war, but all the other insurmountable roadblocks to rectifying Haiti’s woeful status as a failed state Clinton determined that the best course was to topple the illegitimate military junta ruling Haiti, restore order there, and reinstitute Haiti’s constitutionally elected President. Clinton reasoned that not only could an invasion restore Aristide and end widespread human rights abuses, an American-led invasion could spearhead another humanitarian mission to help save another “failed state” by infusing massive international aid and civil works programs to rebuild the broken Haitian economy and infrastructure.

As discussed in the previous chapters, Bush’s vision for a New World Order embraced the Wilsonian concept of stability brought about by an expansion of democracies and global markets

in the wake of the Cold War. Clinton and those he brought into his cabinet held the same fundamental beliefs, but with some important distinctions. Bill Clinton's administration was far more idealistic and mostly untested, and was committed to the ideology of assertive multilateralism, a much more expansive approach to collective security, and crafting a humanitarian-based foreign policy. Haiti, like Somalia and Bosnia, became another testing ground to propel U.S. foreign relations towards multilateralism and embark on nation-building projects. Essential to these supposedly progressive goals was the aggressive "enlargement" of global democracy. While Bush had overseen the lightening conversion of the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact satellite states to infant democracies, the planners in the Clinton administration hoped for more states to embrace democracy and open their markets to Western investors and products. This agenda, however, was far more idealistic than traditional American foreign policy endeavors to promote democracy, as the assertive multilateralists wanted to assert their elitist meliorism on others and assert their will upon other governments and cultures.

"Enlargement" and a humanitarian foreign policy looked good on paper to the administration, but they knew it was premised on idealism that was not generally shared outside the circles of the elites of the liberal progressive left. What particularly worried those that drove policy under Clinton--Tony Lake, Madeline Albright, and Warren Christopher-- was a fear of isolationism and an American retreat from the world stage at a time that they felt was ripe to radically transform international relations.

Thus, it was necessary to develop a foreign policy framework that clearly explained to the American public the opportunities available to the United States after the end of the Cold War while simultaneously devising a strategy that would appeal to American values. The solution, as perceived at the time, was a policy designed to enlarge the community of market democracies.<sup>1</sup>

Enlargement as an aggressive expansion of traditional Wilsonianism, would supposedly create more stability and globalism, which was also believed would be beneficial to the U.S. economy. Expanding democracy and humanitarianism was thus transformed from being a laudable goal for a lone superpower looking for a benevolent new role in the world, but this Wilsonian crusade soon became identified as “a national interest.” Enlargement of democracy, however, was an idealistic concept reaching well past the realist criterion of national interests: issues surrounding national survival, protection of crucial economic pressure points, or relationships with nations sharing a common culture or strong relationships with the United States. The concept was not only idealistic as it focused on changing other governments simply for mostly ideological reasons and some vaguely related practical ones, it was utter inflexible compared to realism because it assumed any other forms of government other than democracies were inherently inferior, somehow naturally invalid, or obtrusive to world order and should be replaced. “Enlargement” was a pipe dream that like assertive multilateralism, was left vaguely defined and open to almost any situation that invited neo-Wilsonianism meddling with an international fig leaf.

Choosing “enlargement” as a promotional goal challenged a growing sense of American isolationism, but undertaking such an idealistic struggle would incur risks and costs-- costs the American public would certainly reject if they had to bear the brunt of those burdens. Adopting multilateralism seemingly went hand-in-hand with this strategy, as U.S. and UN policy would act in cohesion toward enlarging democracy and launching a plethora of human rights and peacekeeping agendas suited to the idealist’s views of America’s role as the sole superpower. Since the risks and costs would be shared through collective action, American sentiment toward isolationism would be contained, and the liberal agenda of empowering the UN would likewise

be fulfilled. The policy was designed to fulfill the values liberals cherished while pursuing the national interests conservatives identified.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately for Clinton, the progressive liberals often claimed he wasn't doing enough to save the world, and the conservatives were rarely invested in the notion of enlargement as a plausible approach to real security issues outside of paying lip-service to the idea of spreading democracy whenever possible; especially if enlargement meant undertaking risky assertive multilateral adventures that had nothing to do with concrete U.S. interests.

After six months of practically ignoring foreign policy, Clinton adopted "enlargement" as a replacement for containment as the pillar of U.S. foreign policy, mostly based on the writings of National Security Advisor, Tony Lake.<sup>3</sup> During the first two years of the administration, after a flurry of speeches and op-ed pieces, the administration carefully orchestrated the debate on the values of the policy. Liberal elites embraced the agenda, and it seemed benign enough along the lines of traditional Wilsonianism that conservatives did little to obstruct it. Academics and the media generally upheld its concepts as well.<sup>4</sup> Clinton undertook most of the steps towards shifting power over to the UN and undertaking assertive multilateralism, using the power of the executive office and attempting to side-stepping Congress almost completely. This approach worked in Somalia until the Battle of Mogadishu, and he would repeat this method again in responding to events in Haiti, as Congress was extremely passive on foreign policy during 1992 and 1993 except when it came time to fund nation-building projects or launch military operations. Clinton pretty much had his own way, despite the fiasco in Somalia, until the Republicans regained control of the House of Representatives in 1995.

Clinton restructured the State Department to reflect his enlargement goals and filled it with appointees who wanted to make democracy a priority, even with existing agencies such as

USAID. U.S. foreign aid was now purposely directed toward getting countries to embrace democracy and submit to UN monitoring of elections and human rights issues. The administration's attempts to massively increase aid to third world countries to promote/protect democracies, however, soon met strong opposition in Congress. The administration tried to aggressively change aid planning laws to create broadly based programs and get around Congressional controls, but was halted in their tracks by the end of 1994 partly due to the fact that Clinton's own party resisted it. The Congressional Black Caucus was angry too little attention was being paid to Africa, and the Republicans were not interested in allowing blanket aid provisions that were not conducted on a country-by-country basis.<sup>5</sup> David Obey, a Democrat from Wisconsin and Chairman of the House Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, remarked, "We will not give to an unelected bureaucracy federal authority to spend dollars any way they want; so long as they call it 'pursuit of democracy' or 'expanding economic development'. There will be no blank check."<sup>6</sup>

Despite the administration's efforts to make enlargement a pillar of U.S. foreign policy, support for it steadily declined by 1994. USAID was often fighting a lonely battle on Capital Hill without much support from the White House, as Clinton and Christopher were focused elsewhere. After failing to take leadership in the bid to increase foreign aid funding, the administration started losing ground quickly. The National Endowment for Democracy (NED), a federally-funded privately administered organization born in 1984 for promoting democracy, was rejected for an increase in funding from \$30 to \$50 million in 1993. NED came under fire from both parties unhappy with a private entity funded by the taxpayers that had a bad reputation for supporting dubious causes abroad and being financially controlled by party-fed contributions at home. NED no longer seemed necessary with the disappearance of the threats of communist

subversion, and a rebellion in the House against Clinton's plans to control foreign aid effectively began a process which slashed its budget and then rolled into up into existing State Department agencies. Public support for enlargement also fell off the radar, as polls showed that "helping bring democracy to other nations" ranked the least important public concerns among foreign policy.

Lacking public support, Clinton's plans for enlargement were hemmed in by the Republican resurgence in 1995, and the administration focused more upon promoting trade rather than democracy and human rights.<sup>7</sup> As more and more compromises were made to insure trade agreements went through with corrupt or undemocratic regimes that violated the very principles of enlargement, the policy showed its fundamentally flawed reliance on idealism that ignored more powerful economic interests. The agenda to enlarge democracy and take on human rights offenders while promoting trade with undemocratic or barely democratic regimes, as one foreign policy official noted, "...one goal completely contradicted the other."<sup>8</sup>

After 1995, democracy enlargement was no longer the central pillar of Clinton's foreign policy. He abandoned it as he fought with Congress over control of foreign policy, and committed his administration to little action in creating new democratic states or reforming corrupt regimes, but instead offered a steady diet of the same rhetoric used since embracing Lake's Wilsonian vision. Clinton wanted the State Department to soldier on with its dwindling resources, and the greatly down-sized USAID became the most active component to engage in democratization programs, especially in Latin America. USAID's primary function became that of administering preparation for elections in poor nations, educating voters, and training international observers to monitor elections. USAID was also responsible for promoting the rule of law and training law enforcement and the judiciary branches, as well as attempting to create

transparency in governments to make them more legitimate by eliminating corruption. Success here was questionable, as few reforms were enacted as host governments refused to allow changes and were ill-equipped to deal with the causes of systemic corruption. Over time focus was placed on monitoring elections, which USAID felt was the most visible but least important component of the program. Elections became a distraction to addressing more serious problems in the host countries, and diverted most of the financial and other resources.<sup>9</sup> Enlargement had fizzled into an underfunded but highly visible program to monitor elections that changed few of the democratic inequities in the targeted nations.

Clinton's enlargement policy failed for several reasons. It lacked depth and public appeal, and the administration failed to demonstrate leadership in restructuring or even defending foreign aid projects. Congressional Republicans, then Democrats, questioned Clinton's grasp of foreign policy, and effectively resisted his aggressive bid to control and widely increase foreign policy funding. The policy to expand markets and trade often heavily conflicted with the agenda to promote democracy, protect human rights, and foster open and transparent governments. Most importantly, it had almost nothing to do with concrete national interests, and expensive programs to reform poor and unhappy countries as part of a feel-good agenda had little focus or measurable payoff in terms of a better security situation or a return on the investment. Clinton, Lake, Talbot, Albright, Christopher and other idealists wanted to lead the United States on a Wilsonian crusade, but no one wanted to follow them, especially if it was going to spend millions upon millions of dollars without producing quantitative results or addressing concrete national interests rather than merely philosophical ones. As Senator Helms labeled Clinton's desire to fund enlargement and democratization as, "pouring money into the foreign aid rat hole." The momentous efforts towards creating a growing list of new or improved democracies



to supposedly enrich the lives of faceless suffering masses of all the Third World populations was soon seen for what it was—an idealistic, unfocused, immeasurable, and unrealistic approach towards American foreign policy.

Clinton would naturally extend his adopted strategy of enlargement to address specific foreign policy issues like Haiti and Somalia, but this was not the disingenuous stance he took on foreign policy during the election. He kept everything about his ideas about foreign policy purposefully vague. “It was suggested later that after serving in George McGovern campaign of 1972, William Hyland writes, “he had learned a valuable lesson: don’t get too far to the left on national defense.”<sup>10</sup> Therefore, Clinton, despite his liberal orientation, ran as a centrist, using a host of ambiguous clichés like “we need to create a smaller but more flexible mix of capabilities”<sup>11</sup> designed to make him sound hawkish on foreign policy, but advocated nothing more provocative than continuing the policy of nuclear deterrence and working with allies. He criticized Bush for coddling China’s dictators (a policy he perpetuated), for fumbling in dealing with the break-up of the Soviet Union (but he offered no better alternatives), and for failing to challenge the brutal Serbian siege of Sarajevo (something he too refused to do when he took office). On most international matters that greatly effected domestic issues, like NAFTA, the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and maintaining NATO, Clinton ironically offered nothing different than Bush. The only significant change offered was his insistence that U.S. foreign policy return to a morally centered effort that would advocate freedom, democracy and human rights, which ironically sounded very much like Bush’s New World Order but with much more Wilsonian moralization. Clinton criticized Bush’s attempt to maintain stability because he tolerated the status quo and relationships with “familiar tyrants” over democratic change, and promised to emphasize multilateral efforts to secure peace and security through

NATO and the UN. He promised to champion democracy in the post-Cold War with a Kennedyesque ring calling building democracy and freedom as bearing new American responsibilities, but he carefully refused to spelling out what risks or costs America was supposed to undertake in performing this Wilsonian crusade.<sup>12</sup> Clinton was offering a new vision for America's role in the world, but it was purposely vague and its rhetoric was defined by using even more rhetoric.

Soon after the election, Clinton made the fatal decision of handing over foreign policy to subordinates, many of them either far too inexperienced or had been a part of Jimmy Carter's staff that had little to boast about when it came to foreign policy successes. All were firm believers in the human rights foundation of American foreign policy, despite the utter failure of this approach under Carter especially in Latin America. Clinton trusted his subordinates to drive the ship so he could ignore foreign policy for the most part because it held no personal political advantages for him, as he told a close colleague, he "didn't see a winner in this whole lot." The job of his foreign policy aides was to keep the issues away from the President so he could concentrate on domestic issues. "Keep the President informed, aides were told, but don't take too much of his time."<sup>13</sup> This approach led to the debacle in Somalia, as seen in previous chapters, and explains the rudderless policy on Haiti during 1993 as well.<sup>14</sup>

David Halberstam writes: "The geopolitical consequences of what happened in Somalia were demonstrated almost immediately in Haiti. It was one of the places that the Clinton administration had been bedeviled from the start, and where like Bosnia, its rhetoric and been grander than its willingness to act."<sup>15</sup> Bush had pushed Haiti onto the backburner, and asked Powell about using force to topple the Cedras junta. Powell replied that the island could be taken in hours by only two companies of Marines, but the problem wasn't getting in, but getting out.

Powell reminded Bush that the last time the U.S. sent in Marines in 1915, they stayed for nineteen years. CIA and the Pentagon saw no problems emanating from Cedras being in power, and this return to Haiti's status quo seemed more stabilizing than Aristide's erratic reign. It was simply a return to a milder form of Duvalierism that had somewhat served U.S. interests throughout the Cold War. Bush, however, had taken his New World Order stance on promoting and protecting democracies, and supported the OAS' Santiago Resolution to restore democracy to Haiti and impose sanctions on the Cedras regime, but took no further actions.<sup>16</sup>

As Bush failed to do anything substantial toward restoring democracy to Haiti, Clinton, as a candidate, found Haiti a ready opportunity to attack Bush. Clinton called Bush's policy to return Haitian refugees cruel and unacceptable and promised he would reverse it, implying a clear commitment to a more humanitarian policy. On the night of Clinton's election, there was dancing in the streets of Port-au-Prince, and a boat-building frenzy ensued (about 700 new ones according to the Coast Guard.)<sup>17</sup> As he was preparing to take office, however, the CIA showed him photographic evidence that as many as 200,000 more boat people were preparing to return their surge toward the United States hoping to take advantage of Clinton's new naïve immigration policies. Amateur hour was over. Clinton immediately backed off his campaign pledged, as Halberstam wrote:

He was aware of the potential political consequences if too many (nonwhite) refugees arrived in the United States unwanted by local authorities, especially in an important swing state like Florida. As a governor of Arkansas, he had tried to do a favor for Jimmy Carter, back in 1979, and accepted large number of Cuban refugees at Fort Chaffee to reduce the overload in Florida. Carter, Clinton liked to claim, said it was a short term deal and refugees would be moved well before the 1980 election. They were not. The mood both inside the camp among the Cubans and outside among the Arkansans had turned ugly, and Clinton was not pleased. "He [Carter] screwed me," he said years later, convinced that it helped cause his defeat in 1980.<sup>18</sup>

Clinton reversed his moralistic refugee position immediately and adopted Bush's policy for returning refugees directly to Haiti and allowing them to apply for asylum from the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince. His rhetoric and strong convictions for human rights evaporated in the face of his own political ambitions, a reoccurring theme that played throughout Clinton's two terms.

Unfortunately, for Clinton, he could not escape the trap of his own rhetoric so easily. Although the Haiti issue had no strong domestic constituency, "the issue was more about race than foreign policy." The Black Congressional Congress was committed to Aristide's return and exerted considerable pressure on Clinton. He knew that the Caucus and its constituents were unlikely to abandon him for a Republican in the next election, so their leverage was limited. Clinton, however, had played the race and humanitarian cards along with the heavy rhetorical commitment to democracy during the campaign, and the Caucus was not about to let him ignore Haiti, and he needed their support for his domestic agenda. So upon entering office, he began pressing for changes in Haiti that would expedite Aristide's return.<sup>19</sup>

Supporters soured on Clinton's decision to return refugees, and zealous pro-immigration challengers to the legality of the return policy were rebuffed by a Supreme Court decision in early March, 1993.<sup>20</sup> Clinton told reporters he had to repatriate refugees in the short term to protect their safety and advance negotiations.<sup>21</sup> Christopher too was sent before cameras to defend Clinton's broken campaign promises, and could only explain that it was unsound policy to accept the hordes of refugees, an almost open admission of the callousness of Clinton's campaign statements attacking Bush for taking the right steps. Aristide criticized the reversal, but when he was convinced to endorse the policy based on the premise that it was beneficial to speed the negotiations to return him to Haiti, and he soon made a radio address to urge Haitians not to

flee the country. The Congressional Black Caucus was also furious with Clinton, but when Aristide accepted the repatriations, so did they. The most vocal critic in the Caucus, Rep. Charles Rangel (D-NY) lamented, "I'm not going to be more Haitian than Aristide."<sup>22</sup> Clinton slithered out from underneath the political pressure by promising to return Aristide to power and alleviate the need to intercept and turn back the refugees, an act he had only weeks before called "cruel and irresponsible."

If ending the refugee problem more permanently now meant restabilizing Haiti, then something had to be done about removing the junta now in power and finding a way to get Aristide returned to the presidency. Cedras and the junta, however, was certainly no threat to anyone outside of Haiti, and were even willing to keep a somewhat sporadic but open dialogue with the administration because of the existing limited embargo. Despite political violence in Haiti being conducted by the brutal FRAPH, Cedras and the junta weren't proving to pan out as dramatically assuming the roles of arch villains as was the recent case with Saddam Hussein. In fact, despite the continuous violence being meted out to the Aristide supporters, they were not doing much at all to attract widespread international attention, much less arouse widespread U.S. public interest since the coup and the recent disappearance of boat people from the daily news. Most of the human rights abuses taking place under the junta wouldn't gain much attention until a report by a UN delegation surfaced in June, 1993, almost two years after the coup. Frustratingly for the administration, despite the condemning rhetoric against the illegitimate government that had "interrupted democracy," Cedras and the junta also showed little belligerence toward the United States in negotiations and were willing to discuss constitutional alternatives: there was just no way would they allow Aristide to return especially after his inflammatory statements promising revenge and justice against the coup plotters. Although they

were willing to discuss stepping down and accepting a new President (given certain guarantees regarding their own personal positions), it was obviously impossible for them to accept the means for their own destruction through negotiation. With the U.S., UN, and OAS committed to returning Aristide as the only possible course of action, stalemate naturally set in.

With Cedras avoiding provoking the United States, and the OAS reliant on the UN to take action (the OAS has no enforcement function), the UN Security Council only meekly parroted the language of Santiago that democracy had been interrupted and had to be restored along with Aristide; nothing was seriously being done to change the status quo. The UN had supported the OAS embargo and sent monitors to observe it. The Security Council sent 200 human rights monitors to observe the situation in Haiti, accompanied later by another 133 sent by the OAS, which Cedras had already allowed previously in November. This mission was designated Mission Civile Internationale (MICIVIH) and was operational by the time Clinton took office. Other than observing and reporting upon the human rights violations and oppression of the Cedras regime, no steps were taken to deal with the junta other than to condemn its actions and request negotiations towards returning Aristide to power. The international effort acted in concert, but its response was tepid.

With the lack of international inertia or sense of urgency, it was left to the United States administration to take the lead on Haiti without any public support. As Halberstam writes, the administration was badly divided over what to do:

Tony Lake, with his special passion for the underdeveloped world, was an activist, more eager to end the junta's rule and reinstate Aristide than most others. The Pentagon remained more dubious. Driving Cedras out of power would be easy, but none of the senior military men, especially since they lacked confidence that the administration would give them a clear mandate, wanted to undertake a peacekeeping role in a country where the indigenous forces had so violent a history, and where, once they ended the junta, there was so little hope for any true democratic improvement. Among the doubters was Les Aspin. In addition, the CIA was openly opposed to Aristide. Its reporting

systematically portrayed him as both unstable and violent, little better than those he would replace.<sup>23</sup>

The State Department did not appear to have strong views about Haiti, but Lake was enamored with Aristide and Clinton also quickly grew to like Aristide in his many meetings with him. Clinton dismissed continuous reports of Aristide's erratic, abrasive, and egotistic behavior, telling George Stephanopoulos, "A lot of normal people are assholes," and in a long diatribe, even strangely compared the eccentric priest's moodiness to Lincoln's profound melancholia.<sup>24</sup> Clinton, it seemed, had hitched his wagon early on to Aristide and believed his restoration to power was the only acceptable solution to Haiti's problems.

In early 1993, the United States continued to push for Aristide's return, much of it done through the UN<sup>25</sup> and subsequently through the OAS. The administration maintained the Bush approach in that, "in the Western Hemisphere, coups are not an acceptable way of resolving political differences."<sup>26</sup> In a special session of the OAS Permanent Council in late January, the United States affirmed that Haiti was considered a *major* American humanitarian and economic interest and the "interruption of democracy" was intolerable. Returning Aristide was the only manner of approach considered and much importance was placed on the importance of reinstalling Aristide in manner compatible with the constitution, which supposedly would create a durable and stable situation. This logically made little sense, given the fact that it was the volatility of Haiti's culture that dictated the impotence of constitutions and the recent situation demonstrated that Aristide was hardly a stabilizing factor. Removing the junta and putting the unstable Aristide back into power would not create long term stability; but long term solutions were not the issue and references to Haiti's future after restoring Aristide were steeped in meaningless platitudes. The administration was more interested in *making the Haitian issue go away* than fixing the troubled nation's long term outlook; another quick fix solution was sought

that avoided a prolonged stay as in 1915 by handing democracy quickly off to the Haitians. As was the catch phrase in often repeated regarding Somalia, the Americans offered the caveat that restoring constitutional democracy was “ultimately a Haitian decision to make.” This was a foreboding sign about the nature of the administration’s nation-building policies that ignored cultural realities and started complex processes that the targeted populations were left to figure out once the intervening parties had quickly removed themselves from the equation.

Clinton meanwhile in an Oval Office press conference, continued to sell Aristide as not only the victim of an unnatural usurpation of constitutional power (which was totally contrary to Haiti’s history which had almost no respect for constitutions and had very few peaceful transitions of power) but as a great shining beacon of hope for democracy and prosperity for Haiti. Clinton, under pressure from the Congressional Black Caucus to speed up action, took the opportunity to promise more support for Aristide claiming that any delay by the junta would only result in greater actions being taken by the United States. He also said he was prepared to commit \$1 billion of aid to help rebuild the Haitian economy.<sup>27</sup>

A quick solution, however, was not in the cards. Despite appointing Lawrence Pezzullo as a special envoy to Haiti to work with UN/OAS envoy Dante Caputo, the situation remained at an impasse. The junta simply took superficial and cosmetic measures in reaction to American demands. The de facto regime held Senate elections and placed a new figurehead president, Emile Jonaissant in power, but the elections were rejected as invalid by the UN and OAS. The administration then increased pressure on Haiti through the UN by promoting a wider international embargo and freezing Haiti’s assets. The Clinton rationale was that this pressure on the military leaders would eventually lead to a return to democracy, thereby ending the refugee



problem. The U.S. Navy patrolling the waters around Haiti would now not only intercept refugees, but enforce the embargo as well.<sup>28</sup>

In February 1993, the junta responded to the coercive measures by denying access to the UN monitors being sent to Haiti. Cedras said that they would only be allowed into Haiti if certain conditions were met, including international recognition of the de facto government and lifting the embargo. When UN negotiator Dante Caputo arrived in Haiti to work out an arrangement, he was met with demonstrations and insults. A frustrated Caputo left Haiti under escort to protect him from possible mob violence.<sup>29</sup> Clinton renewed his intention to reinstall Aristide to power. International pressure soon succeeded in getting Cedras to allow the monitors to enter Haiti, and he agreed to resign if given amnesty for himself, his staff, and his family. Aristide agreed to these conditions. When Caputo returned to Haiti in April, however, he met more resistance from the junta. Cedras and the junta did not trust Aristide, and they did not believe the UN or the United States would follow up on threats to impose more economic sanctions.<sup>30</sup> The junta knew that the domestic pressure on Clinton had slackened considerably once the refugee flow had been stemmed by the repatriation policy, and believed eventually the Americans would back off. Cedras, in effect, was playing a game of chicken, attempting to deflect increased economic sanctions by agreeing to vacate power. When pressured to leave, however, he would renege on any agreement he had made. Following a request by Aristide, the frustrated Security Council passed Resolution 841 on June 16 imposing a fuel and arms embargo and freezing Haiti's assets and those of the de facto regime.<sup>31</sup> This action seemed to have the desired effect, and on June 27<sup>th</sup>, Cedras and Aristide met separately with mediators at Governor's Island, New York to forge a workable agreement to return Aristide to power. On July 3, 1993, an agreement was reached. The coup plotters would receive amnesty, Cedras would retire, and the sanctions and UN

Resolution 841 would be lifted. A new pro-Aristide prime minister would be appointed, and Aristide would return to Haiti on October 30, 1993. The accord also allowed UN personnel to enter Haiti prior to Aristide's return to train the police and army and repair Haiti's shattered infrastructure.<sup>32</sup>

At this moment, the prospects for returning democracy to Haiti looked promising. Clinton released a statement claiming the Governor's Island Accord was "a historic moment for the Haitian people" and pledged \$37.5 million in redevelopment programs.<sup>33</sup> In the spirit of multiculturalism, he later described the United States as just one of a group of Caribbean nations who shared a collective ambition to "take strong stands in the collective defense of democracy."<sup>34</sup> Warren Christopher likewise hailed the accord as "a victory not only for the Haitian people but the international community as well" perhaps because it demonstrated that nothing other than democracy was going to be an acceptable form of government in the new world order.<sup>35</sup> The administration was puffed up with pride in its Wilsonian designs to impose democracy throughout Latin America, highly reminiscent of Wilson's proclamations in the early part of the century, but with an even higher emphasis on collectivist security rather than U.S. unilateralism. Nation-building, enlargement, and assertive multilateralism it seemed, were back in full swing.

The administration, however, started crowing a bit too soon. Not all was as it seemed, and the chest-thumping about returning Haiti to its supposedly rightful status as a democracy would have to wait. Soon after the Governor's Island Accord was signed, Haiti underwent its worst period of violence since the 1991 coup. Hundreds of Haitians were killed or disappeared, while pro-Aristide supporters were beaten, intimidated, or arrested, often right in front of UN observers. Numerous corpses showed up on the steps of hotels where UN observers were

staying, and gunfire was a daily occurrence.<sup>36</sup> As part of the accord, a newly appointed Prime Minister and Aristide supporter, Robert Malval, showed up in Haiti but was denied any instruments of power.<sup>37</sup> Instead of preparing his departure from office, Cedras was eliminating potential rivals and Aristide's most vocal supporters.<sup>38</sup> In September, an Aristide financial advisor was murdered, and after that, his would-be Minister of Justice was assassinated. The two shootings were like warnings; if Aristide returns, they seemed to proclaim, he'll be number three.<sup>39</sup>

In late September, a group of about two hundred American soldiers and twenty-five Canadian engineers were assembled to go to Haiti to work on nation-building projects under MICIVIH. Like in Somalia, the administration was anxious to jump into UN nation-building projects and was quick to dispense the military to carry them out. The Pentagon was apprehensive, especially Aspin, who felt the situation was too volatile to send them. Believing Cedras was unpredictable, he feared that the junta might turn on the Americans, and he delayed their departure. Lake, Albright, and others argued that the American soldiers would add necessary muscle to the international mission, which was essential a U.S.-Canadian venture anyway. Clinton ignored the critical issue and allowed his subordinates once again to handle messy details-- even ones that could cause major policy disruptions. Over Aspin's objections, the troops were sent anyway to conduct nation-building operations, despite the fact that Cedras hadn't kept his word about much of what he had agreed to at Governor's Island. If the lightly-armed troops ran into trouble, there was no back-up plan to help them.<sup>40</sup> It was another case of emotionally charging into the hornet's nest and ignoring the realities of the situation because opportunities for nation-building were so badly overvalued by the assertive multilateralists. Although the impetus to rush in was cherished, this did not correlate to the logical assumption

being made that the administration would spend serious time planning out the details of such idealistic ambitions. The ineptitude that the administration showed in Somalia was repeating itself in Haiti.

The administration was determined to send U.S. forces into Haiti as part of the newly designated UN Mission to Haiti (UNMIH). “In August, U.S. Army Command, at the direction of the Joint Staff, created the Joint Task Force Haiti Assistance Group (JTFHAG) and named Colonel J.G. Pulley, the commander of the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group, as the commander. JTFHAG was an ad hoc organization whose personnel ranged from various subject matter experts to officers that knew nothing about the country and its problems. Many assigned to JTFHAG had little idea what they were expected to do”.<sup>41</sup> Many of its officers were quickly plucked from the current assignments and hastily sent to Norfolk, Virginia. There, they were told they were going to Haiti to professionalize and reform the armed forces of Haiti (FADH) and train the Haitian Army staff. As the staff tried to figure out what “professionalize” meant, they received word that the Haitian military did not want to be retrained, they just wanted new weapons and pragmatic training how to use them.

News arrived about the growing violence and assassinations in Haiti and on September 23rd the UN authorized sending 1,267 police and military into Haiti in accordance with the Governor’s Island agreement. Without bothering to inform Aspin, JTFHAG was designated to serve as the spearhead and cornerstone of this mission and two U.S. Navy ships were assigned to transport the ad hoc force.<sup>42</sup> The *USS Harlan County* under Commander Marvin Butcher would depart with JTFHAG’s staff and a platoon of Marines and 225 UN observers (mostly Canadians) would follow later carried by the *USS Fairfax County*. Clinton ordered the Joint Chiefs to have the ships depart for Haiti as soon as possible. The departure was disorganized, passengers

trickled on board throughout the night before the scheduled departure day, and incredibly no one was assigned command of the landing element. None of the administrative work such as passenger lists and manifests had been completed to give to the Navy, and the *ad hoc* Army officer in charge, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Baker scrambled to figure out who and what he was taking to Haiti. The chain of command was also disjointed. The Navy ship commanders were not subordinated to JTFHAG and only answered to the Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic Fleet (CINCATLFLT). Colonel Greg Pulley was flying to Port-au-Prince, and was not aboard either vessel. LTC Baker would assume command of the force once they were ashore, but had no command authority over the naval vessels carrying them.<sup>43</sup>

The *Harlan County* headed south and picked up American and Canadian engineers in Puerto Rico, but its departure from there was delayed by news of more violence in Haiti. The UN Security Council resolution had not called for a forced entry into the country, and U.S. military personnel continued to view the situation in Haiti as a permissive one despite the foreboding news of continuous and increasing bloodshed. The idea was that the Americans would be conducting highly visible humanitarian missions that would highlight the benefit of more continuous aid upon Aristide's return and this would soften Haitian apprehension of foreign intervention, but if the situation in Port-au-Prince proved resistant to an American presence, none of that would mean much to those confused peacekeepers aboard the *Harlan County*.<sup>44</sup>

On October 3, news of the battle of Mogadishu reached the *Harlan County* and the prospects of conducting peacekeeping looked even more uninviting. DOD planners sensed that the small, lightly armed force scheduled to go into Haiti would be incapable of preventing violence and the whole concept of the mission was a prescription for another disaster.<sup>45</sup> The junta, meanwhile, followed the news coverage and rationalized that the U.S. was weak and irresolute. If the

Americans could be persuaded that Haiti could be another Somalia, then Clinton would back down.<sup>46</sup> Consequently, Cedras started planning a demonstration that would intimidate JTFHAG and discredit the UN mission.<sup>47</sup>

After sewing UN patches on their uniforms and donning the symbolic blue helmets of peacekeepers, JTFHAG arrived on October 11, 1993 in Port-au-Prince harbor, despite the fact that violence was a daily occurrence in the capital and Cedras had given no indication he would keep his word about allowing UNMIH into the country. Halberstam observed that, “The policy, was as one administrator said, another based on hope and not much more.”<sup>48</sup> There would be no military force on hand to help if JTFHAG ran into trouble.

Trouble, however, was immediately discovered the minute the *Harlan County* arrived. The harbor was checkered with hundreds of little boats attempting to slow the ship’s arrival, as Haitian police using trucks offloaded hundreds of demonstrators on the docks. The *Harlan County*’s scheduled berth was occupied by a derelict Cuban tanker and there was no place to dock. The small boats menacingly circled the *Harlan County* until the crew manned the .50 caliber machine guns and the Haitians backed off. Gunfire was heard nearby, but the Americans were not under fire. More Haitians arrived by bus to join the protest, which mostly included yelling anti-American slogans, drinking liquor, and firing their guns into the air. The U.S. charge d’affaires in Haiti, Nikki Huddleston, had observed the scene from the balcony of the U.S. embassy and against Baker’s advice via radio, went to the scene with COL Pulley and others. About the time of their arrival the FRAPH<sup>49</sup> militiamen had dumped two corpses on the dock and invoked the crowd to yell repeatedly, “Remember Somalia!!” Huddleston’s armored sedan was recognized upon her arrival and the crowds hit the vehicle with ax handles until the driver beat a hasty retreat, an image that was caught on film by CNN cameras. Pulley, however, believed the

crowd was disorganized, and a landing was still possible. He thought a show of force by the U.S. Marines onboard would scare off the drunken mob, but they had already donned their UN patches and blue helmets and had their vehicles painted completely white with the symbolic large UN markings. They could no longer act as U.S. soldiers, they now represented the UN, and violence was the last thing the UN wanted. As blue-helmeted peacekeepers, they were helpless to take offensive action.<sup>50</sup>

As the day passed, the Haitian boats defiantly flying the Tonton Macoute flags of the Duvalier era and unruly crowd on the docks kept their distance. As night fell, the Haitians brought cars along the dock to shine on the *Harlan County* and try to intimidate the crew. The Americans using night-vision devices detected that the Haitians had brought up and attempted to conceal armored vehicles equipped with 90mm guns. Commander Butcher knew the guns could do serious damage to his ship, which was already restrained in its ability to maneuver in the crowded harbor, and wondered if the situation was really permissive at all. Butcher and Pulley debated either beaching the ship or offloading men and equipment by small boats once a Navy SEAL team was landed, but no consensus was reached. Likewise, sending a landing party to negotiate or scout the docks area was out of the question without deploying a SEAL team, and that too could spin events out of control. They decided to await further developments. The next morning, two Haitian gunboats arrived in the harbor, and Butcher ordered his sniper teams and machine gunners to open fire if the Haitians dared touch their triggers, but the Haitians refused to come close when the ship's machine guns were manned. Butcher correctly assumed the Haitians were monitoring his unsecured radio communications with the U.S. embassy, so he reported to them he would destroy any vessels that came within 1,000 yards of the ship. The ploy worked, the Haitians kept a respectable distance.<sup>51</sup>

Butcher assessed the situation and determined his position was untenable. Haitian gunboats posed a continuous threat, the docks were crowded with armed protesters, the port contained deadly armored vehicles, and the berth was blocked leaving nowhere to dock. Staying invited violence and guaranteed no positive change in the situation, and most importantly, the environment was clearly not permissive as the mission was supposedly designed. Commander Butcher concluded the situation was untenable and without permission weighed anchor and notified the Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic Fleet (CINCATLFLT). Thirty-five minutes later, CINCATLFLT radioed to support Butcher's call.

The Haitians and especially the FRAPH stared in amazement as the *Harlan County* left Port-au-Prince and steamed for Guantanamo Bay. Later, the U.S. government announced it had ordered the ship out of Haiti because it could not guarantee the safety of the vessel and its personnel. Despite that rationale, many saw the *Harlan County*'s departure as a blow to U.S. credibility and prestige.<sup>52</sup>

It was a humiliating situation, and an effective end of the Governor's Island agreement. The American retreat emboldened the junta to dig in, and further bluster by the United States would be pointless. Clinton still insisted that he was "dead serious" about enforcing the agreement, but another ship bound for Haiti was cancelled.<sup>53</sup> Governor's Island was dead in the water; Cedras had played the administration for chumps and made them look foolish and impotent. Following on the heels of the disaster in Mogadishu, it was perhaps the lowest point for Clinton's foreign policy. The administration itself was badly divided. The hawks like Lake and Albright wanted to force a landing of troops to jumpstart UNMIH, but the doves, particularly Aspin and the Joint Chiefs, wanted to forestall another situation like Somalia. No one, however, wanted a full-scale invasion that would place troops in another hopeless political environment. As the heat was turning up over the Somalia debacle, no one wanted to take any casualties in Haiti.<sup>54</sup>



Because taking real risks in restoring democracy were not acceptable to Clinton, the return of Aristide would have to wait. Vice President Al Gore was tasked with telling Aristide that the U.S. intended to keep its promise to return him to power, but it would take more time and planning. Gore was shocked to find that instead of being furious or depressed, “Aristide was ecstatic” and kept his faith in Clinton. Clinton was not surprised that Aristide wasn’t criticizing him after the incident. “What would *you* rather do,” Clinton asked Gore. “Go back to Haiti or sip champagne in Harry Belafonte’s apartment?”<sup>55</sup> Clinton, however, was not as pleased as Aristide, and went on another tirade blaming others for his own mistakes much as he did after the Mogadishu battle, as described by Halberstam:

Clinton was furious and blamed his NSC staff for putting him in a lose-lose situation. No small part of the problem, he decided once the incident was over, was the lack of positive spin his White House was putting on events, and he suggested to his NSC people that David Gergen, the former Nixon, Reagan, and Bush aide who had recently joined his team, be included in on their decision-making. The Reagan people, Clinton yelled at Lake during a particularly violent tirade, were much better at the politics of foreign policy than his team. When Reagan’s people lost Marines in Lebanon, Clinton said, they had almost immediately invaded Grenada and that had kept their popularity up. A few minutes after the tirade, Lake sat down in his office with Sandy Berger and George Stephanopoulos and went over the presidential tongue lashing he had received. “I couldn’t believe what I was hearing”, Stephanopoulos wrote later of their meeting. “Grenada? That’s’ how we should handle things? Like Reagan? The answer to losing 250 Marines in a terrorist attack is to stage the invasion of another country? If you really believe that, *then why did you turn the ship around?*”<sup>56</sup>

Despite Clinton attempting to shift blame from himself he couldn’t absolve his own reckless decisions. “Rarely had the United States looked so impotent, it’s mighty military driven away from a banana republic by a pip-squeak dictator and a hired mob”.<sup>57</sup> America looked weak, and Clinton looked even weaker after Somalia and *Harlan County*. The policy appearing naive and directionless was bad enough, but the decision to turn the boat around made him look spineless. He later admitted during a visit to Russia that he “wimped out” during the *Harlan County* fiasco and vowed never to look that bad again.<sup>58</sup>

As often was the case, however, Clinton couldn't count on even himself when it came to his penchant for flip-flopping on important positions and "wimping out" happened again with far more serious consequences. A few months later he avoided entanglement in the massive genocide taking place in Rwanda, and Clinton rejected every option that included sending in military force. Clinton wanted nothing to do with another foreign policy crisis that entailed high risks and few political rewards. In yet another twist of the political theater that was foreign policy under Clinton, "even the word *genocide* was to be muted in all public discussions" so that Clinton could not be held accountable for refusing to stop the slaughter every week. Clinton supported giving logistical aid to the UN efforts to stop the rampage of murder in Rwanda, but let the Europeans do the heavy lifting of intervening and conducting peacemaking there. Clinton's desire to inject humanitarianism as the cornerstone of U.S. policy was trumped by his fears of casualties and political failure, and even his vow never to appear weak in foreign policy was overwhelmed by his desire to play it politically safe.

After the *Harlan County* humiliation, Clinton sought to play it safe until the political heat died down. Rather than confront the military regime directly, Clinton first sought to insulate himself from the debacle and put a heavy spin on the permissive entry nature of the mission and deflect accurate criticisms that placed the *Harlan County* incident as another misguided peacekeeping adventure that was ineptly handled on the fly. First, he insisted that the junta continue to accept a permissive entry and announced that the regime had failed to live up to the Governor's Island Accords.<sup>59</sup> Clearly, this admission seemed a mere formality to put the junta on notice and to justify the retreat of the *Harlan County*. The next day, Clinton restated that the U.S. intended to reinstall Aristide, but strangely claimed that "we have no intention now, of interfering in the internal affairs of Haitian except to say that we want democracy and the will of

two-thirds of the Haitian people to be honored.” He sold the Governor’s Island agreement as an “invitation” of UN troops and justified the JTFHAG mission, describing the incursion as no more than an international civic works project using hundreds of U.S. military personnel to “simply serve as trainers” to rebuild Haiti. Most shockingly, Clinton announced that the UN incursion was not aggressive (meaning, like Somalia). “This is not peacekeeping. This is not peacemaking,” Clinton stated, and that he would not send military personnel into Haiti without a permissive agreement in place. Since they no longer had such an agreement, Clinton therefore announced his intention to ask the UN to reimpose sanctions until the conditions of the Governor’s Island Accords were fulfilled by the junta.<sup>60</sup> This was an obvious attempt to disassociate the administration’s plans for enlargement and Wilsonianism from the heavy fire the administration’s dedication to peacekeeping policy was receiving from the fallout over Somalia. By labeling Haiti as a permissive environment and not an attempt at peacemaking, it would be less connected to the failures and useless deaths in Somalia. Of course, this position was only meant to buy the administration time, as it was scrambling over what to do next since a permissive environment was clearly becoming unlikely after the humiliation of the *Harlan County* incident.

As promised, Clinton turned to the UN Security Council which voted to reimpose sanctions and tighten the blockade. No one on the Council, however, insisted the United States dispatch forces to reinstall Aristide. Albright, speaking at the UN, insisted that, “this has never been, nor should it be, some kind of gunboat diplomacy,” a disingenuous statement if there ever was one; it was a classic definition of gunboat diplomacy.<sup>61</sup> Soon after, however, Haiti became less important to the administration as it dealt with the anger in Congress over Somalia and the

ongoing mess in Bosnia. Haiti was no longer on the A-list of crises, a White House aide callously remarked at the end of November.<sup>62</sup>

Nevertheless, Haiti was severe setback for the administration. An ABC-*Washington Post* poll showed that 45% disapproved of Clinton's handling of Haiti with only 36% stating their approval.<sup>63</sup> Even Clinton's liberal allies fumed in the press that our troops had become "Girl Scouts" in the new world order and that CNN recorded every incident of Americans turning tail.<sup>64</sup> Everyone wanted Haiti to go away it seemed. The moralists in the administration, however, were not going to let the issue dissipate. They were offended that American policy to defend democracy and promoting human rights had gone nowhere in Haiti, and feared recent events would set a precedent with Clinton's decision-making in foreign policy. The Haiti hawks, led by Tony Lake, continued to pressure Clinton to keep Haiti on the front burner:

Clinton's zigzag policy came to be dominated by a group of moralists who form a liberal web knotted together during the administration of Jimmy Carter. They all speak the same language, the Carteresque "human rights first" policy. All hated the Central American policy of the 1980s. And they have no real feel for politics... And because Clinton eventually got the Pentagon he wanted—led by technocrats with no powerful say in policy—nobody was there to counterbalance the Haiti hawks.<sup>65</sup>

On the other hand, the Congressional Republicans wanted nothing to do with taking risks to get Aristide back in power and attempted several unsuccessful amendments to impede more peacekeeping forays like in the disaster in Somalia. Senator Bob Dole said putting Aristide back in Haiti wasn't worth one American life, and others condemned Aristide for being "a philosophical ally of Fidel Castro." Jesse Helms called the eccentric priest a "psychopath," which wasn't far stretch from the CIA's assessment of Aristide's mental stability.<sup>66</sup> Taking risks for Aristide, the conservative critics poignantly pointed out, made no sense. Aristide was an unstable leftist who berated the United States and failed to keep order in Haiti; he was nothing but a thorn in the side of U.S. - Latin American relations.<sup>67</sup> Forcing him back into the presidency

was no guarantee of stability; it might cause even more unrest. Going into Haiti guaranteed a violent backlash. It made no sense to risk American lives when no national interests were at stake. After the *Harlan County* incident, they believed, these realities should have been abundantly clear to the president.

Unfortunately for these realists, however, Clinton only stepped back from his democratic crusade in Haiti, but he did not abandon it. Credit for keeping Clinton engaged in Haiti must be given to the Haiti hawks, but this influence on Clinton does not entirely explain his decision to insist on returning Aristide to power. Fueling Clinton's passion for assertive multilateralism and nation-building (that paralleled that of the Haiti hawks) was Clinton's personal strong affinity for Haitians whom he admired because they "seemed not only to survive, but to enjoy life." Clinton had a personal attachment to Haitians, as he had visited Port-au-Prince in 1975 during the Baby Doc years and felt a natural connection towards them. Clinton was especially impressed with Haiti's folk life and a vibrant culture that simultaneously embraced Catholicism and voodoo--even after witnessing a voodoo priestess bite the head off a live chicken and the group surrounding her fell to the ground in convulsive fits which supposedly successfully released the evil spirits within them. Clinton strangely described the practice of voodoo as nothing more than "(proving) that God works in mysterious ways,"<sup>68</sup> and was smitten by all things Haitian. Clinton felt a moral obligation to help the Haitians, and as long as it didn't involve taking any serious political risks for himself, he adopted the hawks' crusader mentality to "rescue" the delightfully eccentric Haitians from poverty and oppression.

More than simply having an affinity for the Haitian people and their culture, Clinton was also enamored with its exiled President. He had a fondness of Aristide which perhaps clouded his judgment. He stubbornly ignored CIA reports about Aristide, dismissed Aristide's early

transgressions that mucked up diplomacy with the junta, and excused Aristide's not-so-saintly behavior during both his two terms of office before the 1990 coup and after he returned to power in 1994. Clinton was enraptured with his charm and reveled in their shared populist ideologies and love of music (both played the saxophone). Clinton and Aristide also shared their personal experiences of fatherlessness, and both saw each other as an outstanding intellectual as well as a popular champion of the poor and oppressed. Clinton shared the popular refrain of the liberal media that Aristide was some kind of heroic Robin Hood figure. He was frequently painted as a compassionate natural leader gifted with the ability to speak several languages and compose music on several instruments, but who instead of using his unlimited talents for personal ambitions, selflessly suffered for the cause of the downtrodden masses.<sup>69</sup> Many aides over the years described Clinton as personalizing Haiti policy, and this can in part be attributed to Clinton's strong personal attachment to Aristide as friend, and perhaps because Clinton identified so much of himself with Aristide's highly intellectual but charming persona.

Even more important to Clinton than his personal bond with Aristide or his philosophical agreement with the hawks that Haiti had to be saved, was the president's domestic agenda. Haiti became a political motivation for Clinton, as "he has told friends that a happy ending there will restore him to the good graces of the Black Caucus, whose members were outraged by the cashiering of Lani Guinier, his doomed choice to head the civil rights division at the Justice Department."<sup>70</sup> Clinton needed the support of the Black Caucus for his domestic agenda, and they in turn wanted real action in Haiti. The Congressional Black Caucus made Haiti a racial issue as much as a foreign policy issue, especially after the black Haitian refugees were refused entry into Florida. Representing constituents who were historically distrustful of foreign adventures that sent many blacks in uniform to be sacrificed in heroic causes that effected no

changes in the racial status quo, the Caucus wanted U.S. foreign policy under Clinton to evolve from its historic course that virtually ignored the plight of black populations. Involvement in Haiti would promote this agenda as Haiti was an all-black impoverished nation that the Caucus emotionally identified with, and the liberals in the Democratic Party were already on board with funding UN nation-building there once the junta was removed. Caucus members saw Haiti as an oppressed black population languishing in a nation only 800 miles away-- a perfect opportunity for inducing change under the administration's espoused strategy of enlargement and supposed subjugation of foreign policy to humanitarian principles. This desire to affect positive change in Haiti became especially stronger since the prospects of doing the same for any number of poor African nations withered after disgusted Americans witnessed desperate U.S. soldiers taking on hordes of angry black militants in street battles in Mogadishu on CNN. African nation-building may have been derailed by these images, but the members of the Caucus wanted to ensure Clinton wouldn't put Haiti on the backburner.

Consequently, they too championed the exiled Aristide, a real man of the poor and oppressed black masses. Restoring him to power would serve as the centerpiece of their agenda to aid black nations, and they pressured the administration to squash any initiatives to make Aristide a mere figurehead in any deal to form a new government. Likewise, they continuously harped on the growing reports of human rights abuses flowing from Aristide's supporters in Haiti to undermine cutting a deal with Cedras that would keep Aristide from regaining complete presidential power. The Caucus also refused to blame their champion Aristide for inciting his followers to engage in several acts of violent behavior which, of course, led to a reaction by the junta causing the upsurge in already growing violence since the Governor's Island accord was signed. Like the Haiti hawks within the administration, the Caucus considered Aristide as a saint

and a cure for all of Haiti's ills—no other solution other than his full restoration to power was acceptable. It was the pressure of the Congressional Black Caucus that was a major factor in the administration's refusal to consider a negotiated settlement of Aristide's replacement or even to hear conflicting advice.<sup>71</sup> After reneging on his promise to change Bush's policy on boat refugees and floundering on the Lani Guinier appointment, Clinton was too afraid to irk the Black Caucus any further and therefore was stuck to his repetitive promises to restore Aristide since restoring him was the only acceptable solution to them. Needing the Caucus to support his domestic agenda, and having been already blindly enamored with Aristide as some kind of savior for democracy himself, Clinton was committed to putting him back in power. Clinton therefore flushed any possible policy options by November 1993 on and found himself trapped in Haiti.<sup>72</sup>

Clinton's myopic and fumbling approach to the Haitian issue was not lost on the Republicans who were eager to poke holes in Clinton's foreign policy strategies. Members from the previous Bush administration had kept any criticism of Clinton's foreign policy to themselves for months, but after the fiasco in Somalia and the *Harlan County* embarrassment, that quickly changed. Clinton was publicly chastised for naively ignoring foreign policy developments and delegating important decisions to subordinates. Bush himself spoke out against Clinton's lack of mission focus saying: "If you're going to put somebody else's son or daughter into harm's way, you've got to know the answer to three questions: 'Do American leaders know what the mission is, how are they going to do it, and how are they going to get out of there'... what happened is that they didn't adhere to that very rigorous definition of what the mission is."<sup>73</sup> Bush criticized the administration for forgetting the mission in Somalia and launching nation-building, while former Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney blasted the Clinton team for being "lacking in intellectual rigor and tight command and control." Republicans in



Congress supported Bush's comments, saying that Bush was not unduly trying to subvert the new president, because if they really wanted to see Clinton's administration fail in foreign policy, "all they would have to do is stand back and leave it alone, because it was doing a fine job of that on its own."<sup>74</sup> Incensed Clinton aides shot back to reporters that it was Bush's administration that left them the messes in Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti, and pointed out that no exit strategies existed under Bush for these situations either. Stephanopoulos fumed before the cameras that Bush had no policy in Haiti except to repatriate refugees, and then postured that unlike their predecessors, the current administration's foreign engagement at least avoided isolationism. Former Secretary of State James Baker's public reply at speaking engagement in Washington the next day, however, trumped Stephanopoulos' snide retorts and stung the administration on a level echoing what the public generally felt deeply at the time:

While last weeks' disaster in Mogadishu was a tragedy, Monday night's Haitian fiasco was an embarrassment. A few thugs on the docks of Port-au-Prince forced the only remaining superpower to turn tail, and for the second time to reverse course in its policy toward Haiti. This embarrassment has dealt a blow to American credibility, one of our last precious assets."<sup>75</sup>

The administration not only looked incompetent, it looked like it was unable to take responsibility for its decisions or even handle the political heat. Unlike his indignant, inexperienced staff who ranted at the press that the Bush team "didn't *praise* them for not cutting and running," Clinton coolly responded that Bush had dealt him a losing hand in Somalia, because it was impossible simply to "give people food and turn around and leave and expect everything to be hunky-dory."<sup>76</sup> Clinton played down the criticisms as "just politics", but he knew that Bush and his former foreign policy team had hit several raw nerves and the timing of the humiliation in Port-au-Prince harbor was politically devastating after the Mogadishu disaster. Worse, the administration looked lost and rattled. Since Somalia was proving utterly

unsalvageable, something had to be done to change the situation in Haiti if Clinton was going to be able to keep his support base in line and fend off his Republican critics that his team couldn't handle foreign policy.

After the *Harlan County* embarrassment, Clinton needed to fix Haiti fast because it was undermining his image of credibility in the conduct of foreign policy. Wasting little time to get Haiti policy back on track, on October 20, 1993 Clinton directed the U.S. Navy to re-establish the embargo which most importantly targeted fuel shipments. This operation was organized as Joint Task Force (JTF) 190 utilizing nine ships operating within thirteen maritime "boxes", stopping ships bound for Haiti and searching them for contraband. Ships carrying forbidden items were redirected to ports outside Haiti.<sup>77</sup> The UN simultaneously adopted Resolution 875 enacting a Chapter VI and Chapter VII mandate over Haiti to enforce the previous Resolutions 841 and 873 to restore democracy to Haiti. Clinton declared that the direction of U.S. armed forces to Haiti "was consistent with United States interests and constitute crucial support for the world community's strategy" to fulfill the Governor's Island accords and remove the junta from power. He dubbed the deployment "Operation Restore Democracy."<sup>78</sup> Soon after, Warren Christopher outlined U.S. foreign policy goals, reiterating the Wilsonian strategies of engagement and enlargement in creating a new world order. Restoring Aristide to Haiti was included as a goal, but Christopher outlined no specifics as to how this was to be done other than continuing pressure on the junta to abide by the Governor's Island agreement.<sup>79</sup>

The junta, however, showed no signs of adopting Governor's Island. Negotiation efforts from Venezuela, France, Canada and other sources were rebuffed. By the end of 1993, Clinton's Haitian policy was going nowhere fast and was becoming a growing political liability. Attempting to win the NAFTA ratification vote, Haiti was giving a black eye that the strategic

goals and avalanche of rhetoric concerning of “establishing and maintaining free markets” with “economies governed by democratic principles” in Latin America. The administration was still billing Haiti as a “serious” national security concern, but was emphasizing the potential negative impact of refugee flows (which had already been stemmed by reconstituting the Bush policies of returning refugees). Despite the fictional baiting about a refugee exodus and the junta’s refusal to abide by the Governor’s Island Accords, the administration still pronounced that negotiation and dialogue with the Cedras regime was the best method of returning Aristide to power.<sup>80</sup>

The real rationale behind the blockade, and later with the invasion of Haiti, was the hubris of the Chapter VII collective security ideology bloc within the administration and the UN coupled with the flawed conclusions of a Wilsonian-based world view. Clinton himself best summarizes this mindset, as he stated in an October 15<sup>th</sup> announcement: “The military authorities in Haiti simply must understand that they cannot defy the desires of their own people as well as the will of the world community.”<sup>81</sup> The concept of traditional authoritarian rule in Haiti seemed so strangely alien to the Wilsonians who never able to fathom that this *was* the traditional culture of Haiti and that democracy provided no real benefits to U.S. interests outside of stroking the post-Cold War egos of those that believed the planet was progressively moving toward democracy as the only acceptable form of government. Worse yet, they firmly believed that the world’s governments were highly motivated to snuff out even the most insignificant non-democratic regimes, even ones that had not proven a threat to anyone else. The Wilsonians in the Clinton administration couldn’t fathom how the power blocs that made up the Haitian regime couldn’t perceive how “abnormal” their behavior was in this idealistic new world order, and continued to convince themselves that Wilsonian rhetoric and collective action would convince the junta to simply step aside and allow themselves to be replaced by their old enemy Aristide. The junta, on

the other hand, took a more realistic perspective. After the *Harlan County* incident and the weak international response to the junta's rebuff of the Governor's Island accords, there was no reason to think that any of the high-sounding rhetoric and indignation of the Wilsonians had any real force behind it.

For many months, the junta seemed to be proven correct. After the blockade was initiated in October 1993 through the early part of 1994, there was nothing in Clinton's policies towards Haiti but Wilsonian rhetoric. Numerous reports surfaced that the blockade was not effecting the ruling class and military as many suspected might happen, but was instead only hurting the poor—the very targets of salvation the interventionists were pinning their “moral obligations” to restore democracy in Haiti upon. Still the administration kept harping on its ideological fallacies towards Latin America, to the point where officials were unwittingly pointing out the apparent contradictions in their strategies and the lack of public support in promoting their collectivist ideologies. Warren Christopher noted that, “Democracy and human rights are cardinal principles of the Americas. Unfortunately, Haiti and Cuba are outside of the orbit of democracy.”<sup>82</sup> While the administration strained to sell its urgent agenda to reinstall democracy in Haiti, nothing, however, was being done about Cuba's long-running communist government, even after its benefactor, the Soviet Union, had long since collapsed. The contradictions were clear: why was strategically insignificant Haiti so important, while Cuba was institutionally tolerated by the democracy-hawking U.S. and the assertive multilateralist UN? Was it because Haiti was an easy target to reinstall democracy while Cuba was somehow off-limits? Not that it mattered; no public consensus existed for pursuing a crusade for democracy in Latin America existed outside liberal circles either, but the administration extrapolated its self-reinforcing domestic agendas on

a global scale to somehow have a silent public complicity even after the disaster in Somalia and the ongoing floundering in Bosnia.

To this end, Christopher strangely tied U.S. democracy expansion efforts to Clinton's controversial vision to "reinvent government" in the United States, an effort that a majority of Americans (even many Democrats) were resisting in their own country, much less would be interested in spreading abroad, especially by use of force. He also connected the current Wilsonian foreign policy to Clinton's (soon to be) failed drug strategy and crime bill as "government institutions (which could be applied to both American and Latin American institutions) must become more efficient and accountable."<sup>83</sup> Statements like these paralleled Wilson's failed visions for Haiti and other Latin American nations almost verbatim, but the Clinton interventionists received even less enthusiasm for crusading to reform Haiti in 1994 than Wilson did in 1915. The ideologues in the administration, however, seemed unable to decipher the difference between a simple international consensus for a democratic hemisphere, and to what extent nations individually or collectively were willing to sacrifice in order to install, reinstall, support, and continuously reform nations with feeble economies and weak foundations for democratic rule and responsive government. *Agreeing* about democracy and passing resolutions was one thing the international community was quick to jump on—*doing something* about it was quite another. This important difference was a principle the assertive multilateralists and liberal interventionists never understood or cared to understand.

Myopically unable to fathom any other possibilities other than forcing the junta from power and reinstalling Aristide, in November 1993 the administration directed the JCS to put together a forcible intervention plan to replace the permissive one which dissolved after the *Harlan County* debacle. This new forced entry option is exactly what Clinton publicly promised not to undertake

only one month before. The nucleus of an invasion plan was slated to a small planning staff in USACOM (US ATLANTIC COMMAND) under Major General Michael J. Byron (USMC) codenamed “Jade Green”. Jade Green would be the forerunner of OPLAN 2370, the military and interagency plan to invade Haiti and forcibly install UNMIH as previously planned. The plan was essentially an old plan from 1988 dusted off to create a structured invasion force, but it did not address how these units were to be used operationally, and would have to be modified.<sup>84</sup> USACOM laid out the purpose of the mission, the endstate, and defined criteria for military success. The document went to the JCS and NSA with few corrections, essentially making USACOM responsible for crafting the political-military plan for Haiti if Clinton ordered an invasion.<sup>85</sup> A key portion of the plan centered on removing the Haitian military and FADH and replacing them with a retrained police force to maintain security so that civil order and democracy could flourish once Aristide returned. Military planners did not want to have U.S. units undertake the role of creating security or for training a new police force, and an interagency group agreed that the Department of Justice should undertake this task.<sup>86</sup> Soon the JCS directed USACOM to build a conceptual invasion plan involving the U.S. 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division and selected Special Forces units. In January, 1994 XVIII Airborne Corps (the parent organization of the 82<sup>nd</sup>) was directed to begin contingency planning. The overall planning staff was kept at a minimum as the plan was compartmentalized to be kept under wraps, but the essence of the plan was to swiftly overwhelm the tiny Haitian military with American superior capabilities in firepower, movement, and communication and to land as many troops as soon as possible on Haiti’s airfields and through its ports. This plan evolved and developed compartmentally as OPLAN 2370.<sup>87</sup>

General Henry “Hugh” Shelton, the commander of XVIII Airborne Corps, directed that the invasion take place at night and quickly secure critical targets all over the island. Once daylight approached, the Haitians would wake up to find the Americans in control of everything. Eight airborne battalions would descend on Haiti and capture it without firing a shot. Special Forces would move inland and secure weapons caches as U.S. citizens would be quickly protected and FAHD neutralized. XVIII Airborne surmised that the most crucial center of strategic gravity in the invasion was securing U.S. public support, and the operational center of gravity was securing Port-au-Prince and eliminating opposition. Intelligence pinpointed even the smallest of Haitian paramilitary and police facilities and leadership locations, and resistance could be negated quickly. The operation would take only twenty-four hours to complete five phases, which culminated in handing off duties to the follow-up forces under JTF 180. The initial force would include 3,848 paratroopers utilizing 113 cargo planes soon supplemented by an additional 4,500 paratroopers landing on secured airfields with heavier equipment and six light Sheridan tanks. Navy SEAL teams and Army Special Forces would also hit key targets, and the Air Force would supply AC-130 gunships for close support. Planners felt confident that the operation could be initiated with as little as nine days notice, and U.S. forces could hand off peacekeeping responsibilities to a UN force within six weeks.<sup>88</sup>

As USACOM military formulated contingency invasion plans, the Clinton administration still was unsure what to do next as negotiations and the embargo were proving fruitless. Officials were still trying to galvanize the multitudes of Haitian factions residing in the U.S. toward reinstalling Aristide as their best option while they were hard-selling the supposedly selfless nature of their Wilsonian cause for a wider audience. Lawrence Puzzullo, U.S. Special Advisor on Haiti, told Haitians: “We have a stake in the future of your country not because we covet its

territory or resources, nor because we favor particular parties or personalities in Haiti—rather we are deeply interested in the welfare of the Haitian people.”<sup>89</sup>

The ongoing self-congratulatory rhetoric in the face of continuous stagnation, however, was wearing thin with Aristide and his liberal American supporters. In January, Aristide was becoming openly critical of Clinton’s stymied policies in the media and congressional hearings. By March, as reports of more regime-directed violence against pro-Aristide targets became commonplace<sup>90</sup> Congressional liberal Democrats were joining him and pressing Clinton to push through tougher sanctions. Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa stated he was one of Clinton’s strongest supporters, “but the actions of this administration with regard to Haiti are embarrassing and shameful to this country.” Senator Christopher Dodd of Connecticut said, “I think it’s fair to ask why this administration sends combat troops to Mogadishu or launches cruise missiles at Baghdad, but does not even rattle saber at the leaders in Port-au-Prince.” Rep. Carrie Meek of Florida vented, “Our policy of interdicting at sea has been likened to a floating Berlin Wall.”<sup>91</sup> On April 21, five members of the Congressional Black Caucus and Congressman Joseph Kennedy were arrested for protesting Clinton’s Haiti policies in front of the White House without a permit. Dodd, who had recently returned from Haiti, labeled the embargo as “ridiculous” because the military was getting even richer reselling contraband gasoline smuggled in from the Dominican Republic. The senators supporting Dodd called for tougher sanctions, which they believed would make military action unnecessary.<sup>92</sup>

It was about this time when Clinton himself revealed that despite all the chest-thumping Wilsonian and collectivist rhetoric about Haitian democracy over the past year, he had absolutely no grip on dealing with the situation in Haiti once the junta refused to cooperate. David Halberstam writes:



At one point in April, Randall Robinson, a prominent black activist and leader of TransAfrica Forum, had started a hunger strike to protest American policy in Haiti. When reporters asked Clinton what he thought about Robinson's strike, he amazed them by endorsing it. "He ought to stay out there," Clinton said as if he was talking about some other president's foreign policy. That greatly surprised Robinson: "To have the president suggest that a policy should change and that I should stay out there on a hunger strike while he abdicates his responsibility is deeply disturbing." Clinton, Robinson added, could change the policy with the stroke of a pen.<sup>93</sup>

Clinton earned a respite from the hail of criticism surrounding the Robinson situation in May when he forced out Pezzullo and appointed William H. Gray, a former leading member of the Black Caucus, as his special envoy to Haiti to begin a new diplomatic push to get the junta to abdicate. Clinton publicly announced he had not ruled out military intervention in Haiti, and would allow a new wave of Haitian boat people to apply for asylum aboard U.S. ships or in third countries. Instead of placating his own party's critics, this only served to fuel liberal Democrats to push Clinton to use force to remove the military. After Clinton made a statement for CNN that "it was time for them to go," but also stated that the administration was trying to avoid military action to remove the junta, Senator Harkin noted, "This administration has got to get some spine and stop equivocating." Rep. Carrie Meek, representing the angry Florida contingent segment of the hawkish congressional coalition, bluntly stated, "There's no more time for pussyfooting."<sup>94</sup> Liberal Democrats likewise blasted Clinton for sending muddled messages to Haiti's rulers and argued that the administration wasn't going to get anywhere demonstrating its unwillingness to use force. Pezzullo bitterly charged after his removal that the pundits were right, and that Clinton only finally resorted to sanctions merely to assuage domestic critics; this is why Clinton reversed course and backed broader UN sanctions after resisting them for months. Pezzullo said, "It (the administration) has now adopted a policy line—sanctions without any political track—that has no prospect of returning democracy or Aristide to Haiti."<sup>95</sup>

Conservatives, for their part, were bashing Clinton for even considering military action. Republicans warned that Clinton was floundering in Bosnia and drumming up another Somalia situation in Haiti. On May 24<sup>th</sup> a center-right bipartisan coalition pushed through a non-binding amendment opposing the use of U.S. forces in Haiti, but Democrats defeated a Republican effort to control U.S. military costs in peacekeeping operations which would have limited the president's ability to initiate or support peacekeeping missions. The thought of another assertive multilateral adventure in Haiti was too much for conservatives to bear and were bucking against the majority party any way they could to prevent another Clinton-led peacekeeping fiasco. Clinton's comments about considering using force in Haiti angered Republicans who saw no point in restoring the leftist Aristide to power or imposing sanctions that would only increase the misery of Haiti's poor and drive more of them to flee to Florida. Senator Richard Lugar of Indiana noted, "This is so off the wall... that someone ought to say, 'Stop it. Cut it off.'" <sup>96</sup>

Republicans were equally unhappy with Clinton's reversal on the asylum policy which reinvigorated the flow of refugees taking to the high seas. "The perception is that the administration had allowed our asylum policy to be driven by Randall Robinson," said Rep. Doug Bereuter of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Republicans also charged that the sense of futility, as much as anything, has spurred the talk of military action, and the conservatives saw no reason why forces had to be sent into harms' way to bail out Clinton's fruitless and serpentine efforts to put Aristide back into power. <sup>97</sup>

Public sentiment in May 1994 seemed to be aligned with the conservatives. A *Washington Post*-ABC News poll showed only 40% approved of Clinton's handling of foreign policy, while 53% disapproved. The general consensus even among Democrats was that foreign policy was a mess. Critics lashed out at the liberal desire to babysit Haiti through another probable long

intervention, and chastised Clinton for undergoing five major policy shifts in Haiti and even more in Bosnia.<sup>98</sup> This perception only worsened in July when the administration held a seminar in which the White House oddly openly invited experts to educate them about the situation. “It’s basically all the guys who have been trashing us in op-ed pieces,” an official told *The Washington Post*. The attendees subsequently picked the administration’s aimless policies apart. Haiti, they were told, was just another instance of Clinton’s rudderless approach to foreign policy. In confrontations in Bosnia, Somalia, and Korea, the administration had set a pattern of talking tough to international violators of the New World Order but backed down from any form of confrontation and routinely surrendered autonomy to allies’ reluctance to take real action-- but still somehow maintained that it was resolute in its intentions.<sup>99</sup> Even Clinton supporters lamented that he broke every campaign promise on foreign policy he made, and that it took Robinson’s hunger strike to remind him of those he presented for Haiti. Few on the right or left expressed any strong confidence publicly in the administration’s ability to deal with Haiti effectively.

Despite its recent education on its directionless approach which fell into familiar patterns, the administration continued to talk tough and continue to peddle the Wilsonian rhetoric that no one was buying. When Clinton appointed Gray, he kept referring to Haiti as a “crisis”, and pushed the notion that democracy in Haiti and human right violations were “vital” American interests. Strobe Talbot parroted the outrage toward “interruption of the constitutional process anywhere in the hemisphere” to the OAS and kept beating the drum for collective action to oust the Cedras regime.<sup>100</sup>

Albright echoed this emotional oversell in the UN, overstating the urgency of the situation in Haiti and the supposed resolve of the Security Council to fulfill the Wilsonian ambitions of the

interventionists as the U.S. rammed through more resolutions to punish the junta. She said, “Today the Security Council speaks with one voice. We demand an end to the assault on democracy.” Despite Albright’s collectivist spin on international resolve to rescue Haiti, the Security Council (as was the case with the OAS) was hardly enthusiastic about taking charge and was simply happily following the administration’s meandering lead. Imposing sanctions against a rogue regime of a small impoverished island nation would take little real effort but served placating the Americans in the Security Council. Beyond France and the U.S., sanctions against Haiti only nominally affected a few Caribbean nations and the consequences of lost trade were economically irrelevant for the most part. Since it would be the Americans primarily who would be doing the invading and paying billions to “rescue” Haiti while internationally affirming vague democratic principles; there was little to object to when the Americans wanted more UN endorsements to choke off Haiti’s rulers or to sweep aside Haiti’s miniscule army to install another assertive multilateral crusade. To this end, on May 6, 1994 the UN passed Resolution 917 which essentially mirrored the unilateral American sanctions already in place. As was the case in Somalia, the resolution was essentially crafted by the administration and rubberstamped by the Security Council, so in this sense, Albright was right about the UN “speaking with one voice.” The Resolution further demanded the execution of the Governor’s Island Accords, and the coercive sanctions were placed under a Chapter VII mandate which also approved a possible invasion.<sup>101</sup> The assertive multilateralists in the UN were likewise thrilled to have the administration not only abdicate its sovereign right to act unilaterally against Haiti, but to pump new life into the shelved UNMIH nation-building effort if the junta could be forced to collapse. Ignoring the mistakes of Somalia, assertive multilateralism was again rearing its ugly head with Resolution 917.

In June, Gray announced that the new UN sanctions had been implemented. Clinton then signed an executive order banning private financial transactions between Haiti and the United States and for air carriers to cease connections to Haiti. Again Clinton evoked the rationale that U.S. interests were at stake in Haiti because U.S. citizens resided there and also action was necessary to stem the flow of refugees. He also reiterated that Haiti and Cuba were the only non-democracies in the hemisphere, and that because of the refugees' plight, "we have not only a moral responsibility but very practical interest in human rights and democracy." He also announced plans that a new permissive UN peace-keeping mission would be undertaken once the junta departed.<sup>102</sup> The junta, however, gave no indication it was going anywhere, and was in fact continuing its' repressive methods. By late July, as the sanctions failed to budge the regime, and Clinton worried over the growing costs of maintaining the expensive refugee camps in Florida, the administration made no secret that it was losing patience and invoked more threats of force. Although the administration had no idea what it was going to do next and had no consensus even within itself to launch an invasion to oust the junta, the policy was to continue to threaten the Haitian military regime and rely on a full barrage of overblown bluster and rhetoric. In a Security Council statement in late July, Albright sent an open message to Cedras, Francois and Biamby. "You have a choice. You can depart voluntarily and soon, or you can depart involuntarily and soon. The sun is setting on your ruthless ambition." She then haughtily dismissed the critics who said that democracy and prosperity were not really possible in Haiti, and boasted that this administration had a more positive outlook than the critics and the collective effort would succeed in restoring democracy because "the cause is just and the ability to make a difference is at hand."<sup>103</sup> Although the administration had not crafted a viable policy toward regime change in

Haiti, it continued to aggravate itself by not forcing Cedras' hand, but ironically through its own through ridiculous displays of bravado.

While the administration continued to spin the notion that the new sanctions would coerce Cedras to step aside and make way for another peacekeeping mission that would deliver Haitians from poverty and repression, Republicans started digging in, fearing that Clinton was simply set on a myopic course for invasion. "I'm not convinced we're getting total frankness from our government", Rep. Jim Leach of Iowa said, "I think that not only is a military option on the table, but it's right at the front of the desk... and it's unfortunately at the front of the desk is not that our policy has made significant progress as has been implied today, but that we've had a series of failures."<sup>104</sup> Senator Helms grilled Warren Christopher during a confirmation hearing, "All we are hearing is invasion, invasion, invasion. I don't believe there is any vital national interest or strategic reason for the United States to risk even one American service personnel to restore Aristide to power." "I know of no one in the administration that is panting to invade Haiti", Christopher responded, but I don't think we should rule out invasion."<sup>105</sup> Republicans and centrist Democrats weren't placated by such evasive statements from the administration. Critics believed that Clinton had painted himself into a corner because he had been whipsawed by the competing demands of the Florida lawmakers who feared a large influx of Haitian refugees and African-Americans who were demanding a more liberal refugee policy. "The administration knows there is congressional and public opposition to invasion, Rep. Robert Torricelli (D-New Jersey) said, "but the problem is the President has made a series of statements that have left him few options." Clinton's rationale concluding that crucial interests were at stake because Americans residing in Haiti were at risk weren't ringing true, because no one was threatening them. Democratic Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia told NBC's the *Today* show there was no

interest in invading Haiti to save Americans because “right now they’re not under threat.” In fact, nothing Americans defined as an interest in Haiti was threatened by its military rulers. Nothing was at stake other than fulfilling the administration’s credibility toward promising to “secure democracy”, whatever that actually meant in reference to Haiti’s checkered past. None of the administration’s spin had any basis in reality; there was nobody to save, there were no interests there, and refugees were only an issue if you accepted them, otherwise, they’d stay put. Nobody was buying that there was any urgent need to use force. Senator John Glenn further questioned the goals of the mission, “How do you establish order? How do you get out?”

Despite the building consensus that the administration was steering into trouble, however, the centrists failed to reel in Clinton’s runaway policies on Haiti. A Republican attempt to pass an amendment requiring Clinton to get congressional approval before sending troops to Haiti was rejected by the Democrat controlled Senate. The defeat of the amendment, however, was hardly a ringing endorsement of Clinton’s Haiti policies. Even conservative Democrats like Sam Nunn expressed concern over the administration’s fixation with returning Aristide to power, as it was no equivalent of restoring a lasting democracy.<sup>106</sup> A poll in *Newsweek* vindicated the conservative’s opposition to invasion finding that 68% opposed any invasion.<sup>107</sup> Despite the overblown rhetoric of “democracy interruption” and the feeble attempts to sell Haiti as a “crisis” that greatly affected U.S. interests, there was still no public or Congressional support to invade.

Despite the lack of public and congressional support for using force, the administration continued its coercive diplomacy track toward the Cedras regime, but with little direction or policy planning. By early August, the administration was even split over setting a deadline for a recently won UN approval to invade, because no one could decide whether they really wanted to take that step if there was still a chance the junta could be induced to leave by other means.

Defense Secretary William Perry opposed an invasion and setting a deadline, and proposed inducing the military leaders into a comfortable exile instead. Strobe Talbot argued that offering incentives was morally repugnant, and favored a quick invasion. In a sharp exchange, Perry shot back that Talbot represented a strange morality: he argued that it would be immoral for the United States not to do whatever it could to avoid the deaths of American soldiers and spending of taxpayers' money. CIA attempts to set up arrangements to quietly exile the junta members were squashed anyway-- not because the others in the administration opposed the principle, but rather instead were unsure how it would play out in domestic opinion.<sup>108</sup> Image once again trumped substance, and invasion was once again at the top of the list. Clinton meanwhile defiantly stated in a news conference that he did not require congressional approval to invade and continued to overinflate the importance of the make up of Haiti's government to U.S. interests. "Our security is caught up with whether people in this hemisphere are moving toward democracy", Clinton stated.<sup>109</sup>

During that summer the Pentagon was tweaking its operational plans. As early as May, the Joint Chiefs told USACOM that they might want to consider crafting another plan that would entail a permissive entry if the junta abdicated power. A new military option that entailed a permissive entry and a much longer operation in Haiti was labeled OPLAN 2380, and was assigned by Lt. General Dennis Reimer to an entirely different headquarters, the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division to implement. Two different headquarters were now developing two different plans simultaneously in two different locations, even though such a large operation was usually beyond the scope and capabilities of a divisional staff. 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain saw itself "establishing and maintaining secure environment" and envisioned a five phase operation lasting 180 days beginning thirteen days after getting the order to invade. Operational phases generally consisted



of maintaining stability operations in the early phases, and training the Haitian police and military in the latter phases until handing off the mission to UN forces after six months. The plans called for a unique helicopter-borne invasion by an almost all-Army force based from Navy carriers. Unfortunately for 10th MTN, OPLAN 2380 laid out an ambitious and long mission for an exhausted unit that had just recently returned from Somalia where it had a very bad experience with peacekeeping. To make matters worse, the endstate concept of handing off the mission quickly to a UNMIH contingent was also doubtful, as operational compatibility with any contingent unit(s) was highly unlikely, which foreboded an even longer deployment for the weary division.

OPLAN 2370 was soon after reformulated to reduce the number of Army airborne battalions and made to include Marine amphibious units. It made no tactical sense to include the Marines, and the planners uniformly argued against it, but the politics of inter-service rivalries dictated that XVIII Airborne unnecessarily split the crowded area of operations with a Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU).<sup>110</sup> Planning was difficult to synchronize, as now three planning groups were working on two different operational plans in three different locations. In July, the JCS further ordered USACOM to plan for using CARICOM (Caribbean Command) contingents and were told to “get as many flags in there as possible” even if they could only provide one platoon. After coordinating through State, small contingent units were incorporated into operations, including seven Caribbean nations who actually did send only a single platoon.<sup>111</sup> The sham of the tiny CARICOM military contributions, however, was supposed to validate the “multinational effort” to remove the junta but served no practical tactical purpose.

The Pentagon’s dual war plans (OPLANS 2370 and 2380) for both an invasion and a permissive entry mission became part of what became known as “the Bookend policy”. One

bookend was potentially a bluff: the administration would go through the motions of an invasion and hope to bluff the junta out, knowing they had no desire to take on American forces. If the bluff failed, the other bookend was the invasion which could be completed in a quick strike. The Pentagon was still wary, however. Walt Slocombe, Undersecretary of Defense, had no intention of risking American lives to “put that psychopath back into power.” Few doubted conquering Haiti would be easy, but none felt secure about what would happen afterward. The mission lacked clarity, the White House itself was divided on what it was trying to accomplish, but there were few at the top who didn’t want some kind of invasion. JCS chairman, John Shalikashvili, was a pro-Clinton activist who was anxious to help him roll back the president’s negative image in military affairs, while Lake and Talbot at State were pressing hard to invade. Vice President Gore was also a strong activist. Stephanopoulos saw very little utility in taking such a risk that portended few dividends, but his cautious voice was increasingly becoming muted in the power shifts occurring within the White House. Although Clinton knew he lacked public and congressional support, few were arguing hard against invasion anymore in the administration because no one seemed to be to stand on equal ground as the hawks with Clinton. Even in the Pentagon, voices of opposition were muted once Shalikashvili proved to be a true Clinton loyalist and Hugh Shelton simply seemed eager to launch his airborne assault. The Haiti hawks had won out. By September of 1994, if the junta didn’t abdicate soon some sort of invasion was imminent--even if it ominously contained the same vague humanitarian fuzziness (including a magical handoff to the UN) that had doomed the Somalia mission.<sup>112</sup>

As part of the “bookend” policy, the administration was always confident it could coerce the military regime in Haiti to bend to its will. U.S. policy toward Haiti had narrowed itself since 1992 to what is referred to as “Type C Coercive Diplomacy,” which is the most extreme style of

coercive diplomacy that not only makes threats or employs limited force, but seeks to make fundamental changes in a target government without going to war.<sup>113</sup> Coercive diplomacy to be effective uses threats to destroy the target's will to resist. First, there must be an asymmetry of motivation that favors the state employing coercion. Second, the target state must be sufficiently convinced that the punishment and cost associated with noncompliance are both credible and acceptable. Third, the coercive state must be able to employ the appropriate mix of incentives and negative threats. Incredibly, *none* of these essential elements existed in the policy toward Haiti as coercive measures were ineffective against the junta from 1992 to 1994, and the half-hearted coercive policy actually increased the junta's resolve and undermined U.S. credibility.

Coercive diplomacy with Haiti was an ongoing failure. Sanctions under Bush were limited and embargos were routinely unenforced, as the ruling regime members were personally wealthy and financially immune to sanctions and asset freezes. Further sanctions under Clinton actually enabled the military to escalate its repression against the Haitian people, while the bitter anti-Aristide sentiment within the rank and file of the military and FRAPH thugs effectively undermined Cedras' ability to negotiate with Washington through fear of retaliation if the leaders dared concede too much. The demand for UN human rights monitors was tolerated by the junta in 1993, but the repressive violence that followed forced the international effort to resolve all UN demands once and for all at Governor's Island in an "all-or-nothing" approach to the problem. The "all-or-nothing" approach toward dealing with Haiti's rulers completely undermined American options and ignored the complexities of the situation in Haiti, which the hawks never seemed to grasp especially after they collectively patted themselves on the back for getting Cedras to agree to step aside at Governor's Island. Despite Cedras' approval of the accords, Michael Francois refused to be "retired" and rejected the demands to reform Haiti's military and

police, and undermined Cedras' and Biamby's attempts at making concessions or complying with Governor's Island. Subsequently, Francois was determined to resist UNIMIH in September 1993 once they landed, which led to the *Harlan County* fiasco. Legal councils advised the administration, that in order to restore Aristide, they could talk with Cedras and Biamby, but couldn't "work a deal... They're going to have to kill Francois."<sup>14</sup> Instead of exploring the growing reports of divisions between the contentious military factions and the paramilitary FRAPH, the administration insisted on seeing those ruling Haiti as a single-minded entity that could be coerced into submission through threats and sanctions.

The tougher sanctions that followed the prevention of UNIMIH's disembarking in Port-au-Prince actually only punished the military's enlisted men, but proved financially rewarding for the high command as they seized control of the black market and realized huge windfall profits, especially through smuggled oil. As the population grew restless under tighter sanctions, instead of inducing the leaders to submit to domestic pressure, profits were used to buy more political support through bribes and expand FRAPH to induce more oppression. Instead of undermining the resistance to compliance, U.S. actions were strengthening the hardliners in FRAPH who were challenging the power of local military commanders and becoming more unpredictable. As FRAPH was expanding to 10,000 by early 1994, the military was losing control. The coercive measures were having the *opposite* effect of their intended goal to bring about a compliance of the Governors' Island Accords; instead they were actually strengthening the radical and most violent elements under Francois that would never tolerate Aristides' return, and undermining the military under Cedras who was always willing to negotiate with Washington. By 1994, Gen. Cedras and Col. Biamby had lost their base of support as rifts appeared in the army, and after prompting from his loyalist officers, Cedras was even more willing to cut deals with

Washington. Business elites also wanted Cedras to step down, as U.S. businesses were quickly divesting in Haiti and capital flows stopped. Cedras and Biamby had no illusions about holding onto power for long, but feared the unpredictability of Francois and FRAPH if he stepped aside or caved into allowing Aristide back into power. Cedras had signaled Washington he and Biamby were willing to accept a financially secure exile for themselves and their families in June 1994, not because Clinton threatened to invade, but because he feared a FRAPH-led or a right wing coup d'état by younger more ambitious members of the military. Before Clinton announced his intention to invade on September 15th, Cedras was already planning to meet secretly with former President Jimmy Carter to explore ways of leaving power safely. Cedras decision, however, had little to do with the failed American attempts at coercive diplomacy through threatening an invasion.<sup>115</sup> If anything, Clinton's constant Wilsonian moralizing and increasing coercive measures coupled with policy reversal and long periods of indecision, only negated the possibility of the junta stepping down peacefully without an invasion.

Since the administration's coercive policies had undermined Cedras' more pliable position and empowered the radical elements in Haitian power politics, it seemed that only a use of force would allow an intervention in Haiti, and nothing seemed to be in Clinton's way to prevent it. By early September invasion plans were fairly complete and military action seemed likely as continued coercion was not budging the regime. Halberstam writes:

Clinton might be getting what he wanted, but he was hardly happy about it. He did not like the current policy, which was of course, a non-policy, he did not like the old policy, which had failed, and he did not like the new policy they had just signed on to because it might end in violence with considerable political repercussions. There were signs of the usual Clinton irritation as he dealt with things he didn't like, "I can't believe they got me into this...How did this happen?" "We should have waited until after the elections," Clinton told the people around him.<sup>116</sup>

It is unclear why Clinton decided to invade in September. Perhaps the finalization of the military planning and the upcoming midterm elections presented a combined opportunity, and logically there was no point in delaying any further since Clinton denied himself any other options by then. In his autobiography, Clinton only explains that he “fed up” that Cedras hadn’t stepped down as agreed after a year and he was also moved by the daily reports of suffering by Haitians being brutalized by the thugs in control. Buoyed by the UN resolution to conduct a Chapter VII mandate, and pressured by Florida lawmakers and the Black Caucus, Clinton had left himself no place left to go. Cornered by his own rhetoric, and pushing internationalism and sanctions as far as they could go, he had to invade or else face another credibility disaster by doing nothing or looking weak. Invasion was the only option he had left himself.

On September 7<sup>th</sup> in an NSA meeting, Shalikashvili briefed Clinton on the finalized invasion plan and Clinton said, “It’s a good plan, let’s go.” The rest of the meeting was spent on selling the plan to Congress and the public. The older Carter-era idealists in the meeting wanted congressional approval, but knew they weren’t going to get it. Their biggest fear was that if casualties mounted, Clinton could face impeachment. Stephanopoulos suggested writing a “white paper” to make the case with Congress for unilateral presidential action, just as FDR had done when he circumvented Congress with Lend-Lease. Clinton liked the suggestion and then focused on how to “market the mission to various audiences”.<sup>117</sup> Clinton then turned to his ad hoc political advisor, Dick Morris, calling him a few days later asking him, “I’ve got to speak on TV about invading Haiti, what arguments should use?” Morris, Clinton’s most trusted confidant on how to play the political game, ironically told him *not* to invade:

“You shouldn’t invade at all,” I heard myself say. “You’re invading the wrong goddamn island,” I went on, referring to Cuba. “Racism and isolationism are the two most deadly, poisonous forces in our politics, and you’ll be offending them both at once, and you’ll never recover.” The president took refuge in idealism and detail, his favorite defense when he wasn’t ready to talk

about politics. He ticked off the abuses, the rapes, the killings, the death squads, the midnight raids. I knew this was a dress rehearsal. It wasn't the real reason either...President Clinton didn't want Haitian refugees swarming over our beaches. He knew how refugees could hurt you.<sup>118</sup>

Morris told Clinton that a naval blockade and sealing the Dominican border would keep refugees out, but Clinton responded the sanctions were hurting the poor, the Dominicans were unreliable, and the allies expected the Americans to do something. Morris suggested gunboat diplomacy—"Send the fleet and *then* try diplomacy". As for the speech, Morris urged Clinton to sell the moral outrage of the atrocities in Haiti and to keep focusing on *values*—not interests. People want a foreign policy that has a connection to values, he said, only national security advisors want a policy based on *interests*.<sup>119</sup> Morris was a master in aiding politicians craft an image, and been very useful to Clinton in the past. That's exactly why Clinton called him; he needed to sell the invasion of Haiti as a values-based image since it lacked such little real substance to the American people.

While ignoring Morris' sound advice not to invade, Clinton did follow the expert advice on how to spin the invasion, and publicly announced his immediate intentions to use force if the junta didn't relinquish power. On September 15<sup>th</sup>, despite overwhelming public and congressional opposition to the possibility of invading Haiti, Clinton made a nationally televised speech issuing a last-ditch warning for Haiti's leaders to step down. Clinton bluntly told the junta, "Your times is up— leave now or we'll force you from power." Clinton then announced the call-up of 1,600 reservists. Clinton seemed intent on using the speech to answer his critics in Congress and giving his rationale for invasion.<sup>120</sup> Critics reacted by saying that the pitch for "national credibility being at stake" was extremely weak as "most Americans doubt Haiti is a real test case for their national resolve," and that Clinton's "underlying motive was the preservation of his own credibility after threatening military action so often."<sup>121</sup> Clinton's

arguments for economic self-interests and controlling refugee flows also fell flat with Americans, and few saw the need to deal with atrocities in Haiti while Clinton had already balked on dealing with similar outrages in Bosnia and Rwanda. Dick Cheney and Brent Scowcroft voiced objections in the press that pacification in Haiti would be difficult and a prolonged engagement especially with casualties would see weakening support. Dan Quayle suggested Clinton was hoping for a quick boosts in the polls with a quick invasion, just as he had when he launched cruise missiles at targets in Iraq. Rep. Porter Goss, (a Republican from Florida) scoffed at Clinton's quick fix to secure American prestige, saying, "you can't really claim a great national victory by saying we overcame that vicious foreign enemy, the Haitian army."<sup>122</sup> Few saw the "international threat" Haiti was supposedly presenting, as Haiti bothered no one and no one but the U.S. was hampered by refugees. Haiti was generally seen as nothing more than to give Clinton a desperately needed foreign policy victory before the elections in November, presenting another veiled attempt at nation-building, and "then everyone will wait for the unraveling, the bogging down, the withdrawal, and the defeat."<sup>123</sup>

Instead of softening opposition on Capitol Hill selling a values-based policy, Clinton's speech agitated the middle-right of both parties, and Clinton's unilateral approach that side-stepped Congress was under fire. The Senate had already voted in August 100-0 in favor of an amendment declaring that a UN approval for military action did not satisfy Clinton's obligation to seek congressional authorization, but administration officials arrogantly insisted that Clinton would not be deterred even if Congress specifically opposed the mission.<sup>124</sup> Rep. Torricelli had previously warned that the administration might move up the invasion "to bring democracy in Haiti in order to avoid (embarrassing) votes in Congress" and now bitterly charged that "there was no rationale before the speech for an invasion of Haiti, and there isn't one after the



speech.”<sup>125</sup> Democrat Senator Jeff Bingaman said, “They have boxed themselves into a corner by making a series of threats to the thugs presently in control in Haiti, and evidently the administration now feels compelled to carry out those threats to preserve its credibility. That is a sorry reason to put American lives at risk.” Lawmakers lamented, however, that Clinton had them boxed in, because once the troops were sent in, politically congressional members couldn’t undercut the mission financially without appearing unsupportive of the troops.

As Torricelli had predicted, the military operation was already swinging into action before Congress could thwart Clinton’s unpopular adventure in Haiti. Border monitors utilizing U.S. and foreign contingents to enforce the sanctions were already trained and in place in the Dominican Republic by September 11th. Secretary of Defense Perry had already pre-positioned U.S. forces to invade by the first week of September, and U.S. forces were prepared to launch either OPLAN 2370 (the “kick-down-the door approach) or the permissive-styled OPLAN 2380 within thirty days. A merger or “bridge” of the two plans was dawn up as OPLAN 2375 to integrate the two operational headquarters to meld the initial invasion plan into ongoing peacekeeping operations. On September 9, XVIII Airborne received an alert order operating as Joint Task Force (JTF) 180. Likewise, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain designated as JTF 190 boarded the *USS Eisenhower* and sailed toward Haiti. Both force packages had been deployed, but no one was sure how they would be utilized. After a frantic last minute effort to iron out the details, OPLAN 2375 was briefed at the White House on September 13<sup>th</sup>. In the meantime, 300 CARICOM soldiers arrived in Puerto Rico for a planned twenty-one days of training by U.S. Special Forces. Many contingents arrived poorly trained and several lacked even the most basic equipment such as boots and canteens, but planners ensured that CNN covered their arrival to promote the international effort and “play mind games with Cedras”.<sup>126</sup> The CARICOM contingents,

however, being just a symbolic force and more important for creating imagery over tactical utility, were placed under JTF 190, and would not be part of the initial invasion wave.

By the time Clinton made his speech on September 15<sup>th</sup>, everything was in place. The next day he notified his subordinate military commanders that he had decided to implement the Haiti military operation.<sup>127</sup> D-Day was set for September 19<sup>th</sup> at 0401 (Zulu Time) or 1201 EST.<sup>128</sup> It was at this point that the path towards invasion took an interesting turn. Former President Jimmy Carter was making significant headway with Cedras through their back channel connections (see above). Although he had little faith in Aristide's commitment to democracy, Carter believed he could broker a deal to tailor Clinton's policy goals, and volunteered to lead a negotiating team that would permit a peaceful entry of American forces. Carter asked to take fellow Georgian Sam Nunn with him. Nunn, an anti-invasion advocate and conservative Democrat in the Senate, gave him credibility with the junta. Nunn was skeptical of the plan, as he didn't trust Aristide to protect minority rights either, but he wanted to avoid an unnecessary loss of American lives and would meet with members of Haiti's parliament to help hash out a power-sharing deal. Nunn requested that Colin Powell join them, someone who could talk to the ruling generals in a soldier's language they understood and greatly respected. Clinton was delighted to have another chance to avoid the outright use of force to intervene in Haiti, but he was wary of Carter. He found Carter useful in other negotiating situations such as talks with North Korea, but he feared Carter might give up too much to the junta. He also feared getting staked to Carter's foreign policy image in the press, as during his election campaign had criticized that last Democrat president as too soft, while Clinton would be more centered and tougher. Clinton and Stephanopoulos worried that sending Carter was risky; Carter was hard to control, tended to freelance and might fall prey to the manipulations of the junta because of his ego and his need to

validate himself as an international peacekeeper. Still, sending the negotiating team would look good to the Latin American states, as it seemed one last demonstration that Washington wanted to avoid gunboat diplomacy. Clinton decided to send the team.<sup>129</sup>

Carter, Nunn, and Powell arrived at midday in Port-au-Prince with only thirty-six hours before the invasion deadline to convince the junta to leave peacefully. Clinton wanted a peaceful entry, but most of all he wanted a clear resolution-- no more stumbling or delays could boil up and repeat the frustration of the *Harlan County* incident. Clinton feared Cedras was hedging again, and nothing could be allowed to create another inconclusive result as U.S. policy had repeatedly allowed at Governor's Island. Aristide, of course, was hoping that negotiations would fail and the U.S. military would come in and wipe out all his adversaries for him. He almost got his wish about twelve hours into the negotiations when the junta started telling both Carter and Powell that they were willing to fight to the death. It was at this point that Powell explained to them in blunt military terms the firepower arrayed against them from sea, land, and air and that it would be futile to needlessly sacrifice themselves and their men. After seeing the results of American hi-tech weaponry in the Gulf, the junta knew how quickly the highly trained American troops could eradicate any opposition. Still, their meetings dragged on as the 12:01 (0001 hours) deadline approached on the 19<sup>th</sup> as the Haitian rulers stubbornly tried to squeeze more last-minute concessions out of the team.<sup>130</sup>

Meanwhile, the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne began boarding planes at 2030 hours on the night of the 18<sup>th</sup> to make the combat jump. CNN was prepared to report their departure, which would have signaled their arrival time (about three and a half hours away) over the target as well to the Haitians. Lieutenant General Sheehan begged Tom Johnson, head of CNN, not to run the story, because it would get soldiers killed, and Johnson agreed to hold off on airing it.<sup>131</sup> Clinton began to worry

that the team could be in danger as the deadline approached or might even be taken hostages, and ordered them out. Carter, sensing an agreement was close, asked Clinton for a little more time. Clinton feared Carter was falling into one of Cedras' stalling routines, but Powell and Nunn assured Clinton that wasn't the case. Clinton gave them a few more hours, after that, he couldn't turn back the invasion. Soon after Col. Biamby burst into the room to announce, "The 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne is on its way!" Still the junta members thundered on about their pride, honor, and manhood and claimed the proposal was unacceptable. Military planners at Fort Bragg watching live reports about the negotiations on CNN worried that if a diplomatic solution or another delay occurred after 2100 hours that their aircraft would run out of gas and the mission would have to be aborted. Shelton, the invasion commander, was aboard the one of the aircraft carriers offshore and preparing his final checklist as only a few hours remained before hostilities ensued. To his amazement he saw Carter, Nunn, and Powell still pursuing diplomacy in live news clips on CNN. "Get out of there!" Shelton shouted futilely at the television screen in his operational center. The Carter team, however, was very aware that Shelton's force was on its way and the negotiators were putting the little remaining time to good use. After Cedras made more protestations about refusing to betray the Haitian people, he finally agreed to adhere to the constitutional decisions of the Haitian President and accept exile *if* the proposal was approved by the cabinet. Oddly enough, the culminating moment was when President Jonassaint (supposedly a powerless puppet in the eyes of the interventionists) broke the will of the obstructionist cabinet ministers by calmly accepting the threatened resignation of the defense and information ministers. "Good, resign. There are too many ministers already....I am signing this proposal." With Jonassaint's signature and no parliamentary backing, reality set in and the junta threw in the towel. A date was fixed for the junta to leave and Aristide to return, and guarantees were

made that there would be no resistance to American forces. OPLAN 2370 was terminated at 2347 hours, only minutes before the deadline. The American troops would arrive peacefully.<sup>132</sup>

Despite the stunning success of the diplomatic “hail Mary,” the Clinton people were concerned that Carter was going to be a problem. He wanted to stay in Haiti and monitor the progress of the negotiations. This irritated the White House who wanted to minimize his role and maximize Clinton’s. Clinton didn’t want to share the spotlight and wanted to claim Haiti as his foreign policy success. Halberstam writes:

Haiti had been successfully done, force threatened but not used, and Clinton wanted the credit. If it was not exactly a big-time success, it was the first foreign policy victory, one badly needed.... But all in all, the White House was generally pleased. The president had been partially dewimped, it had been low cost, relatively easy to control. If Haiti would not easily be transformed into a democracy, if Aristide’s political world was almost as murky as the one that had preceded it; no one really cared that much. What Haitians did to themselves was always another matter. What mattered in the White House was that we stood up to dictators, gotten them to leave (albeit on terms rather favorable to them) and reversed the image of *The Harlan County*.<sup>133</sup>

In the end, after two years of indecisiveness, overblown rhetoric, flip-flopping, and painting himself into a corner, Clinton could claim a foreign policy victory, or at the very least, the crafting of the image of one. The junta would leave in October, Aristide would be returned to power, and “democracy restored” while American troops entered permissively under a Chapter VII mandate. It was everything the Clinton administration and the assertive multilateralists could have hoped for—or at least it seemed that way as the troops came ashore unopposed that morning. Building upon the questionable foundation of avoiding risks (both political and military) and spinning the inconvenient truths about Aristide and the importance of Haiti, Clinton finally got his “splendid little war”.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Rick Travis, "The Promotion of Democracy," in James M. Scott, ed., *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War World*, 254.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> See Anthony Lake, "A Strategy of Enlargement and the Developing World," *Dispatch* 4 no. 43 (1993): 748.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> "Foreign Aid Reform Scrapped," *Congressional Quarterly Almanac* (1994): 452, found in Rick Travis, "The Promotion of Democracy," in James M. Scott, ed., *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War World*.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 260.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Dobbs, "U.S. Shifts Goals in Markets of Asia: Failing to Sell Its Brand of Democracy America Now Promises Its Merchandise," *Washington Post* 9 August, 1995, A14 found in James M. Scott, ed., *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War World*, 263.

<sup>9</sup> For USAID projects for democratization in Latin America, see Travis, 265-270.

<sup>10</sup> William G. Hyland, *Clinton's World*, 17.

<sup>11</sup> Speech by Governor Bill Clinton, *A New Covenant for American Security*, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., December 12, 1991.

<sup>12</sup> Hyland, 18.

<sup>13</sup> Tom Matthews, "Clinton's Growing Pains," *Newsweek*, 3 May 1993; Douglas Jehl, "Clinton, Unlike Predecessors," *New York Times*, 8 February 1994, found in Hyland, 18.

<sup>14</sup> For comparison of Bush to Clinton and Clinton's initial approach to foreign policy after the 1992 election, see Hyland, *Clinton's World*, 15-27.

<sup>15</sup> David Halberstam, *War In a Time of Peace*, 267.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 268.

<sup>17</sup> Joe Klein, "When Everyone's An Amateur," *Newsweek*, 14 December 1992, 42.

<sup>18</sup> Halberstam, 269. Clinton quote referenced from Dick Morris, *Behind the Oval Office*, 5.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Hyland, 60.

<sup>21</sup> "Clinton Seeks to Advert Influx of Haitians," *Defense and Foreign Policy* 51, no. 3 (16 January, 1993): 142.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Halberstam, 270.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. Clinton quote from George Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human*, 219.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> State Department, Luigi Einaudi, U.S. Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States, Address before the OAS Special Session of the OAS Permanent Council, Washington, D.C., 21 January, 1992.

<sup>27</sup> President, Bill Clinton, *Opening Statements at News Conference: Statement of the President of the United States*, Statement released by the White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Washington, D.C., 16 March, 1993.

<sup>28</sup> Hyland, 60.

<sup>29</sup> Walter E. Kretchik, Robert F. Bauman, and John T. Fishel, *A Concise History of the U.S. Army in Operation Uphold Democracy*, 33.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Thomas G. Weiss, *Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises*, 176.

<sup>32</sup> Walter E. Kretchik, Robert F. Bauman, and John T. Fishel, 34.

<sup>33</sup> President, Bill Clinton, *An Historic Moment for the Haitian People: Statement by the President*, Statement released by the White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Washington, D.C., 4 July, 1993.

<sup>34</sup> President, Bill Clinton, *U.S. Interests In the Caribbean: Building a Hemispheric Community of Democracies*: Statement by the President, Opening Statement at a News Conference with Caribbean Leaders, Washington, D.C., 30 August, 1993.

<sup>35</sup> Warren Christopher, Secretary of State, *The Governor's Island Accord: A Victory for Diplomacy and Democracy in Haiti: Remarks by the Secretary of State*, News Conference with UN/ OAS Special Envoy Dante Caputo and U.S. Special Advisor on Haiti Lawrence Pezzullo, Washington, D.C., 19 July, 1993.

<sup>36</sup> Walter E. Kretchik, Robert F. Bauman, and John T. Fishel, 34-5.

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- <sup>37</sup> Halberstam, 270.
- <sup>38</sup> Walter E. Kretchik, Robert F. Bauman, and John T. Fishel, 34-5.
- <sup>39</sup> Halberstam, 270.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid, 271.
- <sup>41</sup> Walter E. Kretchik, Robert F. Bauman, and John T. Fishel, 35-6.
- <sup>42</sup> Lawrence Casper, *Falcon Brigade: Combat and Command in Somalia and Haiti*, NY: Lynne Reinner (2001), 124.
- <sup>43</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>46</sup> Donald E. Schulze and Gabriel Marcella, *Reconciling the Irreconcilable: The Troubled Outlook for U.S. Policy Toward Haiti*. (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute), March 10, 1994, 22.
- <sup>47</sup> Walter E. Kretchik, Robert F. Bauman, and John T. Fishel, 37-8.
- <sup>48</sup> Halberstam, 271.
- <sup>49</sup> Revolutionary Front for Haitian Advancement and Progress.
- <sup>50</sup> Walter E. Kretchik, Robert F. Bauman, and John T. Fishel, 40.
- <sup>51</sup> Ibid, 38-40.
- <sup>52</sup> Ibid, 41.
- <sup>53</sup> Hyland, 61.
- <sup>54</sup> Halberstam, 272.
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>56</sup> Halberstam, 272-3. Stephanopoulos quotes found in Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human*, 214. The next year, when Clinton planned to invade, he asked NSA aides to prepare a comparison to Grenada including rationales and likely casualties. Aides joked that they weren't any medical students in Haiti to rescue but they found two American dentists there. See Leslie Dickstein, "Fighting for Truth, Justice, and Dentistry," *Time* 144, no. 4 (25 July, 1994), 14.
- <sup>57</sup> Halberstam, 273.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>59</sup> Statement by Secretary of State Warren Christopher, *U.S. Response to Events in Haiti*, Statement released by the Office of the Spokesman, Washington, D.C., 11 October, 1993.
- <sup>60</sup> President, Bill Clinton, *Reimposing Sanctions on Haiti: Remarks made in Washington, D.C. upon Departure for Chapel Hill*, October 12, 1993.
- <sup>61</sup> This is another example of the statements made by the aggressive multilateralists in the administration that seem devoid of all reason and common sense. If a nation imposes an embargo on another nation in order to execute changes in the opponent's government, and uses strong naval force to enforce an embargo, how do such actions not fit the most basic definitions of "gunboat diplomacy"?
- <sup>62</sup> Hyland, 62.
- <sup>63</sup> U.S. State Department, *Dispatch*, 15 August, 1994 found in Hyland, 62.
- <sup>64</sup> Mary McGrory, "Haiti Scrambles Clinton Options," *The Washington Post*, 14 October, 1993, A2.
- <sup>65</sup> "How Did We Get Here?" *Newsweek* September 26, 1994 found in Hyland, 62.
- <sup>66</sup> Mary McGrory, "No One Else Will Do For Haiti," *The Washington Post*, 21 October, 1993, A2.
- <sup>67</sup> See U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearing, "U.S. Participation in Somalia Peacekeeping," 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 19-20 October, 1993.
- <sup>68</sup> For more on Clinton's love for and experiences in Haiti, see Bill Clinton, *My Life*, 236-7.
- <sup>69</sup> See Mary McCrory, "No One Else Will Do For Haiti."
- <sup>70</sup> Mary McCrory, "Haiti Scrambles Clinton Options."
- <sup>71</sup> Clinton's refusal to work a compromise was uncharacteristic of either him or Christopher, whom both were known for their inclination to make lawyer-like compromises to solve tough problems. See Garland Thompson, "The Disturbing Turmoil in Haiti," *Crisis* 100, no. 8 (November/December 1993): 23
- <sup>72</sup> Robert D. Novak, "Why So Hard on Haiti's Military?" *Washington Post*, 21 October, 1993, A-31.
- <sup>73</sup> Thomas Friedman, "A Broken Truce: Clinton vs. Bush in Global Policy," *The New York Times*, 17 October, 1993, A-1.
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>76</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>77</sup> Kretchik, Bauman, and Fishel, 42.

- <sup>78</sup> President, Bill Clinton, *Letter to Congress on Deployment of U.S. Armed Forces to Haiti*: Text of a Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, 20 October, 1993. U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 4, no. 44 (1 November, 1993): 766.
- <sup>79</sup> State Department, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, *The Strategic Priorities of American Foreign Policy*, Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., 4 November, 1993. U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 4, no. 47 (22 November, 1993): 797.
- <sup>80</sup> Alexander Watson, Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, Address to the 1994 Miami Congressional Workshop on Hemispheric Political, Economic, and Security Affairs, Miami, Florida, 7 January, 1994.
- <sup>81</sup> President, Bill Clinton, Presidential News Conference, transcript found in *Congressional Quarterly* 51, no. 42, (23 October, 1993 ): 2907.
- <sup>82</sup> State Department, Warren Christopher, Secretary of State, *A New Consensus for the Americas*, Address before the Matias Romero Institute for Diplomatic Studies at the Mexican Foreign Ministry, Mexico City, May 9, 1994. Found in U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 5, no.20, (May 16, 1994): 309.
- <sup>83</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>84</sup> Kretchik, Bauman, and Fishel, 44.
- <sup>85</sup> Interview with Lieutenant Colonel Ed Donnelly by Walter E. Kretchik, October 1995, U.S. Atlantic Command, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas found in Kretchik, Bauman, and Fishel, 44.
- <sup>86</sup> This condition was later abdicated by the Justice Department after claiming it didn't have the necessary resources, and the military was forced to accept this function as the invasion became imminent.
- <sup>87</sup> Kretchik, Bauman, and Fishel, 45-6.
- <sup>88</sup> Ibid. 46-48.
- <sup>89</sup> Lawrence Pezzullo, Special Advisor on Haiti, Address to the Miami Conference on Haiti, Miami Florida, 15 January, 1994. Found in U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 5 Issue 5 (31 January, 1994): 46.
- <sup>90</sup> See Thomas G. Weiss, *Military-Civilian Interactions*, pg. 182 for reports of murder, rape and acts of cruelty by members of the Haitian police and FRAPH during the spring and summer of 1994.
- <sup>91</sup> Carroll Doherty, "Democrats Hit Administration over Aristide's Ongoing Exile," *Congressional Quarterly* 52, no. 10 (12 March, 1994): 613.
- <sup>92</sup> Mary E. Kortanek, "Democrats Push Clinton to Toughen Embargo," *Congressional Quarterly* 52 no. 16 (23 April, 1994): 1015.
- <sup>93</sup> Halberstam, 278.
- <sup>94</sup> Carroll Doherty, "Clinton Again under Pressure to Intervene Militarily," *Congressional Quarterly* 52, no.19 (14 May, 1994): 1235.
- <sup>95</sup> Carroll Doherty, "President Broadly Criticized for Talk of Military Action," *Congressional Quarterly* 52, no. 18 (7 May, 1994): 1134.
- <sup>96</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>97</sup> Pat Towell, "On Issue of Using Military Abroad, House Marches to a Different Drum," *Congressional Quarterly*, 52, no. 20 (28 May, 1994): 1402-3.
- <sup>98</sup> *The Economist* 331, Issue 7864, (21 May, 1994): 28.
- <sup>99</sup> "The Empty Suit," *New Republic* 211, no. 2 (11 July, 1994): 7.
- <sup>100</sup> State Department, Strobe Talbot, Deputy Secretary of State, *Pursuing the Restoration of Democracy in Haiti*, Statement of the Deputy Secretary of State before the Permanent Council of the American Organization of American States, Washington, D.C., May 1994 found in U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 5, no. 21 (23 May, 1994): 331.
- <sup>101</sup> U.S. State Department, *Dispatch*. 5, no. 21 (23 May, 1994): 325.
- <sup>102</sup> President, Bill Clinton, *Establishing the Basis for a Successful Conclusion to the Crisis in Haiti*, Statement by the President and the Special Advisor to the President on Haiti, Washington, D.C., 10 June, 1994. Found in U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 5, no. 26 (27 June, 1994): 424.
- <sup>103</sup> State Department, Madeline K. Albright, Statement by the Permanent Representative to the United Nations before the UN Security Council, New York City, 31 July, 1994.
- <sup>104</sup> Heather Fleming, "Give Sanctions Time to Bite, Gray Tells Lawmakers," *Congressional Quarterly* 52, no. 23 (11 June, 1994): 1540.
- <sup>105</sup> Elizabeth A. Palmer, "Christopher on Friendly Soil," *Congressional Quarterly* 52, no. 26 (2 July, 1994): 1815.
- <sup>106</sup> Carroll Doherty, "Senate Defeats GOP Proposal to Limit Clinton on Haiti," *Congressional Quarterly* 52, no. 26 (July 2, 1994): 1814.
- <sup>107</sup> Carroll Doherty, "Haiti Invasion Looms Larger," *Congressional Quarterly* 52, no. 28 (16 July, 1994): 1944.



<sup>108</sup> Ian Williams, "U.S. Dithers on Haiti," *New Statesman and Society* 7, no. 315, (12 August, 1994): 10-11.

<sup>109</sup> Elaine Sciolino, "Top U.S. Officials Divided in Debate on Invading Haiti," *New York Times*, 4 August, 1994, A-1.

<sup>110</sup> For more on other recent operations that included unnecessary service components because of the politics of inter-service rivalries, see Adrian Lewis, *The American Culture of War: The History of U.S. Military Force from WWII to Operation Iraqi Freedom*. Lewis effectively argues that large Marine Corps land-based components were later also unnecessarily injected in Operation Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom due to inter-service politics.

<sup>111</sup> Kretchik, Bauman, and Fishel, 61-64.

<sup>112</sup> Halberstam, 279.

<sup>113</sup> Bartilow, Horace A., "Diplomatic Victory Misunderstood: A Two-Level Game Analysis of U.S. Policy toward Haiti," *Security Studies* 10, no. 3 (Spring 2001): 115-152. Bartilow presents an in-depth explanation as to how U.S. coercive policy failed to understand the political realities in Haiti and claimed a victory in forcing an eleventh hour abdication by Cedras and Biamby that was more a result of local circumstances than actions taken by the Clinton administration. Bartilow argues that it was the Clinton "tough talk" policies, tougher sanctions, with the insistence of returning Aristide to power coupled with indecisiveness that unnecessarily prolonged changing the Haitian government.

<sup>114</sup> Robert McCandless quoted in James Ridgeway, ed., "The Ruling Families: Haiti's Affairs," *The Haiti Files: Decoding the Crisis*, (Washington D.C.: Essential Books, 1994), 33-34.

<sup>115</sup> Bartilow, 143.

<sup>116</sup> Halberstam, 279, using quotes in Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human*, 305.

<sup>117</sup> Stephanopoulos, 307.

<sup>118</sup> Morris, 4-5.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Carroll Doherty, "President, Rebuffing Congress, Prepares to Launch Invasion," *Congressional Quarterly* 52, no. 37 (17 September, 1994) : 2578-9.

<sup>121</sup> R.W. Appleton, Jr., "Preaching to the Skeptics: Clinton Gives His Rationale for Invasion But the Messages Faces a Tough Audience," *New York Times*, 16 September, 1994, A-1.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> "To Haiti's Rescue?" *The Economist* 332, no. 7881, (17 September, 1994), 13.

<sup>124</sup> Doherty, "President Rebuffing Congress."

<sup>125</sup> Ibid. Also see Michael Wines, "Clinton Corners Himself, Along with his Quarry," *New York Times*, 18 September, 1994, p. 142.

<sup>126</sup> Kretchik, Bauman, and Fishel, 72-3.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, 74.

<sup>128</sup> Kretchik, Bauman, and Fishel, 76.

<sup>129</sup> Halberstam, 280-1. Also see Clinton, 616-7, and Powell, *My American Journey*, 597-560.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid, 281. Powell also records a most bizarre account of hurried shuttle diplomacy across Port-au-Prince. See Powell, *My American Journey*, 601.

<sup>131</sup> CNN's decision did not prevent the intelligence loss. Haitian spies watching the airfields telephoned Port-au-Prince and reported the loading and departure of aircraft as Powell and Carter met with Cedras. Powell noted, "Not bad intelligence for such a poor country." Powell, 601.

<sup>132</sup> Halberstam, 282.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER 7:

## Creating a Secure Environment: Peacekeeping and Quasi-Nation-Building in Haiti

With the impending doom of the mighty 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne winging its way towards Haitian airspace, the Cedras regime finally agreed to abdicate power within a specified time period. Clinton and the hawks finally achieved their goal to “restore democracy,” or at least they had instituted the desired regime change. The Haitian headache that had dragged on throughout Clinton’s first term was finally being exorcised and Clinton could finally claim a foreign policy success after a series of gaffs, blunders, and disasters. Haiti could be called a significant foreign policy victory. Clinton and his foreign policy team were not only ecstatic that Aristide was being placed back in power, but the administration took the opportunity to unabashedly oversell Clinton in a Kennedy-like comparison as “forcing Cedras and his thugs to blink first.” Just as importantly for Clinton, an obviously unpopular invasion and possible resulting casualties had been avoided by last minute diplomacy. Although the decision to intervene in Haiti was quite unpopular, the avoidance of a forced entry boosted his ratings in the polls. The assertive multilateralists were pleased as well; Haiti was lifted up as an example of what would happen if democracies (even highly dysfunctional ones) were overturned in the supposed new world order. Democracy was now considered an indispensable form of government globally and any deviations from this assumption could and would be met with international pressures and force. Just as tantalizing for the multilateralists, Haiti created another opportunity for another nation-building project, this time in Latin America. With the popular Aristide serving as a malleable host government, the multilateralists were sure Haiti’s government, economy, and infrastructure would be reformed and rejuvenated. This would be accomplished via the guiding hand of the all-powerful Americans and the UN emerging to take on its’ rightful role in interjecting itself into all

forms of internal issues breaking down the traditional barriers of national sovereignty. With the abdication of the junta, the situation in Haiti had created a sense of euphoria with the multilateralists as American troops landed on the island.

The reality in Haiti for the next few years, however, would prove to be quite different than the hopes and expectations of the multilateralists in the UN and in the White House. The injection of a sizeable U.S. military peacekeeping force, another international hodge-podge of contingency forces, as well as a slew of international humanitarian agencies did very little to fix the deeply rooted problems that accounted for Haiti's cultural history with corruption and violence in governing its population. The billions of dollars in governmental and humanitarian aid poured into the Western hemisphere's poorest nation did almost nothing to rebuild its economy or alleviate the abysmal level of poverty of its inhabitants. Peacekeeping in Haiti proved to be an almost pointless exercise; while very little violence was launched against U.S. or UN peacekeeping forces as was the tragic case in Somalia, they also accomplished next to nothing either. Peacekeeping forces were restricted from getting involved in Haitian-on-Haitian conflicts, and establishing law and order was precarious at best. The primary concern of the U.S. mission in Operation Restore Democracy was achieving the vaguely defined goal of "creating secure environment", which basically meant maintaining a semblance of order until it could quickly pawn off the job of peacekeeping and nation-building onto the UN. The American mission did little to nothing to change Haiti's pitiful circumstances other than placing the eccentric and slippery Aristide back in power, and all operations were geared around a risk-free approach toward nation-building. The Haitians accordingly were either indifferent about reforming their dysfunctional society, were quickly disappointed by their lofty expectations of international intervention, or passively resisted the international efforts to transform them into

something alien to what they had always known. The Wilsonian project in Haiti, however, was nothing new to them and they were not awed into complacency by American paternalism and know-it-all- attitudes. As the Haitians had done previously in 1915, they simply took what they perceived was useful from the do-gooders and discarded the rest. When the UNIMIH finally left Haiti in 1997, an accurate assessment would indicate nothing much had been changed in Haiti other than returning the popular but unstable and Aristide and his Levalas Party to power.

After the Carter team's successful diplomacy mission getting Cedras, Biamby, and the junta to agree to abdicate power and allow Aristide to return to the presidency, the forced entry mission was switched back to the permissible entry plan already drawn up by the Pentagon. On D-Day, General Shelton disembarked his command vessel, the *USS Mount Whitney*, to meet with Cedras. Originally tasked to capture Cedras and treat him as an international criminal against humanity, Shelton was now oddly directed to "to coordinate and cooperate in an atmosphere of mutual respect" with his adversary.<sup>1</sup> Since Aristide was considered the only legitimate leader of Haiti, the U.S. could not send ambassadors to deal with the junta, leaving Shelton in the role of negotiator and shogun in the tentative situation. Shelton, knowing he was being watched by Cedras on CNN, made it a point to arrive ashore by helicopter without wearing weapons or protective gear. Shelton wanted to make it clear to Cedras that the dictator was going to cooperate with the multinational force by arriving unarmed, the American commander "wasn't the least bit afraid of what the hell he had in the country."<sup>2</sup> Shelton's main concern was letting Cedras know that if cooperated he could leave Haiti without further embarrassment, but if he did not, he be stripped of everything. While Shelton dictated terms to Cedras, U.S. troops poured into the country and started setting up roadblocks and security positions. Tactically, Cedras could have ordered FADH to snipe and harass the American troops when they were most vulnerable,

and making calculated token resistance by the regime seem like a national uprising against the invasion. FADH troops dressed in civilian clothes could cause enough trouble because the Americans would be unable to distinguish them from the population in Port-au-Prince; however, there seemed to be no point to this course of action for Cedras given Shelton's ultimatum.<sup>3</sup>

Pentagon planners feared that even if Cedras had been cowed, many of the junta's subordinates would not be willing to suffer such a humiliation or allow their old enemy Aristide to take his revenge upon them once he was back in power. Surprisingly, however, there was no resistance from FADH. As planned, U.S. troops quickly occupied military and police installations and seized weapons caches and set up secure perimeters in the early morning hours. By the time the sun rose on D-Day, the Americans were already in control of major military and government compounds in the country, including the ports and airports. The Haitians seemed to take it all in stride. Even FADH members simply stood and watched as the Americans moved through the streets. Throughout the next day, Marine and Army units fanned out to seize weapons caches. American soldiers, weapons, and equipment continued to pour ashore through the airport and ports. By the second day, 10,700 troops were already ashore and the only opposition they were facing was from the oppressive tropical heat.<sup>4</sup>

As the Americans troops poured in-country, Shelton continued to win his domination game with Cedras when he ordered the removal of Haiti's only heavy weaponry and armored vehicles from Camp d' Application in Port-au-Prince. It was a symbolic act designed to publicly demonstrate the impotence of the regime to resist the Americans and to finalize in Cedras' mind that he had no cards to play. Shelton had to be careful, however, as Cedras still controlled FADH and to humiliate him too greatly could cause FADH elements to spin off in dangerously independent directions. As long as Cedras controlled FADH and he was compliant, they would

be too. The real wild card seemed to be the general Haitian population. Would they resent another U.S. occupation, or see the Americans as liberators?<sup>5</sup>

To address this issue, Pentagon planners always publicly referred to the occupation as “stability operations” and focused on convincing the population that American troops were simply “assisting in a peaceful transfer of power.”<sup>6</sup> The Americans launched a full-scale PSYOPS (Psychological Operations) campaign to reassure the Haitians they weren’t under attack and to help them understand the real motives for the UN operation and help keep the situation calm. Radio messages, leaflets, and Special Forces working in the countryside with local leaders were employed to inform the populace about the return of Aristide and the impending UN humanitarian mission. Aristide gave regular radio addresses confirming he was returning and calling for calm.<sup>7</sup> Much of the population remained skeptical, however, as a nation so long deceived by its leaders found it difficult to accept such benefice-- especially from a superpower that had previously invaded and controlled Haiti for almost two decades.<sup>8</sup> Surprisingly, PSYOPS missions also included a “Guns for Cash” program to attempt to get weapons out of Haitians’ hands and reduce the potential for violence. The program was based on the same rhetoric that touted unsubstantiated “success” stories in American cities to reduce violence, and was as useless as the same “symbolism over substance” initiative in Somalia (see Chapter 3).

As was the case in Somalia, widespread disarming of the Haitians was not really a part of the plan to create a secure environment. The Americans were measuring success in more simple terms, which meant in the immediate sense, that no one was preventing them from coming ashore and dismantling the regime. Although relieved that resistance was nonexistent and many Haitians (especially Aristide supporters) welcomed them, the American occupiers, however,

soon ran into another delicate situation. Planners had anticipated that U.S. troops would have to intervene in incidents between the police and civilians, and this was a hotly debated topic during the planning stages. Military planners wanted to avoid mission creep and getting sucked into administering a civil justice system, but realized that they would be asking for trouble if Haitians were allowed to run amok or if FADH tried to thwart the mission by continuing to terrorize and intimidate the population. Rules of engagement (ROE) were prescribed by planners to avoid getting caught up in the nebula of Haitian power struggles, and U.S. troops were ordered not to get involved in Haitian-on-Haitian violence unless it threatened them directly. Although these ROE seemed to be practical, they quickly crumbled once troops were on the ground. The CNN effect again reared its ugly head with scenes of violence in the streets taking place as American troops hopelessly stood by-- an image of both impotence and purposelessness in a mission designed to “create a secure environment” and “protect human rights”. Often looters or pro-Aristide demonstrators were beaten right in front of U.S. troops. On September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1994 an incident illustrated the apparent illogic of the situation:

Near the harbor, astonished and frustrated American troops stood by passively while members of FRAPH lunged into a peaceful crowd that had gathered to celebrate and observe the extraordinary events unfolding in the capitol. The police swiftly attacked the Haitian civilians and brutally beat one man to death. Witnessed by television crews and an international audience, the affair created a public relations crisis. In a point of fact, several incidents had already occurred out of sight from the media. Initial guidance directed at U.S. troops would not supplant FAHD in maintaining public order in Haiti; nor would they intervene in “Haitian-on-Haitian violence.” The political neutral tone of the phrase, in the eyes of some observers, suggested that the Americans were willing to forget human rights record of the junta and its backers.<sup>9</sup>

The incident not only exasperated U.S. soldiers, but caused Haitians to question the legitimacy of the multinational force and left them wondering who was really in charge.<sup>10</sup> ROE were then recrafted to prevent “civil rights abuses” but all this meant was that the FRAPH thugs couldn’t beat their victims directly in front of U.S. forces, which were not generally interacting with the

population anyway as they stayed in their secured areas and conducted limited patrols. As long as the *image* of brutality and American impotence in protecting human rights was removed, and no one was openly resisting American troops, that satisfied the vague mission goal of “creating a secure environment” in Haiti.<sup>11</sup>

Although they offered no real resistance to the invaders, FADH didn’t just stop throwing its oppressive weight around either. As had the rest of the population, Haitian security officials went about their normal routines, which included roughly handling criminals and troublemakers on the spot in the traditional Haitian manner. Shelton, however, could not disband FADH as it was the only functioning civil authority. Dissolving FADH would mean that the multinational force would have to fill the void and take on all aspects of police and judicial authority, something they were not willing or equipped to take on. Policing the Haitian populace was a far too monumental task which not only again invited mission creep (something Pentagon planners had consistently tried to mitigate from the start) but it would be an obvious mistake to try to repeat the decision to administer the country’s civil system as the Americans had done in 1915. Many Haitians would resent it and could turn against their “liberators”. More pragmatically, the Americans had few Creole linguists that could translate for them, making running the civil authority on any level an obvious impossibility. The brutal and corrupt civil authority that had aided in the repression of the Haitian populace and aided in bringing and keeping the junta to power, was left in place out of expediency to fulfill the mandate of “creating a secure environment”.<sup>12</sup>

The change in posture not only clouded the soldier’s sense of the mission but left the Haitian population baffled and disillusioned. Employing FADH and working with them to maintain civil authority was pure hypocrisy. Paradoxically, FADH was labeled as an essential component of



the “illegal and oppressive” regime, and was a major target for the invasion, now it was deemed too essential for creating secure environment to disband. It was bad enough that American troops stood by and did nothing about Haitian-on-Haitian violence, but now they were working directly with their former enemies to control the population. The legitimacy of the human rights crusade was in question almost immediately from the beginning of Operation Uphold Democracy:

Inclined initially to view the Americans as liberators, most ordinary Haitians experienced a profound sense of unfulfilled expectations upon discovery that American soldiers were negotiating with and the collaborating with the despised FAHD in maintaining order in their capitol. To be sure, many Haitians had expected U.S. forces to exact retribution from members of the junta. Indeed, some envisioned scenes of street justice against their former oppressors of the sort that have long marked transitions of power in the two centuries since the Haitian Revolution. As one American observed, all too often in Haiti’s past, vigilante justice was the only kind available to the average Haitian.<sup>13</sup>

Shelton, however, was determined not to allow any orgy of retribution to maintain order and meet his mission to create a secure environment, whatever that really meant. Theoretically, this meant the Americans weren’t taking sides, but playing peacekeepers again (but still really taking sides)-- thus again putting the Americans in the untenable position trying to create peace between squabbling and violent factions without the legitimacy of being neutral peacekeepers. The Americans had promised a change in power, but not an opportunity for revenge. That formula made little sense in Haitian culture, as the two were synonymous. To maintain order, the occupation had to simultaneously promise enough carrots and sticks for both the formerly oppressed and their oppressors; a bag of mixed messages if there ever was one. Aristide himself started the mixed messages, as he had constantly promised no retribution if he was allowed to reassume the presidency; essentially because the Americans required him to do so ironically after he repeatedly vowed to return and take revenge. Once Operation Uphold Democracy was launched, he made numerous public appeals for calm before his return, which surely did little to soothe the anxiety of those who had opposed him. Many openly doubted Aristide’s calls for

reconciliation with his enemies. Former Prime Minister Robert Malval expressed his own skepticism saying in an interview, “In his [Aristide] own mind, reconciliation meant that the masses and traditional bourgeoisie would join forces and everyone else would be left aside.”<sup>14</sup>

Whatever the reality, the realization that a deal had been cut with the military leadership and that the junta would go unpunished caused considerable disappointment with most Haitians.<sup>15</sup>

On the ground, the convoluted situation made little sense to American infantrymen who had come ashore prepared for a fight but were now supposed to work with their enemies the FAHD to maintain order. As military analyst Daniel Bolger noted:

The two groups were supposed to be working together to maintain order. Clever men in tailored suits back in Washington cooked up this scheme, but they missed some of the important realities out among the dusty shanties of Haiti... The FAHD seemed like a supporting cast from a Marx Brothers production—ill organized, sloppily attired, unloved, and incompetent. But they knew how to crack heads, and their ample suit of firearms was only too real.<sup>16</sup>

U.S. soldiers on patrol faced a myriad of dicey situations from mob scenes, to beatings, to random gunplay during their patrols and were equally uncomfortable with teaming up with FADH. American soldiers spent much of their time watching their “new partners” quarrelling with another and with overly boisterous crowds. The other unique problem U.S. Marines faced in their area of operations was that they had forgotten about their nineteen-year occupation of Haiti, but the Haitians had not. As had been the case in 1915, they “were seen as interlopers, uninvited, and unwanted self-appointed guardians” of a culture that prided itself on its history of independence.<sup>17</sup> Teaming up with the hated FADH to maintain order only perpetuated negative feelings towards the American soldiers.

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, another major incident tested the popular “legitimacy” of the intervention. In Haiti’s second largest city, Cap Haitien, the Marines had begun aggressive foot patrols to establish a high-visibility presence. As one patrol approached FADH police station, the FADH

members started making what was perceived as threatening gestures, including one man reaching for a weapon. The Marines opened fire, killing ten of the FADH. None of the Marines were hit.<sup>18</sup> Initially, American ground commanders were satisfied that the tragic incident was actually beneficial because it set the tone that the Americans weren't to be trifled with and that it greatly enhanced the legitimacy of the mission. That sense of optimism quickly diminished as the delicate working relationship with the FADH started to unravel and news of the firefight spread throughout the city causing rioting, looting, and pillaging FADH police stations. Marine rifle and armor teams had to be sent in to restore order. To minimize civilian casualties, sniper teams were also used to take out gunmen shooting into street crowds.<sup>19</sup> Three days later the violence spread outside Cap Haitien as a grenade was hurled into a crowd of pro-Aristide demonstrators in Port-au-Prince injuring forty. JTF 190 forces poured into the city and captured the FRAPH terrorist during a patrol the following day.<sup>20</sup> Several demonstrations and protests broke out, as both pro and anti-Aristide factions clashed in street riots. It appeared that maintaining order might prove more difficult as Aristide's return drew nearer.

Despite the violence, the Americans began preparing the country for Aristide's return in October. The military attempted to keep violence under control and the Army utilized PYSOPS and Civil Affairs units to reach out to the Haitians, and try to get as much human intelligence (HUMINT) on any obstructive FRAPH activities as possible. A large demonstration was expected on the anniversary of the October 1<sup>st</sup> coup, and it was feared that anti-Aristide elements use the event to whip up support against Aristide's arrival. U.S. troops therefore stepped up efforts to locate more weapons caches and looked for ways to thwart any FRAPH efforts to stage anti-Aristide demonstrations or violent activities. Increasingly too more Special Forces continued to fan out in the mountainous rural areas to reassure the population of remote areas

that Aristide was being peacefully restored and that their cooperation ensured the dismantling of the old regime without fear of reprisal. To this end, U.S. forces also seized the remaining television and radio stations and turned them into from junta-supported media sources to pro-Aristide propaganda outlets. The Americans were focused on suppressing violent activities and a creating permissive environment for Aristide to reassume power and “reestablish democracy” in Haiti. Paradoxically, by targeting FRAPH and undermining its efforts to demonstrate effectively or organize against Aristide’s return, the American efforts were squashing any possibility of political opposition to Aristide. Under the control of the Wilsonian-driven invaders, practicing democracy under the terms of Operation Uphold Democracy was only tolerated if it didn’t threaten the image of American control, and of course, only then if it supported Aristide.

Maintaining relative order was the primary mission for U.S. forces in these early stages of the intervention. Street fighting amongst the Haitian factions continued sporadically on September 29<sup>th</sup>, but U.S. forces on the scene did not interfere much to the chagrin of the international media. The following day, however, was rather quiet and surprisingly no major demonstrations of the coup anniversary took place. Most U.S. military activity therefore centered upon stopping looters and working with the humanitarian agencies arriving in Haiti to restore basic water and electrical services.<sup>21</sup> On October 2, the Americans continued to raid more suspected arms caches to prevent more serious violence between the factions. By now, the Americans had occupied and secured all essential military and governmental facilities and were conducting regular patrols to make their presence felt.

More than 15,000 troops had arrived by October 1<sup>st</sup>, with several units in Port-au-Prince established around the port, but the major American base was centered at the airport. The flow of logistics into Haiti had already shifted from combat units to support units. Particularly needed

were food, water, and sanitation assets, as the impoverished Haitian area of operations precluded equipment for trash and waste removal and even toilets. Once on the ground, the Americans set up the light industrial buildings around the airstrip and set up a massive tent city on the terrain nearby. The base grew as more troops and equipment arrived by the hour. Unfortunately, the buildings were in shoddy condition and infested with mice, spiders, and filth. Worse yet, the location of the tent city on the open space of the airport was a poor one, as the runways were built to have rain slope away from them right into the area the Americans decided to set up in. Nearby too was an overgrown city dump that filled the sticky hot air with an ungodly rotting stench. The base became a miserably hot, humid, smelly, water-logged mud flat.<sup>22</sup> Complicating matters too was the fact that the overlapping of the two invasion plans had caused an overflow of the forces converging into operations in Haiti. CINC therefore directed that troops under JTF-180 be capped at 15,500. Pentagon planners too were highly wary of the increasing costs and risks of the operation, especially as the likelihood of mission creep in humanitarian operations was the undesirable pattern. At the strategic level, success was already being measured in terms of costs, duration of mission and control of troop levels rather than in humanitarian mission terms.<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile, the Americans started repatriating small numbers of refugees from the overcrowded Guantanamo Bay camps to Port-au-Prince on September 26<sup>th</sup>. This action raised immediate criticism from the American political extreme liberal left; supposedly repatriating the refugees was a violation of their civil rights and was a breach of Haitian sovereignty. The American Civil Liberties Union again brought more cases against the U.S. government arguing against the impact of beginning repatriation against those who still sought asylum in the U.S. and pushed for restraining orders against any actions that returned any Haitians to their homeland.<sup>24</sup>

This legal position was simply ridiculous since the junta was no longer able to oppress Haitian refugees; there was no substantiation for their immigration other than for purely economic reasons. It was exactly for these reasons that the U.S. wanted to halt unchecked immigration immediately, and why Guantanamo was set up in the first place. Likewise, the argument based on violating Haitian sovereignty was equally delusional, as the American led/UN sanctioned invasion proved that when it came to legal observances, the concept of Haitian sovereignty was an easily discarded commodity.

As U.S. Coast Guard cutters began shipping back hundreds of volunteer refugees, UN monitors began arriving in small numbers. These peacekeepers were primarily the vanguard of the International Police Monitors (IPM) that were to retrain, professionalize, and reform the security forces. The immediate task of the IPMs was to initiate the gun buyback program for the Americans and help reopen the Haitian Parliament.<sup>25</sup> The highly-publicized presence of UN monitors was considered crucial to the intervention planners, as they wanted to put an international face on this almost purely American invasion and accredit it with the UN stamp of legitimacy and legality to remove the Cedras regime. These symbolic manifestations of international legality probably meant very little to the average illiterate Haitian, but the assertive multilateralists seemed to conclude how essential a handful of blue berets were to the operation; even though the UN mission wasn't going to take Haiti out of the Americans hands for several months. But as had often been the case, the *image* in peacekeeping operations was deemed the important thing, not reality of the situation or the end results.<sup>26</sup>

Imagery aside, Shelton and Admiral Miller knew, however, that any military success in Haiti would be measured by the longevity of Aristide and a functional democracy which could only be facilitated first by developing stability and an ongoing security apparatus. This meant that for

government officials and institutions to be relatively secure, there had to be a working police and security apparatus to control the population and reduce violence and a functioning legislature that had the support of the people. The U.S. commanders could do little about a legislature, but they could provide security for Aristide's officials and government facilities. They also could not effectively police Haiti indefinitely; they could only try to impose generalized force temporarily until a police and security force could be reconstituted. This issue was to be the purview of the U.S. Justice Department and the IPMs.<sup>27</sup> Basically, the main goal of the military was to keep a lid on the violence until Aristide could set up shop and the nation-builders could put Haiti's justice system back on track. The problem Shelton faced in "creating a secure environment" for democracy and humanitarian aid was one of the classic Catch-22's of nation-building.

Democracy and responsive government couldn't occur until a secure and relatively violent free environment was established, but a secure environment was dependent on the local population willing to be patient and accept the unchallenged mandates of supposedly well-meaning outsiders who created massive power imbalances that threatened major portions of the population and political factions. Just as importantly, democratic reforms could not take place in an environment as insecure as Haiti's dire economic conditions. UN operations to restore critical services and infrastructure could supplant the very institutions they were trying to resurrect.

Shelton knew that no democratic institutions in Haiti could be nurtured without creating security and some degree of economic self-sufficiency. And yet, the military mandate given to Shelton did not support large scale nation-building or long term U.S. military involvement.<sup>28</sup> Thus, it was impossible for Shelton to do more than create a temporarily secure environment for UN nation-building activities that were mutually interdependently incapable of sustaining each other without the Americans propping them up temporarily.

Likewise, establishing a secure environment was a goal that the American-led Multinational Force (MNF) was unlikely to fulfill, given the fact that countless Haitian governments had failed to do so previously and that the MNF commander did not make Haitian policy or control the contributions of non-DOD agencies. The MNF needed to tread a thin line between the goalposts of occupation on the one side and nation assistance on the other; all of which was to be accomplished in six months to hand off the entire operation to the UN.<sup>29</sup> MNF had to constantly demonstrate the mission's humanitarian and nation-building intent, and felt that nothing accomplished this better than restoring electrical power, providing fresh water and food, and making the transportation system functional. Basic human needs had to be met before any lasting political or security systems could be achieved.<sup>30</sup>

To take the next step towards creating lasting security, on October 3, the IPMs under American direction began training the FADH soldiers and police components. The concept was to identify and retrain FADH members who could carry out routine police functions, but the concept was fundamentally flawed. The Americans had come to replace the oppressors including the detested and corrupt FADH, but they elected not to do so in order to prevent a guerilla base from immediately forming from the banished paramilitaries. They also felt policing the Haitians directly as had been the case in the 1915 would be problematic, and they were unwilling to undertake such a heavy civic burden. To this end, FADH was not only kept intact for the most part, the majority of its ranks would not even meet the retribution Haitians were expecting to come their way after all the international rhetoric about punishing the "criminal" regime. To make matters worse, now the invaders were working directly with the FADH and putting them right back on the streets.



Rather than sweeping out the ranks of human rights abusers in the regime as expected after the unending torrent of Wilsonian rhetoric, the only thing the Americans seemed to be focused on was removing the junta itself, castrating its FRAPH political base, and reinstalling their anointed symbol of democracy, the exiled Aristide. To this end, Washington was quite successful. On October 4, Michel Francois, head of the Haitian police fled for the Dominican Republic. His successor, Colonel Jodel Lesage, was a moderate who joined with Emmanuel Constant, the head of FRAPH, in asking Haitians to forsake violence. Despite these signs of success and compliance by FRAPH leaders, planners still worried if the elites would select new leadership or if FRAPH would turn itself into a guerilla movement.<sup>31</sup>

There were, however, still no signs of resistance and the almost risk free invasion was panning out as the administration had heavily pinned its hopes upon. Only one American was seriously injured during the invasion itself and another wounded later in a brush fight with a FADH on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, but otherwise casualties had been practically nonexistent. Troops continued to pour in, up to 21,000 by October 2, despite the CINC's cap placed at 15,500.<sup>32</sup> Most of the major Navy and Air Force air assets were quickly withdrawn from the operation, as they were no longer needed. For the most part only U.S. Navy support ships stayed on station, and Coast Guard cutters continued to bring back hundreds of Haitians from Guantanamo. Only the combat vessels *USS Wasp* and *USS Nashville* were kept in reserve in case they were needed for Aristide's return. The situation was so permissive that high-ranking military officials including Admiral Miller, General Shalikashvili, and Secretary of Defense William Perry all made visits to troops in Haiti the week after the invasion.<sup>33</sup> Since all involved knew beforehand Haiti couldn't resist an American force, the only concern was with light casualties, and there were even less than anticipated. The lack of casualties and the rally-around-the-flag effect, boosted public

acceptance of the invasion, although the White House well knew that the public would only maintain that support if there continued to be no serious casualties or if the Americans didn't stay too long. Buoyed with the success of the risk free invasion, President Clinton and Secretary Perry visited the *USS Eisenhower* at Norfolk on October 6<sup>th</sup> and made congratulatory speeches to Admiral Miller and the recently returning crew. In his first appearance before American troops since the operation began, Clinton "was received with applause that was little more than polite." A noticeable number of the 1,500 sailors and officers displayed their displeasure with Clinton during the speech by keeping their hands in their pockets or folded across their chests.<sup>34</sup> This was hardly the stirring scene of the commander before his victorious troops that Clinton's handlers had envisioned crafting as positive image for Clinton's adventure in Haiti.

All was not all smiles and back-slapping back in Washington either as the general lack of support for Clinton's adventure was demonstrated in anger on Capitol Hill. In *Upholding Democracy*, John Ballard writes:

The Senate passed a nonbinding resolution 91 to 8 that criticized Clinton for not seeking congressional approval before sending troops to Haiti. The House also passed a similar resolution and continued to debate over establishing a cutoff date of March 1, 1995 for the return of troops. Congress was hostile to both the Clinton Administration and the rising frequency of U.S. troops being sent overseas. Although this action was purely political and no effect on the ongoing operation in Haiti, it did cause some members of the force to wonder how well the American people supported the operation.<sup>35</sup>

Although wary of placing restrictions on a president's ability to control the military in times of crisis, many lawmakers were irritated with Clinton for ignoring Congress and invading Haiti without public support. Congressional Republicans were not just concerned about Haiti, but now saw the need to limit Clinton's impetuous desires to involve American troops in endless UN peacekeeping forays. On January 4<sup>th</sup>, 1995, Senator Bob Dole proposed legislation under the War Powers Act that would prohibit U.S. troops from serving under UN commands and cut U.S.

funding for future UN operations. Democrats, however, countered with arguments that such a move would undermine U.S. leadership in the UN and undercut the president's authority as commander in chief.<sup>36</sup> Other lawmakers opined that it wouldn't help in ending Clinton's Haiti adventure anyway. Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN) stated that, "any resolution we adopt won't really bind the administration. There will always be an escape hatch." Congress felt constrained that it was contemplating action after troops had already taken the field, and no lawmaker wanted to appear to be undermining the troops. Although a recent Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll showed that 55% of Americans believed that the U.S. would not be able to create a lasting democracy in Haiti, while only 32% approved of Clinton's handling of foreign policy.<sup>37</sup> Many in Congress from both parties heavily criticized Clinton's decision to invade and ignoring Congress, but when it came to taking a tough stance, Congress meekly abdicated its power to decide whether U.S. forces should be committed to action.<sup>38</sup> With most Democrats protecting Clinton under partisan politics, little came of the measure to seriously limit peacekeeping for the time being, and Clinton was left with a free hand in Haiti.<sup>39</sup>

As Clinton side-stepped Congress in Washington, Shelton and the Pentagon focused on the other political arena in Port-au-Prince in September and early October. The primary concern of military and political planners was preparing for Aristide's return, as general order had to be maintained, but Aristide himself would also need a substantial security detail. The murder of the Haitian president or even a successful attack that injured Aristide or made him vulnerable would undermine the weak foundation of the Wilsonian experiment in democracy as the American justification for invasion frailty lay in just one man. Aristide had to be protected at all costs with both general population control measures and specific security tasks surrounding Aristide. Of course, imagery played a large part in the issue of Aristide's personal security as well. For the

sake of crafting a positive imagery, it was decided that Aristide should be seen being guarded by his own personnel, as American security guards would create images of Aristide being helpless or an American puppet. Perry therefore announced that a sizeable number of Haitian personnel would be trained by the U.S. and would be the president's protectors during his return.

Before Aristide could return, there was still more groundwork that needed to be laid to restore the exiled government and aid in a smoother and hopefully less violent transition of power. On October 6 and 7<sup>th</sup>, Haiti's House of Deputies and Senate voted for an amnesty bill that would allow Aristide to pardon the junta for any crimes. This agreement would permit Cedras and the others to depart Haiti without being tried for crimes ranging from treason to drug trafficking.<sup>40</sup> Although these gracious measures would obviously outrage the general population who sought retribution for their suffering under the old regime, it was correctly calculated that amnesty would motivate the junta to leave Haiti quietly and persuade their FRAPH followers to accept political defeat and not mount an insurgency against the incoming new government.

Despite this successful move to sever the ties between the head of the junta and its base, there were still problems controlling FADH and paving the way for a transition of power. On October 9<sup>th</sup> in Miragoane, forty miles East of Les Cayes, a pro-FADH driver crashed his bus into a crowd of pro-democracy demonstrators killing fourteen and injuring others. There were widespread reports of Haitian locals refusing to accept the old FADH tormentors training with the IPMs and were violently opposing the old police remaining in place. The pro-Aristide elements weren't making life any easier for the Americans either. 5,000 pro-democracy demonstrators marched in Port-au-Prince to demand Cedras' immediate resignation, threatening to topple the delicate arrangements to get the junta to go quietly. Transition problems also extended beyond policing issues as the U.S. Justice Department proved incapable of fulfilling its tasks in creating enough

advisors to help reestablish Haiti's creaky legislature and its dysfunctional judicial system. A few military reservists were used to fill the gap, but they were too few and almost no one spoke Creole and could deal with the Haitians directly who did not speak French or English.<sup>41</sup>

Once the Aristide government was officially restored and the environment remained relatively calm, the combat phase of the operation was terminated under JTF-180 and the XVIII Airborne Corps. JTF-190 led by the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division would be employed to conduct the permissive peacekeeping/nation-building mission as initially planned after the Governor's Island Accord but was nixed by Cedras refusal to comply with the terms of the agreement. The quick force transition from JTF-180 to JTF-190 after only a month of occupying Haiti was a logical choice. XVIII Airborne, a rapid-deployment asset that was the strategic initial entry force for the United States, was not designed or equipped for long-term missions, and was not trained or structured for peacekeeping operations. 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain was a recently retooled light infantry unit structured to take on these roles, and had recently had experience in peace enforcement in Somalia. Already made the centerpiece of the permissive peacemaking force of JTF-190 and incorporated into the hybrid invasion plan, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain was already deployed in-country and slated as the main force occupying Haiti. 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain's main activities were typical nation-building support tasks, such as protecting UN and humanitarian workers and assets, working to help the NGOs repair the crumbling infrastructure, and initiating outreach programs to the Haitian population to implement Wilsonian nation-building projects to rebuild and reform the dysfunctional society. As was the case in Somalia, American publicity reporting the transition relished the images of 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain's peacekeeping soldiers helping children and handing out food, medicine, and supplies to the grateful inhabitants.

JTF-190's mission, however, was always labeled temporary and limited. Pentagon officials quickly announced in early October 1994 that U.S. forces would be decreased to 6,000 in 4-6 months. The idea was to shift the public's focus away from recent comparisons to Somalia toward seeing a rapidly decreasing U.S. presence after the coup leaders were removed. To this end, the White House and the Pentagon emphasized that American troops would not be staying in Haiti very long or getting bogged down with long term missions. Although the American involvement was constantly sold by Clinton and his staff as "definitely not nation-building," 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain's essential tasks were all part and parcel nation-building activities supporting the UN agenda. The crucial issue for the administration wasn't whether or not nation-building was being undertaken, but whether they could justify what was being done on the ground in Haiti as something else that Americans would accept or simply blissfully ignore. Although there was no congressional mandate or resources to conduct full-blown nation-building, the goals in Haiti for the UN, the administration, and subsequently for American commanders were by default nation-building tasks despite the denials and "spin" techniques woven by the White House. JTF-190's mission was essentially a nation-building a peacekeeping operation, even if was labeled "stabilization operations" or "UN support operations," and there wasn't much anyone, even Congress, could do about it as long as risk and casualties remained a non-issue.

Clinton's second foray into nation-building and peacekeeping agenda hinged upon the other pillar of the risk-free invasion of Haiti-- get out fast by declaring victory and handing everything off to the UN. This meant using the same flawed formula as was planned in Somalia; this time, however, it was hoped that the U.S. could pull out most of its forces much faster before the Americans got too mired in the dirty and endless mess of peacemaking and nation-building and end up in another shooting war. Once again, however, the assertive multilateralists ran into the

dysfunctional nature of UN peacemaking which hampered the administration's plan to get in and out quickly and declare a great victory for democracy and world order. After six months of U.S. operations, the UN was to insert a 6,000 man contingent force once a secure environment was established by the Americans (the UN wouldn't go in until the waters were made safe, as it were). It was politically essential domestically for Clinton as well to constantly reiterate that U.S. troops would not stay more than a few months, and promised that they weren't engaged in nation-building. Likewise it was imperative for the military to counterbalance the international agenda within U.S. policy and put several brakes on nation-building adventures in Haiti which would obviously result in mission creep. The military therefore focused mainly on the task of maintaining security, which was the linchpin in getting the UN to take over.<sup>42</sup> The problem here was that the UN and the Americans had different definitions of what a secure environment entailed, as after the Somali debacle, the UN didn't want to send anyone where an armed threat even existed. This forced USACOM to increase its activities to reduce even more violence and instability in Haiti while at the same time trying to meet its most important goal-- reducing U.S. forces there as rapidly as possible. To this end the White House and the military were on the same page-- avoid casualties and risk, get out of Haiti as fast as possible, and claim victory before it all went south.

To this end, it was decided that Aristide was going to have to pick up some of the slack to reduce violence and shoulder more of the weight in returning Haiti to responsible government. The State Department convinced Aristide to promise to include more opposition members in his cabinet and to launch several projects to repair roads and the electrical grid, and distribute food and medicine under USAID direction and funding. Gasoline prices were also to be fixed, as it was in short supply after the embargo. To alleviate this problem, the U.S. sent a fuel tanker to

Haiti to start the supply again.<sup>43</sup> The hope was that if Aristide's government could be seen meeting more of the basic needs of the population who had been suffering under affects of the regime and the embargo that the situation would become calmer and security would effectively become less of an issue.

Unfortunately, none of the needed improvements in security or a welcomed increase of approval of Aristide would facilitate any faster withdrawal of U.S. troops until UNIMIH was fully in place. As is the case with any UN peacekeeping operation, the mission components arrived painfully slowly over several months in many pieces. On October 20<sup>th</sup>, the Americans welcomed the first major contingent of non-U.S. troops which arrived in Haiti and was met with much fawning over by the multilateralists who wanted so desperately to promote the international foundation of this almost total American Wilsonian endeavor. It was a gigantic image of assertive multilateralism that couldn't be undersold in political spin, even if it was just a small force in reality. 400 Bangladeshi troops arrived to replace elements of the SPMAGTF, as the U.S. Marine amphibious assault force began returning to North Carolina. In the meanwhile, most of the departing Marine's operations were not undertaken by international units, but by their fellow Americans in 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain. As UN contingents trickled in over the next few months, the American planners started watching the clock anticipating handing off responsibility for Haiti to more of these contingents and the UN.

On October 10<sup>th</sup>, Cedras finally resigned and turned the command of Haiti's military over to Major General Jean Claude Dupreval. General Biamby also stepped down in favor of General Herve Valmont. Clinton then announced that Aristide would return and reassume the presidency on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1994. The next day, U.S. troops removed employees from the National Palace in preparation for Aristide's return. The provisional president, Emile Jonassaint also resigned on



the 12<sup>th</sup>. The next day, Cedras, Biamby and their families arrived in Panama and were granted sanctuary there. As part of the agreement to abdicate power, the U.S. government unfroze their personal assets which were estimated at \$79 million.<sup>44</sup> Ironically, this result was identical to the proposal that Tony Lake and the Haiti hawks had so vehemently rejected months earlier that would have negated the need for an invasion.

With the departure of Biamby and Cedras accompanied with Jonassinat's resignation, the old regime officially ceased to exist. U.S. planners still worried about possible reactionary movements, including a possible restructuring of FADH into a guerilla faction aimed at toppling the new regime. With Cedras and Biamby out of the equation, FADH would be much more difficult to control. Shelton assured Dupreval that the new Haitian security force would be respected and Dupreval could maintain his authority as long as he kept FADH in line.<sup>45</sup>

At the White House on October 14<sup>th</sup>, Clinton held farewell ceremonies for Aristide attended by several dignitaries and key members of the administration and Congress who had pushed so hard to reinstall Aristide. After 1,111 days in exile, Aristide was finally returning to Haiti. The only question was whether he would keep his promises for reconciliation and if the joyous celebrations of his supporters in Haiti would turn into vengeful mob violence. Meanwhile, violence was still continuing in Haiti, as two FRAPH supporters were killed in demonstrations and riots on October 16<sup>th</sup>. The threat to U.S. forces still remained minimal, and the CINC felt comfortable releasing more assets used in the initial invasion force as the *USS Eisenhower*, *Nashville*, *Wasp*, *America*, and docking ship *Ashland* sailed for home. Regular air traffic also resumed to Haiti on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

That month the Aristide government started stepping back into its old shoes. The Haitian parliament outlawed all paramilitary groups, and the retraining of FAHD was officially initiated

at Camp d'Application under the Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) under the U.S. Justice Department. On the 24<sup>th</sup>, Aristide announced Smark Michel was to be his new Prime Minister. Michel was long time ally of Aristide, but had the respect of the other parties and his selection was designed to send a message of diversity and tolerance within the new government.<sup>46</sup> In November, Michel and seventeen new cabinet members took office at National Palace, paving the way for the complete return of the Aristide government. The thrust of the effort was made toward restoring government and creating cooperation between executive and legislative branches, but the actuality of an improved functioning government at this point was just a veneer. In Haiti, the large number of government employees was useless and did no work; many jobs on the national payroll were simply a source of political graft. There was little foundation for good government to build upon, and few records were kept about even the most routine government activities and resources. Rather than simply stepping into their respective offices, Aristide and Michel would be essentially starting from almost scratch and would have their hands full from the beginning. Recognizing this situation, American advisors from the U.S. State, Justice, and Commerce Departments, along with MAT (Ministerial Advisor Teams) and U.S. Civil Affairs under the 358<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Brigade were sent to help the new Haitian government. Civil Affairs advisors were reservists who drew upon a large pool of experience from the civilian world and proved most adept at helping the Haitians get organized, but were quite limited in what they could do and had very short mission durations. Duty periods for these Civil Affairs legal advisors lasted typically only fourteen days, sometimes extended to twenty-nine days. At most, a few teams were assigned for sixty to ninety days.<sup>47</sup>

As Aristide's government incrementally stepped into place, Lieutenant General John Sheehan assumed command of USACOM on October 31<sup>st</sup>, taking over from Admiral Miller who retired.

Sheehan was the first Marine to hold this high regional command position. Sheehan's selection was partly due to his knowledge of Haiti operations and because he was an important advisor to the Clinton administration.<sup>48</sup> The selection of generals for regional positions based on their enthusiastic support of humanitarian missions and their personal rapport with the president became commonplace during Clinton's two terms, and Sheehan's promotion was no exception.<sup>49</sup> If anything, Clinton was assured that his top military commander was on the same page with the administration's policies in Haiti.

As XVIII Airborne pulled out, the assault force of JTF-180 was phased out and JTF-190 undertook its roll under the permissive environment as planned. 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain, JTF-190s base unit, was already part of JTF-180 and operating in Port-au-Prince so the command transition was fairly seamless. 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain, however, fresh from its experience in Mogadishu, had developed a siege mentality and was not very engaged with the Haitian population as the other units in country. Major General David Meade, the division's commander, had ordered a strong defensive posture around the U.S. base at the airport, with heavy use of sandbags and concertina wire. With the lack of threats to U.S. troops in the oppressive heat, most units quickly adopted the comfortable and practical "soft cap" uniform, but Meade demanded his troops wear full body armor and Kevlar helmets and carry loaded weapons all the time even within the perimeter.<sup>50</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain hunkered down in its encampment, erecting a fence around the airport to keep the Haitians out and U.S. troops in. Troops were strictly forbidden to even fraternize with the Haitians through the fence. The only chief security measure initiated outside the encampment, however, was to removing piles of foul garbage, some ten feet deep, that choked off nearby streets. Meade was soon criticized by others in the task force being too conservative, for adapting siege mentality when it landed with JTF-180 in the initial invasion. Perhaps Meade was more of

a realist. Perhaps he knew the only real measure of success in this operation other than removing Cedras was preventing even the smallest number of American casualties. The vague mission tasks crafted by the assertive multilateralists and the idealists in Washington and New York didn't translate well into day-to-day operations, and none of it would matter if Americans were killed in even minimal numbers. That was the case in Somalia, and Meade surely knew it. Force protection was the only stance that seemed to address these realities. Enthusiastic overachievement in nation-building would run unnecessary risks to troops and bring no real gains, especially as the administration kept insisting it wasn't performing nation-building. "Creating a secure environment" under these circumstances was an ambiguous mission task if there ever was one, and it was doubtful that the U.S. military could do much more once Cedras and the junta were removed.

To his credit, Major General Meade recognized that neither U.S. troops nor the MNF could impose a political solution on Haiti that would secure democracy. A Haitian solution offered the only true path to stability. Given that precondition, U.S. forces and the MNF could not assume the role of Aristide's police force, rounding up every last paramilitary thug or weapon, an impossible task in any event. Furthermore, an endless search of dwellings, churches, and schools might drive the enemies of the regime to resort to desperate measures, including attacks on U.S. and MNF soldiers. Meade thus concluded that Aristide must preserve, and probably co-opt, the military and the police with the exception of those personnel whose criminality was beyond doubt. Resurrection of the judiciary was the next essential step on the road to elections. Unfortunately, in Meade's view, the Aristide government appeared to have no such vision, and without strategic guidance, day to day operations by the MNF lacked overarching purpose. Given the circumstances, Meade did not intend to risk his forces flailing aimlessly around the capitol.<sup>51</sup>

Meade kept force protection at the forefront of his objectives, and the restrictive and uncomfortable body armor and armor policies were strictly enforced despite the virtual absence of resistance or Shelton's sense that U.S. troops should be positively engaging the Haitian populace to support Aristide's government.<sup>52</sup>

Most of 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain's activities outside the fence in October therefore were geared toward finding hidden weapons caches that could be used to support anti-Aristide guerilla movements and create even more instability. The Haitian constitution, however, allowed for the ownership of guns, and confiscation of private weapons would have been illegal and definitely encountered serious resistance. Conducting house-to-house searches would have been futile anyway; American military planners didn't want to get that involved in policing the whole population and possibly antagonizing them. To this end, Perry even rejected a request by Aristide to aid in confiscating weapons from "disloyal soldiers" and "terrorists" on November 27<sup>th</sup>, as Shelton was content to maintain general order on the streets rather than stirring up any new hornet's nests. The Americans saw a weapons buy-back program as a better alternative to getting privately owned weapons and relied on confiscating any larger weapons caches that may still exist.<sup>53</sup> A few confrontations investigating FRAPH sites ensued, but the paramilitaries almost always stood aside when U.S. troops arrived or could be easily driven off with smoke grenades and warning shots. More often than not, few weapons were found. Such raids also had unintended consequences as well. Haitians would gather whenever U.S. troops arrived, and created the potential for misunderstandings or violence.<sup>54</sup> Typically, if a U.S. inspection team searched a home or business on faulty intelligence and found nothing, the Haitians in the crowd automatically assumed the owner was a supporter of the old regime and would try to attack the hapless inhabitants. Even if the owner was escorted to safety, the Haitians always looted the home after the Americans left. The only thing the Americans could do was employ PSYOPS teams with loudspeakers to try to convince the crowd that nothing was found or to give the suspect an identity card stating in Creole that he had not been found of any wrongdoing. Most effective was the employment of American Military Police (MP) units rather than infantry

soldiers to handle these situations. MPs were much more adept at handling suspects, dealing with crowd control, and conducting searches. MPs also worked shifts in Haitian police stations to provide supervision to the FADH. Female MPs were a particular oddity to the male-dominated Haitian culture, as were the large German shepherds (gigantic compared to mangy Haitian dogs) which the MPs used effectively to keep crowds at bay.<sup>55</sup>

10<sup>th</sup> Mountain also began undertaking its task as the base headquarters for the Multinational Force (MNF). In mid-October, other peacekeepers began to arrive and 10th Mountain, as was the case in Somalia, would be the logistics and command hub of the international contingency operation. Despite the swooning of the assertive multilateralists about the contribution of troops from other nations, the impact of international force was hardly worth noting militarily. The United States coordinated all the planning, conducted all the logistics, and brought all the real firepower not to mention transportation, medical, and communication assets. Few international units were of any useful size. Bangladesh's battalion of troops was atypically large; most contributors mirrored Guatemala which only sent a company and Costa Rica offered a mere platoon. The MNF was more "multinational" than it was "force". Only the Americans and the Canadians ever sent significant forces to conduct Operation Uphold Democracy, the other nations forces were not necessary and served no purpose other than putting UN face on the American invasion and occupation. It was pure political theater.

10<sup>th</sup> Mountain therefore had to undertake the momentous task of acting as JTF-190 headquarters and coordinating all the elements of the MNF as well as the IPMs, something far too large for a divisional staff to handle. Meade's small divisional staff accordingly increased by 200%, growing to over 880 personnel to effectively become the core of the MNF staff. The staff had to be augmented by U.S. Army outsiders, which had not been part of the division nor its

initial planning under the permissive entry plan, and were subsequently treated like outsiders.

The overall effect was that the headquarters lost much of its internal cohesion in the process.<sup>56</sup>

Shelton meanwhile was unhappy with the execution of 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain's operations which weren't meeting his expectations. Shelton was concerned about the division's "base camp" mentality within the perimeter, and that siege mindset impeded all operations. Under the heavy force protection guidelines set forth by Meade, it was difficult for Haitians to enter the compound, now known as Camp Democracy, and Civil Affairs units complained it could rarely leave and perform its mission tasks under the tight restrictions. 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain had a siege mentality and everybody in Haiti knew it. Forty percent of those deployed to Haiti in the division served in Somalia, and 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain was imbedded with the horrible and fruitless experience of Mogadishu. The staff likewise did not plan their operations assuming Haiti would be a permissive environment once JTF-180 supplanted it. Meade, acknowledging his critics, indicated that by mid-October he understood that the situation was much different than in Somalia where the Americans had entered into a civil war and that here the Americans were popular with most Haitians. Meade, however, cautioned that letting their guard down would be a huge mistake, and the force protection posture ensued.<sup>57</sup>

Due to the fact that casualty aversion and nation-building become contradictory goals, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain initially was not doing much to create a secure environment because it wasn't willing to take risks to control the population. In the first two weeks of the deployment, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain left its perimeter only cautiously and did not patrol Port-au-Prince at night. This left the streets to bands of roaming thugs. Informants who gave valuable information about weapons caches were left open for reprisals. Dead bodies were found in the streets in the morning, especially in the beginning of Operation Uphold Democracy. When the Americans did venture outside the gate,

they only went out in heavy force clad in helmets and body armor, an posture that makes it much more difficult to invoke an image of calm and restraint, and made the Americans look nervous and untrusting of the population they were supposed to be supporting. Meade's emphasis on force protection compelled Shelton to personally stay longer in Haiti than he had planned as JTF-180's commander, and endeavored to get 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain out of its siege mentality and to engage the population before he turned over his position to his replacement. 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain gradually began operating more in Port-au-Prince, and slowly relaxed its force posture within the perimeter. Outside of conducting convoy escorts and patrols, however, there wasn't much to do. "Inactivity led to boredom among the troops and nurtured the perception that the mission lacked any real purpose".<sup>58</sup>

Violence against U.S. forces was much lower than even anticipated. This was a boon to the planners of an invasion that was founded upon the low-risk principle of a short duration, little opposition, and few casualties. As 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain was reluctant to get too involved in controlling the population, it did less to provoke negative reactions to the American presence but also didn't create very much more law, order, or justice in Haiti either. Accomplishing little in rebuilding Haiti while instilling a sense of futility among the troops seemed to be more advisable than provoking the locals by imposing Western reforms on them and involving themselves in their traditional petty squabbles. Militarily speaking, it seemed wiser to just go through the motions of peacekeeping and just wait it out to avoid taking any real risks:

According to Dr. Bryant Freeman a long time expert from the University of Kansas, who subsequently served as an advisor to Major General Joseph Kinzer, commander of the UN mission in March 1995, the preoccupation of American forces in Port-au-Prince was summed up in two words: "no casualties".<sup>59</sup>

*New York Times* columnist Bob Shacochis noted in January 1995 that the risk aversion, not aiding Haitians rebuild their country or securing the environment, had become the essence of the



American mission. “If one lesson has emerged from the occupation is this: in the post-Cold War world of small messy conflicts, the U.S. Army might as well leave the infantry at home.”<sup>60</sup> It wasn’t until a few days after Shacochis’ article ran that the Americans suffered their first casualties. On January 12<sup>th</sup>, 1995 SFC Greg Cardott was killed at a checkpoint in Gonaives, and SSG Tommy Davis was wounded. Operation Restore Democracy had exceeded all expectations for casualties, especially with the focus on force protection, but in these operations one loss was too many.<sup>61</sup>

With the emphasis on force protection and casualty aversion, U.S. troops were at a greater disadvantage in shaping the security environment. The Americans in Port-au-Prince were not engaging the population effectively to get a good sense of the public’s mood, nor developing good intelligence sources. American understanding of Haitian culture outside of the Special Forces was largely superficial. Most of its information came from Haitian-Americans, many of whom had been connected to the elite class or who had been out of the country for many years. American planning had always been centered on engaging with the elite political figures (friends and foes) but dealt little with the much more numerous lower classes. Linguists attached to the force provided the military with much of its knowledge, but they were often jaded by their family connections. Sometimes Americans could not discuss matters with members of the Aristide government or local leaders because the officials did not trust the linguists the Americans employed. Some linguists refused to wear name tags because they might be recognized by elements hostile to the U.S. occupation. In some cases, the cultural advisors simply were not very useful. One even advised against wearing red hats, as this would be construed as threatening to Haitians, a warning which had no basis in fact. With few Creole speaking soldiers (French was only spoken by a small minority of the population), the Americans

were dependent on their advisors and linguists, and thus were often fed skewed or erroneous information. Since they had no real understanding of the culture, couldn't speak the language and had to rely on often unreliable linguists and advisors, the planners' intent to engage the population and build up political good will was greatly hampered.

Mixed with 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain's unwillingness to get mix with the city's population more readily, this made it impossible to create the type of goodwill or situational awareness necessary to pull off their hopes of laying out a fertile ground for democracy to take root in-- other than laying out a red carpet for Aristide to take power again. The desired end state, a secure and stable environment, was basically left defined by commanders on the ground who were trying to accomplish political ends through military means but were not getting an accurate political picture. For them, success was measured in terms of keeping the port and airport secure and witnessing a lack of generalized large scale violence that hindered local economic activity. With the bar set so low when it came to "creating a secure environment", commanders could easily announce "mission accomplished" and then transition the operation over to UNMIH peacekeepers and nation-building NGOs. In a nutshell, they could claim victory and go home leaving solving Haiti's deeply seated political and economic problems to another tiny and woefully underfunded UN nation-building project that was doomed to fail.

Not all American forces, however, were at such a loss to interact with the Haitian population. While 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain operated out of Port-au-Prince and Cap Haitien, Army Special Operations Forces (SOF) controlled the countryside. Once on the ground after being an integral component of the initial invasion, SOF units fanned out in a "hub-and-spoke" network operating from larger towns outside the bigger cities and then pushing their small teams out into the more remote villages. SOF teams established contact with local leaders and identified human rights abusers

and seizing paramilitary caches, actions which quickly won over the majority of the people. SOF teams emphasized that local leaders should take responsibility for solving problems, and American engineers and other experts were often choppered in to teach Haitians how to repair or rebuild wells, roads, etc. rather than having the Americans fix it for them. SOF teams lived directly within the towns, and adapted to the local customs earning the admiration and respect of the people there.<sup>62</sup> On one occasion a SOF medic brought a voodoo priest with him to treat a seriously ill patient before administering modern medicine. SOF teams of a few men administered hundreds of miles of remote territory, which left them as the de facto government over entire regions of the country. Unlike their conventional counterparts, the SOF leaders on the ground were more restrained in seeking out weapons caches, as it was deemed imprudent to “go around busting down doors every time someone was accused of having a weapon.” A tremendous asset, SOF soldiers seemed to know how to flexible enough to handle almost any situation. On one occasion, a Special Forces leader was requested to arrest a seventy-year old blind woman who was accused of being a werewolf. Other reports across Haiti of requests for the Americans to deal with witches, zombies, and ghosts were not uncommon.<sup>63</sup> Special Forces organized town meetings and gave civics lessons in democracy, and prodded local judges to hear outstanding cases of prisoners long since held in prison without trials. SOF teams also cleared out a notoriously inhumane jail in Les Cayes, and ordered the responsible parties to correct the situation.<sup>64</sup> If the handful of Green Berets in the hinterlands needed more support, they could call it in quickly. In an incident where a FADH soldier shot and wounded a SOF soldier, the SOF commander called in support from U.S. Army Rangers who came roaring in helicopters and full body armor to search the FADH homes and clear out the weapons. The demonstration of firepower left in doubt who was in charge.

Unfortunately, the working relationship between Special Forces and the conventional forces operating in Port-au-Prince was not always smooth. In the first place, SOF forces soldiers did not routinely wear body armor and helmets in the countryside and chafed under the tight restrictions they encountered while entering what they mockingly referred to as “the Kevlar zone.” The SOF and conventional forces were doctrinally worlds apart as far as their training and culture were concerned, as they lacked a common perspective. SOF soldiers refused to adapt to the force protection uniform when they traveled to the capital, and some were personally reprimanded by Meade himself. Others were chastised for breaking the rule about fraternizing with Haitians through the base perimeter fence by the assistant division commander. SOF soldiers couldn’t understand how they were supposed to accomplish their mission if they were supposed to stay comfortably and unnecessarily buttoned up in full combat gear while avoiding contact with the Haitians rather than interacting with them directly. The force protection mentality was exactly the opposite of what they were trying to accomplish in Haiti, and they routinely clashed with 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain’s leadership.<sup>65</sup>

The worst misunderstanding between 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain and SOF took place a few days after Special Forces took control of their primary invasion target, the infamous Camp d’Application. SOF soldiers seized the weapons there, neutralizing the heavy weapons threat, but found the FADH garrison highly cooperative. Building a working relationship with the FADH soldiers, and knowing they would have to soon co-opt them into the new security force anyway, the SOF team moved in a shared barracks with the FADH on the site. Without proper coordination, a 10<sup>th</sup> MT unit soon showed up to secure the facility, and approached with armored vehicles in an attack posture threatening to take on the FADH, who were immediately afraid. Concerned that their own mission was being compromised, the SOF soldiers sought to relieve the high tension and

ensure the heavily armed interlopers that they had the situation under control. They taught the Haitians to assemble and to do “the wave” (the popular gesture seen at sporting events) to the bristling conventional forces. The gesture was taken as a sign of disrespect by the on looking officers of 10<sup>th</sup> MT who refused to relax their posture, and charges were leveled against the SOF soldiers. No one, however, was punished as a result.<sup>66</sup>

Regrettably, the incident at Camp d’Application set the tone for the relationship between the conventional forces and their Green Beret counterparts. SOF soldiers were outspokenly critical of the JTF- 190 force protection posture, and even marked the frontier on maps with caricatures mummified in kevlar. The contrast in approaches was not lost on observers in the press. According to a New York Times columnist, “The more ambiguous threat [in Haiti] is better addressed by Special Forces, not the infantry, which has had little to do in Haiti since October but guard itself.” In contrast, “they [Special Forces] do everything from repairing wells and delivering babies to arresting notorious thugs and rescuing victims from mob violence.”<sup>67</sup> After awhile, however, as the situation quickly turned serene, even the SOF soldiers began to feel that their mission was at the point where community projects could be better performed by Army engineers or the Peace Corps.<sup>68</sup>

One can hardly blame the conventional forces, however, for not contributing much toward effecting political outcomes after removing the Cedras regime. Although Americans were to help establish conditions for a secure return of Aristide and the conduct of free elections, they were directed not to take over the functions of local or national government or substitute for efforts slated for NGOs. The ambiguities in the mission surfaced early in the mission, especially in the areas of Civil Affairs. Major George Fisher, commander of the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, which replaced the 10<sup>th</sup> MT in January 1995 observed, “There was a conscious decision by the United

States not to engage in nation-building and the mission expansion that accompanies nation-building.”<sup>69</sup> Fisher expected that funds and assistance for development projects would flow from international and interagency sources following the establishment of U.S. forces in Haiti. To the surprise of military planners, the expected support did not arrive and U.S. forces lacked Title 10 authority from Congress to assume responsibility for providing a broad array of relief. U.S. forces were supposed to assist civil authorities, but the JTF-180 mission parameters exclusively forbade large-scale nation-building projects that could induce mission creep. UN agencies and NGOs were supposed to conduct nation building, but U.S. military planners weren’t even provided a list of the aid agencies they were supposed to help. The best military planners could do was to intercede in areas where they thought major loss of life or large scale violence might result, and to mitigate human rights abuses and the outbreak of disease. Fire, rioting, and contaminated drinking water were considered top priorities in the cities.<sup>70</sup> General George Fisher stated:

Regardless of initial intentions, discrepancies soon appeared in the American approach to civil affairs projects in Haiti. If the plan was to minimize dependency on American support and to deflect credit to local authorities, some U.S. participants, such as Lieutenant Colonel Anderson, believed practice soon deviated from policy. At the direction of Admiral Miller, U.S. troops stepped in a restored electrical power, provided temporary sources of clean water, and otherwise engaged in projects that however useful in the short term, may have contributed to the perception among Haitians that the U.S. military “can fix anything.” Absent any long-term mandate for American forces in Haiti to prop up the local infrastructure, Anderson felt that U.S. actions served to raise expectations of help the natives would receive from Americans rather than from their own government. “Basically, it’s a formula for failure, and it’s been written about in every development manual that the American military has ever put out.”<sup>71</sup>

Some frustrated Civil Affairs officers believed the military should be doing more, not less. The main goal of Civil Affairs operations in Haiti, however, was to conduct only limited missions such as opening roads and restoring electrical power that could mitigate destabilizing influences, not fixing Haiti’s dilapidated infrastructure or taking steps to aid its anemic economy or public

services.<sup>72</sup> Only the devastation of Tropical Storm Gordon in November brought any infrastructure development projects to the hinterlands. Most of the effectual Civil Affairs projects under the JTF-180 restrictions took place under the Special Forces operations in rural areas.

Along with Civil Affairs operations, medical support in Haiti was supposedly also a critical component of U.S. humanitarian operations. The general level of health in Haiti was the lowest in the western Hemisphere due to poor sanitation and health practices. U.S. medical assets were limited, and designed to ensure soldier care, not create medical welfare for the Haitians. Commanders did, however, have the discretion to treat Haitians in critical situations and help the government get its health care system back on track. For the most part, U.S. medical teams were to only evaluate and report on the health services in Haiti and make recommendations for aid and reforms. Teams deployed to local medical facilities were in shock as they discovered the wretched conditions in local hospitals and hotel sites designated as possible conversion facilities:

When we arrived we found 200 families living in the hotel. The hotel was dilapidated and filthy. There were waste products all over and dripping off some of the balconies. A few dirty needles were lying on the ground in some areas, and a few elderly males were lying curled up in the corner dying of starvation. There was no electricity or running water. Children ran around without clothes and urinated wherever... the initial assessment was that hotel could be renovated but it was going to take a lot of work.<sup>73</sup>

Mission constraints, however, limited helping with the insurmountable problems that plagued the almost nonexistent Haitian health system, and U.S. Army medical teams were often filled with a sense of futility in the “put a bandage over it” mentality of abbreviated short-term nation-building being conducted under Operation Restore Democracy. Whether it came to civil affairs projects or medical problems, the American mission was conducting extremely limited nation building that its government and president claimed it was not even engaging in at all.

The American nation-building effort therefore was schizophrenic in nature as a justifiable foreign policy and then executed only half-heartedly by the military planners who wished to avoid it. In Operation Restore Democracy, building roads, fixing wells, and improving medical services took on a very peripheral importance compared to the main military efforts geared towards “providing a secure environment” where most U.S. energies were focused. Achieving this vague and self-defined goal became the American strategy, not rebuilding the society as the grandiose rhetoric of the policymakers had claimed. The primary goal for American planners seemed to be focused on keeping a lid on the violence so the UN would be comfortable coming in and relieving the Americans of their newly acquired peacekeeping burden. Nation-building and human rights were the essence of the American-led UN humanitarian intervention in Haiti; but the Americans were doing little to address these issues directly. Nation building projects and protecting human rights operations were really nothing more than window dressing for instituting a quick regime change while fobbing Haiti off on the UN to supposedly rebuild.

For U.S. forces participating in this performance of theatrical imagery, the biggest problem towards creating such a “secure atmosphere” still was dealing with the ubiquitous looting and riots in the cities. Port-au-Prince had become a vacuum since FRAPH control had been disrupted, and the remaining Haitian police became extremely passive. The decision to retrain the FRAPH and police and conduct patrols with them to maintain order had severely negative consequences. U.S.-Haitian patrols symbolized to the Haitians that the Americans had forged an alliance with the members of the old regime and that the Americans were doing little to go after the attaches who had brutalized them. PSYOPS teams with bullhorns became crucial necessities in dealing with crowds, and several methods were used to try to convince the average Haitian



that the Americans were acting in their best interests. Billboards, radio messages, stickers, buttons, and even t-shirts were distributed to get the Americans' message across. Political spin had to be applied to the Haitians as well. Haitians, however, still remained skeptical as they watched the Americans take control of their streets with the hated attaches at their side.<sup>74</sup>

Despite the lack of real effort being made to fix Haiti's deeply rooted problems in this supposedly humanitarian operation, the Clinton administration and the assertive multilateralists were still convincing themselves that Haiti was a great crusade for international democracy and Haiti's future. This sense of Wilsonian euphoria and self-delusion was played out when Clinton and Aristide attended the summit of the Americas Conference in Miami, Florida on December 11, 1994. The meeting stressed hemisphere cohesion, and much of the conference was filled with a self-congratulatory atmosphere by the OAS and CARICOM states toward removing Cedras and "restoring democracy" in Latin America. Given the tone of the rhetoric at the conference, removing one non-threatening regime in isolated and strategically irrelevant Haiti was apparently the solution to all of the region's anxieties regarding the proliferation of democracy in the Western Hemisphere. Ironically, if not hypocritically, any real discussion of the dangerous communist dictatorship in Cuba, however, was left vague and muted and heavily couched in the soft language of *hope* towards a change in the oppressive regime there but no concrete action was even suggested. Recent events in Haiti were naturally heralded as a great achievement for democracy throughout the region. Aristide, however, soon made observers wonder about even that. After returning boosted from the rhetoric-laden conference on December 13<sup>th</sup>, Aristide publicly called for the prosecution of all human rights violators in Haiti including the junta members.<sup>75</sup> This vindictive pronouncement was a direct contradiction to the pledges he had made earlier regarding reconciliation, and fueled critics who had characterized him as being almost as

politically and morally incorrigible as those he was replacing. Democracy may have been restored with Aristide's return to power-- but it was still the type of jaded and twisted democracy that Haitians understood all too well but the international reformers failed to ever comprehend.

Nonetheless, the lofty mission continued as planned. The 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (ID), another American light infantry unit, was slated to relieve 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain and continue America's occupation of Haiti. 25<sup>th</sup> ID's main task was to continue to prepare the way for a return to normal government and create a stable environment for UNIMIH operations to begin. The training of 3,500 soldiers took place in Hawaii, the 25<sup>th</sup>'s home station, and took on specific "training vignettes" designed to deal with the type of operations being undertaken in Haiti based on lessons learned from the deployment thus far. After training in Hawaii, 25<sup>th</sup> ID conducted warfighter training at Joint Readiness Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana. As 25<sup>th</sup> ID replaced 10<sup>th</sup> MT, likewise its commander, MG George A. Fisher, also replaced Meade as MNF commander. Fishers' main priority was to use 25<sup>th</sup> ID as a transition force to prepare the way for final UN mission.<sup>76</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> ID's entry into Haiti after training purposely overlapped with 10<sup>th</sup> MT's phased departure, and the division was up and running by the time control of operations was handed over to the UN on March 31, 1995.

Special Forces operations were also placed under UN operational command, but no doctrine had yet been created on how Special Forces were supposed to operate under non-U.S. control, as this naturally was a radical and risky departure from normal American operations. The Army therefore was forced to make up procedures as it went, as American military forces were again quasi-subordinated to the UN. Fisher answered to Major General Joseph Kinzer, who was "dual-hatted" as the U.S. force commander and the UN force commander (exactly as was done in Somalia with Montgomery to avoid conflicting lines of authority).<sup>77</sup> Kinzer reported directly to

both Lakdar Brahimi, the UN Special Representative to the Secretary General, and Sheehan at USACOM. In concept, Brahimi would set forth UN policy in the operation.<sup>78</sup>

The Americans, however, undertook the burden of controlling logistics under Logistics Support Command as the UN was utterly incapable of addressing this essential mission task. UN contingents were almost always incapable of adequately supporting their units, too much equipment incompatibility existed among contingents to share resources, and some peacekeepers didn't even have adequate uniform supply. As was almost always the case in joint UN peacekeeping operations, the U.S. shouldered the complex and expensive burden of maintaining a host of hodge-podge token international units.<sup>79</sup> Once again, the UN was placed in control over them, but the Americans did almost all the heavy lifting.

The focus of MNF operations then turned to preparation for the general elections, which were scheduled to be conducted on June 4, 1995. A presidential election would follow in the fall once the legislature and local elections were conducted. However, problems abounded in establishing elections in a country poorly vetted in the concept of democracy and steps would have to be taken to ensure that the public was being afforded a fair and democratic process in selecting government officials. To this end, the UN set up a gradual process for Aristide's government to conduct elections based on Aristide's proposals to initiate a Provisional Electoral Council (CEP). The CEP would be a centrally managed independent body, whose members would supposedly not receive any of the political rewards from the results of the election. Under the plan, Aristide would appoint CEP heads to set up for elections, and new laws would be passed for conducting the electoral process. Under the Civilian Election Project, candidates had a limited time to file applications which would put their name on the ballot along with their picture and symbols of party affiliation. Party symbols were known better than the candidates themselves, as TV and

newspapers were virtually unseen by the generally poor and illiterate population. Candidates for Aristide's Levelas Party dominated the legislative ballots. Many candidates never made their way onto ballots, probably due to error, but many believed that this manipulated by the CEP. Special Forces commanders later noted that some Haitians in rural areas burned their ballots when their candidates were omitted. Many Haitians felt the elections were rigged to place Aristide's party firmly in control. Such perceptions led to the ridiculously low turnout in the presidential elections, which amounted to only about 28% of voters. Even worse, only 5% turned out for the following Senatorial elections in April 1997, a figure which some observers feel was even inflated.<sup>80</sup>

Equally important as conducting elections, foremost among the tasks preceding a UN departure was building the Haitian National Police and developing a national security apparatus that would maintain order and allow the Haitian government to function. FADH had been effectively shoved aside once the junta resigned in October. Since then, 3,000 of its members were designated for removal or arrest in an effort to weed out the worst of the thugs and dispense justice upon them. The cowed remainder who hadn't walked off the job continued to work as police alongside the Americans as part of Shelton's short term solution to maintain general order. However, keeping even a portion of the detested FADH cadre in place much longer was not a viable option if the Haitians were going to reconstitute human rights under the rule of law. A new police force had to be quickly instituted to maintain order and FADH would have to be phased out as the national police force took control.

Supposedly, the main effort in retraining the Haitian police force fell to the International Police Monitors (IPMs), which were also to act as UN watchdogs for human rights violations. In reality, the IPMs were not sufficient in number to undertake this task, nor did they perform as

expected. Nonetheless, the MNF had to constitute an indigenous security force that could provide a secure environment, as lacking a secure environment would severely negatively impact the election process. The MNF also had to demonstrate that Haitians were profitably involved in improving their nations' future and policing themselves utilizing Western enlightenment ideals. To this end, three phases were planned. In the first phase, an Interim Police Security Force (IPSF), constituted from vetted former FRAPH members, would operate alongside American handlers until a Haitian National Police Force (HNP) could be established as a new security force. In the second phase, arriving contingents of IPMs would then be integrated into patrols and police stations and mentor and monitor the new IPSF units. Third, the IPSF would be phased out as a new "no-FADH" force (HNP) would be created from populace to give credibility and reduce unemployment.<sup>81</sup>

Toward this end, as early as October, 353 former Haitian military personnel were put into law enforcement training to become ISPF police run by U.S. State Dept International Criminal Investigation and Training Assistance Program (ICITAP). The training program was supervised by former New York City Police Chief Ray Kelly and conducted by U.S. and Canadian forces at Camp d'Application. Other ISPF were trained in Canada and the U.S. As the initial IPSFs underwent a crash course in human-rights based law enforcement, IPMs, eventually numbering 1,170 personnel from twenty-four nations, arrived in Haiti as part of the UN mission. Only thirty-five IPMs, however, came from the United States.<sup>82</sup> With the intervention of these modern model contributors, the ISPF and HDF would be crafted in their maker's image and practice Western concepts of humanitarian based law and order.

As sound as it may have appeared on paper, the UN police retraining program was actually a farce. Although 620 more FADH were identified and arrested for human rights violations under

the old regime, the majority of former police and national security forces were put back on the streets under the guise of ISPF restructuring. The former FADH were only given a brief six-day course, returned to the streets, and were labeled adequately trained and rehabilitated. More ridiculously, the UN had no equipment or handguns to give its new police force, so it gave them what it had on hand from recent confiscations. Most ISPF did not even have handguns; the few that did were only issued two bullets, *ala* the comical Barney Fife deputy character from 1960s' classic *The Andy Griffith Show*. U.S. forces brought many FADH attaches back on the streets in their old uniforms to police alongside them and work with the IPMs, and this caused public resistance and bitterness. Americans quickly discovered that the former FADH members were still fairly useless as professional policemen anyway, as they refused to put themselves at any sort of risk and could not prevent looting throughout the capital. As police, the ISPF lacked much authority to do anything, and went for months without pay making them even more reluctant to carry out their jobs. People didn't respect them, and they did little in the way of preventing crime or carrying out the rule of law. As one U.S. officer noted, "these guys are a joke."<sup>83</sup> To make matters worse, despite assurances to the contrary, they were denied admission to the new police academy to become part of the new HDF by the Aristide government.<sup>84</sup>

As pathetically as the IPSF performed, their UN international handlers served as no better examples. Observers noted that the IPMs did little but hang out with their Haitian counterparts at the stations, and would only sometimes go on patrol with them but usually would not even get out of their vehicle. They would usually not go into dangerous areas and not respond to violent incidents. Some IPMs even refused to accompany their Haitian counterparts on patrols with Americans, despite being encouraged to work with U.S. troops by their Director at the UN. In early 1995, the IPMs were replaced by the CivPol (UN Civilian Police) composed mostly of

police trainers from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and France. CivPol's record, however, was little better than the IPMs. CivPol's mission in Haiti was a very small effort and was barely operationally functional. The trainers lacked compatible radios and often didn't even have their own vehicles, severely limiting what they could accomplish. Unsurprisingly, like the IPMs, CivPol made very little impact on transforming Aristide's dysfunctional new interim police force as the UN once again demonstrated how its ambitions were outweighed by the realities in peacekeeping and nation-building.

Since the IPSF and the IPM mentors were of little utility in maintaining order, the American MPs became the de facto police of Haiti, even to the extent of taking over the police stations and shadowing every IPSF shift. The Americans were going to have to handhold the Haitian police and basically run things until they could be replaced by the HDF.<sup>85</sup> Attempts to train and instill confidence in the Haitians were not always successful and led to confusion and frustration. In one incidence, U.S. trainers encouraged former FADH troops to break up a riot and make arrests, only to have soldiers from 10<sup>th</sup> MT arrive on the scene who amazingly started arresting and handcuffing the police. The incident was televised by CNN making the old FADH look impotent. Disgusted and humiliated, FADH members across the capital burned their uniforms in protest and quit. Civilians, sensing a vacuum of civic order, stepped up rioting and looting in the capital.<sup>86</sup> Under the circumstances, there was little the Americans could do to impress a sense on professionalism and duty on the pathetic and unmotivated IPSF to turn them into real a police force.

The concept of reforming Haiti's cops into a Western-styled professional force was problematic enough, but the Americans also had their own hands full taking over the de facto policing of the population. As previously discussed, American units were reluctant to involve

themselves in complex situations and were primarily geared toward keeping large scale violence off the streets. Growing crime was still left generally unimpeded. MP units utilizing law enforcement doctrine operated well in training and running police stations, but they were far too limited in number. Infantry units were the primary instrument in attempting to maintain general order, but they were not so successful in performing more specific police tasks. Given the infantry's war fighting doctrine and the fact that they were inherently trained to seize and control areas with applied force, the infantry soldiers lacked the finesse of dealing with complex societal situations that law enforcement entails. MPs also felt the infantry's practice of wearing full body armor and helmets was a mistake as well as it sent all the wrong messages; mainly that the Americans were still acting like occupiers and that they still feared some kind of threat when none really existed.<sup>87</sup>

Nonetheless, the American troops did their best to shoulder the burden of attempting to create a secure environment in the volatile Haitian streets. On October 20<sup>th</sup> the Americans started patrolling the crime infested slums of the Cite Soleil district of Port-au-Prince which did help reduce violence there. By November 15<sup>th</sup> U.S. patrols were accompanied by IPMs and IPSF personnel, and by December, American MPs encouraged the ISPF to increased solo patrols in Cite Soleil, in an attempt to restore confidence in new force.<sup>88</sup> When it came to maintaining order, there was only so much American forces could do as it passed off as much responsibility to the inept IPSF as they could. The invasion may have ended widespread police oppression by the FRAPH, but with the brutally efficient security forces removed, a crime wave erupted. As the American commanders well knew, the IPMs and the ISPF were obviously in no shape to cope with security situation beyond providing a semblance of order on the surface. Jailbreaks were common, as were beatings and robberies. Disbanded police and FADH members were suspected



to be a big part of the problem, as many took their weapons with them when they walked off their posts during the opening days of the invasion. In rural areas, hijacking of trucks became common practice, probably conducted by former FADH. Few criminals, however, were ever caught.<sup>89</sup> After all the self-righteous rhetoric about restoring order and human rights to Haiti, the MNF was constantly being embarrassed by its own ability to maintain the rule of law it had so pompously promoted as a justification for the occupation. In one particularly embarrassing incident, two Haitians were killed in a robbery and car jacking at the U.S. embassy on November 10<sup>th</sup>. Worse yet, Ambassador Swing's own bodyguard was suspected in the killings. Many Haitians began to wonder if they could trust U.S. policing its population if this was what could be expected of American reforms, which seemed to invoke the double standards of America's last occupation of their nation.<sup>90</sup>

As dicey as the security situation was, law enforcement was not the only issue in preparing the way for Haiti's restoration of democracy and return to carrying out Western enlightened ideals in government. Without a fair and accountable judicial system, the rule of law would not thrive. The legal system in Haiti was in as bad shape as the police and desperately needed an overhaul. The courts (those that even operated regularly) were utterly dysfunctional and disorganized. Many local judges had no education in the law or any training in keeping legal records. There wasn't even a location where legal records were kept. Compounding these problems was the fact that the Cedras regime centered all administration in the hands of a few select individuals, who were no longer acceptable as public servants.<sup>91</sup> While he was dismantling the army, in November Aristide also dismissed all civilian police chiefs from the districts and replaced them all with political supporters. Aristide's MNF handlers, however, dismissed this corrupt and highly undemocratic authoritarian move as a necessity and acceptable consequence

of Aristide's return to power as president.<sup>92</sup> Nonetheless, there were still few qualified judicial bureaucrats or workers not connected to the Cedras regime that could perform basic legal and court functions. Prison reform was also part of restructuring Haiti's morally bankrupt and dysfunctional legal apparatus, and steps were made in these areas almost immediately after the invasion. U.S. forces captured the infamous National Penitentiary soon after landing, and disarmed paramilitaries running the prison. Soon after 100 prisoners escaped once the Americans started handing over security over to the IPMs, who were only able to recapture eight of the prisoners. This was a major embarrassment to the Wilsonian mission, which was increasingly showing the failings of depending on the international agencies and hastily retrained Haitians security forces to maintain civil order.

Meanwhile, Aristide continued to dismantle anything within the government structure that was not loyal to him, which included the army. On November 18<sup>th</sup>, Haiti celebrated its traditional Armed Forces day, but Haiti's military soon would find it had little to celebrate. Aristide replaced interim commander Major General Jean-Claude Duperval with the much lower ranking Brigadier General Bernardin Poisson to command the defense forces. Poisson reorganized the General Staff three days later removing anyone considered a possible threat to the new regime. Many in the new government used the commemorative occasion to openly question the need for an army in Haiti, since the Haitian military had always played a historic role as power broker in government and Haiti had no fear of its neighbors. Later that month Aristide responded to the radical concept of completely disbanding the army, publicly referring to the army as "a cancer" that he wanted to cure rather than cut out, but he took steps to destroy it all the same. He couldn't get rid of army constitutionally, but he and his party could cut its funding and undercut it

financially, which he did. FADH, the national security and defense force for Haiti, disintegrated.<sup>93</sup>

With FADH essentially disemboweled, Aristide's government was counting on the creation of the new Haitian National Police (HNP) to maintain order. This new police force was supposed to be a more credible security element than the inept IPSF and was to be professionally trained and invigorated with the ideals of respect for the rule of law and human rights. The HNP began with the opening of the Haitian Police Academy which provided a four-month training course under the supervision of a team sent by the U.S. Department of Justice. Testing centers for admission were set up around the country, but word soon got out that the selection was rigged by the Lavalas Party to reward party loyalty. Selectees were trained at Camp d'Application for eight weeks and another at Ft. Leonard Wood in Missouri. Human rights training and the role of law and order in a democracy were heavily emphasized to recruits. However effective the training may have been, the entire force was too few in number (only 5,000 police for a population of eight million) and were young and inexperienced and still steeped in the traditional power structures of Haitian law enforcement. The HNP proved to be a huge disappointment for the UN planners. The HNP was also no more willing to enter the famous slums of Cite Soleil and provide equal protection across the city than FRAPH previously had, so violence flourished there unimpeded. Worse yet, soon after the HNP took to the streets, police routinely resorted to excessive force in several well-publicized incidents. By February 1997, some 400 members of the 5,000 man force had been cited for civil rights abuses, and thirteen were charged with murder.

The attempts to revamp Haiti's police and security forces and even Aristide's return still did not bring order to Haiti. As Aristide was announcing to refugees that it was now safe to return,

mob violence continued in the streets in November. On the 17<sup>th</sup>, a pipe bomb exploded in a Cap-Haitien home killing a mother and her child. Mobs in the city even attacked Haitian troops which had to be rescued by U.S. troops. Too much needed to be done too soon to create a stable situation.<sup>94</sup> Matters improved little by the next month. On December 21<sup>st</sup>, 1,000 former FADH members protested in Port-au-Prince at the Army headquarters building, demanding pension refunds after Aristide reduced the force down to only 1,500 soldiers. The protest alarmed the MNF planners who worried about destabilizing nature of eliminating so many jobs and security structure so fast. The protest marked a warning sign that radical reform pushed too far too fast could be counter-productive. After Christmas, more violent demonstrations were conducted by soldiers demanding back pay lost due to the invasion and occupation. Several deaths occurred, and the MNF was called in to put down riots since Haiti still had no viable security force. Aristide again called for reconciliation but many in his party wanted FADH completely destroyed. Aristide announced a commission to restructure police and security forces on January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1995 and then forced FADH out of its traditional headquarters, replacing it with a Ministry for Women's Affairs. American liberals applauded the irony of a reform government replacing Haiti's Pentagon with a ministry to promote feminism in a traditionally male-dominated culture; but Aristide's vindictive policies to reduce the national defense force to a tiny corps of 1,500 and humiliate the military by giving their historic headquarters away to a ministry for women hardly matched his rhetoric about reconciliation with the military. On January 11, the last vetted FADH class graduated from their six day ISPF training course at Camp d'Application, raising the total to 2,960 police on the streets. As the transition continued, On January 17<sup>th</sup> Aristide officially dismissed the rest of the army as planned, but agreed with Fisher to keep a former 1,500 FADH force on border patrol and another 400 on as police once they too completed the ISPF six day

course. This adjustment gave the new HDF 3,400 members, and supposedly demonstrated that the new government had dealt with the threat of the old regime while meeting its domestic obligations.<sup>95</sup>

As if trying to control the population wasn't difficult enough, the new government had to deal with a new onslaught from Haiti's oldest and most violent foes—storms and hurricanes. In November 1994, Tropical Storm Gordon hit Haiti and Guantanamo Bay dumping fifteen inches of rain in less than twelve hours. One hundred deaths were recorded in Jacmel on the “southern claw” of Haiti. 1,500 Haitians were left homeless, crops were ruined, and food and water supplies contaminated. U.S. Army Engineers and Civil Affairs units swing into action to relieve the suffering in this very isolated area. The primary necessity was to repair destroyed road network in area, clear mudslides, and fix bridges so more humanitarian relief assets could get access to the victims. NGO relief operations began once the roads were opened and U.S. operations there ended after only seven days.<sup>96</sup>

Besides having to rush in and help with Haiti's storm mess, the American government had to clean up one of its own at Guantanamo as well after impatient refugees rioted. No deaths occurred at Guantanamo, but the property damage was costly and many facilities for the refugees there had to be rebuilt. The hundreds of thousands spent for repairs to the base, however, was small change compared to the ongoing bill for maintaining refugees at Guantanamo which was getting expensive. Catching/rescuing immigrants with ships, planes and then processing and housing them was costing the United States millions of dollars-- a cost that had been increasingly incurred since the refugees started fleeing Haiti in 1991. Now that Aristide had been returned to office and the junta effectively removed without hope of returning to power, few refugees could claim a need to be given asylum in the U.S. There was no more oppressive regime, and officially

no more instability existed in Haiti. But thousands returning to Haiti could pose a security threat and would be added to jobless pool. Legal problems with repatriating refugees from Guantanamo began almost immediately after the invasion, however, because U.S. officials foolishly decided to allow the American district courts to rule on matters of repatriation which greatly complicated matters and slowed down the effort to clear out Guantanamo.

One complication was dealing with hundreds of Cuban asylum seekers who had joined the Haitian flotillas hoping to also obtain access to the United States once Clinton and pro-Aristide Democrats made noises about softening “racist” American immigration policies and accepting more political refugees fleeing tyranny and oppression. On November 1, 1994 the U.S. district court in Florida extended a restraining order that the U.S. government could not return Cuban immigrants in Guantanamo involuntarily to Haiti. When efforts were made to overturn the restraining order, Cuban immigrants began protesting efforts to take them back to Cuba via Haiti and then rioted causing damage throughout the refugee facility. Fifteen Cubans even tried unsuccessfully to swim across the bay to Cuba. The U.S. military quickly worked to improve conditions at the camp to appease the inhabitants, but knew it needed to repatriate their detainees immediately without invoking any more legal entanglements or obstacles.

Luckily, the 11<sup>th</sup> U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals soon overturned the restraining order and the CINC directed JTF-160 at Guantanamo to start screening immigrants for repatriation. U.S. Coast Guard cutters began to return volunteers, but the task was difficult as cutters were not designed to carry thousands of passengers. Meanwhile, the U.S. was paying to berth cruise ships to act as hotel facilities at Guantanamo, as the base was far too small for holding all the refugees, and unsurprisingly no other nation in the “international cooperative effort” would provide support with the refugee problem. On November 14<sup>th</sup> the issue arose again with Cubans in Guantanamo

when the Clinton administration announced that it wanted to allow Cubans refugees with kids to enter the U.S. for humanitarian reasons and to release pressure, but the U.S. court in Miami ruled that unaccompanied Haitian minors should get same treatment. On November 22, aided by the International Organization for Immigration (IOM), 185 Haitians were granted asylum in Miami. It is unclear why these Haitians were permitted to enter the United States, perhaps it was a calculated move in order to show the international community and those still stewing in Guantanamo that the Haitians' applications for entry were being taken seriously and the American government was still conducting its supposedly altruistic policies towards the plight of Haitians.

Within forty-five days since Aristide returned to power, 15,199 Haitians returned to Haiti by the U.S. Coast Guard in Operation Able Manner. 250 more were returned after training as IPSF at Guantanamo, but JTF-160 was still dealing with thousands left who wouldn't go voluntarily and were still applying for asylum. The U.S. therefore told Aristide that refugees had until January 5<sup>th</sup> to register for voluntary repatriation or else face involuntary repatriation.<sup>97</sup> By end of December, only 294 more accepted repatriation, as the U.S. was already planning to send 2,000 troops from 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment to help deal with remaining 4,500 refugees who wouldn't leave. The problem was that the American government needed to rid itself of the costly refugee headache, but regardless of the course of action to be taken, the refugee issue was going to require more money and more effort. The longer the refugees stayed the longer they had to care for them, but if they left they would have to be legally processed and physically returned which was another burden on U.S. resources. Clearly many would not leave voluntarily, and the Haitian government not very agreeable with the forced repatriation of its citizens. To make matters worse, courts were still hearing attempts by extreme liberal organizations in the United States

such as the ACLU trying to change the process so that the U.S. government would be legally forced to accept thousands of Haitians.

Disregarding the recent shrill attempts by leftist elements to open the floodgates of undesirable immigration, JTF-160 continued to process Haitians at Guantanamo for voluntary and non-voluntary repatriation as fast as possible. Finally, after only 300 more Haitians volunteered to return in January, 1995, the U.S. 11<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court finally ruled that Haitians don't hold the same U.S. constitutional rights as American citizens and the U.S. government was under no obligation to grant refugees citizenship or allow them a lengthy appeal process. The "green light" was therefore quickly given to JTF-160 to start shipping the Haitians back wholesale. Later that month, Haitian officials met with stubborn refugees still not budging in Guantanamo, and took responsibility for them legally. The officials told the refugees that those that did not want to live under Haitian law would have to go through other process legally rather than attempting to enter the U.S. as part of a mass exodus. Nonetheless, the Guantanamo refugee door was officially closed.<sup>98</sup>

Unfortunately, the immigration problems did not end there for the administration. On February 10<sup>th</sup>, 1995, U.S. Immigration reported that Emmanuel Constant, the founder of FRAPH and key Cedras regime supporter, had entered the U.S. on six month tourist visa, but had since disappeared. Constant's access to entry made it clear he was on the U.S. payroll (CIA) as was alleged by the American media. The report inflamed anti-U.S. sentiment in Haiti, which tapped into widespread resentment for so much previous U.S. activity in Haiti that kept repressive regimes in power during the Cold War. When the news about Constant reached Haiti, angry mobs attacked a police station in Limbe after U.S. troops had pulled out of the area and turned over operations to the IPSF. Three IPSF policemen were later reported to be missing, and their



commander was found dead after the attack on police station. The situation demonstrated that Haiti was full of many dangerous undercurrents which could lead to more instability if not kept in check, which seem to be playing out on March 28<sup>th</sup> when gunmen assassinated Mireille Durocher Bertin, a well-known opposition leader and supporter of junta. The incident happened only three days before Clinton's scheduled visit, which made for bad publicity about Haiti's stability and its restored supposedly democratic regime. Wishing to deflect criticism and seem impartial, Aristide asks FBI to investigate killing of his political enemy.<sup>99</sup>

Within a month, the Americans were able to successful transition the mission over to UNIMIH, but the establishment of a Haitian security force still remained elusive. The IPMs were of little use, and the CivPol force that followed them accomplished little more than propping up the running joke of the IPSF. The incoming HDP proved little better and proved that the Haitians were not yet capable of policing themselves within the enlightened ideals of human rights and civil liberties expected of them from their UN mentors. The transition of law and order had actually changed very little, but nonetheless was naturally touted as a resounding success by policymakers in Washington. All had gone according to plan as the Americans handed off the mission to the UN as they executed their exit strategy. U.S. planners had always defined and promoted the all important exit strategy in Haiti to be, "the planned transition of the host nation of all functions performed on its behalf by peace operations forces,"<sup>100</sup> a goal which simply meant leaving the UN in charge and getting U.S. troops out of doing any real peacekeeping and running any real risks. In the opinion of scholar Michael Mendelbaum, "The exit strategy became the mission."<sup>101</sup>

Still the basic conditions for departure were met: creating basic civil order, the return of Aristide, and the conduct of an election resulting in a "peaceful" transition of power. Plus the

military performed well in the invasion and maintaining basic order afterward, while conducting successful civil affairs, PSYOPS, and Special Forces operations. Mission creep had been somewhat avoided too by refusing to involve itself too directly in civil projects, but those that were attempted predictably raised Haitian expectations too high.<sup>102</sup> As high as Haitian expectations may have been for change, American policymakers set their goals amazingly low, defined them extremely vaguely, and unsurprisingly fulfilled them to much self-congratulation. The Americans got in got out without incurring any serious risks, while meeting their vague definitions for “creating secure environment” and “restoring democracy and human rights.” This success, however, was only achieved by accomplishing next to nothing in the strategic or humanitarian realms while leaving Haiti pretty much in the same state it had always been in.

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> John R. Ballard, *Upholding Democracy: The United States Military Campaign in Haiti 1994-1997*, 107.
- <sup>2</sup> Hayden, C.L., ed., *JTF-180 Uphold Democracy Oral History Interviews* (Fort Bragg, NC: XVIII Airborne Corps) x. Found in Ballard, *Upholding Democracy*.
- <sup>3</sup> Ballard, 108.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid, 109-110.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid, 111.
- <sup>6</sup> Donna Miles, "Upholding Democracy in Haiti," *Soldiers* 49, no. 11 (November 1994): 4-5.
- <sup>7</sup> Aristide had to be coached by U.S. PSYOPS teams so he wouldn't accidentally indicate in his speeches that he was going to torture his enemies. Leaflets were also employed, but were simple cartoon animations of happy reconciliation scenes and symbols as most Haitians couldn't read any language. See Douglas Waller, "How Special Ops Campaign Saved Lives," *Armed Forces Journal*, June 1995, 32.
- <sup>8</sup> Ballard, 112.
- <sup>9</sup> Kretchik, 98.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> See Michael R. Gordon, "The Decision Not to Be the Police Backfires," *The New York Times*, 1 October 1994, 4.
- <sup>12</sup> Walter E. Kretchik, Robert F. Bauman, John T. Fishel, *Invasion, Intervention, "Intervasion": A Concise History of the U.S. Army in Operation Uphold Democracy*, 96.
- <sup>13</sup> Kretchik, 97.
- <sup>14</sup> "A Conversation With Former Prime Minister Robert Malval," *Haiti Insight* (February-March 1996), 36. Found in Kretchik, 97.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid, 97. Kretchik basis this analysis on his interviews with senior Army commanders in JTF-180.
- <sup>16</sup> Daniel Bolger, *Death Ground: Today's American Infantry in Battle*. New York, Ballantine Books, 1999, 1-3.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> John T. Quinn, "Marine Expedition to Haiti; September-October 1994," *The Marine Corps Gazette* 79, no. 7 (July 1995): 50-54.
- <sup>19</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, *Making the Corps*, (New York: Shribner Press/Simon & Schuster), 2007, 273.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid, 99.
- <sup>21</sup> Ballard, 119.
- <sup>22</sup> See Kretchik, 101.
- <sup>23</sup> Ballard, 117.
- <sup>24</sup> Ballard, 116.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid, 117.
- <sup>26</sup> For example, Ballard's *Upholding Democracy* is a particularly supportive account of the assertive multilateralist view, the legitimacy issue, and the "success" of the intervention. While Ballard's narrative of the mission is outstanding, his interpretations and conclusions drawn of these events are quite faulty.
- <sup>27</sup> Ballard, 118.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid, 119.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid, 134.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid 135.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid, 121.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid, 121.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid, 121-2.
- <sup>34</sup> Dog Jehl, "Clinton Exults in Swift Success of U.S. Military Force in Haiti," *The New York Times*, 7 October, 1994.
- <sup>35</sup> Ballard, 122.
- <sup>36</sup> Carroll Doherty, "Sharply Divided House Panel Votes to Curb UN Missions," *Congressional Quarterly* 53, no. 4 (28 January, 1995): 291.
- <sup>37</sup> Carroll J. Doherty, "Hill Wary of Putting Strings on Military Mission," *Congressional Quarterly* 52, no. 38 (1 October, 1994).
- <sup>38</sup> Carroll Doherty, "Congress, After Sharp Debate, Gives Clinton a Free Hand," *Congressional Quarterly* 52, no. 39 (8 October, 1994): 2895.

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<sup>39</sup> Ballard, 138.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 122.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 123.

<sup>42</sup> See Carla Anne Robbins, "The U.S. Is Taking a Tentative Approach to Rebuilding Haiti," *The Wall Street Journal*, 29 February, 1995, no. 37, A1.

<sup>43</sup> Ballard, 126.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 124.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 124.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, 127.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 151.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 136.

<sup>49</sup> Clinton's selections for top command positions, including members of the Joint Chiefs, was more politicized than in previous administrations. Clinton's choices gravitated towards careerists who supported doctrines that essentially called for a high rate of interventionism utilizing unique "global reach" assets and supplanting large conventional forces for high-tech quick fixes and "surgical" air strikes (strategies which generally benefitted the U.S. Air Force and the assertive multilateralists). Clinton's selectees were also more accepting of creating permanent U.S. forces under UN control, an elusive policy goal of the president. Critics also charged that Clinton's choices for the top commands were based on political ideologies as well. This issue came to the surface when unabashed Clinton supporter LTG Wesley Clark was promoted to the command of NATO jumping ahead of many much more senior generals. See Adrian R. Lewis, *The American Culture of War* and Wesley Clarke, *Waging Modern War*.

<sup>50</sup> "Soft cap" uniform means wearing the basic uniform with the soft baseball style cap of the Battle Dress Uniform (BDU) or the newer ACU (Army Combat Uniform) with little or no gear, and is quite comfortable and practical for performing non-combat related tasks. On the contrary, "full battle rattle" includes the uniform plus helmet, body armor, pistol belt, ammo pouches, canteen, web gear, and may include other additional items such as radios, maps, GPS, weapons, food, sleeping gear, and a rucksack. Body armor and helmets alone are heavy, uncomfortable, and oppressively hot as all the body's increasing heat from exertion and perspiration has almost nowhere to escape. In hot and humid environments wearing the full battle gear while performing even routine tasks can be increasingly strenuous.

<sup>51</sup> Kretchik, 103, based on a memorandum from Meade to Admiral Miller written sometime around 15 October, 1994.

<sup>52</sup> Kretchik, 106.

<sup>53</sup> Ballard, 148-9.

<sup>54</sup> Captain Michael W. Schellhammer, USAR, "Lesson from Operation Restore Democracy," *Military Intelligence*, 22, no. 1 (January-March 1996): 18-20.

<sup>55</sup> Kretchik, 103-4.

<sup>56</sup> Ballard, 133.

<sup>57</sup> Kretchik, 106-7.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 107-8.

<sup>59</sup> Kretchik, 109. From interview of co-author Robert Baumann with Freeman, 5 May, 1997.

<sup>60</sup> Bob Shacochis, "Our Two Armies in Haiti," *The New York Times*, 8 January, 1995.

<sup>61</sup> Ballard, 139.

<sup>62</sup> For detailed Special Forces operations in Haiti, see Thomas K. Adams, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in Action: The Challenges of Unconventional Warfare*. (London: Frank Cass, 1998).

<sup>63</sup> Kretchik, 117-8. Story comes from "U.S. Faces Weapons, Werewolves," *The Washington Post*, 24 November, 1994.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 119.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 120.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 121.

<sup>67</sup> Bob Shacochis, *The New York Times*, Schwalm Interview, 20 March 1997, found in Kretchik, 121.

<sup>68</sup> Kretchik, 122.

<sup>69</sup> General George A. Fisher, interview with Major Burton Thompson Jr. found in Kretchik, 122.

<sup>70</sup> Kretchik, 122-3.

<sup>71</sup> Fisher, interview found in Kretchik, 123.

<sup>72</sup> Eric A. Doerer, "Operation Vignette: Civil Affairs in Haiti," *Military Review* 76, no. 2 (March-April 1996):

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73, and Lt. Colonel Stephen R. Bowers, USAR, "Restoring Normalcy: Army Civil Affairs Specialists Played Critical Role in Haiti," *Armed Forces Journal* 132, no. 8 (March 1995): 18.

<sup>73</sup> Major Patricia Dallas Horosho, "Health Facility Assistance Hit Team", unpublished research paper, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, KS 1996, 23. Found in Kretchik, 132.

<sup>74</sup> Kretchik, 129-130.

<sup>75</sup> Ballard, 137.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 136-7.

<sup>77</sup> Robert B. Killebrew, "Winning the Peace: Haiti, the U.S., and the UN," *Armed Forces Journal* 132, no. 9 (April 1995): 40-41.

<sup>78</sup> Kretchik, 136.

<sup>79</sup> Ballard, 139.

<sup>80</sup> Kretchik, 136-7.

<sup>81</sup> Ballard, 141.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, 141.

<sup>83</sup> Interview with Major Walter Pjetraj by Dr. John Fishel, Major Robert Shaw, and Dr. Robert Baumann, 13 January 1996, Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Found in Kretchik, 141.

<sup>84</sup> Kretchik, 141-2.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 138-9.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, 138-9.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 139-40.

<sup>88</sup> Ballard, 143.

<sup>89</sup> Larry Rohter, "Haiti's Fate: Out of Repression, Into a Crime Wave," *The New York Times*, 8 January, 1995, A10, and Sean D. Naylor, "Taking the High Road in Haiti Isn't Easy," *Army Times*, 10 July 1995, 8.

<sup>90</sup> Ballard, 145.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 135.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, 142.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, 145.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, 146.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, 152.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid, 138.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, 156.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 147.

<sup>100</sup> Kevin C.M. Bensen and Christopher B. Thrash, "Declaring Victory: Planning Exit Strategies for Peace Operations," *Parameters* (Autumn 1996): 69-80, found in Kretchik, 145.

<sup>101</sup> Michael Mendelbaum, "Foreign Policy as Social Work," *Foreign Affairs* (January-February 1996): 25.

<sup>102</sup> Kretchik, 145-6.

## CHAPTER 8

### UNIMIH and Spinning Failure in Haiti

*“Democracy is a political method...and hence incapable of being an end in itself”<sup>1</sup>*

As seen in previous chapters, the objectives of U.S. foreign policy in Haiti were built upon a shaky foundation of rhetoric, self-serving political ambitions, and managing imagery rather than addressing realistic strategic considerations. Just as importantly to consider, the goals of the humanitarian adventure in Haiti were in turn set so low and vaguely to facilitate as little U.S. involvement as possible, which raised Haitian expectations but delivered very little progress in return. American Wilsonian intervention (masked by the fig leaf of internationalism) was not a deeply dedicated national effort, had no real public support, and therefore was purposefully designed for purely political reasons to be executed for as short a duration as imaginable while invoking as little military and political risks as possible. American involvement was anchored to the practice of avoiding risk by ignoring Haiti's root problems while still going through the wasteful motions of pseudo-nation-building. Getting out became the primary goal, and this could only be done through employing the already proven failed practice of handing off the mess to the UN; which was organizationally and financially incapable of undertaking the independent role of a being a credible catalyst for change and progress. Operation Restore Democracy was a whitewash-- an exercise in theater undertaken with the primary objective of creating the illusion that the United States was rescuing failed states and protecting the sacred concept of democracy, all while promoting the fallacy of a “community of nations” working towards progressive ideals in the confusion of the post-Cold War world. This illusion was further dismantled after the American intervention ended and the UN mission hobbled on in Haiti for six more years and accomplished next to nothing. Under Aristide and his protégé Michel Prèval, Haiti reverted back to its corrupt, predatory, and impoverished natural state and the world once again lost interest in

the tiny basket case nation. The whole panacea of restoring Aristide was a farce, as the mission to restore democracy and hope was an incredible wasteful lie. Yet, the Clinton administration and the multilateralists continued to spin Haiti as an incredible success as it returned to its historically dysfunctional self, quite securely unaffected by Clinton's half-hearted Wilsonian adventure.

Despite all the rhetoric about the United States' "deep commitment to democracy in Haiti," America's brief military stay in Haiti with the MNF was a clear signal that the United States wasn't going to leave much of a progressive footprint on the broken streets of Port-au-Prince or the impoverished rural villages of Haiti. Clinton had sold the intervention to Congress and the American public as a short stabilization mission to begin with; as he had little choice given the overwhelming popular rejection of the multilateralist nation-building agenda after the debacle Somalia. The administration made it clear that the troops would not stay long, and unintentionally also made it clear through its policies and actions that U.S. soldiers wouldn't do much while they were there except wait for the UN to take Haiti off its hands. Quickly transitioning this responsibility was the planned exit strategy of the American mission, and the Americans had no intention of committing themselves openly to staying on longer in Haiti with the UN. Involvement in UN missions still made Washington nervous, even with aggressive assertive multilateralists at the helm of policy. UN missions had a tendency to linger for too long in certain situations, as UN forces were deployed to places like Cyprus and the Golan Heights for decades. Americans traditionally had little patience for long military missions and had overwhelmingly rejected nation-building after Somalia, so the intent was to keep the U.S. presence in Haiti limited in duration and scope.<sup>2</sup> As planned from the beginning, the Americans handed Haiti off to the United Nations. Beyond offering some logistical and technical support in

order that UNIMIH could function at all, the Americans dumped it in their lap and claimed a foreign policy success. To that end, on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1995, the UN Security Council passed UNSCR 975 officially transferring the American peacekeeping mission over to UNMIH on March 31<sup>st</sup>.<sup>3</sup> As was the case in Somalia, the UN, however, was unprepared and ill-equipped to deal with the myriad of nation-building tasks General Fisher was transferring to UNIMIH.

With UNIMIH now in place, the UN planned to continue stability operations and “reconstruct” Haiti’s government and economy while working alongside the restored government. This construct was a typical Chapter VI mandate, as a “permissible environment” hosted by Aristide’s government. The World Bank and other donors pledged \$660 million in reconstruction packages and another \$240 million in military assistance over the next fifteen months. Meanwhile the Haitian parliament busied itself with passing amendments to set up the next legislative elections to take place in June, preceded by voter and candidate registration in early April.

Almost immediately, the restoring democracy experiment ran into trouble as Aristide started showing his true colors. On February 23<sup>rd</sup>, former President Carter, Senator Sam Nunn, and Colin Powell visited Haiti for three days. The three man team which had prevented a violent invasion in September quickly received a cool reception after Carter asked Aristide to maintain his neutrality in the upcoming municipal and legislative elections. Aristide and his “supporters misconstrued Carters advice as meddling in Haitian politics and protecting ‘old U.S. allies’ as fears and misconceptions continued”<sup>4</sup> in Haiti despite the recent changes. Later, however, as he hosted Strobe Talbot and some U.S. business leaders who would back economic assistance in Haiti on March 4<sup>th</sup>, Aristide suddenly promised he would remain neutral. Certainly, the timing of Aristide’s promise was not coincidental given American assurances of more aid and economic



ties, as well as Talbot's commitment of significant U.S. support personnel and equipment (capped at 2,700) to aid the mostly ragtag CARICOM contingents under UNIMIH.<sup>5</sup> Aristide, nonetheless, was showing strong signs of returning to his old uncooperative ways.

Meanwhile on March 27<sup>th</sup>, USACOM transitioned to redeploy 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division back to the United States as UNIMIH assumed control of the mission. Brigadier General James T. Hill assumed command from General Fisher as the formal transformation phase was undertaken. Clinton reported to Congress under the War Powers Act that Haiti "remained calm and relatively incident free," as Aristide confirmed that the country was now secure enough to transfer operations from the MNF to UNIMIH. On March 31<sup>st</sup>, Clinton, General Sheehan, Boutros-Boutros Ghali and other dignitaries attended the transition ceremonies. Major General Kinzer assumed command of both U.S. forces in Haiti (USFORHAITI) and UNIMIH under the "dual-hat" command concept. U.S. troops, although only designated as taking on a support role, still consisted of 40% of the 6,000 man UNIMIH force.<sup>6</sup> The rest of the force consisted of a mishmash of Canadians, French, Pakistani, and small CARICOM and African contingents supporting the UN and NGO operations.

UNIMIH's mission had several specific goals: (1) sustain the secure and stable environment in Haiti (2) establish an environment conducive to free and fair elections (3) professionalizing Haiti's security forces (4) protect international personnel and key installations.

The most basic mission of UNIMIH was assisting the elections for a new president to succeed Aristide, the only act that would really signal that sufficient political progress had been achieved. A successful election was viewed as proof that Haiti was able to manage its own affairs without a foreign presence.<sup>7</sup>

Clearly, UNIMIH's basic function was to help facilitate a symbolic act, to help manufacture the *imagery* of elections, stability, and independence. As the Haitian government reestablished itself after the foreign imposition of relative order, Haiti's more secure environment was a cornerstone

to returning it to a stable democratic state. But creating relative security and conducting elections still weren't going to solve Haiti's real problems with exercising democracy. John Ballard notes that:

... experienced Haitian observers understood that the appearance of calm and even the achievement of a period of greatly reduced instability could not counter-balance the years of cultural and societal abuse that had been the Haitian standard for most of the proceeding century. The only real solution for Haiti would be a healing process that took time and the recovery of a sense of identity that engendered trust among Haitians in all walks of life. The question of how much time foreign forces were needed to ensure this long-term recovery in Haiti remained open for speculation.<sup>8</sup>

The appearance of stability (at least temporarily) became less of an issue as both the UN and Aristide were satisfied that that Haiti was secure enough to permit the transfer from the heavy-handed American-led MNF to the softer touch of UNIMIH, and more importantly that elections could be successfully carried out that year. The real threats to Haitian security and stability, however, were not elements seeking to disrupt elections, but the anemic economy which was improving too slowly to promote the idealistic changes envisioned by the multilateralists. Haiti wasn't productive enough to fund its security and institutional improvements, and economic listlessness often bred unrest. The transition stage in restructuring Haiti's security forces therefore was to be eased by massive infusions of foreign aid and investment. Neither of which fully materialized, however, making this attempt to keep Haiti on track even more precarious. A budget cutting U.S. Congress too wasn't willing to keep Haiti on perpetual welfare. By 1995, the U.S. had publicly sworn off nation-building, and was finally beginning to see that its past forays into Somalia and even earlier in the Caribbean had produced counter-productive economic dependencies in target nations. Ballard writes, "The United States made the strategic decision to avoid mission expansion that nation-building entailed and Meade and Fisher were prohibited from directly contributing to the Haitian economy. Yet, no other organization stepped in to

provide the assistance needed to fully restore the financial foundation and economic productivity that real, enduring stability required”.<sup>9</sup> With the U.S. contributing less and less to Haiti’s economy directly, that left the UN and the international community to prop up Haiti’s expensive recovery. The UN donations, however, weren’t sufficient enough to even return Haiti to pre-embargo levels. It was a fatal flaw in the concept of rescuing Haiti, as the hundreds of millions being poured down the Haitian economic sieve would still never amount more to a drop in the bucket of what was needed to put Haiti on its own feet.

Despite the fact that Haiti would remain impoverished and inherently unstable as a result, UNIMIH’s main focus was on promoting democracy, the fundamental linchpin of the intervention. The return of elections, especially the presidential elections after the interruption by the junta’s takeover of the government, was the symbol of the mission’s meeting all the international goals of restoring or rescuing Haiti; the concept being that fostering democratic institutions would allow the country to continue to develop and prosper. Conducting elections, especially from the American viewpoint, became the litmus test of success. Hence security operations and reinstituting the Haitian political process became the priority of operations throughout 1995.<sup>10</sup>

Stability, however, remained precarious, given the nature of Haitian political culture. Aristide’s government still remained suspect of seeking revenge and plotting to destroy its opponents. The Pentagon even had information that perhaps a dozen opponents were marked for assassination. Others feared that the resurrected government would use all types of illegal and disreputable methods to ensure full implementation of Aristide’s major initiatives. Many of the initiatives included punishing political opponents, rewarding supporters with graft, and taking unhealthy steps to undermine a market economy. Other problems also extended beyond Aristide

and politics. Judicial reform was also not progressing very quickly, as cases were heavily backlogged and the prisons were still clogged with inmates.<sup>11</sup> Boat refugees were still trying to sneak in by the hundreds into the United States, and Coast Guard cutters were routinely intercepting vessels packed full of Haitians. Aristide still however, obstinately refused to renegotiate the Alien Migrant Interdiction Operation (AMIO) that would have allowed the rescue and direct repatriation of Haitian migrants at sea.<sup>12</sup>

Despite these realities, UNIMIH and Kinzer focused on elections as the crux of the mission. It was believed that conducting successful local elections would provide the best indicator of Haitian support for the national government and Aristide's programs. "It was anticipated that their outcomes would show massive support for President Aristide's Levalas support group, reinforcing Aristide's position almost as another presidential election would have. Finally, local elections could serve as an excellent vehicle for teaching the fundamentals of democracy that had been frequently ignored since the years that Papa Doc Duvalier took control".<sup>13</sup> On April 10<sup>th</sup>, the CEP delayed the elections for three weeks until June 25<sup>th</sup>, with run-offs to be held on July 16<sup>th</sup>. It was decided they needed more time to prepare, would give candidates more time to campaign, and give voters more time to register. By May 17<sup>th</sup>, the CEP compiled a list of authorized candidates which included 133 for the Senate, 650 for the Chamber of Deputies, and 650 for local elections. With the Americans providing ballots and airlifting them across the country via helicopter, over 10,000 polling stations were opened across the country for 3.5 million registered voters.<sup>14</sup>

UNIMIH gave logistical and security support to the elections held on June 25<sup>th</sup>. "Fifty percent of the population had registered to vote for some 10,000 candidates, which was a significant demonstration of the people's faith in the democratic process."<sup>15</sup> Immediately after the elections,

however, political opponents accused the Levalas Party of voting fraud and irregularities, some of which included collusion on the part of the UN. Most of the problems were more due to lack of proper equipment and training, but still the process had a tainted feel to it. Run-off elections were postponed until August 13<sup>th</sup> due to the charges of irregularities. One of the biggest problems with the elections was that no one had much training in how to properly conduct uniform voting practices or exercised any faith that mistakes and irregularities weren't evidence of fraud. Another major problem was the overwhelming illiteracy of Haitians. Ballots had to be colored coded because most voters couldn't read candidate or party names. This made confidentiality an issue as well. Access and transportation to polling stations in isolated rural areas was also problematic. Despite these issues, planners enthusiastically saw the elections as the first step "that the country was well on its way towards democratic health."<sup>16</sup>

This assessment, however, was overwhelmingly too optimistic. In May, 1995 the UN Civilian Mission in Haiti released its Human Rights Report which listed several concerns regarding the elections and growing problems with crime. The report not only outlined the lethargic nature of Haitian courts, but reported a trend in politically related murders which included the killing of former Army colonel Dumarsais Romulus. These crimes were officially written off as just violent robberies, but many suspected that Aristides's supporters were still seeking their revenge or perhaps that Aristide's government was directly involved. The security situation was still precarious. On April 13<sup>th</sup> a prison riot occurred over the horrendous conditions in the National Penitentiary forced UNIMIH to intervene, leading to the wounding of two prisoners. UNIMIH again was forced to step in to restore order when a gang shootout in Cap Hatien wounded ten people. On April 25<sup>th</sup>, eleven prisoners escaped from the National Penitentiary, including the suspects involved in the U.S. embassy killings. More political murders ensued in May and

tensions in the streets heated up. Teachers, later joined by student protesters, took to the streets demanding better pay for teachers. The protests only dissipated when Aristide promised to raise their wages. The situation in Haiti was still shaky, but believed to be conducive enough to press on with the heavily symbolic elections.

In another effort to invoke more symbolism, the OAS held its annual meeting in June in Port-au-Prince to promote positive imagery of the restoration of stability and the return of Haiti to the international community. Security measures were obviously heavily intensified to protect the production of this imagery to make Haiti look stable and safe. At the meeting, the OAS passed Resolution 824 granting \$500,000 in financial assistance for reforming Haiti's derelict judicial and administrative systems. The intent was that Haiti would increase its security and stability and be able to open its doors for more international tourism and trade after years as a pariah state. The following week, the UN also voted to extend its human rights monitoring mission to February, 1996.<sup>17</sup> The international community continued to invest in Haiti's reform and recovery.

By the end of August, twelve months into the mission, direct costs of the invasion were estimated to be \$596 million, but these costs were deemed justifiable due to the conduct of elections and maintaining a secure environment for them to take place. Run-off elections took place in September, but only 10% of the voters turned out.<sup>18</sup> Results again supported the Levalas Party, which only confirmed to Aristide's rivals that the elections were rigged against them.

More problems grew as the presidential elections drew near in September, as protests took place in Port-au-Prince against the privatization of large corporations. Aristide brushed the incident aside, and in an indication of his own hubris, designated a two-week mourning period to commemorate the coup against him. To make matters worse, Prime Minister Michel resigned in

protest after the Haitian cabinet rejected the privatization provisions required by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Privatization was a sensitive issue, as many elites believed it went too far. Aristide's attempts to financially destroy the traditional elites were at the core of the attempts to restructure the economy, but so too were his leftist-dominated government's disregard for free market principles. On November 8<sup>th</sup> Clinton reacted to Aristide's economically self-destructive activities by announcing that the U.S. would withhold \$4.6 million in aid pending reform through privatization, but he still soon released \$1.3 million later to help pay for the elections in December. The loss of Michel, the bridge between Aristide supporters and the other political elements, was a blow to the image of the legitimacy of the government. Aristide could afford the loss, however, now that the national elections had placed so many Levalas members into parliament seats and local positions. Michel could be viewed as expendable as his invaluable contribution toward stability during the crucial transition phase had now since passed. Haiti's Foreign Minister, Claudette Werliegh, was named on October 23<sup>rd</sup> to replace Michel.<sup>19</sup>

The UN continued nonetheless to focus not on the growing anxiety about Haiti's return to strongman politics under Aristide and the Levalas Party, but rather on the importance of elections and the symbolism surrounding them. On October 13, 1995, Boutros-Boutros Ghali and Vice President Al Gore attended ceremonies commemorating the anniversary Aristide's return to Haiti. The dignitaries were buoyed by news that the CEP was prepared to hold presidential elections in December, and that the UN had recently announced that it could end operations in Haiti by February 1996. In November, the last of 21,783 refugees processed at Guantanamo Bay finally returned to Haiti, and the expensive and exhaustive effort to process the tide of Haitian boat people finally came to an official end.<sup>20</sup> U.S. military activity had not ended, however, as the Clinton administration had in June initiated more nation-building projects by deploying

engineering assets to conduct infrastructure and humanitarian assistance projects across the country under “Operation Fairwinds”. These projects were labeled as short duration “training exercises” under USACOM, although in actuality they were direct unilateral attempts to contribute to the renewal of the Haitian economy and infrastructure. Clearly, Fairwinds was the administration’s attempt to sneak more nation-building through the back door without officially committing U.S. troops directly to UNIMIH while utilizing the engineering civil projects as more imagery that the U.S./UN mission was producing “progress and change.”

Reality however, kept interfering with the image crafting process designed to make Haiti appear stabilized and that the mission was successfully putting it on the road toward peaceful democracy. On November 9<sup>th</sup>, Aristide’s cousin, Feuille, was killed in an apparent robbery attempt in Port-au-Prince. Aristide reacted strongly to the attack on his family and vowed retribution against those that threatened him. Aristide’s public tirade coincided with the CEP’s announcement that elections would fall on December 17<sup>th</sup>, which was too close for comfort. His speech at his cousin’s funeral on November 11<sup>th</sup> touched off several days of riots. Aristide accused UNIMIH of not providing enough security, once again demonstrating his habit to lay blame on others and show his ingratitude. His explosive rant “nearly stalled the entire reform process”.<sup>21</sup> Despite Aristide showing his fangs, the Americans and their UN counterparts promised to continue to aid his government after the pullout even though UNIMIH had already been preparing to terminate the mission. Fairwinds was also designated to continue unabated.

Despite the assurance of continuous involvement in Haiti’s recuperation, Aristide continued to lash out at his international benefactors and unveiling what the CIA had earlier warned Clinton about him being “imbalanced and an ingrate.” Aristide started making public statements about wanting to stay on as president for another three years, to recoup his lost time in office



during his exile. The Levalas Party supported the initiative, but many wondered if he was taking the first step in holding on to office indefinitely. Most observers believed that he floated the idea in order to control the process and build popular support for his hand-picked successor by reminding everyone of his own popularity. Later, as the election neared, Aristide nonchalantly performed an about-face and announced he would leave on schedule.<sup>22</sup> Although he would abide by the constitutional rules governing reelection, it was clear that he was quite willing to manipulate the system towards his own ends.

During his last days in office, however, Aristide continued to abuse his position and insisted on placing his stamp on as many changes he could muster before vacating power. First, he again renounced Coast Guard repatriations of Haitian citizens, a move that boosted his popularity at home but served no practical purpose towards stabilizing Haiti or easing America's costly refugee headache.<sup>23</sup> Next, he announced his intentions to marry before leaving the presidency, which as a defrocked Catholic priest he was certainly now able to do, but it all seemed very politically orchestrated. The impromptu marriage to coincide with the very end of his term was used in order to paint a symbolic image of his selfless devotion to state always coming before his own needs. The very public official wedding too was perhaps another blatant attempt to keep the spotlight solely fixed upon himself at a crucial time when Haiti was supposed to be looking for new leadership figures to replace him. In his final days he also fired the Police Director, General Rameau, and replaced him with his own head of personal security, Lieutenant Colonel Jean-Marie Celestin. He then demobilized the tiny thirty-seven man Haitian Navy, and turned it into an even smaller civilian style coast guard simply to demilitarize its foundations and show that he could reach out and undercut anyone not part of his political machine. It was during this period that he also dispersed the ISPF and integrated what was left of it into the HNP, and subsequently

broke all his assurances that the ISPF could apply for spots in the academy. By dismantling FADH, the border patrol, the navy, and even his own interim police force, Aristide had effectively destroyed every vestige of the right-wing Haitian military and replaced it with a neutral but weak security force which was in reality beholden to himself and the now completely dominate Levalas Party.

The political plot thickened on December 8<sup>th</sup> as presidential front runner candidate René Prèval announced that if elected, he would ask the UN to stay longer in Haiti. Immediately following this, Aristide announced his total support for his old ally Prèval. Following on the heels of Aristide's gambit to speculate about staying in office, this move made it impossible to disassociate supporters' desires to keep Aristide from turning into sure votes for the already popular Prèval. Prèval therefore would become Aristide's heir apparent (and become politically beholden to Aristide) and cement the Levalas Party firmly into control.<sup>24</sup>

Much to the chagrin of international planners who had pinned mission success to the imagery of fair elections, the presidential election on December 17<sup>th</sup> was a letdown. There were few disturbances, but less than 30% of registered voters bothered to cast a ballot.<sup>25</sup> 87% of those who did vote cast their vote for Prèval proving his immense popularity, but it also indicated that few felt there was any point in running against him or that there was any chance that anyone other than a Levalas candidate would win.<sup>26</sup> It was a sure sign that the initial euphoria of elections had worn off quickly and that few had faith in the fairness or the necessity of the election process. Observers were even more pessimistic about the "milestone" election the Clinton administration touted as proof of a successful intervention. Former U.S. ambassador Ernst Preeg noted the election:

...was seriously flawed in a number of respects. The provisional election council was challenged by the opposition parties. The media was harassed, with a few members

beaten, and they were effectively silenced. It was a very brief election campaign. All the centrist and conservative parties boycotted the election. They had won a third of the vote five years earlier.<sup>27</sup>

Regardless of how flawed the election may have been, Prèval lost no time in acting on his victory. He immediately met with Tony Lake and General Shalikashvili to formally discuss extending the UN mandate another six months. On January 10<sup>th</sup> his request was granted as the UN agreed to keep a retention force of 1,500 military personnel after the bulk of UNIMIH forces had departed. The bulk of the force would consist of Canadian troops, but 2,200 American soldiers would stay on through February 1996 to ensure another smooth transition. USACOM set April 15<sup>th</sup> as the target date for the withdrawal of all U.S. forces. Despite Clinton's often repeated promises about withdrawing in "months not years," the American military was staying in Haiti for almost a third year.

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1996, Prèval was inaugurated in the first democratic transition between two presidents elected by universal suffrage since 1804. Madeline Albright, Ambassador Swing, and General Sheehan were in attendance to witness the fulfillment of the American and international goals which was a culmination of all the rhetoric and symbolism of Clinton's policy to "uphold democracy" in Haiti. Boutros-Boutros Ghali formally announced initiation of the six month extension requested by Prèval to be supported by 2,500 UN troops placed under the command of Canadian Brigadier General J.R.P. Daigle and assisted by the U.S. Support Group in Haiti (USSPTGHAITI). At the end of February, Ghali later announced another four month extension would be added to the mission. In June 1996, another UN support mission (UNSMIH) was initiated to continue internal reforms.<sup>28</sup>

"Fairwinds" missions were also continued beyond 1996, which ensured that thousands of Americans troops were still rotating through and intervening in Haiti conducting mini-nation-

building on the sly even though the U.S. had officially pulled out over two years earlier. The Americans continued “Fairwinds” throughout 1997, which were later renamed “New Horizon Haiti” missions in 1998.<sup>29</sup> These American projects repaved twelve kilometers of road, dug sixteen wells, built thirty schools, and medically treated over 40,000 Haitians in 1996. Only so much could be done, however, as the Americans and Prèval were careful not to invoke images of too much dependency or another American occupation. U.S. forces also continued contributing direct logistical, engineering, and medical support to UNIMIH as USSPTGHAITI (U.S. Support Group Haiti) after October 1996, although Clinton had promised several times the previous year that they’d be gone by April. “New Horizons” nonetheless continued and cost taxpayers \$20 million in 1998 alone. It was true that American infantry and MPs weren’t patrolling the streets of Port-au-Prince anymore, but the Clinton administration had agreed to have the U.S. pay for the operating expenses of the Pakistani battalion that was there performing those tasks.<sup>30</sup> In essence, it was more bait and switch by the Clinton administration-- the Americans never really left Haiti after March 1995 and were still flipping the majority of the bill for conducting UN nation-building there.

Still, despite the money and energies being slid into Haitian nation-building, little real progress was made in restructuring or resurrecting Haiti. Symbolic elections had been successfully conducted, small civil works projects were conducted, but little else had been identifiably improved since the Americans left Haiti to the UN. Western leaders overlooked reports of corruption by Aristide and clear indications that he continued running the country from behind the scenes after he stepped down.<sup>31</sup> Democracy brought neither growth nor stability to Haiti and very few of its institutions had been reformed, especially the security forces which had been such a focal point of Operation Uphold Democracy. The HNP too was anything but the

“professionalized” police force it was envisioned to be. Although over the years their appearance slowly improved, the HNP was still poorly trained and unmotivated and feared taking on any real risks. Ballard writes:

HNP appeared weak and dubious at best. For a member of the HNP to prosecute any criminal at length was to incur risk, with little assurance of help and no reward. Even job self-satisfaction was difficult to cultivate when the Haitian government was constantly at odds over the role of the police. The average HNP’s best interests lay in the direction of looking good, doing only what is required, and trying to stay sufficiently neutral so that he could easily shift to whatever side might eventually win out in the future Haiti. Few HNPs stood up to big crime or confronted the violations of important people: too much fear and not enough trust existed to significantly change the old ways of Haiti. No one was willing to bet on the Prèval agenda.<sup>32</sup>

As seen in the previous chapter, the HDP became increasingly corrupt and occasionally reverted to much of the same thug tactics and human rights abuses of FADH. The rest of the criminal justice system too remained a sad joke. Despite the training by ICITAP, police precincts still kept few if any logs of their activities and arrests. Prisons too still remained overcrowded cesspools and few if any records were kept of who the inmates were or how long they had been incarcerated. Court records and procedures were little better despite all the attention given to their restoration in Uphold Democracy and its UN follow-on missions. The security apparatus and criminal justice system had not been significantly reformed.

Just as sadly, the intervention and subsequent elections had changed little for the average Haitian. As an American observer noted, “Life remains an existence defined by grinding poverty and abject squalor that the imposition of democracy from above will do little to alleviate anytime soon.”<sup>33</sup> Gas was somewhat cheaper than before, but the streets were so strewn with potholes and filled with more vehicles that one driving the streets of Port-au-Prince was no better off. Open sewers systems still filled the air with a putrid aroma, rotting piles of garbage were still common in the streets, and untold thousands still lived in overcrowded streets lined with dilapidated

shacks. Basic foods like rice and beans were still quite expensive for the poor to purchase. Thousands called “cocoa rats” lived at the city dump, who subsisted on the truckloads of waste dumped by UN forces. Soldiers had to surround the trucks with barbed wire and keep the hundreds of Haitians fighting over the garbage at bay until they could finish dropping their load. Soldiers reported that every scrap of the garbage would disappear within a day or two. Desperate Haitians still turned to crime as well. Vigilante crime had declined considerably in 1995-1996, but still was not uncommon and violent crimes rates including those tracking robberies and carjackings still held steady after the MNF departure.<sup>34</sup> Crime, while greatly reduced since the days of the Cedras regime, was still a major problem and the government was incapable of dealing with it or operating a functioning justice system. People were safer at night in their beds, but the government was still inept, ripe with corruption, and unresponsive in providing security for its people. Even Washington’s pet project, the formation of a new Haitian police force, was so underfunded, corrupt, and mismanaged that it had to be scaled back after 1996. Few Haitians had any illusions that Prèval’s government could fix any of these major issues while Haiti remained shrouded in abject poverty, stagnation, and backwardness.<sup>35</sup>

Abject poverty was always the root problem, and the intervention had done little to alleviate it. Despite the gestures of symbolic nation-building and repeated infusions of foreign guidance and aid, the economy continued to be abysmal. Two-thirds of the Haitian budget came from foreign aid. Poverty was still rampant, unemployment was extremely high, and the government had done little to spur investment, growth, industry or fix the dilapidated infrastructure as Prèval lacked any real backbone to undertake any real reforms under international guidance or make tough decisions to shake up the status quo.<sup>36</sup> Haiti was economically declining as the private sector was being driven out of business and food prices skyrocketed. Most honest Haitians just

tried to make do and survive the best they could, hoping for change. One Marine commander described it as “the busiest poorest place on earth.”<sup>37</sup> Ironically, despite the infusion of foreign aid, it wasn’t the professed manufacturing sector that prospered, but the growing trade in foreign currency laundering became the economy’s star performer. Amongst all this dysfunction and chaos, the Haitians did manage to greatly improve a major source of its income in one sector—drug smuggling. Haiti increased its role as an international cocaine trafficking point, transmitting more than 13% of all the cocaine being brought into the United States. This was four times the rate during the Cedras regime<sup>38</sup> that the Clinton administration had argued was such a national threat that justified an invasion of Haiti.

By 1999, the overall situation had only worsened. Prèval had no effective government to carry out his long-term plans for improvements, and his support generated by Aristide’s Levalas party was splitting or draining away. Prèval failed to negotiate a satisfactory CEP for the April 1997 elections but defiantly conducted fraudulent legislative elections anyway. Despite its success in seizing more control against the opposition parties, the Levalas Party continued to fight among itself and restless factions within it challenged Prèval’s leadership. The increasingly antagonistic legislature struck at Prèval by refusing to legitimize his selection of a new prime minister, which led to a twenty-three month long crisis.<sup>39</sup> As Prèval called for yet another extension of the UN presence, his own legislature passed instead a measure designed to end the foreign presence in the country.<sup>40</sup> A wave of political assassinations and political bickering paralyzed an already moribund Haitian parliament. Prèval then dissolved the parliament and began ruling by decree.

As the situation deteriorated, on March 13, 1999, General Charles Wilhelm, the U.S. Southern Commander, testified before a House Appropriations Committee that the U.S. military presence should be terminated. Wilhelm stated:

As our continuous military presence moves into its fifth year, we see little progress towards creation of a permanently stable internal security environment. In fact, with the recent expiration of parliament and the imposition of rule by presidential decree we have seen something of a backsliding.<sup>41</sup>

Wilhelm also expressed concern that more and more resources on these humanitarian missions were being used for force protection in the deteriorating environment.<sup>42</sup> It was soon made apparent that Wilhelm was not exaggerating the dangers. On April 23, gunmen fired at U.S. Marines preparing for their morning run outside the U.S. military compound.<sup>43</sup> Despite the obvious deterioration, the Clinton administration continued to promote the company line about helping Haiti and employed the usual tactic of emphasizing it was already downsizing the U.S. commitment in Haiti to undercut any Congressional initiatives to pull troops out. “The President is committed to reduce and eventually withdrawal our forces there, David Leavy, spokesman for the National Security Council stated. “We have not made any final decisions and we continue to be committed to Haiti’s democratic transition.”<sup>44</sup>

Washington’s “democratic transition” policies, however, had always been tied tightly around the jaded personage of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was again planning to run for the presidency after being a chief source of corruption behind the scenes in the Prèval government and a major obstacle to UN attempts to reform Haiti’s dysfunctional institutions. Aristide’s ability to weave corruption throughout the government and undermine the UN’s efforts to establish a stable democratic state was all too apparent. Since his triumphant return, Aristide and Levalas obstructed the creation of democratic government and the establishment of a free market economy. By never fully cooperating with the international do-gooders during his short



presidency, Aristide had politely undermined the Wilsonian attempts to reconstruct Haiti. He unnecessarily gutted the military (a key foundation stone in Haitian society) and replaced it with a corrupt and inept security force designed around rewarding those loyal to him. He manipulated the elections to replace him by threatening not to leave, and after stepping down, he again “outflanked the forces of good” through rigging elections. The egomaniacal populist also made sure that Prèval’s government never fully cooperated with the international economic agenda, especially when it came to monetary reforms and privatization of industry. By the time Prèval’s term was in its last year, it was clear that Aristide was calling most of the shots and that he had no intention of practicing the type of enlightened democracy that was wistfully expected to be the culmination of eight years of intervention. Having once worshipped the former priest’s resurrected presidency as a near-holy event, by 1999 “pro-Aristide voices in the U.S. and the international community were slowly being shamed into silence”.<sup>45</sup> The return of Aristide again to the forefront was not an encouraging sign for the fruition of the Wilsonian mission designed to save Haiti from itself.

Nonetheless, after sitting out Prèval’s term, Aristide would be constitutional eligible to run again in November 2000, and throughout 1999 his Levalas Party was focused on conducting elections that would put him right back into power. Aristide was still widely popular despite the cloud of corruption that surrounded him, and he appeared to be the easy favorite. *The Wall Street Journal* reported, “Little stands in his way except perhaps his own arrogance and the excesses of his entourage.”<sup>46</sup> In preparation for his election, in March Aristide and Prèval formed a new CEP that allowed the opposition, *L’Espace de Concertation*, to have limited participation in the new government. Soon after, however, the government drove out the opposition ministers and neutralized the CEP to conduct bogus senate elections to install more pro-Aristide candidates.

These last two election cycles (1997 and again in 2000) were widely dismissed as rigged and were never really sanctioned by the United States or any other independent international observers.

With its mandate in shambles and violence increasing, American and UN forces quietly withdrew from Haiti in March 2000. A small token mission, the International Civilian Support Mission (MICAH) remained to monitor the Haitian situation and supposedly serve as forward-deployed staff for a future UN mission to rebuild Haiti if conditions improved. Such was truly wishful thinking. Unfazed by the UN drawdown, the Levalas Party pushed back parliamentary elections to May 2000 hoping for a coattail effect to coincide with Aristide's presidential bid in November. These legislative elections were unsurprisingly ripe with typical Haitian styled violence and corruption. Reports of armed men stealing ballot boxes and poll observers being run off by Levalas goons was followed by and a wave of street violence in which fifteen people were killed including a prominent opposition journalist. Government officials too were also increasingly threatened and assaulted, including a grenade attack upon a council member that killed six innocent bystanders. Two council members resigned in fear after the elections, and one, Leon Manus, fled to the United States after he refused to confirm the results the government wanted him to announce in the returns.<sup>47</sup> The legitimacy of the elections was called into deeper question when it was discovered that eight of the senate seat winners had not received the necessary 50% of the total in the first round. The OAS called for a recount, a move supported by Washington, but the Levalas Party simply refused. Unsurprisingly, Levalas won an overwhelming majority in both houses of parliament.<sup>48</sup> Just as much as before in its history, deep-seated corruption again made elections in Haiti fairly irrelevant. It was quite apparent that Aristide had conspired with Prèval during his administration to eliminate any real political

opposition, and Aristide was continuing to seize more power illegally as he stepped back into presidency. “Yet Washington’s practice was to reluctantly criticize Aristide’s actions and then forgo follow-up accountability.”<sup>49</sup>

This latest round of full-blown election fraud, however, was just too big to ignore. The Clinton administration threatened not to support the upcoming presidential elections and considered imposing economic sanctions if Haiti did not mend its undemocratic ways. Incredibly, it was glaringly ironic that the Clinton administration was threatening the very people it had helped restore to power in 1994. Despite Washington’s threats, Haiti held its presidential elections in November 2000 and promptly voted Aristide back into power. The election was marred by widespread voter apathy and a broad-based boycott. Voter turn-out was as low as 10% in some areas, and all the opposition parties failed to participate after the parliamentary elections had been so obviously rigged in favor of Levalas in May. More reports of polling irregularities and violence were prevalent. Due to the increase of violence and Aristide’s return to power, the UN finally threw in the towel and withdrew MICAH in February, 2001.<sup>50</sup>

The withdrawal was an unmistakable admission of total failure in Haiti for the United States and the United Nations. After two years of directionless policy and posturing, Clinton launched an invasion of Haiti based on flimsy rhetoric and a thoroughly naive faith in the Wilsonian mission of imposing democracy and staking themselves to the false messianic figure of Jean Bertrand Aristide. Eight years and over \$4 billion dollars later, nothing had essentially changed in Haiti. The Clinton administration, however, was never going to admit that this grandiose boondoggle at any point, from invasion to pullout, was anything close to the predictable failure that it became.

As seen previously, the Clinton administration engaged in a heavy exercise of couching the rationale for its mostly rudderless policies towards Haiti in Wilsonian terms and heavy multilateralist rhetoric. This rhetoric was geared towards the importance of “saving democracies” and obligations towards “the community of nations”, not allowing freedom to be usurped, and stopping repression and human rights violations. This spin cycle continued after the launch of the invasion in September 1994 and was continued throughout the intervention in Haiti as the rationale for the American presence there, even long after American troops were supposedly no longer necessary to restoring freedom and democracy. As previously discussed, the Clinton administration used these flimsy foundations as the rationale for its decision to invade and occupy Haiti under the fig leaf of internationalism, many of which were contradictory, self-serving, and had absolutely nothing to do with national interests. Because a majority in Congress opposed Clinton’s assertive multilateralist designs and the “globo-cop” intentions also had almost no support among the public, the administration had to, in George Stephanopoulos’ words, simply “spin even harder.”<sup>51</sup>

After the debacle in Somalia, Clinton badly needed a foreign policy success, and when the Cedras regime finally agreed to step down, he and his staff were convinced he had one. As American troops successfully swarmed into Haiti without opposition and the military and casualty risks practically evaporated instantly, the administration quite thoroughly convinced itself that all its assumptions and policies had been proven to be true. The well-documented public arrogance of Clinton and his foreign policy team resurfaced after the deep humility it they had endured after the messy impasses in Bosnia, Iraq, and Korea, not to mention the pain inflicted by the Mogadishu and Harlan County fiascos. With Operation Restore Hope, however, the dark clouds seem to be all swept away as the rhetoric was turned up a notch and the members

of the administration involved in Haiti seemed bent on announcing this vindication of their supposed wisdom, foresight, compassion and commitment to poor Haiti. Clinton and his subordinates' addresses to the media and Congress were nothing short of political crowing. The evil junta had been "forced to blink first" and removed due to the Clinton's steely resolve, and the oppressed masses of Haiti had been freed and allowed to "return to the community of nations." Most importantly, the crusaders thumped their chests over the restoration of democracy and their beloved poster child, Jean Bertrand Aristide, who was the populist symbol of making all things right in the world again. When UNIMIH later wallowed along and the Wilsonian mission crumbled under the blinding realities of Haiti, the message was slowly muted but never changed. When the true nature of the heavy American investment in Haiti unveiled itself as an exercise in pure futility, the administration's crowing morphed into a well-rehearsed ritual of self-delusion and pretending. The administration kept heralding Haiti as a success story, and that Aristide's and Prèval's governments were making great progress, when just the opposite result was obvious to anyone paying attention to what was happening in Haiti. The cycle of information from the administration went from hard-selling an unnecessary invasion to crowing about its straw-man military and political victories, then finally moved toward denial and pretending everything was going according to plan as their fantasy world crumbled around them. It was foreign policy driven by hubris, self-delusion, and deception.

In the beginning, Haiti policy was just importantly about spinning the administration's unpopular Wilsonian agenda as much as accomplishing anything else. To invade Haiti, Clinton had to sell to the American people some justification for going to war and occupying a third-world country to promote assertive multilateralism as an accepted norm. In conjunction, before and after the invasion the Clinton administration made a conscious effort to "sell" Aristide as an

important symbol of democracy, and promoted that combining his reinstitution with UN parenting would create a panacea for all of Haiti's ills. Clinton stated, "There is no question that the Haitian people want to embrace democracy; we know because they went to the ballot box and told the world."<sup>52</sup> The hard "sell" or spin was that Haitians had embraced and exercised a strong culture in which democracy would naturally thrive and flourish but had been somehow strangely stolen from them in 1991. This, of course, was either a romantic fantasy in Clinton's mind or a purposefully misleading description of the nature of Haitian political culture based on the anomaly of Aristide's election (and its obvious failure and quick reversal). Not only did Clinton proclaim that a UN invasion to reinstall the victimized Aristide would fix Haiti and "stabilize the region" (which was never really destabilized), the administration also consistently emphasized that it was a moral *obligation* for the United States to rescue Haiti.<sup>53</sup> In essence, the spin on events was centered on unfair *victimization*: Aristide was an innocent victim and so were his democracy-loving people. Clinton sold Haiti as a victim state, robbed of its precious democracy which was somehow a serious threat to the entire region and to the institution of democracy itself. Clinton argued the loss of Haiti's (basically whistle-stop experiment in) democracy was too dire for America to ignore, and Americans somehow were obligated to fix it. The election which placed a (corrupt anti-U.S. populist radical in charge who was doomed to fail) president in office in a insignificant third-world nation somehow necessitated U.S. military action because "others" (whom were never elaborated upon specifically) would follow suit in the new world order. Of course, this "coup domino effect" never materialized even as the junta defiantly stayed in power for three years. Not only did not the spin match the facts, it did not support the unexplained notion as to why American lives should be risked to fulfill a subjective

moral imperative that seemed so urgent to fulfill in 1994, but inexplicably not almost two years earlier when Clinton entered office.

Equally spun into Clinton's arguments to go to war against the tiny and hapless Haitian Army was the need to rescue the human victims in this high emotional drama. Haiti's population was accurately reported to be tormented by this faceless group of thugs that were terrorizing their own people, but explanations about the realities of the traditionally volatile political situation in Haiti were left to the imagination. Furthermore, no good reasons were provided as to why action was necessary *now* if this brutality and terror was so unbearable and intolerable *after two years of tolerating it*. As we have seen, the administration was just wishing the Haitian problem would simply go away rather than dealing with it with any level of effectiveness. But after refusing to cut a realistic deal with the junta, the administration wanted to force an unpalatable noose around their necks and then became incredulous when they refused to play along. The relentless victim spin then got cranked up several notches after Cedras reneged at Governor's Island in order to justify Clinton's preordained decision to use force if he couldn't get the junta to cave in under other coercive means. It was only then that the focus again swung back to the *immediate* and dire imperative of saving the countless helpless victims. Dramatic *imagery* in public statements always centered on the brutality of the regime and the "execution of children, raping women and killing priests..."<sup>54</sup> which by 1994 was glaringly becoming an old and tired tactic of the assertive multilateralists. Children and women as victims kept popping up as constant themes in the emotional rationales to use military force in Somalia and Haiti, and later Bosnia and Kosovo.<sup>55</sup> When solid reasons for American involvement couldn't be adequately explained in terms of threats or interests, repetitive imagery of victimized women and children was substituted instead. Even as the dysfunctional interventions drug out and failed miserably, the victimized women and

children the assertive multilateralists argued “couldn’t simply be abandoned.” From beginning to end, the emotional rationale in Haiti was no exception.

Other emotional imagery meant to gin up support for intervention described the plight of helpless boat people and the overcrowded facilities at Guantanamo. In his invasion announcement, Clinton suddenly charged that these situations too needed urgent action. Clinton claimed swift action was necessary not only because of the moral necessity of providing sanctuary for “those fleeing terror,” but because the cost of intercepting and caring for these thousands of refugees was a growing strain on U.S. resources. Of course, what he failed to mention was that there would have been no explosion of refugees or spiraling costs to care for them in Guantanamo had he *not* decided to end repatriation and give them hope for asylum. Clinton further claimed that had the invasion not been undertaken, the U.S. would face an even *larger* exodus of refugees. This too, of course, was disingenuous because Haitians only continued to come because Clinton refused to immediately send them back, given them the impetus to make the journey-- exactly what Bush and Baker had previously warned would happen in 1992. This reason for intervention therefore can be broken down to simple terms: an invasion was somehow necessary to stop an exodus of refugees from coming, but they wouldn’t have come anyway if the U.S. hadn’t temporarily billeted them and publicly agonized over their ambiguous immigration status. Lost inside Clinton’s “sell” on the refugee rationale was the inescapable conclusion that the U.S. had to invade because it was suffering the predictable effects of Clinton’s own inconsistent, illogical, and self-defeating policies towards repatriation of refugees.

Clinton not only sold the need for invasion on emotional imagery over reality, but he and his staff kept harping on the fact that it was America’s responsibility to intercede in Haiti’s



sovereignty. Clinton substituted rhetoric for national interests stating, “When brutality comes close to our shores, it affects our national interests and we had to act.” Other than stopping refugees and somehow saving democracy, this empty Wilsonianism was as close as Clinton got to explaining why America had any interests in Haiti at all. Clinton was arguing in favor of yet again taking on the role of globo-cop to control and police Haiti’s internal affairs, and yet he also was saying, “I know that the United States cannot—indeed, should not, be the world’s policeman.”<sup>56</sup> Notably, it is far too rich to ignore the irony that the primary role of U.S. forces in the MNF mission was to take on policing and security roles. Clinton’s claimed that the U.S. had an *obligation* to police Haiti (and several other nations) but not act as the world’s policeman are stupefying. It was an utter contradiction made in the same breath, or just simply just doubletalk. How can a nation (or power) be responsible to act against brutal regimes that do not pose a direct or even indirect threat to that state, yet that nation is obligated to police it? Clinton implied that the necessity lies in Haiti’s geographical proximity (?) Similar statements, however, were made to justify Clinton’s policing of far away Somalia and the Balkans. A vague sense of moral obligation which could not be qualified or explained was the bottom line of Clinton’s “sell” of invasion.

In selling the invasion/occupation, Clinton evoked hubris as well moral obligation. He claimed, “The United States also has a strong interest in not letting dictators—especially those in our own region—break their word to the United States and the United Nations”. In the age of post-imperialism, how a government breaking its’ word against an aggressive breach of its own sovereignty by another nation attempting to topple that government necessitates an invasion and a military occupation, is anybody’s guess. Breaking an intrusive agreement (even one pushed by a belligerent and self-empowered agenda driven UN) does not automatically erase the inherent

national right to maintain one's own sovereignty. This was especially true when the agreement in question (Governor's Island) was specifically designed to deny said government's right to exist and attempted to remove it and leave its members vulnerable to obvious retribution at the hands of its own internal enemies. Clinton's aggressive multilateralist reasoning towards negotiations again is irrational, basically pronouncing to Haiti's government: "you wouldn't keep your promise made under duress to let us remove you; so that now gives us the moral and legal right to remove you by force because you lied to us about giving up". As was the case seen in Somalia and with peacekeeping in general, the multilateralist fallacy that governments or factions vying for power will simply negotiate away their right to share power or even exist simply because meddling "progressive" outsiders say they should do so is extremely naive and illogical. The "broken promise" rationale and indignation was no realistic justification for invasion, but simply more spin designed to make the use of force look like a righteous decision.

Hubris too was as much in play as the reasons for war Clinton was peddling. Clinton claimed the national honor was at stake in coming to Haiti's aid, but indications point towards it being more about his personal pride than the nation's that were at stake. What is quite apparent in reviewing the sequence of events in 1992-4 is that Clinton's ego was showing up as major factor in his decision making in Somalia, Bosnia, Iraq, and Haiti. Clinton boxed himself in with his meandering decision-making, and when he finally became thoroughly frustrated by his aimless and self-defeating attempts to create cheap fixes in foreign policy, he reacted angrily when his bluffs were called and he routinely resulted to quickly using force after painting himself into a corner. Force was then justified as being the only available option after exhausting the administration's benevolent patience, but it was more emotional reactionary decision making than the stoic calculation of progressively encountering stages of event thresholds being

poetically spun before the public. Such was the case when Aideed easily frustrated Clinton and the UN's attempts to eliminate him from contention in Mogadishu. Cedras and company likewise successfully befuddled the meddling multilateralists and drew out their irritations because they wouldn't simply go away so easily under Clinton's attempts to conduct policy on the cheap through the UN. The junta in Haiti naturally bargained in bad faith to buy time and refused to carry out the ridiculous notion that they would negotiate away everything that had risked and gained up until that point. Clinton and his fellow multilateralists were shocked and outraged when their fantasy concept about negotiating the junta into exile through use of overwhelmingly negative inducements that put them at Aristide's mercy crashed to the ground. Not only did the multilateralist naivety come into play here, but Clinton's personal hubris did so as well. We saw a similar knee-jerk reactions when Aideed flouted similar foolishness, and Clinton's rages and tirades against "not going to be pushed around by two-bit pricks" again finds itself factoring into the decision to quickly resort to use of heavy force.<sup>57</sup> It seems Clinton's penchant for rashly wanting to take down small-time thugs that made him look impotent and foolish had much more to do with the decision to invade than reaching a preset exhaustion within a carefully laid out progression in diplomacy and gamesmanship on more than one occasion. The administration's rudderless approach to foreign policy, including its ad hoc confrontation with the junta, makes it highly unlikely that there was any sort of predetermined triggers in place that precluded a decision to invade after months of dithering and refusing to act unilaterally. Part of Clinton's reasoning for invasion was that the target government refused to eliminate itself upon demand and this was an intolerable slight on the integrity of the U.S. and the UN. Using force then somehow became a necessity to erase this supposed national insult, but perhaps it more about Clinton's bruised ego and desperate politically need to look tough after the *Harlan County* fiasco

and again getting duped at Governor's Island more than defending national pride. As we have seen in Somalia, it wasn't the first time that the president put the management of his own image in front of more pressing policy considerations. In this case the junta made him look impotent, and his ego couldn't tolerate any further castration of his already floundering idealist foreign policy.

Another big factor in the "sell" for invasion was the promise that American troops would not stay long or engage in nation-building because Clinton knew both conditions were overwhelmingly unpopular with the public. Troops were therefore promised to be brought "home in months, not years," Clinton said.<sup>58</sup> Of course, this wasn't exactly true. The MNF was brought home in eight "months" but American troops were involved in UNIMIH missions for more than *six years*. As shown previously, Clinton kept finding ways to keep American troops in Haiti for nation-building and systemically propping up UNIMIH long after MNF officially closed up shop in early 1995. The experience in Somalia had already shown that even under the best circumstances, the UN couldn't function in Haiti without direct American military support, a fact Clinton well knew. So the core of UN forces were always intrinsically American, were aided by many troops directly funded by the United States, and wholly supported by U.S. logistical assets while other U.S. assets were quietly kept rotating in and out to performing nation-building tasks. When it came to pulling out American troops within months, it was pure bait-and-switch. Clinton's "sell" about limited and short U.S. involvement was proven to be untrue.

Another factor Clinton's carefully crafted pitch to invade Haiti was the blatant attempt to openly shame domestic political opponents to intervention. Clinton stated in his address of September 15<sup>th</sup> after carefully painting the emotional imagery of victimized and terrorized Haitians, "I know many people believe that we should not help the Haitian people recover their

democracy and find their hard-won freedoms, that the Haitians should accept the violence and repression as their fate.” It was an elitist position smugly insinuating only the idealists who supported humanitarian intervention had any scruples; any contradictory realist conclusions that saw no justification for invasion somehow being heartless and morally irreprehensible, especially when an invasion would easily save these poor souls and put Haiti on track. Clinton’s sharp words harkens back to the earlier volatile tactics of the Black Caucus, which insinuated that if one didn’t buy into rescuing and uplifting poor Haitians, then it must be a choice based on racism or some other equally morally indefensible position. Clinton too tried to place Haiti into the same context as the invasions of Grenada and Panama made by earlier Republican presidents during the Cold War, in order to somehow give credibility to the operation or perhaps to insinuate that those operations lacked clear validity toward addressing national security either. Finally, Clinton melodramatically equated the Haitian struggle to the course of American independence itself and closed the speech by asking God to bless “the cause of freedom”. Clinton’s speech was a haughty hard sell that evoked extensive victim imagery, emotionalism, and tried to draw upon national hubris and attempting to shame the realists into conforming. Despite all the emotional gimmicks, Clinton’s rationale for invasion, however, still lacked any concrete substance in terms of protecting national interests.

Clinton’s hard sell to invade Haiti found few buyers, but it mattered little. Right after invading Haiti, happy circumstances soon allowed for Clinton and his foreign policy team to turn selling into to systematic crowing about “success” in the Haiti gambit. It seems only natural that Clinton and his team would be euphoric after the MNF roared ashore unopposed and feel a sense of vindication. A violent invasion had been avoided, the no-risk war had panned out exactly as hoped, Congress had been successfully side-stepped; and because there were no casualties

involved, the unenthusiastic public stayed quietly relieved and generally apathetic. Aristide would be triumphantly returned to power, nation-building could be undertaken in Haiti, and the policymakers could notch an important victory in their belts for rescuing the oppressed and reinstituting the “invaluable institution” of popular elections. As long as there were no major casualties and the Americans didn’t stay too long to evoke the irritation of the American public, it was a risk-free adventure and a significant foreign policy victory for Clinton.

In early days of the invasion, the administration was quick to pat itself on the back and claim the adventure as a nearly risk-free success. On September 19, Carter, Nunn and Powell were publicly heralded for their peacemaking efforts that negated the need for a violent incursion. Clinton again emphasized the peaceful transition of power, and the peaceful entry of U.S. troops, which he quickly linked to minimizing risks and casualties. Clinton again asserted that the mission would “be limited in time and scope,” and that a quick hand-off to the UN was a primary goal. Clinton also indicated that he and General Shelton agreed that “protection of American lives is our first order of business.”<sup>59</sup> Clinton’s statements again reinforce the notion of the no-risk war, with peaceful conditions, heavy emphasis on force protection over other priorities, and a speedy exit strategy. After many pleasing statements about avoiding bloodshed and meeting their moral obligations, the only gaff in the moment of triumph appeared in the press conference when Carter prophetically said, “But as Senator Nunn made it plain that one man does not mean democracy. There has to be a national commitment to the sharing of power...”<sup>60</sup> As already shown, this would not be the case in Haiti as the Clinton administration and its UN counterparts pinned everything on the slippery persona of Aristide and the overblown symbolism of ballot boxes.

That same day Clinton reported to Congress that the “deployment of U.S. forces into Haiti was justified by national security interests”.<sup>61</sup> These assumptions were based on the same porous rationale used in his speech before the invasion, which again included Wilsonian ideals that listed saving the victimized Haitians, stabilizing the region, securing U.S. borders from refugees, and demonstrating U.S. reliability in fulfilling its commitments. None of this rationale was spelled out or supported except Clinton’s reiteration that invasion would stem an exodus of more refugees and his reminder that U.S. policy since 1991 had always been to reinstall democracy and Aristide.<sup>62</sup> Clinton invoked UN Resolution 940 and the United States’ multilateral obligations within it, and claimed “An exit strategy for ending the deployment has been identified. Our presence in Haiti will not be open-ended.”<sup>63</sup> This language was identical to that used for the nation-building effort in Somalia, and both incidents were proven to be either obvious deceptions or serious planning miscalculations that resulted in ongoing incompetent misapplications of force abroad.

As more troops poured ashore in Haiti, selling and justifying a risk-free invasion turned to more self-congratulation and spin. Obviously none of the administration’s policies of the early crisis were recalled in summarizing events leading up to the invasion; in fact, they were reframed and spun into a period of quiet resolution and “peacefully pursuing every option with the dictators”. Even then the word “invasion” was quickly exorcised in describing using military force against the Haitian government. At an East Room meeting in the White House, Vice President Al Gore continually referenced the invasion using the term “rescue” at every juncture, “rescue mission,” “rescuing democracy,” and he ramped up the rhetoric about “saving” the Haitians from the evil, corrupt dictators. In turn, Aristide’s rehearsed public dialogue in conjunction with the administration’s spin always centered on rescue and reconciliation. He

spoke in healing language about reaching out to his enemies and, the Haitian military, and addressing Haiti's woes, all of which were later found to be deceptions to placate his multilateralist benefactors.<sup>64</sup> Clinton afterward made television and radio addresses in which he proudly announced progress in Haiti as Americans cautiously restored democracy, but again sold it as a limited mission.<sup>65</sup>

In crowing over its apparent success in Haiti, the administration began to pull out the assertive multilateralist agenda again that had been quietly dampened over the past year and reinforcing the ideology that democratic expansionism and collectivism (Wilsonian core values) were paramount to success in U.S. foreign policy.<sup>66</sup> Again the rhetoric that had actually cornered Clinton into an invasion and a lengthy occupation was placed at center stage as vindication that not only was Haiti a smashing success in his foreign policy, but it was proof that the assertive multilateralist agenda was working and unilateralism was no longer practical or desirable. Madeline Albright boldly asserted, "Rather, in this interdependent world, multilateral approaches are a necessary means of supplementing what we cannot do on our own."<sup>67</sup> Building on the perceived success in Haiti, she promoted a liberal but horribly undefined aggressive strategy which purported that the United States would attempt to generally contain humanitarian crises and human rights violations which became destabilizing factors *before* they affected regions,<sup>68</sup> an impossible pipedream if there ever was one in conducting foreign policy. Strobe Talbot too parroted the fuzzy notion that unilateralism was now somehow defunct in the face of the new multilateralism, because it reduced risks through burden sharing and somehow made the United States more effective.<sup>69</sup> The MNF was to be the administration's "Exhibit A" in the new risk-free foreign adventures, in which short-term, feel-good missions with little or no casualties were readily available via multilateralism. Clinton himself said that the "MNF has proven burden



sharing makes for a lighter load,”<sup>70</sup> which was a statement that was only true on the surface. The load in Haiti was lightened for the MNF, but only by infinitesimal measures which were more of an impractical layer of window dressing than a military asset. As was the dirty secret in Somalia, the Americans were doing the heavy lifting and taking most of the risks in Haiti in a carnival of international symbolism.

Albright also injected the internationalist community rhetoric into the sanctimonious back-slapping over Haiti, as she postured with poetic but meaningless statements that included “restoring Haiti to community of nations” and “the international community makes common cause with the Haitian people in support for President Aristide.”<sup>71</sup> Strobe Talbot vamped this same campy tune saying Haiti could now, “take its rightful place in the growing community of democratic states.”<sup>72</sup> Exactly what criteria by which constitutes who is allowed to have *the right* to be a member of this amorphous community of course would be determined by the assertive multilateralists in Washington and New York who again demonstrated that national sovereignty is an objective matter to be discarded at their discretion in any given circumstance. This hypocrisy was borne out when Aristide proved to be openly corrupt and illegally using his power to deny Haitians their humanitarian rights, but the same Wilsonian crusaders barely acknowledged his government’s transgressions as a “rightful member” of the community.

Multilateralism, however, wasn’t the only prize as it was possibly only a means to an ends in the administration’s hard spin on Haiti. The main pillar of the Wilsonian agenda that was repeatedly brought out as a vindication of Clinton’s foreign policy after the invasion was the rhetorical demand that democracy in Haiti, and everywhere else, be acknowledged as absolutely indispensable. Al Gore, in an address to the Inter-American Development Bank, laid out a detailed description of the importance of a human rights based agenda that was supported by the

collective international will. He said the challenge of the 1990s is the creation of an effective, efficient, and transparent state”<sup>73</sup> to create democracies in the international community. Not only was democracy the only acceptable form of government according to the administration, its rejection, disintegration, or loss anywhere was utterly unacceptable to the United States in the new world order. Haiti was to serve as an example of those who would challenge such a notion. The United States (acting multilaterally, of course) would meet such a perversion with force and transgressors would meet to same sorry fate of the Cedras regime-- unless of course, one considers that they left Haiti unpunished with full amnesty and millions of dollars being placed in their bank accounts. These facts didn’t stop Warren Christopher from announcing after the invasion that: “Together, we have shown that the democratic tide that has swept over this hemisphere cannot be subverted with impunity,”<sup>74</sup> and again, “we have sent a clear and powerful message to would be coup plotters throughout the hemisphere: Democracy—the key to stability in America—cannot be overthrown with impunity and cannot be stolen from the people.”<sup>75</sup> Al Gore chimed into the chorus promoting as a demonstration of American determination: “Together with the international community, we sent a bold warning to would-be tyrants around the world that democracy cannot and will not be overturned with impunity. Together we have made it crystal clear that there no more righteous or mighty force on the earth than the yearnings of people for liberty.”<sup>76</sup> Nothing better summarizes the Clinton’s administrations’ demonstration dogma and posturing after the invasion, however, than Alexander Watson’s statement:

...”we took these unprecedented measures in Haiti because it was in the self interest of every democratically elected government in the region to do so. The message was for the hemisphere at large: The days of the dictators and coups are over. Anyone contemplating the overthrow of a democratically elected government anywhere in the region can expect a strong, united, hemispheric response. Coups will not be permitted to succeed. Thus, our success in reversing the coup in Haiti is a success for supporting the policy of supporting democracy in our region—a policy that has been pursued rigorously under both Republican and Democratic administrations.”<sup>77</sup>

Clinton too naturally took the opportunity to personally weigh in to the push using Haiti as a springboard for more acceptance of assertive multilateralism. Clinton announced in his remarks at the Freedom House on October 6, 1996 it was time to “reassert America’s leadership in post-Cold War world” and to “move from the Cold War world to the global village.”<sup>78</sup> “*We know*” (italics by author) that abroad we have the responsibility to advance freedom and democracy to advance prosperity and the preservation of our planet.” Clinton’s use of the word “know” here is an attempt to supplant an assumption that no other possible conclusions on democratic enlargement are imaginable after the Haitian triumph. In this same speech, he even insinuates that even debating the merits of enlargement and multilateralism is self-defeating and unimaginable. “Bipartisan support for that leadership is absolutely essential as a source of strength at home and abroad,” and that Americans have “an even heavier responsibility to advance our values and interests.” For the Republicans and others who may be in opposition or unconvinced to convert to assertive multilateralism and its goals towards enlargement, Clinton simply decreed the debate was already over. “Unilateralism in the world that we live in is not an option,”<sup>79</sup> he proclaimed. Clinton even strangely tried to tie enlargement as a necessity to domestic prosperity, claiming that there was no dividing line when it came to national security between foreign and domestic policy. This is especially an odd position for Clinton to take, given the fact that he initially ran for office and early on conducted foreign policy on the premise that foreign policy was of secondary and limited importance. Regardless, Clinton now had transformed himself into an engager that tethered democratic expansionism and multilateralism to national purpose and economic well-being. “Promoting democracies that participate in the new global marketplace is the right thing to do.”<sup>80</sup> He claimed America had “special obligation to lead in the world” and used post-WWII initiatives such as Breton Woods and the formation of

NATO as examples of why the United States had to undertake aggressive assertive multilateralism as part of its historical obligation to lead the world, even though no real threat was perceptible to the nation.<sup>81</sup>

After pronouncing unilateralism (somehow inexplicably) dead, Clinton then went after those that dared to reject assertive multilateralism. He opined that the realists and isolationists were simply trying to reverse the “bipartisan progress” made in the last fifty years towards globalism, and arrogantly announced it was not enough to condemn isolationism and rejection of Wilsonianism, but “it is even more important that we explain the way the world was working,” as if to say opponents were uneducated children in need of correction. Clinton tried to sell the assumption that bipartisan support for past global stabilization and security measures should be seen as being no different than his new liberal agenda, and that the ideology of Wilsonianism and unchecked idealism had always been American policy. Sounding like Woodrow Wilson himself, Clinton pontificated, “Let us not forget that our values and our interests are one in the same.”<sup>82</sup> Brazenly, Clinton attacked opponents of his brand of Wilsonian globalism, whom he simply repetitively labeled “isolationists”, in both parties.<sup>83</sup> This was a glaring contradiction to make after painfully crafting Wilsonianism as naturally bipartisan; given the fact his opposition to assertive multilateralism was far *more* bipartisan than his supporters. In an equally odd pronouncement Clinton argued, “We have to drop the abstractions and dogma and pursue –based on trial and error- and persistent experimentation—a policy that advances our values of freedom and democracy, peace, and security”. After proclaiming that the assertive multilateralists had all the answers down pat while his opponents and critics obviously were visionless, Clinton here strangely advocates giving the administration a free reign to return to a directionless play-it-by-ear approach to saving the world.

After dismissing the isolationists as out of touch, Clinton then thumped his chest over his Haiti adventure and rubbed it in their faces. “When we gave democracy a chance in Haiti, a lot of people said it had nothing to do with the United States. Well it did. It did.”<sup>84</sup> Clinton boasted that the administration succeeded in Haiti because, “We backed our diplomacy with sanctions and ultimately, by force. We succeeded because understood that standing up for democracy in our own hemisphere was right for the Haitian people and right for America.”<sup>85</sup>

Clinton didn’t stop at spinning assertive multilateralism and Wilsonianism as irrefutable and bipartisan foundations of foreign policy; he also spelled out how well the administration was conducting foreign policy overall under that approach. He couldn’t help but to take the opportunity of the risk-free invasion of Haiti as a chance to list his foreign policy “successes” under assertive multilateralism, which like Haiti, under even minimal scrutiny actually bared little resemblance to qualified successes. “We’re safer because Russian missiles are no longer pointed at our citizens,”<sup>86</sup> Clinton gloated, and then announced they convinced North Korea to freeze its nuclear program. He also proclaimed Americans were safer because of his tougher campaign in counter-terrorism, and that they were moving toward a democratic transition in Cuba. Unfortunately, for Americans, the truth was quite different. History has born out that none of these “successes” were real and some actually proved counterproductive. It was fairly common knowledge that Russian missiles could be retargeted within seconds; the initiative was purely symbolic lacking any real substance towards making Americans any safer. North Korea hoodwinked the administration out of millions in humanitarian aid while accelerating and expanding its dangerous nuclear program. Cuba remained a belligerent communist nation, and the United States efforts against terrorism under Clinton were anemic and confused which arguably helped lead to attacks globally and on U.S. soil during and after his administration.

These difficult foreign relations issues were no different than the one in Haiti where symbolism countered for more than substance and putting a positive spin on failing policies was more prevalent than the truth.

As the euphoria of the collapse of the junta and the low risk occupation continued, the Clinton administration was locked into selling Operation Restore Democracy and assertive multilateralism as a whole as a huge breakthrough. The administration kept reminding everyone of the importance of removing the brutal regime and placing the transcending Aristide back into his rightful place in the presidential palace. Long after Clinton spun how his invasion saved democracy and prevented a refugee exodus in his “victory lap” speech at Freedom House,<sup>87</sup> his foreign policy team kept spinning Haiti as one big success story. Despite the nature of the built-in limitations of Uphold Democracy to avoid real risks and accomplish very little on the ground, the administration always spun the mission as overwhelmingly meeting all its goals and proceeding on schedule. Advisors briefed the House of Representatives in an upbeat accounting of progress in Haiti to head off any congressional moves to set a deadline promising handing off authority to Aristide. Clinton’s speech on the *USS Eisenhower* also emphasized how much progress had been made in such a short time.<sup>88</sup> Warren Christopher even took to borrowing from Aristide’s own overly poetic remarks to paint the adventure in Haiti as a “rainbow” and “a model of dignity and hope”.<sup>89</sup> Meanwhile, the never-ending spin that presented Aristide as a noble savior of the victimized Haitian masses thirsting for nothing but peaceful democracy was ratcheted up as high as it could possible go. When Clinton arrived in Port-au-Prince, Aristide publicly painted Clinton as a messianic figure by saying that thanks to him, and the peaceful Haitian movement that returned him to power, “Haiti has moved from death to life. The water of violence was transformed to the wine of peace.” Clinton then told Aristide and his supporters,

“Your democracy will be maintained and strengthened by free elections and by respect for the rights and obligations enshrined in your constitution.” Clinton pronounced that they would overcome challenges because their will to succeed is greater. “Thank you for embracing peace, for denying despair, and holding on to hope,” Clinton told them. “Because of your courage and because of your determination, freedom can triumph over fear.”<sup>90</sup>

Much of the information given about Haiti by the administration to the press and Congress throughout the rest of the year was a positive grocery list of international monetary pledges, the symbolic arrival of foreign troops, and the promises to stick to the exit strategy. Much of the other cheery reports involved reporting the fortunate lack of violence against peacekeepers, the orderly transformation of power back to Aristide, and conducting helpful civic projects such as planting trees and paving roads. In early March 1995, Strobe Talbot reported to Congress that the “success” in Haiti was a vindication of the administration’s policies:

Operation Uphold Democracy has fully lived up to its name. It has peacefully ousted Haiti’s brutal dictators, restored its legitimate government, established secure and stable environment... We cannot say ‘mission accomplished’. We have another year of work ahead of us. But we can say ‘So far, so good’. ...Think for a moment where we would likely be today had not acted: The dictators would still be in power, and their campaign of murder and terror against the Haitian people would still be continuing. Tens of thousands of Haitians would still be seeking refuge abroad posing a threat to America’s borders and to regional stability as well... We intervened because it was in our national interests, we intervened after every other alternative was exhausted and we intervened because it was the right thing to do.<sup>91</sup>

As he exalted Clinton’s decisions, Talbot again reminded Congress of Bush’s vague rhetoric that Haiti’s loss of democracy was a threat, therefore continuing to execute the administration’s clumsy choice to falsely claim bipartisanship foundations in their radical Haiti policy while Republicans were simultaneously trying to bludgeon the administration with the War Powers Act. He then optimistically reported that the mission was undoubtedly an outstanding success. The Haitians were heeding Aristide’s call for reconciliation, political violence was disappearing

since the invasion, and that weapon buy-back was performing superbly. He also claimed institutional reform was well on track as police were now civil servants not thugs, and the new trainees were being picked on merit rather than political connections, which of course, was not accurate. Probably most pleasing to his audience was his report that there had only been one American fatality during the mission, as Clinton and his commanders were continuously focused on force protection as a priority. He added UNIMIH was on schedule to relieve the American force and that General Kinzer would still be in command of the Americans remaining behind in UNIMIH.<sup>92</sup> Talbot understood that the other not-so-cheery realities could be glossed over as long as a situation presenting no casualties and no risk ruled the day.

As the mission dragged on throughout 1995, the White House found itself having to defend the increasing investment being made on behalf of the democratic restoration experiment. The tired rhetoric was wearing thin as Operation Uphold Democracy was increasingly not going very well as time wore on. Spin control was then thrown into full throttle mode as ugly truths were omitted for the most part. The administration fudged facts and avoided delivering the full story about the true nature of what was going on in Haiti and distracted them from looking too hard at the investment being made. Albright masked the fact that the Americans were bearing the brunt of the MNF mission (75% of the JTF-190 plus regional assets were American) by explaining that the U.S. troop contribution was minimal compared to the overall UN global peacekeeping force, which she reported ranked only 26<sup>th</sup> in size and that less than 1% of the foreign policy budget was being spent on peacekeeping. Of course, this was misleading as this costs calculation excluded the military costs of Operation Restore Hope (because they fell under DOD, not State), and the number of UN contingents on deployment was still near an all-time high during this period of peacekeeping overreach making the U.S. contribution look smaller in



comparison. She also downplayed the total \$1 billion spent in Haiti in 1994 alone as only amounting to be a contribution of about “\$4 per American.”<sup>93</sup> A year after the invasion Special Coordinator to Haiti, James Dobbins, told the press that Haiti was a continuing success as U.S. troops had rotating home, elections were happening, and inflation had been cut in half. Of course, he failed to mention that troops had rotated out much later than promised, and were still being replaced by smaller American contingents to shore up the UNIMIH mission. The amazing reduction in inflation too was also a natural product of the end of the embargo more than the result of UN initiatives, which Dobbins probably was well aware. The horrid overall economic state of Haiti, however, was too big to hide. Dobbins injected the first official glitch in the administration’s spin machine by publicly saying the “economic renewal still tentative at best” and security still fragile, inexperienced, and untested”<sup>94</sup>

In 1996, the positive spin that all was going according to plan nonetheless continued in the face of rapidly unfolding realities on the ground. The administration still clung to Prèval’s “historic” election as the culmination of democracy and political reformation, and reported that Aristide’s vindictive disbanding of the army and replacing it with the problematic HDP was a monumental success for rebuilding the Haitian government.<sup>95</sup> As far as the White House was concerned, symbolism had completely overridden substance in determining successful policy execution. Even as late as July 1996, Talbot still hadn’t jettisoned the rapidly dissolving fairytale the administration had strutted out in the haughty days surrounding the invasion as he continued to hawk the deceptive company line. “Our policy in this hemisphere has been to promote, strengthen and when necessary, defend democracy. There is no more dramatic example of this policy than Haiti.” He still contended that the mission had a “clear exit strategy and timetable,” even after continuous American military involvement was have supposedly ended, and the UN

kept repeatedly extending its mandate. As the security situation unraveled, he spun the growing political violence and assassinations as being numerically much more preferable to the days of widespread terror during the junta. Even Operation Uphold Democracy's biggest cheerleader and master of Wilsonian rhetoric, however, couldn't ignore the elephant in the room-- the disastrous Haitian economy. "Quite simply and quite bluntly, Haiti won't make it as a democracy unless it is able, with our help, to develop a viable economy."<sup>96</sup>

The other major portion of spin control centered around selling the enormous costs of babysitting Haiti and nursing it "back into the community of nations". Humanitarian aid in first year was estimated at \$97 million (\$57m paid to be financed by the United States). Haiti also needed an estimated an estimated \$210 million to make the most rudimentary repairs to the infrastructure. The United States would also forfeit the \$83 million of Haitian debt in arrears, USAID pledged another \$25 million in relief towards this goal and other nations pledged \$53 million to cover the rest of the arrears. The World Bank unfroze in Haitian assets and another \$30 million from came from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The UN also pushed for \$15 million more to initiate minimum agricultural recovery. Overall, \$375 million (\$87 directly from the U.S.) was spent immediately on aid to recover Haiti.<sup>97</sup> Despite the large expenditures, the administration spun the large American contribution to the strategically irrelevant nation as negligible, and always discussed the costs only in the context of what was happening globally with peacekeeping and couched expenditures with what all the other nations were contributing. Talbot dismissed the massive U.S. expenditures as acceptable thanks to the concept of burden sharing, claiming the United States was only paying for 30% of Haiti's recovery, which would be later reduced to 25%. Talbot quoted Christopher saying, "This is a sensible bargain I know the American people will support," a statement the polls didn't even

begin to vindicate. The administration spun that international donors pledged another \$1.2 billion in support, anticipating that 75% of the cost of helping Haiti would be incurred by others as a “successful instance of burden sharing.” Christopher announced that while the U.S. had already provided \$1.2 billion to UN peacekeeping that year, all this massive funding would be a “chance for people of Haiti to take back their destiny.”<sup>98</sup> In March 1995, Talbot too announced at this time of “burden sharing” that the United States was pumping another \$12 million in business credits via USAID, and claimed that the U.S. government had spent \$700 million thus far on Operation Uphold Democracy.<sup>99</sup> In the later half of that year, Gore was still pushing the idea that the global community pledged \$1.2 billion for next two years, while the U.S. pledged \$187 million in aid that year.<sup>100</sup> The tactic was to constantly contrast the large amounts of American money being spent in the multilateral experiment to even larger figures supposedly being sacrificed by the international community. Alexander Watson explained that the MNF operation had cost the international community \$12 billion up to its departure in March 1995, including \$600 million on military operations and \$300 million the U.S. spent on refugee related operations. Watson dutifully reported more aid from the U.S. Treasury was still being sent Haiti’s way, another \$120 million in 1996 and again in 1997. U.S. humanitarian costs so far were estimated at \$107 million, but he promised the UN and the world community would be covering more of the costs in the future.<sup>101</sup> Despite the ever-increasing costs, Talbot stated in June 1996 that even though the MNF mission was over, the “U.S. still has a vital interest in long-term difficult task of helping Haiti build a stable democracy.”<sup>102</sup>

After allotting continuously increasing amounts of money to rescue Haiti while the administration pretended it was a mere pittance, the burden sharing spin finally was wearing thin in Congress. As the Haiti adventure failure to yield anything more than symbolic results, and

Prèval's term was spiraling faster into the muck of traditional Haitian corruption and waste, the Clinton administration quickly ran out of ways to put a positive spin on shoveling more money toward Haiti. The vast amounts of international investment (American, UN, or otherwise) had produced no lasting fruit in Haiti. By 1996, after billions were spent to rescue Haiti, the administration couldn't demonstrate that burden sharing was working especially after international resources eroded. Spinning the need to continuously spend hundreds of millions annually in Haiti was meeting little success in a now Republican-controlled Congress, who felt no compulsion to pour more money down Jesse Helms' depiction of the foreign aid "rat hole".

Not all the spin control, however, was geared towards creating a perception of overly positive results or downplaying spiraling costs. One element of spin control was incorporated early on to provide cover for the administration in case something went wrong in Haiti. Despite all the high-sounding rhetoric and optimism about rebuilding Haiti's future, the administration always devoted a small piece of its spin control towards building an escape hatch in case things didn't work out in Haiti as planned. Using the exact same verbiage that accompanied the failure of assertive multilateralism in Somalia, the policymakers consistently kept stating throughout the intervention that the outcomes were going to be determined by the Haitians themselves in the familiar "it's really up to them" mantra of nation-building. While self-sufficiency and Haitians embracing change would be obviously be crucial components for success, the public repetition of the notion served as a reminder that blame for failure in nation-building would ultimately only rest on the target nation, not the instigators of assertive multilateralism. As was the case in Somalia, the international community was kicking in the door with gun in hand demanding the country be restructured according to its own desires, but it somehow wouldn't be at fault if the experiment ever went awry. Haitians were painstakingly depicted as malleable peace loving

democrats with great potential, but subsequently would be the only ones saddled with blame if democracy and prosperity somehow failed to take root after the intrusive intervention.

Christopher's gushing rhetoric invoking Aristide's remarks recalling Haiti as a "rainbow" and "a model of dignity and hope" were coupled and finalized with *the abdication of control of the results* of the new radical American foreign policy: "but the responsibility for rebuilding Haiti now rests with the government its' people."<sup>103</sup> Although Clinton claimed immediately after Aristide returned that "They now have the opportunity to make democracy work themselves and to reach their God-given potential,"<sup>104</sup> the administration kept reminding that Haiti's makeover was an extremely iffy situation it wasn't guaranteeing. Christopher's following statements on Haiti's future reiterated Clinton's initial letter to Congress, repeating the "it's up to them" mantra. Christopher told the press, their future "rests primarily with the people of Haiti."<sup>105</sup> Despite the complete violation of Haiti's sovereignty, an invasion and lengthy occupation, and hundreds of billions of dollars spent towards "rescuing and restoring" Haiti's institutions and economy, the administration refused to take responsibility for any outcomes in Haiti throughout the MNF or UNIMIH missions. This was a practice carried over from Somalia, which placed responsibility in the target population's laps, not with the administration or even the UN.

The escape hatch to policy in Haiti was always left publicly open, taking accountability for results off the table from the very beginning. Talbot told the Senate in March 1995 as the MNF troops departed, "Haitian people most solve those (basic problems) themselves."<sup>106</sup> This message remained unchanged a year later when Watson explained to a House subcommittee on appropriations, but only the Haitians own resolve and ability to make difficult decisions will determine success or failure in the end".<sup>107</sup> The administration passed the message directly to the Haitians themselves as Clinton told them, the "future rests on your shoulders."<sup>108</sup> More

prophetically, Gore told them at Aristide's one year commemoration ceremony, "Most of all, the hope of a democratic and prosperous Haiti will depend on the ability of the Haitian people to come to terms with your painful past. This will not be easy."<sup>109</sup> Over and over again, the administration was creating an escape hatch for its policies in Haiti by saying to the Haitians directly, "It's really up to you. If this experiment fails, this administration cannot be held accountable for the outcomes of its own policies during this incursion and usurpation of your sovereignty." This was exactly the same approach that was utilized in Somalia, and when it did fail, as we saw earlier, Clinton and his staff blamed everyone and anything other than themselves.

Predictably, the Wilsonian adventure in Haiti did fail miserably, and it wasn't even until the final days of the Clinton administration that there was any sign of public acknowledgement of the failure of the prolonged peacekeeping boondoggle in Haiti. Even then, the blame was shifted on the Haitians, not the idealistic policymakers who failed to accept Haiti for what it had always been. In the summer of 2000, Luigi Einaudi, the Assistant Secretary General of the OAS observed, "With Haiti, the international community feels as if it has plowed the sea and invested uselessly."<sup>110</sup> After Haiti's useless elections in November that year, one U.S. official explained, "Haiti is considered a failure... There's a sort of psychology at work that we were never able to crack... The problem with Haiti is that they want us to fix it and that's not the way you get things fixed."<sup>111</sup> In sharp contrast, Clinton and his spin team at the top of the administration still insisted Haiti was an American foreign policy success.

Despite the glaring realities of another peacekeeping fiasco, Clinton refused to completely accept that assertive multilateralism was a bust and that his sainted friend Aristide was a corrupt and petty tyrant. The president dismissed or ignored outcomes, and later wrote in his memoirs

that Haiti was one of the biggest successes during his two terms. Clinton claimed that while things didn't work out perfectly, his policies still saved millions of lives, ended brutality and tyranny, and at least gave the Haitians a chance to restore their democracy.<sup>112</sup> With this justification, Clinton spends little effort on reflecting on what missteps he took that led to the inevitable failure to reform or uplift the backwards nation because he removed Cedras and the junta and "gave Haiti a chance". Despite Clinton's rationalizing, the inherently flawed intervention policy nonetheless stemmed from the hopelessly idealistic foundations of democratic enlargement and nation-building that he championed:

But if Haiti should teach Washington anything at all it is that an ambitious nation-building program alone is not a sufficient condition to transform a country into a self-sustaining, democratic member of the family of nations. Other domestic variables can cancel out the effort, rendering it futile. Haiti is simply not ripe for nation-building. It does not possess the human and physical capital or the natural resources to rise above extreme poverty. Nor does it have the political stability or legal institutions to inspire investor confidence, foreign or domestic. Few, if any, in the Haitian government favor a working market economy or even understand what the term means, and political culture prevails with widespread acceptance of the habits, beliefs and values that sustain democracy of democratic institutions. "There is always a limit," admitted a State Department spokesperson referring to Haiti in the final weeks of the Clinton presidency. "You can't impose democracy."<sup>113</sup>

As Clinton left office, the situation in Haiti progressively worsened whether he chose to acknowledge it or not. Not only had the pipe dream of democracy disappeared, but so did the relative appearance of stability. After the fraudulent election of November 2000, the Europeans suspended all assistance to Haiti, a move countered by the U.S. Congress who wanted no more assistance to be channeled through the corrupt Haitian government. Since the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank hadn't allocated money to Haiti since 1998,<sup>114</sup> the financial tap was finally turned off after six years of handouts and billions of dollars of aid were futilely wasted.

Once Haiti's empty shell of an economy was deprived of its international life support, the situation deteriorated even further. In September 2003, Amiot Metayer, the leader of the Gonaives gang known as "The Cannibal Army" and staunch Aristide opponent, was found murdered and mutilated by machetes. His brother Buteur took over the gang, renamed it the National Revolution Front for the Liberation of Haiti (NRF), and swore vengeance on Aristide. In February 2004, NRF seized Gonaives (Haiti's fourth largest city) beginning a minor revolt against Aristide. Sacking police stations and looting HDP weapons and vehicles, they spread the revolt down the coast and captured Cap-Hatien, the second largest city. The rebels were soon joined by former members of the military Aristide had targeted for destruction, many of whom had been waging attacks against the government since 2002. Popular support for deposing Aristide grew as the rebels met little resistance. Aristide's decision to replace the army with a tiny under armed and poorly trained police force had now backfired on him as many HDP stood by and did nothing. By the end of February, Aristide couldn't contain the revolt and wildly claimed the U.S. was backing the impromptu coalition of rebels as the NRF easily approached the outskirts of Port-au-Prince. Despite his ridiculous accusations against his old benefactors, his aides asked the U.S. embassy for help as rebels overran Port-au-Prince and closed in on the Presidential Palace. American Special Forces were swiftly inserted into the chaotic capital to rescue Aristide, and flew him secretly to Bangui in the Central African Republic. Aristide's second term had come to an inglorious end as the Americans shoved him and his wife on a plane just in the nick of time. Thanks to the American soldiers risking their lives, he was lucky to get out with his skin. The ever ungrateful and imbalanced Aristide, however, insanely claimed afterwards he was kidnapped by the Americans who forced him into exile. After his rescue, the American government, now under the administration of George W. Bush, reported that the U.S.



had offered Aristide hasty transportation out of Haiti after he had abdicated the presidency voluntarily. Aristide, sounding like he simply dusted off a copy of his old script from 1991, maintained he was still the only legitimate and democratically elected president of Haiti, and that he planned on returning to his rightful office. As Aristide accused the CIA of stealing his presidency while refusing to quietly go into exile, the odd situation seemed to perfectly apply with baseball great Yogi Berra's famous lamentation, "It was déjà vu all over again."

With Aristide gone, Supreme Court Chief Justice Boniface Alexandre succeeded Aristide as interim president and petitioned the UN for yet another peacekeeping force to restore order. The UN recognized Alexandre as the legitimate president, and 1,000 U.S. Marines were immediately dispatched to Haiti. Canadian, French, and Chilean troops arrived the next day as the UN set up teams to assess the situation. On June 1, 2000, a new UN peacekeeping force labeled MINUSTAH was constituted of 7,000 troops from several nations, mostly coming from Brazil, and was slated for peacekeeping duty in Haiti. Meanwhile, CARICOM refused to recognize the interim government, rejected the request to send peacekeeping contingents, and demanded an investigation to determine if France and the United States had maneuvered to remove Aristide illegally. CARICOM also accused both nations of pressuring members not to push for an investigation into the circumstances surrounding Aristide's departure and also strangely announced that Aristide had done nothing that indicated that he was unsuited to be president. The situation was not aided in March 2004 when California Congresswoman Maxine Waters, who had personal connections to Aristide, made public accusations that Aristide was held hostage, forced to resign and then abducted by the United States.<sup>115</sup> Aristide gave interviews in which he claimed U.S. ambassador James Foley accompanied by U.S. soldiers forced him from office. Aristide claimed he never resigned but was removed by a coup d'état, even though he

later admitted he asked for American help to get him out. Levalas naturally backed his conspiracy claims, insisting there was no real rebellion and Aristide's removal was a carefully orchestrated plot by the Americans, French and Canadians. The Cuban news service, *Granma*, unsurprisingly reported the U.S. engineered the leftist president's overthrow. After Aristide attempted to sue members of the French government, an exasperated Secretary of State Colin Powell read a statement explaining that, "He was not kidnapped... we did not force him onto the airplane" and that it was Aristide himself who had requested going to Bangui. Aristide later admitted signing a letter announcing his departure, but only to avoid a bloodbath. He insisted the letter was not an official resignation.

Aristide continued to agitate from Africa,<sup>116</sup> and was able to lobby several CARICOM nations after securing Jamaica's support to reject the interim government. Meanwhile back in Haiti, the country writhed in low-scale but perpetual violence as pro-Aristide gangs squared off against their counterparts. On October 15, 2005 the Brazilians called for more troops as the situation worsened. When Prèval was reelected in June 2006, CARICOM finally dropped the request for the conspiracy investigation and accepted the new government back into CARICOM. Prèval's return to the presidency, however, did little to change the situation in Haiti. Riots over high food prices and demonstrations against the UN presence (9,000 troops and aid workers by 2008) grew out of control in April 2008. Economic activity again ground to a halt as street violence and looting again became commonplace.<sup>117</sup> Haiti was again undergoing another cycle of violence and turmoil with no end in sight. Democracy and stability, with or without Aristide, was not going to flourish in Haiti. Ten years later, Clinton's great "foreign policy success" proved to be the continuous failure it had always been. The Haitians proved, as in all nation-building adventures, that no level of arrogant outside progressive "rescue" was ever going to reform Haiti

or build it into nation. Operation Restore Democracy and the assertive multilateral agenda that drove it was an unmitigated failure and no amount of spin or justification could alter ever that reality.

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> Joseph A. Schumpeter, quoted by John Sweeney, "Stuck in Haiti." *Foreign Policy*, Issue 102 (Spring 1996): 143.
- <sup>2</sup> John R. Ballard, *The United States Military Campaign in Haiti 1994-1997*, 162-3.
- <sup>3</sup> See President, Bill Clinton, Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, *Letter to Congressional Leaders on Haiti* 32, no. 12, 25 March, 1996, 542.
- <sup>4</sup> Ballard, 163.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid, 163.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid, 164-5. Also see Colonel Robert B. Killebrew and Lt. Colonel David. H. Patraeus, U.S. Army, "Winning the Peace: Haiti, the U.S., and the UN." *Armed Forces Journal* 132, no. 9 (April 1995): 40-1.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid, 165.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid, 166.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid, 166-7.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid, 167.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid, 168.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid, 171.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid, 169.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid, 170.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid, 170-1.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid, 173.
- <sup>18</sup> Ballard asserts that the low turnout was due to the fact that most seats were already decided or that voters are less apt to make the effort to vote a second time in run-off elections. Others contend that voters were so overwhelmingly disgusted by the amount of fraud and irregularities by the government in the initial election that few bothered to vote again to select a winner. See Ballard, 174.
- <sup>19</sup> Ballard, 174-5.
- <sup>20</sup> Of these, 1,000 Haitians were granted legal access to the United States during the operation.
- <sup>21</sup> Ballard, 175.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid, 176.
- <sup>23</sup> Despite the closing of Guantanamo, handfuls of Haitian refugees still trickled toward the United States in the hopes that Aristide's bluster would get the U.S. to abandon repatriation or they could somehow beat the odds and enter illegally.
- <sup>24</sup> Ballard, 177.
- <sup>25</sup> Some sources put the numbers as low as 18-20%.
- <sup>26</sup> Ballard, 177.
- <sup>27</sup> Quoted in Mark Perceny, *Democracy at the Point of Bayonets*, (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 60.
- <sup>28</sup> The American planners had assessed correctly that UN missions had a habit of extending themselves far past their originally planned exit dates and that Haiti would likely prove to be another example. UNIMIH was no exception as UN contingents remained long after Haitian presidential elections took place via several extensions.
- <sup>29</sup> A common tactic in Washington of continuing unpopular spending projects which face opposition is to make minor changes to the projects' overall composition and simply rename them. "New Horizons" operations seem to fit these criteria as the Clinton administration kept finding ways of keeping US troops involved in Haiti five years after they had announced the departure of the MNF and the removal of an American military effort in Haiti.
- <sup>30</sup> Karin von Hippel, *Democracy by Force: U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War World*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 100.
- <sup>31</sup> Frederick H. Fleitz Jr., *Peacekeeping Fiascoes of the 1990s: Causes, Solutions, and U.S. Interests*. (Westport, CT: Praeger Press, 2002), 136.
- <sup>32</sup> Ballard, 179.
- <sup>33</sup> Sean D. Taylor, "Taking the High Road in Haiti Isn't Easy," *Army Times*, 10 July 10, 1995, 8.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>35</sup> Ballard, 179.
- <sup>36</sup> See Klepak, Hal, "Keeping Democracy on Schedule in Haiti," *Jane's Defense Weekly* 25, no. 4 (June 1995): 33-6.

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- <sup>37</sup> John R. Ballard Interview with Colonel Jon Stull, USMC. Norfolk, VA, 19 November, 1997. Found in Ballard, 180.
- <sup>38</sup> Georges Fauriol, "A Look at Clinton's Protégé in Haiti." *The Wall Street Journal*, 3 November, 2000, A21.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>40</sup> Ballard, 179-80.
- <sup>41</sup> Quoted in Douglas Farah, "U.S. General Calls for Pullout From Haiti," *Washington Post*, 13 March, 1999, A3.
- <sup>42</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>43</sup> Mark Mueller, "Remaining U.S. Troops Face Hostility," *Boston Herald*, 13 June, 1999, 14.
- <sup>44</sup> Quoted in Farah, "U.S. General Calls for Pullout From Haiti."
- <sup>45</sup> Fauriol, "A Look at Clinton's Protégé in Haiti."
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>47</sup> Dempsey and Fountaine, *Fool's Errands*, 81.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>49</sup> Fauriol, "A Look at Clinton's Protégé in Haiti."
- <sup>50</sup> Dempsey and Fountaine, 81-2.
- <sup>51</sup> See George Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human*.
- <sup>52</sup> Quoted in President, Bill Clinton, *President Clinton's Oval Office Address to the Nation*, Washington D.C., 15 September, 1994. U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 5, no. 38 (19 September, 1994), 605.
- <sup>53</sup> The use of the term "obligation" is significant because by invoking it, it somehow eliminates the possibility that there were still other choices available due to some previously made solid commitment to oneself or other parties to intervene.
- <sup>54</sup> President, Bill Clinton, *President Clinton's Oval Office Address to the Nation*, Washington D.C., 15 September, 1994.
- <sup>55</sup> Naturally, there was no use of such vivid descriptions of women and children victims when Clinton decided to forgo intervention in Rwanda which saw massive slaughter that dwarfed the levels of violence in Haiti. White House spokespeople were prohibited from even mentioning the term "genocide" when addressing events there. See Howard Kurtz, *Spin Cycle* and William Hyland, *Clinton's World*.
- <sup>56</sup> Quoted in President, Bill Clinton, "President Clinton's Oval Office Address to the Nation, Washington D.C., 15 September, 1994.
- <sup>57</sup> For Clinton's ego and temper see George Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human* and David Halberstam *War in a Time of Peace*, and Dick Morris, *Behind the Oval Office*.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>59</sup> President, Bill Clinton, Remarks at White House Press Conference, 19 September, 1994. U.S. State Department *Dispatch* 5, no. 38 (19 September, 1994): 614.
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>61</sup> President, Bill Clinton, Letter to Congress: Text of a Letter to the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, September 18, 1994. U.S. State Department *Dispatch* 5, no. 328 (19 September, 1994): 613.
- <sup>62</sup> Clinton invoked Bush's rhetoric that the coup was illegal and "constituted an unusual and extraordinary threat to U.S. security, foreign policy, and the economy of the United States," a claim that Bush never substantiated adequately either.
- <sup>63</sup> President, Bill Clinton, Letter to Congress, Text of a Letter to the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, 18 September, 1994.
- <sup>64</sup> Christopher Warren, U.S. Secretary of State, and Al Gore, Vice President of the United States, *Meeting of the Multinational Force Coalition in Haiti*: Remarks in the East Room of the White House, Washington, D.C., 16 September, 1994, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 5, no. 38 (19 September, 1994): 607.
- <sup>65</sup> President, Bill Clinton, *Supporting Democracy and Promoting Economic Growth at Home and Abroad*: Radio Address to the Nation, Chicago, Illinois. September 24, 1994. U.S. State Department *Dispatch* 5, no. 40 (3 October 1994): 649. Also see President, Bill Clinton, *Iraq*: Television Address. *Vital Speeches of the Day* 61, no. 2 (1 November, 1994): 34.
- <sup>66</sup> See President, Bill Clinton, *Reaffirming Multilateralism*: Address to the United Nations General Assembly, New York City, 26 September, 1994.
- <sup>67</sup> Madeline Albright, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, *Advancing American Interests Through the United States*, Statement before the Subcommittee on International Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., 8 February, 1995. U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no. 8 (20 February, 1995): 125.
- <sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Strobe Talbot, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, *Promoting Democracy and Economic Growth in Haiti*, Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., 9 March, 1995 U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no. 11 (13 March, 1995): 185.

<sup>70</sup> President, Bill Clinton, President Clinton, *UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali, Haitian President Aristide*, Remarks at UN Transition Ceremony, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, March 31, 1995," U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no.15 (10 April, 1995): 283.

<sup>71</sup> Madeline Albright, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, *Reinforcing Haitian Democracy*, Statement by the Permanent Representative to the United Nations before the UN Security Council New York City, 29 September 1994. U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 5, no. 42 (17 October, 1994): 699.

<sup>72</sup> Strobe Talbot, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, *Promoting Democracy and Economic Growth in Haiti*, Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., 9 March, 1995," U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no. 11 (13 March, 1995): 185.

<sup>73</sup> Al Gore, Vice President of the United States, *The Americas: A Community of Democratic Nations*, Address to the Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, D.C., 16 September, 1994. U.S. State Department *Dispatch* 5, no. 40 (3 October, 1994): 650.

<sup>74</sup> Warren Christopher, U.S. Secretary of State, *States of the Western Hemisphere: Cooperation Now and for the Future*, Remarks at a reception for Latin American and Caribbean Delegations to the 49<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly, New York City, 29 September, 1994." U.S. State Department *Dispatch* 5, no. 40 (3 October, 1994): 655.

<sup>75</sup> Warren Christopher, U.S. Secretary of State, Remarks during Departure Ceremony for Haitian President Aristide, Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, 15 October, 1995. U. S Department of State *Dispatch* 5, no. 43 (24 October, 1994): 717.

<sup>76</sup> Al Gore, Vice President of the United States, *Haiti: Celebrating One Year of the Return to Freedom and Democracy*, Remarks at the National Palace, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 15 October, 1995, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 16 , no.44 (30 October, 1995): 792.

<sup>77</sup> Alexander F. Watson, Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, Statement before the House Appropriations Committee Washington D.C., 21 March, 1996, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 7 Issue 14 (1 April, 1996): 169.

<sup>78</sup> President, Bill Clinton, Remarks at Freedom House, Washington D.C., 6 October, 1995, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch*. 6, no. 42 (16 October, 1995): 731.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Both of these historic leadership initiatives Clinton invokes were institutions that were initiated to counter a known *threat* as part of a realistic and limited response to communist expansionism in Europe. They were by no means steps towards facilitating an open-ended idealistic foreign policy toward global Wilsonianism, a fact which Clinton failed to either understand or place into their proper historical context.

<sup>82</sup> President, Bill Clinton, President of the United States, Remarks at Freedom House, Washington D.C., 6 October, 1995, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no. 42 (16 October, 1995): 731.

<sup>83</sup> A common tactic of the Clinton White House was to label opponents to any agenda with a negative label that reflected the most extremist part of the coalition against the initiative and immediately put moderate opponents on the defensive. In this case, to find fault with Clinton's attempts at promoting assertive multilateralism automatically made one an isolationist by default.

<sup>84</sup> President, Bill Clinton, Remarks at Freedom House, Washington D.C., 6 October, 1995, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no. 42 (16 October, 1995): 731.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Doug Jehl, "Clinton Exults in Swift Success of U.S. Military Force in Haiti," *New York Times*, 7 October, 1994, A14.

<sup>89</sup> Warren Christopher, U.S. Secretary of State, Remarks During Departure Ceremony for Haitian President Aristide, Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, 15 October, 1995. U. S Department of State *Dispatch* 5, no. 43 (24 October, 1994): 717.

<sup>90</sup> President, Bill Clinton, *President Clinton and President Aristide*, Remarks at Arrival Ceremony, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 31 March, 1995. U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no.15 (10 April, 1995): 284.

<sup>91</sup> Strobe Talbot, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, *Promoting Democracy and Economic Growth in Haiti*, Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., 9 March, 1995. U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no. 11 (13 March, 1995): 185.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Madeline Albright, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, *Advancing American Interests Through the United States*, Statement before the Subcommittee on International Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., 8 February, 1995, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no. 8 (20 February, 1995): 125.

<sup>94</sup> James Dobbins, Special Haiti Coordinator, Remarks at daily press briefing, Washington D.C., 19 September, 1995, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no.39 (25 September, 1995): 709.

<sup>95</sup> Alexander F. Watson, Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, Statement before the House Appropriations Committee Washington D.C., 21 March, 1996, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 7 Issue 14 (1 April 1996): 169.

<sup>96</sup> Strobe Talbot, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Statement before the House International Relations Committee, Washington D.C., 26 June, 1996, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 7, no. 27 (1 July, 1996): 348.

<sup>97</sup> Mark L. Schnieder, Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean, U.S. Agency for International Development, *Haiti's Recovery Program*, Opening Remarks at a State department Press Briefing, 26 October, 1994, Washington D.C., U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 5, no.45 (11 November, 1994): 753.

<sup>98</sup> Warren Christopher, U.S. Secretary of State, *Restoring Democracy to Haiti*, Address to the United Nations Security Council, New York City, 29 September, 1994, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 5, no. 40 (3 October, 1994): 653.

<sup>99</sup> Strobe Talbot, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, *Promoting Democracy and Economic Growth in Haiti*, Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., 9 March, 1995, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no. 11 (13 March 13, 1995):185.

<sup>100</sup> Al Gore, Vice President of the United States, *Haiti: Celebrating One Year of the Return to Freedom and Democracy*. Remarks at the National Palace, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 15 October, 1995, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no.44 (30 October, 1995): 792.

<sup>101</sup> Alexander F. Watson, Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, Statement before the House Appropriations Committee Washington D.C., 21 March, 1996, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 7, no. 14 (1 April, 1996): 169.

<sup>102</sup> Strobe Talbot, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Statement before the House International Relations Committee, Washington D.C., 26 June, 1996. U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 7, no. 27 (1 July 1996): 348.

<sup>103</sup> Warren Christopher, U.S. Secretary of State, Remarks during Departure Ceremony for Haitian President Aristide, Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, 15 October, 1995. U. S Department of State *Dispatch* 5, no. 43 (24 October, 1994): 717.

<sup>104</sup> President, Bill Clinton, *Honoring U.S. Commitments in Haiti and the Persian Gulf*, Radio address to the Nation, Washington D.C., 15 October, 1994, U.S. State Department *Dispatch* 5, no. 43 (24 October, 1995): 716.

<sup>105</sup> Warren Christopher, U. S. Secretary of State, *Partnership and Progress in Haiti*, Remarks following Meeting, "Washington D.C., 7 October, 1994, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 5, no. 42 (17 October, 1994): 697.

<sup>106</sup> Strobe Talbot, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, *Promoting Democracy and Economic Growth in Haiti*, Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., 9 March, 1995 U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no.11 (13 March, 1995): 185.

<sup>107</sup> Alexander F. Watson, assistant secretary for Inter-American Affairs, Statement before the House Appropriations Committee Washington D.C., 21 March, 1996, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 7, no. 14 (1 April, 1996): 169.

<sup>108</sup> President, Bill Clinton, *President Clinton, UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali, Haitian President Aristide*, Remarks at UN Transition Ceremony, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 31 March, 1995, U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no. 15 (10 April, 1995): 283.

<sup>109</sup> Al Gore, Vice President of the United States, *Haiti: Celebrating One Year of the Return to Freedom and Democracy*, Remarks at the National Palace, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 15 October, 1995 U.S. Department of State *Dispatch* 6, no. 44 (30 October, 1995): 792.

<sup>110</sup> Quoted in Nora Boustany, "Diplomatic Dispatches: American Seeks New Deal With OAS Neighbors," *Washington Post*, 8 September, 2000, A29.

<sup>111</sup> Quoted in Ben Barber, "U.S. Officials See Failed Haiti Policy," *Washington Times* 29 November, 2000, A13.

<sup>112</sup> See Clinton's autobiography, *My Life*.

<sup>113</sup> Dempsey and Fountaine, *Fool's Errands*, 82-3. Official quote from Barber, "U.S. Officials See Failed Haiti Policy."

<sup>114</sup> For more recent events in Haiti after 2000 see [http://enb.wikipedia.org/wiki/2004\\_Haiti\\_rebellion](http://enb.wikipedia.org/wiki/2004_Haiti_rebellion) and [http://fact-archive.com/encyclopedia/2004\\_Haiti\\_rebellion](http://fact-archive.com/encyclopedia/2004_Haiti_rebellion).

<sup>115</sup> Waters has a long history of controversy and supporting outrageous accusations of left-wing and militant race-based conspiracies against the U.S. government, many of which have alienated the rank file of her own party. She once tied up legislation to read in the official record that President Ronald Reagan and the CIA were running a crack

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cocaine ring in California, a story the local media repeatedly dismissed. She has been frequently listed by several watchdog organizations as one of the most corrupt members in Congress, in particularly because of her connections to the banking scandals of 2008 and misuse of TARP monies. As of this writing, she is under investigation by the House Ethics Committee. It is not surprising that she and the equally unbalanced Aristide would find common cause denouncing the United States.

<sup>116</sup> He eventually ended up in South Africa after spending time in France, Jamaica and other nations. As of this writing he still is seeking opportunities to return to Haiti.

<sup>117</sup> Jonathan M. Katz (Associated Press Writer) "Haitian President Fails to Restore Order," *Yahoo News*, 9 April, 2008. Available from: [http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080409/ap\\_on\\_la\\_am\\_ca/haiti\\_for](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080409/ap_on_la_am_ca/haiti_for)



## CONCLUSION

### Risk Avoidance, Image, and Humanitarian Intervention

*“It is sickening snake oil to peddle a world of no risk and no costs.”<sup>1</sup>*

Placing Operation Restore Hope and Operation Restore Democracy in the context of post-Cold War U.S. foreign policy under George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton leads to some inescapable conclusions involving risk assessment as the basis for policy decisions. U.S. foreign policy under both administrations had not only embraced multilateralism as the only acceptable approach to dealing with perceived international crises, but had also embarked upon a system of policy planning and execution that centered almost entirely upon risk mitigation or risk avoidance. Imagery, as we have seen, was also an essential element in the formulation of policy or attempting to spin events and situations into something that distracted attention from ugly truths about humanitarian or Wilsonian operations that attempted to defy basic realities on the ground. Somalia and Haiti were both initiated to fulfill humanitarian “feel good” impulses, but were also undertaken to empower a vague and dysfunctional assertive multilateralist agenda to increase the power of the UN and push the United States into more collective security operations, peacekeeping, and nation-building.

Bush’s choice to enter Somalia to the applause of the assertive multilateralists in the UN was only dampened by his reluctance to get involved in long-term nation-building, which was quickly reversed by Clinton’s full blown acceptance of it but, ironically, without real commitment. While somewhat standing ideologically in opposition to each other toward the concept of involving U.S. forces in nation-building, both Bush and Clinton shared the overarching desire to get into these operations quickly and hand over control to the UN as soon as possible. Events quickly showed that the UN was wholly incapable of undertaking such

momentous tasks especially without American funding and military resources, but this nagging fact was wholly irrelevant in the decisions to get into Somalia for both Bush and Clinton. What was essential in the decisions to undertake Operation Restore Hope, to shift UNOSOM II into an all-out nation-building policy, and to invade and occupy Haiti was the premise that political and military risks would be minimal. This misconception that Somalia and Haiti would be quick victories that would paint a positive image of beneficial American power in the post-Cold War utilizing the benign tool of multilateralism was based on the perception that such operations would hold little to no chance of political or strategic risk, especially if casualties could be kept limited. The military operations in Somalia and Haiti were not conducted because they held great value to U.S. strategic interests or any other national interests; in fact neither had any real value at all beyond supporting a host of illogical and contradictory rhetoric and promotion of self-delusional imagery. American policy to intervene and occupy these two nations was based upon the notion that they could be done quickly, easily, and with little risks to those that ordered them. Policy execution in both cases too was firmly rooted in risk/casualty avoidance, which guaranteed that U.S. troops would be unnecessarily handcuffed in performing basic military operations against hostile forces and so restrained as to ensure that the military aspect of these operations would either be seriously hampered or fail completely.

The risk free approach to military interventions in the 1990s evolved from a series of misapplied lessons dating back to the Vietnam War, and a mixture of caution and sheer pragmatism from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Colin Powell, and others directing American military planning. In the Vietnam War, the strategists under Robert McNamara's "whiz kids" determined that firepower and technology would substitute for vulnerable ground troops and inflict swift and heavy punishment on the enemy while avoiding risking more

casualties in traditional infantry close-in fighting. With increasingly more accurate and deadly weaponry, especially delivered from the air, enemy concentrations could be quickly destroyed once they were pinpointed. The problem in Vietnam was that it took an exorable amount of vulnerable infantry to probe and locate enemy units in the vast and difficult mountains, deltas, and jungles. The communist insurgents also rarely concentrated themselves for long as large identifiable targets as they conducted quick raids or attacked isolated small units before quickly dispersing again. While some of the lessons of counterinsurgency were honed in some branches like the U.S. Marines and Army Special Forces, most were shunned for the sake of applying quick and massive artillery and airpower to break up enemy attacks after the enemy had already seized the initiative. While in Vietnam the U.S. military developed more accurate and more lethal methods of firepower, such as “smart bombs” and equipping infantry squads with more automatic weapons and improving access to call in heavy strikes, it consequently also continued to develop a doctrine of routinely applying more stand-off firepower and shunned the traditional role of the infantry of closing with and destroying the enemy. The concept, dating back to World War II, was centered on the notion: “Why send a soldier when you can send a bullet?” This approach was especially accepted in the later stages of WWII and Korea, since infantry soldiers were always in critical short supply while ammunition could be produced in plentiful numbers. By the 1960s, American fighting doctrine in the context of the Cold War was always firmly rooted in the concept of quality over quantity since the Soviets, Vietnamese, and the Chinese had an overwhelmingly endless supply of manpower and Western resources to resist these enemies were quite limited. Weapon systems that increased U.S. firepower to offset shortages in infantry were highly valued on both the tactical and strategic levels. A “bigger bang for the buck” doctrine not only made the military believe that it would require less infantry soldiers (the

backbone of an army) to close with and kill the enemy, it also saw the benefit of risking less American soldiers in close combat which provided not only a military benefit but a political one as well. As casualties mounted and the Vietnam War became increasingly unpopular with the American public, finding ways to minimize casualties became a political and military preoccupation with American strategists. Although American reliance on heavy firepower and increasingly sophisticated technology created massive enemy casualties and heavily damaged the North Vietnamese infrastructure in strategic bombing, it could not destroy the enemy's ability to wage war nor did it break the communists' will to keep fighting. Technology and firepower could not overcome the overwhelming strategic and tactical liabilities America faced in Vietnam.<sup>2</sup>

To make matters worse, many American strategists learned all the wrong lessons from the war. While new stand-off weapons offered great advantages and increased lethality all the way down to the squad level, they were no replacement for an army built upon a foundation of well-trained infantry units. Part of American weakness in Vietnam was its overreliance on firepower and clumsy use of infantry during operations. American military planners in the Pentagon, however, like future Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, were swept up in what became known as the "Revolution in Military Arms Development," or RMA, and wanted to bring more technology into the equation with a whole new gamut of weapons. Advocates of RMA believed that their enemies would be swept from the battlefield through use of sophisticated computer-run weapons that were generations ahead of enemy capabilities. Cruise missiles, smart bombs, satellite targeting imagery, laser targeted munitions, stealth bombers, electronic warfare, and other systems would blind, befuddle, and decapitate an enemy's strategic, communication, and logistical capabilities making them paralyzed to further attacks upon his front line forces which

would be devastated by overwhelming American firepower at increasingly longer stand-off ranges. Not only could American forces annihilate enemy strategic targets and his front line troops with impunity and with little risk to themselves, other technology would allow American forces to inject themselves anywhere on the globe in a matter of hours and operate with very few conventional forces. What would take an World War II division of 10,000 men to accomplish could be done with an air wing or a mere battalion, or perhaps as few as a company of eighty highly educated “smart warriors” armed with the latest in sophisticated weaponry and communication equipment. RMA was a utopian vision founded upon the microchip and the firm belief that no other nation could match America’s expensive and sophisticated capabilities to engage in such warfare. The strategy only required the imagination of the military to harness the power of computer and electronic capabilities on the battlefield, control of the air and outer space, and of course, increasing amounts of money for development, research, and deployment of sophisticated weaponry and delivery systems. The RMA utopian vision vaguely foresaw that not only would the deterrent value to future aggressors would be undeniable, but it would increasingly make risking American soldiers in large scale combat obsolete.

Embracing the siren song of RMA after the Vietnam War, the military focused primarily upon “big ticket” and “hi-tech” weapon systems, often and neglected funding for conventional combat arms. The U.S. Army practically ignored the lessons of fighting small wars and insurgencies, and turned its attention back to facing a conventional threat of engaging potential massive Soviet divisions in Central Europe. The Army foolishly pretended it would never have to fight small wars again and banked on technology to overwhelm opponents. The Pentagon wisely updated its aging armor and helicopter assets in the 1980s, but in the expensive process

neglected or left Army and Marine infantry units painfully undersized and somewhat treated infantry more as a peripheral asset in doctrine than a decisive one in war.

Part of infantry's demise was due to budget priorities. During the Cold War, the U.S. Armed Services scratched each other's eyes out over new defense spending allocations, and were fixated on possessing big flashy weapons systems. Since the end of World War II, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy won the lion's share of the defense budget with the promise that they had more flexibility, reach, and hi-tech airpower than ground forces, and that they delivered the means for nuclear strategic deterrence and retaliation. The Air Force continued to operate under its own myth that bombing alone could win a war, and demanded more and more of the budget. Especially after Vietnam, the Army and Marines got the smaller portions of the pie, and those services in turn allocated their priorities on aviation, support units, and hi-tech weaponry.<sup>3</sup> The infantry soldier with his rifle, the ultimate low-tech piece on the battlefield, got the leftover funding crumbs, being expected to be used only to clean up what the precision guided bombs and missiles and other hi-tech toys left behind. To save funds for the new hi-tech gadgetry, infantry units were habitually downsized or left undermanned by the Army and Marines.

The Rumsfeld led RMA vision of future warfare dominated by hi-tech American weaponry, information technology, and global reach assets was based upon the false notion that Americans could kill with little risk to themselves. All the models of RMA never envisioned an enemy capable or responding to the rain of blows falling on them from American firepower. RMA advocates never considered how enemies might react to such an onslaught, because the assumption was always that they could not. The techno-war vision of RMA promotes that it can control and digitalize the battlefield, even control the flow of information, to the point where technology is controlling the environment in every spectrum. This is a pipedream that led to

many costly errors in future conflicts, including Iraq and Afghanistan in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, where it soon became apparent that technology again was a great advantage, but no panacea to control the environment or of very much use in fighting guerillas and terrorists hiding among the population. The RMA mentality also never addressed the enormous growing costs of having to stay two or three steps ahead of the rest of the globe in weapons and information technology, especially as that technology is often stolen or soon adapted by foreign powers. RMA advocates refused to acknowledge that eventually, the defense budget would bottom out as research and deployment of such expensive arsenals would prove counterproductive and consume too much of the GNP, especially since many of them still didn't address combating enemies such as insurgents that had no strategic infrastructure or big line units to decimate.<sup>4</sup>

The compulsion nonetheless to rely on sophisticated technology as a military deterrent was cemented throughout the later stages of the Cold War. The 1983 disaster in Beirut in which hundreds of Marines were killed further drove home the idea that putting troops into hostile environments was a dangerous risk that had serious political repercussions, and should be avoided. The realist conclusion was adopted at the time that no troops should be put at risk in places where no vital American national interests were at stake. Exceptions would be made in cases like Grenada and Panama where armed resistance was deemed to be slight,<sup>5</sup> and casualties would be minimal and produce less outrage on the home front.

After the Cold War ended, little had changed in American strategic thinking, except for the fact that now American force could be imposed without direct interference from the Soviets. The 1991 Gulf War presented such an opportunity to rain down the effects of RMA hi-tech warfare upon a highly militarized target. Laser guided munitions obliterating buildings and armored vehicles with ease and cruise missiles being exhibited to be so accurate as to enter

enemy headquarters via the “window on the left hand of your screen” as General Norman Schwarzkopf described them for the media, made warfare against Saddam Hussein’s Iraq look like a video game. The RMA vision was being played out on the nightly news as the Pentagon was eager not only to show its progress in defeating Iraqi forces, but to unveil the successful efforts of the push in RMA made since the 1970s. It all seemed to be good to be true. Standoff ranges and weapon accuracy over great distances killing was became almost risk free warfare. Enemy troops and resources were being smashed and U.S. led coalition forces losses were unbelievably light. When the ground war was initiated (which many argued was unnecessary due to the success of the hi-tech/risk-free air war) Iraqi troops were swept aside and surrendered in droves. Politically, the success of the coalition forces on the ground and in the air made the Gulf War swift and almost painless. Within 100 hours of initiating ground operations, Iraq’s massive army was in full flight and Saddam was forced to bow to the coalition’s terms. It was a stunning victory on an unprecedented level.

Besides its hi-tech aura that seemed to finally culminate the evasive McNamara systems-based approach in Vietnam, the Gulf War was also unique politically and was a direct descendent of America’s uneasy experience in war over the past twenty years. The American government, including Bush himself, asked very little directly of Americans to fight the war. The Gulf War became a spectator war for most Americans, with little to do but watch the amazing video of bomb strikes or cheer sweeping armored columns driving deep across the open deserts seemingly unopposed. With twenty-four hour news coverage, the Gulf became a passive affair, and very few Americans were asked to do anything to aid the effort other than give their assent to the elites conducting it. The Bush administration seemed to surmise that if they asked little of the American people or expected them not to get very involved, and especially asked them to



sacrifice little-- perhaps they wouldn't care too much about the policies that dictated the conduct of the war and its aftermath, especially if casualties could be kept low. The decisions made by Bush in the war seem to bear this out, as the main battle plan was structured around avoiding the Iraqi army—first by launching an extremely lengthy if not overly redundant air campaign against almost helpless Iraqi targets and then by maneuvering far to the West to avoid the main Iraqi army in combat. Following attacks were made again to avoid large Iraqi concentrations, preferring to use air assets to engage large Iraqi formations rather than ground troops. Main battles were avoided rather than sought on the ground, mainly for fear of incurring casualties. Bush feared that if large casualties began to become a factor, public support for his campaign to liberate Kuwait and punish Saddam Hussein would quickly evaporate. This strategic and political weakness became painfully apparent when American bunker-busting bombs struck the Aramay military complex in Baghdad. The bunker was a legitimate military target being utilized by Iraqi defense forces, but they had purposely allowed civilians to cohabitate the bunker in the hopes of either using the as human shields or using an attack against the complex as an opportunity to blame the Americans for indiscriminate bombing of civilians. As predicted by the Iraqis, civilians were killed and the incident was played up in the press as a horrible and shameful use of American military power. This unnerved Powell and Bush, who feared too many civilian casualties and had taken great steps to avoid collateral damage in the air campaign, and the images shook the notion that smart bombs “could gut an enemy’s infrastructure without harming a hair on anyone’s head”.<sup>6</sup> When U.S. Air Force planes annihilated an Iraqi column fleeing from Kuwait with stolen vehicles and truckloads of booty, the grisly images of charred bodies on the news were too much for Powell and Bush who quickly convened to end the ground war against Schwarzkopf’s wishes. Bush and Powell, constantly fearing press coverage of killing

civilians in war, were now afraid to have *enemy troops* being seen killed on the battlefield because it looked unchivalrous and “un-American,”<sup>7</sup> might make Americans too upset, and foster anti-Americanism in the Muslim world. The images that showed the *open truth* of war-- killing maiming, and destroying-- was too much to bear in a conflict which was being sold as the fruition of RMA’s antiseptic approach to war. Powell pushed the President to end the war, and he quickly agreed. Bush and Powell, lost their nerve and called to end hostilities long before military objectives had been met for fear of political blowback. Killing the rapists, torturers, and pilferers of Kuwait as they fled had now somehow become a shameful sight and the conflict had to be stopped immediately before anyone might become appalled by the *realities* of war. The decision to stop a war because enemy troops were being routed and killed *as planned*-- and that somehow now was utterly intolerable-- was completely unfathomable and strategically idiotic. Bush and Powell made excuses about avoiding unnecessary casualties, but they simply were afraid to push their luck after such a lopsided campaign with so few losses and feared that they’d have their antiseptic war get ugly on them. Over Schwarzkopf’s strong objections,<sup>8</sup> the war was ended to coincide with a magical 100 hours of ground operations; a meaningless benchmark that denied the coalition from meeting all its stated ground objectives and allowed most of the targeted elite Republican Guard to escape across the Euphrates River. Halting the advance allowed Hussein to save some face along with handing him the gift of the salvation of the Republican Guard, guaranteeing that Saddam Hussein would be able to stay in power and ruthlessly crush newly risen internal opposition. Stopping at 100 hours of ground war snatched much of the fruits of victory away from the coalition and left ground commanders scratching their heads why the enemy was being allowed to escape from their grasp. It was triumph without victory. Hussein consequently would not be toppled and would remain a thorn in the side of the

United States for another decade. Nonetheless, the Bush administration had won its hi-tech war convincingly and succeeded in getting its low-risk war with few casualties.

It is in this context of the unexpected crumbling of the Soviet empire and the whirlwind victory of the Gulf War that American hubris dominated foreign policy decisions in the 1990s. Left as the only remaining superpower with supposedly unbeatable weaponry and technological sophistication, the United States embarked on foreign policies that had little inertia before such as peacekeeping and nation-building. These humanitarian interventions enticed both the Bush and Clinton administrations with the lure of continuing the recent American tendencies to seek out risk free adventures that would avoid large scale casualties and would also continue to place American use of force in the most favorable light with the international community. Starting with the defeat of Iraq, American military might would now be engaged in defeating aggressors, spreading democracy, and feeding starving children-- that is, of course, on the condition that it could tap into the multilateralist agenda and receive international approval while again not really taking any serious risks, either political or military. National interests were always a nonfactor in this Wilsonian equation, and unilateralism was now deemed suddenly obsolescent somehow without as much as a policy debate. The history of American forced humanitarian interventions in the 1990s under Bush and Clinton is one of seeking out the low risk conflicts that would sell an image of American global commitment to peace, democracy, and humanitarianism without really taking any serious risks.

Essentially the roots of the problem of U.S. policy toward the situations in Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia and elsewhere were the misapplication of Wilsonian idealism by the assertive multilateralists and the formulation of policy approaches that were predicated on the basis of ease and avoiding risk to craft favorable political imagery. The assertive multilateralist agenda

during this period had warped the traditional Wilsonian foundations of American foreign policy, and turned them toward overly idealistic and dysfunctional directions that led to waste and failure. The assertive multilateralists stretched Wilsonianism beyond any practical limits to include launching Chapter VII mandates and conducting nation-building in situations where they were either unnecessary or unwise. The assertive multilateralists nonetheless took on an elitist mantle and assured themselves that democratization, liberalism, and unbound multilateralism were a panacea for all the world's ills and the only possible approach toward American foreign policy. Emotionally based idealism eradicated any realistic policy strategies or alternative interpretations. These idealists pronounced the lone American superpower, supposedly unchecked in the post-Cold War, was obligated to democratize the world and create peace and stability under the banner of collective multilateralism. The assertive multilateralists, however, failed to understand that while democratization was the strategic ideal, it was not necessarily applicable in many societies or all situations and often fails as a heavy-handed and intrusive approach toward bending unwilling societies towards American (or even supposedly) international will. This extreme liberal concept of "global democracy" and empowering international organizations like the United Nations toward global government at the expense of the sovereignty of individual nation-states was a fallacy and a misinterpretation of traditional American goals toward democratization, as it was hopelessly idealistic and out of touch with cultural, economic, and political realities. American policy was thus chained the fuzzy concept of multilateralism, humanitarianism, and nation-building in one degree or another, to the point where even traditional conservatives like Bush were blurring the lines of American national security interests with assertive multilateralist interpretations of creating an ultra idealistic Wilsonian system of collective security to eradicate all conflict and suffering in the world.

Somalia was the first major step towards embracing the doomed paternalistic idealism to save countries from themselves and pushing the UN towards a more active role in policing the world. Providing safety and aid to the Kurds in northern Iraq against Saddam's retributions was the spark that pushed Bush into believing humanitarian adventures were military and politically low risk, and played well for the American public and the international community. Americans seen as good guys, helping the downtrodden, protecting the weak, bringing freedom to the oppressed was foreign policy focused on imagery rather than producing strategic results that benefitted the United States' position in the world. It also didn't hurt that these operations in the Gulf, Iraq, and Somalia made Bush look strong and decisive in foreign policy while shedding his previous label of being a "wimp". Buoyed by the positive imagery and low risk nature of operations with the Kurds, Bush was primed to take further steps to unfurl his fuzzy notions of his New World Order with its vague Wilsonian overtones, but in an election year and a sagging economy it was not a strong possibility if the risks were anything above the bare minimum.

In 1992 Bosnia was the immediate nagging foreign policy problem, but it reeked of high risk and danger, both militarily and politically. Bush's rhetoric about a New World Order seemed to match the horrific conflict in the former Yugoslavia, but in the confusing three-way civil war, the Serbs simply looked too tough and the low risk criteria was critically absent. More importantly, few good reasons could be presented for sending Americans to die stopping a civil war that had little to do with national interests. Secretary of State James Baker believed that an intervention in Bosnia would entail several American divisions and thousands of casualties, as the terrain and jumbled nature of the quasi-guerilla conflict would not lend itself to the type of hi-tech quick victory found in the deserts of the Persian Gulf region. Baker advised Bush and later told reporters, "We simply don't have a dog in this fight". Baker also warned Bush that success

would still preclude a lengthy and costly occupation of Bosnia and perhaps other regions of the former Yugoslavia. Powell was equally adamant about not intervening in Bosnia, putting on the same terms of entering another Vietnam-styled quagmire with thousands of casualties and no end in sight. Bosnia also didn't fit the criteria for the administration's public acceptance of the Weinberger/Powell Doctrine "all or nothing approach" requiring clear objectives, national interests, and widespread public support.<sup>9</sup> Intervening in the messy conflict had nothing to speak for it strategically or politically. Polls favored aiding refugees and preventing genocide, but likewise strongly indicated a desire not to intervene militarily. No one in the administration wanted to go into Bosnia during the election year; Yugoslavia was a no-win situation, so why risk it? The only thing Bush was willing to do was to take steps to try to keep the conflict from getting worse and let the UN and the EU deal with it.<sup>10</sup>

While Bosnia seemed far too risky, Somalia looked more inviting, more akin to the humanitarian based Operation Provide Comfort in northern Iraq. As shown previously, it wasn't until after he had lost the election that Bush decided to intervene directly there. As a lame duck president the political risks were removed by losing the election, and more importantly for the administration Somalia was a method of avoiding the greater risk of intervening in the messy conflict in the Balkans. Still NSA advisor Brent Scowcroft saw no exit strategy for a humanitarian mission in Somalia. The Pentagon and CIA also didn't see a promising outlook there propping up UN peacekeeping which was floundering in a hopelessly poor country filled with numerous violent militia factions and more weapons per capita than any country save Iraq.<sup>11</sup> Colin Powell in his capacity as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs became the tipping point, as he strongly resisted intervening in Somalia for months but then reversed himself after Clinton won the 1992 elections in November. Powell feared Clinton's tough talk about charging into Bosnia

as a low risk venture, and swung 180 degrees on Somalia to steer the humanitarian impulse toward what was perceived as the lesser of two evils. With great trepidation, Powell saw a liberal Clinton administration looking to dive head first into the Balkans knowing the assertive multilateralists in the new administration's goals would be fuzzy, but the Serbs wouldn't be. He was also aware that the idealists in Clinton's administration would force the military into hopeless situations without clear political objectives just as had happened in Vietnam. With a feeling of impotence towards dealing with the bloodshed in Bosnia, Powell and Bush turned to Somalia as a low risk replacement.

Powell's strange primary criteria for accepting an intervention in Somalia was his belief in that it was "doable". Supposedly the idea of protecting UN humanitarian operations in the desert was more palpable than engaging Serbs in the mountains, and the Somali warlords would pose little to no threat. The Powell Doctrine inverted the logical relationship between ends and means, and convinced by a confident Powell, Bush let the means at his disposal shape American strategic aims. "Doability" now somehow equated geopolitical importance. From this point on, the Pentagon always posed the choices as engaging in the desert (like the Gulf War) against wooded mountains and rough terrain (like Vietnam) but ignored the lessons learned from the Soviet's experience in Afghanistan or the limitations of bombing from the 1986 air attack on Libya. Small wars doctrine was also completely ignored in the euphoria of America's recent big hi-tech win in the desert. Powell's overly simplified scenario of overwhelming American force "coming to the rescue as cavalry until the marshals come back in," was a clear indication of the prominence of getting in and making a show of humanitarianism without pinning strategy to obtaining results. Operation Restore Hope was based on superficial military reasons based upon avoiding risk. *Ease* was the criteria created by Powell as the administration enshrined the wildly

idealistic UN “save the world” syndrome of the 1990s into policy. “Doability,” however, was no substitute for strategic clarity, and as was experienced, Somalia became far from “doable”.<sup>12</sup>

Bush soon saw Somalia as an image exercise that held little risk. Acting multilaterally instead of unilaterally, lending a helping hand to dozens of NGOs, supporting the UN, taking bold steps towards ending civil wars and disorder, and of course, rescuing helpless victims and saving starving children was a quick opportunity for demonstrating the benign nature of being the sole superpower and pushing the vague agenda of the supposed New World Order. Although the other Joint Chiefs and the CIA warned about the intrinsic dangers of the hopeless nature of violent country without a host government, Bush continually insinuated to the public that Somalia would be quick and painless and that the Somalis would adhere to UN mandates. Bush and Powell, however, were wrong. The Somalis were not cowed by U.S. firepower, and the warlords simply patiently waited for their opportunity to exploit and then confront the well-intentioned invaders who foolishly tried to usurp their bid for power and control. Powell was too optimistic about balancing the humanitarian ambitions of the UN with their hopelessly idealistic political schemes while staying aloof from the process in order to make a quick exit. He had also greatly underestimated the erratic nature of the Somali street fighters and Aideed himself. Strategically, Powell miscalculated his own government as well. While he read Bush’s intentions clearly enough to get in and out quickly, he failed to see that Clinton and his circle of assertive multilateralists would change course and mire the U.S. in Somalia much deeper, much longer, and much more recklessly. The main intent of Powell’s acquiesce to intervene in Somalia was also a miscalculation, as it didn’t inoculate Clinton from going into Bosnia later, even after the fiasco in Mogadishu.



Going into Somalia was an exercise in political theater; it was all about creating an image of something that wasn't very well defined or necessarily true. Bush's policy was geared toward looking like Americans were aiding Somalia and helping the UN, but it was completely centered around staging a quick fix and retreating leaving the completely incapable UN to sort out the real problems there. U.S. force did succeed in feeding starving kids, but only for short period. None of the root causes of famine and civil war were on the agenda for U.S. operations. The U.S. set a risk aversion mindset for UNITAF, utilizing massive force with extremely limited objectives, and the administration ensured the operations avoided nation-building tasks and refused to spread deeper into the interior. Even the initial landing of the Marines was a risk aversion exercise landing at night (albeit with unwanted TV cameras rolling) but only after getting Aideed's consent to come ashore. Even the Rules of Engagement were geared totally around risk aversion and worry over unsavory images ending up in the press. Crafting the images of feeding hungry and grateful Somalis while being star players on "team UN" was paramount; Americans seen as all powerful but benign. Along with the theater of course, massive force protection was made a crucial consideration. Even a few casualties would undermine the whole humanitarian dog-and-pony show. It was pure theatrics without any strategic rationale.

What worried Powell and Scowcroft from the beginning was that there was no exit strategy for Operation Restore Hope. The international community could dump food, supplies, and assistance there for years, but that wasn't going build a viable economy. UN efforts to broker a peace were equally fruitless. The U.S. exit strategy, the key component of the intervention (because it was all about getting in and out as quickly as possible) was never effectually pinned down. Bush and Powell's plan was to hand everything off to the UN-- the same organization that was incapable of doing anything meaningful without U.S. participation anyway. It was like an

adult watching a ten year old trying to drive a car, taking the wheel from them, and after a few miles getting out and handing the keys back to them feeling confident that somehow everything was resolved. Bush's goal in Somalia was the quick fix predicated on risk aversion and imagery, to place one last star on his resume. The lack of a realistic exit strategy, however, doomed the U.S. to keep a strong hand in Somalia although that was exactly what was to be avoided from the beginning.

When Clinton came to office he adhered to the fallacy of the exit strategy of handing the mission off to the UN, although Clinton was happy to keep the U.S. deeply involved in nation-building. To make matters worse, Clinton paid little attention to Somalia and purposely ignored foreign policy leaving it barely delegated to members of his administration that were not only unrepentant assertive multilateralists itching for the opportunity to submit U.S. power under UN authority, but engage in full-blown nation-building as well. The assertive multilateralists dove headlong into the quagmire of Somalia, brazenly taking steps to fulfill Boutros-Boutros Ghali's hopelessly idealistic nation-building schemes for Somali society, all of which callously ignored the realities of the intense civil war taking place there. Ghali and the idealists in Washington injected the Wilsonian mindset into their UN mandates over Somalia, few of which had any practical evidence indicating that they had any chance of succeeding. Traditional peacekeeping had already failed in Somalia, and mediation and peace efforts were being frustrated and abused by the warlords who took the opportunity of the UN intervention to graft as much from the foreign do-gooders as possible, even to the point of playing the UN off each other.

Egged on by Washington, the UN launched its aggressive mandate for peace enforcement under UNOSOM II, a weak and poorly organized structure that emphasized the crafting of image-driven political theater of beneficence and internationalism rather than practical objectives.

With *declining* financial resources and decidedly *less* force at its disposal, the UN decided to *expand* its mandate with peace enforcement, and force the warlords to submit to its will. Clinton and his administration, driven by the overzealousness of Tony Lake and Madeline Albright, embraced peace enforcement under Chapter VII of the UN charter and pushed the nation-building agenda. Committing more troops and arbitrarily extending their tours repeatedly, Clinton had sucked the U.S. into the Somali quagmire indefinitely, and the lockstep adherence to the aggressive but unsubstantiated UN agenda for peace enforcement guaranteed disaster.

There was little success in nation-building or forcing peace on the Somalis, who incidentally, didn't want peace. UNITAF had already cost U.S. taxpayers \$583 million with little to show for it. Bush spent an additional \$62 million in aid to Somali in three months, the UN and NGOs many times that amount, not to mention the additional \$30 million sent to aid refugees in Kenya, but it did nothing to restore the economy or get Somalis to start producing their own food. During UNOSOM II the U.S. spent an additional \$5 billion in Operation Restore Hope, but it made almost no impact on the economy, or restoring order to most areas. With Somalis deep seated level of poverty, there just seemed to be no end in sight. At what point could the UN or NGOs declare that there was no longer any immediate need for massive aid? The massive international aid didn't even end the famine, Somali farmers did, but the flood of cheap food drove down prices and undercut local production. The aid was *counterproductive* by not only lengthening the famine, but was manipulated by warlords who either hijacked or pilfered the shipments, or robbed people of them once they left the UN dispersal points. Warlords often sold or traded food to buy more weapons, and many of the Somali children that Bush and Clinton were so proud to have saved quickly grew into the next generation of khat-chewing thugs with AK-47s.<sup>13</sup> Not only was Operation Restore an expensive and a completely open-ended venture,

its' only measurable accomplishment, feeding people, was contributing to other problems and creating a cycle of dependency.

UNOSOM II was even less successful in enforcing peace and nation-building than UNITAF. Wilsonian attempts to create a grass roots government infrastructure floundered because they ignored Somalis' clan system and culture, especially the highly touted liberal efforts to include women in the process. To most Somalis, Western style democracy was seen as alien and a method seemingly motivated by weakness not strength. Peace talks among the factions too were a waste of time in which the warlords extorted concessions out of the UN and were abused as nothing more than as expense free shopping trips to Nairobi. Much more heinous than these floundering idealist ventures was the attempt to force the warlords into adapting Western reforms and UN mandates for control. Full of ignorance regarding Somali culture and hubris about the unassailable righteousness of UN power, the assertive multilateralists launched their Chapter VII mandate in the face of all reason and logic. Reality quickly leapt up and confronted the irrational nature of peace enforcement, as the weak UNOSOM II force decided to confront Aideed after Ghali and company labeled him the obstructive force to their nation-building; which perhaps for no other reason that UNOSOM I, UNITAF, and UNOSOM II all were anchored in his area of Mogadishu and he had earned special status as a pariah that the other warlords avoided and played to their advantage. Aideed and his SNA faction were completely underestimated by Ghali and Admiral Hoar who recklessly tried to intimidate Aideed by going after his most strategic assets around Radio Mogadishu. Aideed naturally ambushed the Pakistanis sent to cut him down to size, and hostilities openly commenced. Hoar rashly posted his "dead-or-alive" posters around town, and his impulsive actions were backed by an angry Clinton and Ghali. The indignation of anyone daring to challenge the (arguably bogus) UN

mandate to control Somalia and its future drove them into further quagmire toward engaging in peace enforcement and combat in Somalia. Without realizing it of course, the UN peacekeepers had lost their legitimacy as non-belligerents and the U.S. had stumbled foolishly into a civil war that had absolutely no strategic value at all.

In this contest, the SNA held almost all the advantages where UNOSOM II forces were plagued with military weaknesses. The SNA knew the terrain, the language, and understood how things worked on the streets of Mogadishu. As insurgents, they could hide among the population and had few strategic centers of gravity that American hi-tech weapons could focus upon. They knew that they could manipulate the greater population, and be able to call on smaller militias, clans, as well as free lance street gunmen to aid in their efforts. They also knew that despite their overwhelming firepower, their UN opponents were weak. Aideed witnessed that the American ROE were extremely restrictive, and the Somalis used every opportunity to exploit American fears of hurting civilians or causing too much collateral damage. The Americans' main advantage of overwhelming firepower was thus nullified by their own reluctance to use it. He was keenly aware too that his opponents were practicing risk aversion and greatly feared taking any casualties. He had even achieved air parity in the later stages of the conflict simply by *claiming* to the media he had Stinger surface-to-air missiles,<sup>14</sup> and the risk adverse UN forces refused to fly over his territory. Aideed bragged he had studied Vietnam, and he knew how to make the Americans give up simply by inflicting a few casualties upon them. In the end, he was right. The UN and its American backers had no stomach for a messy, protracted conflict, but he and his fighters had been fighting for years and could afford to be very patient. All he had to do was peck away at his adversaries, utilize guerilla tactics and suck them into easy ambushes in Mogadishu's maze of tight streets and alleys. Once he created enough frustration and casualties,

the Americans would sense the futility of their efforts to control Somalia pack up and go home. Aideed had an excellent strategic plan. He just needed the opportunities to implement his tactics.

The UN forces, on the other hand, had no strategic plan or cohesion. The goal was to capture Aideed, which even if successful, would not accomplish their overall goals of bringing peace and security to the chaos of Mogadishu. The SNA would simply replace him, but capturing Aideed was nearly impossible anyway. UN intelligence sources were practically nonexistent, and the population was turning increasingly against the foreigners as they raided all over the city and destroyed buildings looking for him without avail. U.S. forces were constantly used as the “go-to” force, as UN contingents were either too poorly trained or armed for the task, or simply purposely avoided combat. All the UN contingents practiced overt risk aversion and few would go into dangerous situations.<sup>15</sup> The Italians had ulterior motives in Somalia, and like many other contingents, bribed the warlords not to engage them as they went on patrols and ran porous road blocks. Several contingents only took orders from the home capitals, so a unity of command and purpose was completely lacking. For purposes of image management, the inefficient Frankenstein command structure put the UN nominally in charge with the Americans still controlling combat and logistics, but contingents still would do little to place themselves in harm’s way. At higher levels, there was an utter lack of coordination between Washington and the UN, leaving policy to drift and flounder. American troops would have to do all the heavy lifting, as multilateralism was only useful as a cheap façade for military operations. The Americans were taking on the all the dangerous tasks in getting Aideed, and this was anathema to the risk avoidance nature and exit strategy of Operation Restore Hope.

Although the American troops were the bearing the brunt of UN operations, they tactically had one hand tied behind their backs. U.S. operations, still choked by restrictive ROE designed

to maximize force protection and prevent negative imagery for the media to pick up on, were floundering. Using U.S. troops to get Aideed was deemed a simple task, but no evidence on the ground supported this erroneous conclusion made in Washington. Raids on Aideed focused on pinpoint strikes from the air, as the adherence to RMA vision of war was misapplied in a small wars context. An attempt was being made to fight this conflict on the cheap using only a few light forces relying heavily on helicopter support and little else. Clinton constantly sold the quick-in-and-out raids as successful (although few had actually netted any results) only because the Americans hadn't suffered any casualties. Heliborne raids allowed U.S. forces to engage targets without exposing themselves too long on the ground. The risk aversion mindset continued to drive policy, even though it was pigeon-holing tactical options left open to ground commanders and not accomplishing anything. In a magnificent series of blunders, the Clinton administration denied that artillery be used in Somalia, even though the militias regularly launched mortar attacks against UN compounds. AC-130 gunships were also withdrawn for fear of causing too much collateral damage which might hurt the fragile image of continuing increasingly unpopular "humanitarian" operations through use of force. The final straw came when the White House denied needed armor assets to General Montgomery solely based on the criteria of image management and spin control. Sending armored vehicles to Mogadishu to protect troops as the violence increased was deemed as less important than trying to craft a false image that the U.S. was getting less involved there. It was pure hypocrisy and sheer incompetence at the highest levels.

Clinton's frustration with the failure to get Aideed paired with Powell's backhanded advice to install yet another quick fix sent the Rangers and Delta operatives into a more concerted attempt at capturing Aideed and keep the failing UN mandate chugging along. Clinton, like

Carter in 1979 Iran Hostage Crisis, banked on a Special Forces raid to save his floundering policy and obtain a victory on the cheap.<sup>16</sup> In reality though, calling in Task Force Ranger was a high-risk/high exposure operation with little chance of success. No one in Washington fathomed the possibilities of high casualties using the Rangers, and the myth of the surgical strike as the Holy Grail to winning conflicts was perpetuated. This time, however, the weapon of choice was highly trained elite troops well practiced in insertion and extraction, who would be zipped in and out by helicopter before the Somalis could react. It was the lower end of the spectrum, but it was more of the same RMA mentality that assumed a risk-free approach to smiting low-tech opponents to which they would be powerless to react.

After the Rangers arrived in Mogadishu, the heliborne raids increased dramatically in the attempt to hunt down and capture Aideed. The warlord was watching and capitalized on the Rangers' repetitive tactics and planned the ambush he had been waiting for. Since the Ranger raids were reliant on speed and surprise, they hinged on helicopters to get them out of the hostile environment. Aideed correctly surmised that bringing down at least one helicopter would strand at least a part of the force, and the Americans would scramble assets to surround the crash site. If he could bring down a helicopter, he'd have his ambush. Since the Americans demonstrated that they always flew very low at near rooftop level on the raids to increase tactical surprise, Aideed instructed his militia to engage them with RPGS to bring one down. When Garrison took his forces deep into the SNA held Bakara Market, the trap was sprung, and the SNA got not one, but two Blackhawks and set the stage for an all-out brawl on territory overwhelmingly in their favor. The Rangers and 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain troopers coming to their rescue fought amazingly and meted out overwhelming punishment on the hordes of Somalis coming to massacre them, but without



crucial air assets and armor, the initiative was lost and a protracted street battle ensued. Aideed got his casualties on the streets of Mogadishu.

Clinton's assertive multilateral Wilsonian policy then began to crumble. Strangely, Clinton's first reaction to the firefight was how he should take steps that protected *him* personally. Clinton avoided responsibility, portrayed himself as victim of circumstance, and ranted as his staff for failing to keep him informed of his own policies. To save his failing policy, he then tried to keep selling the same company line about the virtues of saving Somalia and punishing bad guys like Aideed, but few in Congress were in the mood for listening to any more spin from the White House. When the images of dead pilot corpses being desecrated in the streets and the footage of pilot Michael Durant's beaten face were shown over and over in the media, bipartisan efforts began clamoring for a pullout. Unnerving images were unhinging the image-driven policy to save strangers. As Clinton and his team spoke timidly about commitment to UN multilateralism and humanitarianism, it not only fell on deaf ears with the public, but reinforced their beliefs that Clinton and his idealists were completely out of touch and that the Wilsonian adventure in Somalia had proven to be a colossal waste of money and lives. The more Clinton spoke of staying the course and arguing to maintain the commitment to the UN, the louder the resentment grew on Capitol Hill. The mood of the public grew ugly as most Americans had never supported nation-building in Somalia anyway, and felt as if American troops were being recklessly thrown away attempting to save an ungrateful and inherently violent people.

Not being very deeply committed to his own assertive multilateral goals and unwilling to risk his own political capital to salvage his own fickle policies, in a whirl Clinton reversed himself and began discussing a timetable for a delayed pullout. Despite all his tough talk about demonstrating American resolve, he saw no further point in going after Aideed, and ordered his

commanders to stand pat. Instead of galvanizing an overwhelming public demand to get revenge on Aideed, Clinton overreacted and went into further risk aversion mode, and ordered the troops to hunker down and sent them additional assets to defend themselves. After the battle of Mogadishu, the administration engaged in a contradictory “duck and cover” policy in which Clinton insisted on keeping U.S. troops for as long as possible in order not to undermine the floundering UNOSOM II nation-building exercise, but U.S. troops would do little in Somalia other than to protect themselves inside their heavily fortified perimeters. After heated debate, Congress acquiesced to Clinton’s pleas not to pull out the troops immediately in order to keep the UN mission afloat, but they wouldn’t stay long. This portion of the policy was also driven by image control, as the Democrats wanted to help Clinton save face after the disaster and the administration wanted to keep selling the charade that UNOSOM II still had hopes of restoring peace through traditional mediation and nation-building efforts. These efforts were pointless, however, as many contingents saw no point in staying on if the Americans left, and contributions for aid and paying for UN operations in Somalia were already drying up rapidly with little hope of replacement funds or new volunteers for peacekeeping. Yet once again, image management in policy was more important than dealing with the realities.

As UNOSOM II followed its predictable course of collapse, nation-building and other facets of Clinton’s Somalia policy were proven an overwhelming failure. Clinton had failed because he was aloof and detached while he placed troops in an increasing hostile war zone, and had left unproven subordinates to scramble with undelegated tasks that they were arguably unqualified to handle. He failed because he had no real operational strategy in Operation Restore Hope, he had no realistic exit strategy, also had failed because he had raised the risks without raising the costs in waging war on Aideed. Filled with hopeless idealism and mismanagement,

American policy in Somalia under Clinton was built upon the practice of controlling imagery and avoiding risk while hoping for a victory on the cheap. The mix of these elements made success in Somalia on any level and utter impossibility.

In the end, Clinton was humiliated and the public's faith in his administration's ability to conduct foreign policy was polled at less than 23%. Amazingly, the assertive multilateralists in the White House and the State Department still refused to see their own failings in their "progressive" policies and instead looked for scapegoats. Clinton blamed the UN, his staffers, and others for the failure. Clinton threw Les Aspin under the bus and Warren Christopher was also left out to dry. The President never took responsibility for the failure in Somalia. Clinton himself reflected that he was a victim of circumstances in Somalia, and his own memoirs contradict themselves explaining his own role in the making of the fiasco.<sup>17</sup> As Clinton failed in his attempts to keep the U.S. engaged indefinitely in UNOSOM II, he started spinning Somalia as a limited *success*. He repeatedly hailed Somalia as a successful venture because he claimed that millions of people were saved from starvation and that the UN operation "gave the people of Somalia a chance". No one in the administration had the insight to see the failings of the foundations of their hopelessly flawed assertive multilateralist agenda played out in a real-life scenario, nor did they see the failings of their aggressive and meliorist approach of that intrusive agenda which ensured its failure. No one in the administration seemed to see a pattern in the execution of their policies either which made an effective strategy impossible and doomed ground operations to a wimpy flailing of risk aversion exercises designed to avoid casualties and collateral damage for the sake of producing imagery rather than results. After it all blew up in their faces, Clinton and his assertive multilateralists had learned very little from the experience in Somalia, and continued to pursue their idealistic agenda in Haiti, Bosnia, and elsewhere.

In Haiti both the Bush and Clinton administrations practiced risk aversion and image driven policies that mirrored the dysfunctional approaches in Somalia. Both presidents based their policies not on realism, but on empty and ill-defined Wilsonian rhetoric about the indispensable nature of democracies in the Western Hemisphere. This of course, even included an infant democracy in Haiti that had only been afloat for a few months and had been anything but stable, and its recently elected president, Jean Bertrand Aristide, was reputedly quite unstable as well. Aristide, however, was considered the only acceptable option for Haiti by both administrations simply because he won an election. Worse yet, Aristide was a egotistical populist with far left political ideologies that included a rejection of free market principles and an obnoxious anti-American vent, but he was nonetheless portrayed as a helpless victim of circumstance who was Haiti's only real hope for democracy and good government. The unspoken truth was that Aristide was removed by a military coup after attempting to push Haiti's elites and right wing factions in directions that would eliminate them from the traditional power equations of Haiti's complex system of politics and economics, and suffered a predictable backlash. Instead of recognizing this fact and accepting the status quo, the Bush administration claimed that this usurpation of Haiti's 1990 election was intolerable in his New World Order, especially in the sanctity of the Western Hemisphere. Although this idealist perspective had no basis in the context of Haiti's history of violent power struggles and dysfunction, Aristide's messianic election became the cornerstone of the irrational justifications to intervene in Haiti's sovereign affairs for both Clinton and Bush. This idealist perspective also ignored the fact that Haiti's new regime was not a threat to anyone in the region nor had the coup negatively affected American national security or economic interests in the slightest. Had it not been for the growing problem of boat refugees flooding toward Florida and the image of victims plastered in the media needing

the Americans to rescue them at sea, none of the hopelessly out of touch rhetoric about protecting and enlarging democracies in the region would have found any fertile soil in U.S. policy in which to take root.

Bush's actions towards Haiti would prove far more realistic and productive than Clinton's, but they still rooted in a conceptual vacuum of vague idealism which produced an incoherent policy. Bush tried to keep Haiti as low on the foreign policy radar as he could, but the boat people imagery playing out in the media made this exceedingly difficult. The Bush administration spewed Wilsonian rhetoric about boldly confronting "the interruption of democracy" in the region and tied Haiti into the enlargement of democratic ideology of Bush's fuzzy vision of the New World Order, but none of this rhetoric was ever clearly defined or put into strong action. The phony claim (later adopted by and seized upon under Clinton as bipartisan in nature) that the situation in Haiti was a threat to U.S. security interests was based on hubris and emotion selling an unsubstantiated domino effect of Latin American militaries toppling elected governments. Bush's policies seemed to be more about crafting an image of demonstrating benign American international leadership in protecting the sanctity of democracy in the post-Cold War, a policy based upon unproven neo-Wilsonian theory rather than acceptance of the realities of Haiti's historic political and economic dysfunction. This myopic view which ignored Haiti's virtual economic and strategic insignificance along with its long history of political upheaval, hinged on demonstrating to undefined Latin American audiences that coups or autocratic regimes were now suddenly magically inconceivable notions in the post-Cold War. The idealistic and moralistic policies for Bush and Clinton both anchored on this domino fallacy. No coups in the hemisphere took their cues from Haiti during Aristide's exile, including the long period before the U.S. made noises about intervening forcefully and smiting the junta. If pursuing an aggressive posture

against the junta and supporting the obnoxious Aristide was a demonstration, it was a pointless one; the domino theory envisioning a cascade of coups was a false assumption that led policymakers away from more realistic assessments regarding the actual importance of regime change in Port-au-Prince. Nonetheless, the Bush administration played up the “intolerance” rhetoric and chained itself to masts of the Santiago Resolution and committed itself to restoring Aristide’s brief and unhappy presidency.

Aristide, however, was anything but grateful and hardly a friendly asset toward American interests. Not placated by American rhetoric or promises, he made a grand nuisance of himself, even publicly claiming the CIA had orchestrated the coup to remove him. He ranted against the United States even as he took up comfortable residency in New York City, and vowed revenge against those that pushed him into exile. Aristide undermined and sabotaged American attempts to negotiate a power-sharing arrangement or abdication of the coup leaders that left them unpunished.

Aristide wasn’t Bush’s only problem when it came to addressing Haiti. When Bush took action against the junta when he froze Haitian assets and instituted sanctions, it only backfired because the sanctions were porous and in reality only hurt the poor masses on the island. He never seriously considered a realistic approach to the regime, because Aristide was always had to be most visible part of the imagery of upholding the anomalous election of 1990. Despite his efforts to get Aristide back in power, Bush was criticized by the left for not doing enough, not caring enough about the plight of Haitians suffering under brutal oppression, and of course, denying the refugees asylum in the United States. As time wore on, the weight of the sanctions only increased economic hardship on Haiti’s masses, which consequently increased the number of refugees. Bush’s moralist policies against the Cedras regime weren’t accomplishing anything

positive. Bush, however, wisely ruled out using force against junta, realizing that a meaningful intervention would require a commitment as long as the one in 1915. Even a commitment of this type had little to speak to it, as another exercise undertaken in “The White Man’s Burden” in Haiti with massive U.S. guidance and assistance would probably not fix Haiti any better than the Marines and bureaucrats had done under Wilson’s adventure. With sanctions failing, negotiations going nowhere, and the use of force being taken off the table, Bush had no ready solution to the problem. All he could do was order the rescue Haitians adrift at sea and return refugees, and hope that his policy of “prudence and patience” would restore stability to Haiti so aid could be implemented. There were really no other courses of action open to him, because Bush had become trapped by his own rhetoric about saving democracy and restoring Aristide.

Bush had painted himself in a corner with Wilsonian rhetoric, but still there obviously limitations to his idealism. He quickly ruled out an invasion, and had intelligently surmised that despite the shrill cries of racism from the extreme liberal left and the Black Caucus, allowing thousands upon thousands of poor Haitians into Florida was economically and politically unfeasible. Despite media portrayals that painted the desperate boat people as political refugees, Bush knew better and refused to be sucked into the vapid emotionalism. Bush knew that allowing even a small number of asylum seekers into the U.S. would create a magnet for a wave of new immigrants, a common sense analysis that candidate Clinton vehemently rejected and then was later forced to embrace when he took office. Bush’s policy of repatriation, however, was not only in compliance with UN refugee protocols, it worked: the refugee numbers dropped significantly after poverty-wracked Haitians discovered they weren’t getting in the door on blanket visas. Nonetheless, the Democrats in the 1992 election year attacked Bush as being

uncaring and out of touch, and many far-left liberals insinuated that his policies were inherently racist.

With few options and refusing to fall prey to greater political traps of the leftist elites, Bush put Haiti on the backburner content to let the OAS drive the agenda, which ironically was an abdication of demonstrating American leadership in the region, but still an acquiescence to hallowed multilateralism in the New World Order. The OAS was of course, inert on Haiti and did little to help the U.S. alleviate the refugee problem or find alternative courses of action in dealing with the Cedras and the junta. Naturally, none of the members of the OAS were willing to take risks to meet the lofty goals of the Santiago Resolution. Getting nowhere, Bush turned his attention to his re-election efforts and to bigger foreign policy problems in Europe and Asia as candidate Bill Clinton naively called for more action in removing the regime in Port-au-Prince and ending the “heartless” repatriation policy.

In essence, Clinton as president practiced not only risk aversion in policy towards Haiti, but the crux of his goals there were based on crafting imagery over lasting results, and producing symbolism over substance based on the same idealistic rhetoric practiced by Bush. The administration’s policies were never meant to deal with Haiti’s root causes of its dysfunctional state, but instead were designed to create a façade of positive imagery for nation-building and democracy and more importantly, crafting an image of Clinton’s credibility in foreign affairs. Clinton ran a risk-free policy for almost two years using the self-defeating approach of coercive diplomacy aimed at the naïve goal of trying to get the junta to surrender power without considering there was nothing in it for them to cooperate much less ensure their own destruction. This was the same idealistic foolishness that had failed so miserably with the militias and clans in Somalia, but the assertive multilateralists by nature refused to acknowledge. Haiti fit into



Clinton's overall tactic during the early part of his first term which was to stay confusingly vague on foreign policy but still sound hawkish about Wilsonian goals. Clinton had bashed Bush for inaction on everything including Haiti, but actually maintained most of Bush's policies including repatriation and did even less on others. Nonetheless, Clinton and his team harped on the "national interests" involved (although there were none) in restoring Haiti to democracy (which was more democracy in name than function) and sought to use the situation to embark on another assertive multilateralists adventure and empower the UN invoking the peace enforcement agenda over the rationale of national sovereignty (both Haitian and American) once more. Invoking a Chapter VII mandate coupled with the democracy enlargement agenda disguised as a national interest, was the underlying belief that this Wilsonian exercise to restore Aristide was a multilateral endeavor. This effort was then justified as "burden sharing" to downplay U.S. risks and costs. Of course, the reality in peacekeeping is that Americans bore most of the risks and costs, and in the end reaped few (if any) benefits in surrendering sovereignty in foreign policy over to pointless UN mandates that were doomed to fail. Clinton, like Bush, trapped himself with the heated rhetoric of tough talk and preserving democracy, which in the end, had painted himself into a corner and left himself with no policy options with the junta other than the use of force.

Clinton evoked Kennedy's commitment to democracy to "bear any burden," but in reality he wasn't willing to take any real risks and dithered on Haiti for almost two years. The rhetoric was greater than the administration's will to act, as had been the case in Bosnia, Somalia, and elsewhere. Although his election caused celebration and a boat building frenzy in Haiti, Clinton soon showed that his humanitarian posturing was quickly proven quite hollow as he flip-flopped on promises of providing sanctuary for this flood of "poor huddled masses" would put too many

political risks upon *himself*. The Congressional Black Caucus bludgeoned Clinton over the plight of Haitian immigrants and suffering of Aristide supporters, but chained to his campaign rhetoric, Clinton only reacted by creating some breathing room because he had no real strategy in hand. By promising to restore Aristide through pursuit of amateurishly flawed negotiations with the junta, Clinton believed he could either make the issue go away or win a victory on the cheap by using coercive diplomacy against the junta. Clinton therefore hypocritically continued Bush's "heartless" repatriation policy and kept immigrants from becoming an enflamed political issue in Florida, while the undefined but rhetoric laced plan to return their champion Aristide soothed the ruffled feathers of the Black Caucus. Unfortunately, while this contradictory policy served Clinton personally and avoided any real risks for him, it certainly was not a coherent strategy that addressed real national security interests.

Negotiations, however, naturally floundered because Clinton and Lake were fixated on restoring Aristide, the one condition that would ensure swift retribution against Aristide's opponents, including the junta members themselves. Although Cedras was willing to abdicate to almost anyone else, the fixation on Aristide as the only avenue toward a new government made diplomacy pointless; however, the assertive multilateralists only blamed the vilified Haitian regime for the lack of inertia in negotiations and stalemate ensued. Cedras used negotiations to undermine the pressures of the embargo, skillfully frustrating the Wilsonian do-gooders for over a year until the UN finally passed Resolution 841. UN punitive actions even after this point still failed to hurt the regime in any significant way. Talk of using force to remove the regime increased as the administration hawks led by Lake and Albright salivated over the prospects of an easy invasion, but the military wasn't so optimistic. Although FADH and FRAPH could offer absolutely no real initial resistance to an invasion, the Pentagon knew that the liberals above

them would never create a clear mandate there and American troops would be stuck peacekeeping and nation-building there indefinitely. Resorting to force still seemed too politically perilous for Clinton since there was no public support for it, and the junta rightly sensed the administration's unwillingness to take serious risks to oust them. Reneging on the Governor's Island Accords, Cedras deflated the haughtiness of Clinton's overly aggressive "no carrots" approach and used it as an opportunity to clamp down on pro-Aristide supporters. Clinton's no-risk approach banking on promises of returning Aristide through the use of only mostly negative inducements towards the junta, predictably blew up in his face.

Making matters worse, the administration was still committed to its multilateralist and Wilson-styled moralist approach even though the junta was digging in its heels. Cedras had entertained the notion but never fully approved the permissive UNIMIH mandate, yet Clinton's recklessness and inattention sent in blue helmets with the *USS Harlan County* over Aspin's objections to add muscle to the unsettled and vague UNIMIH mission. This poorly conceived and ill-prepared military mission rushed head-first into nation-building despite the realities of the situation in Haiti. Sent in to create the image of taking action in Haiti towards addressing human rights abuses and introducing humanitarian aid, the undefined mission lacked clear organization and command structure and a fiasco resulted. The regime already realized how weak and irresolute the U.S. was towards taking risks, especially immediately after the disaster in Mogadishu and moved to thwart UNIMIH. After only a limited show of resistance by drunken FADH thugs, Clinton ordered the ship to retreat, pulling the American led force out with its tail tucked between its legs, thus publicly exposing the risk-free nature of American policy. With the *Harlan County* fiasco, Clinton was humiliated and Governor's Island was now dead in the water. Clinton absolved himself of his reckless and illogical decisions and blamed his staff for his

mistakes, and decided to wait until the heat died down to disconnect it from the Somalia debacle and to buy more time.

Still looking for a risk-free approach, Clinton clung to the permissive entry scenario and coercion. While the administration ironically claimed not to be practicing gunboat diplomacy, it enacted a blockade and disingenuously claimed that any UN intervention in Haiti would not involve peacekeeping, peace enforcement, or nation-building. While 45% of those polled disapproved of the administration's handling of Haiti and Congress sought in vain to prevent further involvement with the UN there, the Haiti hawks pushed harder to invade. There were few voices inside policymaking circles to counteract the hawks, as Clinton had replaced Pentagon planning posts with technocrats and generals that were beholden to him. Tony Lake and Strobe Talbot further effectively squashed dissenting views within the White House and ramped up the empty rhetoric about the importance of involvement in Haiti's internal affairs. There was no one within the inner circles to advise the President otherwise or echo the bottom line of the realists that restoring Aristide "wasn't worth a single American life".

Naturally, the idealist administration by nature dismissed realism out of hand, and Haiti policy under Clinton was never about making logical choices or seeing things as they really were. Clinton's admiration of Aristide had caused him to personalize American foreign policy and invest the nation's resources in a very unstable and flawed individual whose faults were systematically overlooked. Aristide was always painted in the imagery of the victim, the glowing icon of democracy who had his rightful place as the leader of the downtrodden usurped from him without cause by evil men. Aristide was painted as the panacea for all Haiti's ills, and the reasons for his quick downfall and his obstructive behavior since were completely ignored. Clinton's desire to craft his own image with the Black Caucus and African-American voters also

drove policy as well. Clinton wanted to constantly prove his identification with poor blacks and the underprivileged to build support for his liberal agenda in domestic issues. Haiti policy was founded upon spinning the imagery of Aristide as savior and with Clinton as relentless humanitarian producing a credible and tough foreign policy. It was an elaborate attempt to sell credibility for saving Haiti and in Clinton's abilities where it simply did not exist.

Clinton's credibility, despite all the renewed rhetoric, was not recovering after the *Harlan County* fiasco. As Stephanopoulos and Morris noted, the administration looked increasingly lost, rattled, and incompetent. Clinton appeared impotent over events in Bosnia, was flummoxed by the Chinese and North Koreans, and avoided action in Rwanda because it was deemed too risky to prevent the slaughter there-- justifying inaction and avoiding acceptance of responsibility under the UN Charter simply by officially erasing the word "genocide" from the White House vocabulary when addressing the issue. Spin control lamely could try to cover up the administration's hypocrisy over human rights and Rwanda, but it wasn't making Clinton look any better in dealing with foreign crises. Pushing UN mandates to impose Chapter VI and VII mandates on Haiti and plans to launch a Wilsonian crusade under Operation Restore Democracy to enforce Governor's Island were obvious steps towards rectifying the image problem. Haiti seemed easier and less risky than bloody Bosnia and Rwanda and could be undertaken without much military risk, so the Wilsonian mindset to impose American/international will on Haitians for their own good was undertaken despite Haiti's cultural disposition to reject such lofty enlightened projects.

The assertive multilateralists felt comforted, however, in the shroud of multilateralism they created. The administration was unable to decipher the difference between international or regional consensus for willingness to take action in the hemisphere, and took the useless nodding

in agreement to democratic principles as some sort of serious movement toward international burden sharing. The international community was imbued with even more of the same passive “cooperation that mitigated risk” mindset as the administration, but talking about action was very different than taking on real risks in Haiti to enforce the fuzzy notions of indispensable democracy. Espousing the same inflated rhetoric about tolerating only democracy in the hemisphere continued for months, the OAS did nothing but wait on the Americans to fix the problem for them. To attentive audiences, the supposed regional indignation against the illegitimate regime in Port-au-Prince lacked real substance as Washington policymakers and their OAS sycophants still looked foolish parroting democracy rhetoric at each other at conferences while clumsily avoiding the bigger transgressor of totalitarianism in the region-- Cuba. Clinton likewise appeared extremely ridiculous when he strangely supported Randall Robinson’s hunger strike against his own policies. Randall wasn’t alone in his dissatisfaction with Clinton handling of Haiti. By May 1994, 53% of Americans disapproved of Clinton’s policies as the administration stumbled along trying to involve themselves in a place where no one cared about and employing spin imagery without creating useful results. Even the progressive liberal left grew tired with the administration’s rudderless policies. Clinton’s tendency in foreign policy continued to talk tough and do little, which infuriated his liberal base and did nothing to convince other Americans to get involved in Haiti.

Nonetheless, Clinton’s Haiti policies increasingly pursued the liberals’ goals of assertive multilateralism. In a cyclical pattern, the U.S. and the UN encouraged the other with rhetorical emotional oversell of the situation in Haiti regarding democracy and human rights and invoking collective security arguments regarding breeching Haitian sovereignty. Although the U.S. was unwilling to take on the risks alone, policymakers were shorn up by the mantel of multilateralism

and the expectation that long-term nation-building would be quickly dumped on the UN, while the international community was comforted by the realities that the Americans were going to do all the heavy lifting in an invasion and occupation. In this strange symbiotic misconceptual arrangement, neither party was willing to take on any real risks, but based its consent for a Chapter VII mandate on its counterpart to do so. Of course, such an arrangement was fraught with problems, but the assertive multilateralists in Washington and New York were thrilled nonetheless that peace enforcement was underway despite the logic against undertaking such a foray into the abyss of poverty wracked Haiti.

Springing into multilateral sanctioned action wasn't so easy, especially as permissive entry seemed less and less likely. After such a long delay and pointless diplomacy, Clinton had painted himself into a corner with all the administration's tough rhetoric and then buying into the concept of undertaking an aggressive Chapter VII mission in Haiti. He had effectively eliminated all other options open to him other than force, especially since Talbot opposed conceding any incentives to get the junta to leave peacefully because of "how it would *look* if we bought them off". Imagery again trumped practicality. Tougher sanctions also weren't working; in fact, they were hurting the Haitian masses while strengthening the regime's position as Clinton dithered over setting a deadline for invasion. The administration attempted to bluff out the regime as it had the Pentagon formulate OPLANs 2370 and 2380 as "bookend" policies to occupy Haiti either forcefully or by permissive entry, but the constant righteous bravado about resorting to force simply aggravated the regime. The Republicans in Congress were vocal in their opposition to invasion and their understanding that Clinton was not being honest about his intentions to avoid using force because he had obviously boxed himself in with the junta. With nothing at stake for Americans, polls showed 68% of the public opposed invasion, as did a large bipartisan

block in Congress, but Clinton arrogantly dismissed them all as “isolationists” and sidestepped Congress anyway.

While easily brushing Congress aside with empty platitudes about “consultation,” Clinton discovered he had few obstacles within the Pentagon to go ahead with an invasion. With a new Joint Chiefs of Staff under Shalikashvili and Shelton as Southern regional commander, these new Clinton military appointees were eager to make their new boss look good and engage in peacekeeping. They confidently backed Clinton’s desire to invade and unfolded a plan which promised a quick risk-free invasion as Haiti’s military could do little to stop it. Occupation would also be sold as low risk, as it would be purposely short in nature and its endstate was handing it all off to the UN within a few weeks. U.S. forces could get in and out before anything went sour, giving Clinton a quick foreign policy victory on the cheap. Aristide would be reinstated, the junta cowed, UN forces quickly injected to do peacekeeping, and U.S. forces would make force protection a priority since casualties were the one factor that could unhinge the whole risk-free venture.

Force not only looked appealing, it soon became the only option left open to Clinton after years of pointless diplomacy ground down. The administration’s coercive policy failed (although it was falsely hailed as a success after the invasion) because the coercion was weak and the regime had no motivation to comply in planning its own destruction. Putting their heads on a platter was simply not a valid goal in negotiation within the clumsy confines of Clinton’s all-or-nothing approach to bring back Aristide. Tougher sanctions merely enriched the junta in the black market and reinforced the payoff and loyalty system that kept them in power. U.S. actions *increased* oppression by FRAPH and intensified their hard line stance against Aristide and his supporters. Coercive measures had the *opposite* effect of gaining compliance for Governor’s



Island and strengthened the most radical elements supporting the junta. Coercive measures undermined Cedras' control of the radical elements that would never allow Aristide's return and actually weakened his ability to have more flexibility and more freely negotiate with the Americans. Cedras feared FRAPH more than Clinton, and U.S. coercion merely undercut Cedras' ability to step down. Because of Clinton's "big stick" moralist approach and infatuation with reinstalling Aristide, Clinton's policies practically ruined the chances for a peaceful conclusion to regime change in Haiti.

As Clinton's rudderless policy floundered, he again blamed others and angrily announced he was fed up with Cedras. Cornered by his own poor policies, rhetoric, need for overblown UN mandates, and overarching desire to win a victory on the cheap, Clinton was boxed in and had left open no other options than using force. Invasion plans were ready by September 1994, but Clinton worried about spinning the invasion to a hostile public and feared the possibility of casualties that would unravel the Wilsonian venture. Clinton attempted to follow Dick Morris' advice to *sell values over interests* since they were noticeably absent, but the attempt fell flat. Few accepted Clinton's justifications that U.S. credibility was at stake or that Americans had any special obligation to fix Haiti's problems. Few felt Haiti was worth risking lives over, and many speculated it was all just orchestrated to impact upcoming elections in November. Bipartisan anger grew in Congress as Clinton completely sidestepped the legislature in moving toward invasion, but Democrats refused to allow their incumbent president be reigned in by opponents of nation-building. Congress was removed from the equation because Clinton didn't want a formal debate over his flimsy decisions to go to war. It was an ironic state of affairs that Clinton was clamoring to go to war in Haiti to restore democracy by avoiding it at home.

At the last moment, the Carter/Powell/Nunn “Hail Mary” diplomatic gambit threw an interesting twist in the situation, landing a peach in the lap of the President who desperately desired a permissive entry. Clinton at last had his victory on the cheap after two years of floundering, and would finally get his “splendid little war” to reverse the humiliation of *Harlan County*. Clinton knew that with a permissive entry, especially if they were few casualties, would give his assertive multilateralist agenda a free pass; what happened to Haitians and attempts at nation-building would be unimportant to most Americans. The administration engaged in a rousing round of chest thumping claiming its cheap victory as vindications of its “flexible” policies. This self-delusion of course was more part of image management, designed to appear as if this was the proof of Clinton’s foreign policy credibility and the impetus to put assertive multilateralism back into high gear. Spin was used to avoid the term “nation-building” in Haiti, but few were deceived as to the Wilsonian designs to recraft Haitian society in the enlightened liberal model. What the assertive multilateralists failed to recognize, however, was that Haiti was little better suited for nation-building than Somalia, and the wonder pill of democracy would not cure this patient of her many illnesses.

Once Americans were ashore in Haiti policy in Operation Restore Democracy centered on creating a secure environment for nation-building stabilizing the return and restoration of Aristide’s government. The mission goal of creating a secure environment, however, was extremely vague and difficult to measure in real terms. This approach, however, was a risk-free one. “Stability operations” as they were dubbed encountered very little resistance from FRAPH and FADH, and was measured against those criteria. Disarming Haitians or getting involved in Haitian-on-Haitian violence was avoided, proving that the purpose of the American presence was primarily for crafting the imagery of social control and demonstrating American military

prohess rather than actually policing the population or dealing with Haiti's real security issues. The Pentagon from the initial stages forged its OPLANs so that it purposely would not be relegated to policing the population, and took the low-risk approach of taking stances as to not provoke the population and to perpetuate their carefully crafted image as liberators rather than conquerors. In this policy driven by imagery, the operation involved "as many flags as we can get in there" as Shelton put it, to make the mission look as international as possible, although the CARICOM contingents sent in were all for political window dressing and were of little military utility. The United States military was in control of the country, was 85% of the occupying force, possessed almost all the major sea and air assets and had to train, transport, equip, and supply most of the "burden sharing" OAS contingents at its own expense. Most of the aspects of multilateralism outside of the U.S., Canada, and France were simply a farce in the operation, but again imagery projection trumped reality. U.S. troops for their part did little to stop most violence and crime, as the priorities were on maintaining an image of overall control while utilizing the risk avoidance practices of force protection. This was especially true of 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain's experience, as frustrated soldiers kept tightly inside gated perimeters of "the kevlar zone" of Port-au-Prince widely felt that they were accomplishing little in Haiti other than guarding themselves.<sup>18</sup> To General Meade's credit, however, he perhaps sensed the pointless nature of the Wilsonian mission, and deemed it was foolish to risk American lives to fulfill the vague and impossible goals of image-driven quasi-nation-building in Haiti.

The hypocrisy of the mission was even more apparent as FAHD was allowed to stay on as the de facto police force, as it was essential for military planners to avoid becoming the police force and invoking the obvious mission creep involved. American soldiers became frustrated being partnered with the hated FADH in policing the streets, and found that efforts to retrain them and

embody them with Western ideals of justice and professionalism were a miserable waste of time. Violence, demonstrations and looting nonetheless continued, but as long as an image of general security was in place, none of that mattered to U.S. planners. This establishment of a “secure environment” was especially important given that creating this goal was the main condition under which the UN troops would replace American units, and was the only criteria set down as any type of American exit strategy once the regime was removed and FRAPH was neutralized.

The rickety policy of instituting Wilsonian reform in Haiti and meeting the elusive exit strategy, however, was fraught with problems. The invasion had propped up Aristide, who immediately backslid on his hollow promises regarding reconciliation. He frustrated the international do-gooders at every turn, and used the UN Chapter VII mandate to undermine all his political opposition, which ironically ensured one party rule and made a mockery of democracy since anyone who opposed his return was considered hostile to the short-sighted mandate. The imagery involving returning Aristide as a savior and then protecting him (without making him look like an American puppet in the process) was more important than what Aristide was actually really doing or how feeble his government would be in dealing with Haiti’s problems. Moreover, the problem with security was the crucial issue which became the ultimate Catch-22 in Haiti. Stability had to be established to create conditions for democracy and nation-building, but that would only happen if the population was willing to patient and allow the outsiders to run things; but the American outsiders didn’t want to run things or give the Haitians the expectation that they would be there very long or do too much for them. Worse yet, Haiti was too poor and politically dysfunctional to reform in any attempts at a quick fix, and arguably not even after a long Wilsonian styled occupation could Haiti be come functional. The Americans were simply looking for a quick-in-and-out strategy, almost a drive-by approach to making Haiti

secure enough to hand off to the UN which consequently didn't have the resources to deal with Haiti without massive American involvement.

Imagery nonetheless continued to drive the fool's errand in Haiti. The administration was jubilant over the absolute lack of casualties, and was quick to falsely sell the departure of major pieces of the invasion force as "reducing the American role in Haiti". The administration harped on international efforts to aid Haiti and its progress towards elections and training a new police force, but few Americans approved of staying in Haiti longer than the six months Clinton had promised. Clinton nevertheless constantly broke promises to pull out troops in Haiti by certain deadlines, but benefitted from the fact that public disapproval toward conducting nation-building (that wasn't supposed to occur) was kept quiet by the absence of casualties. Although Clinton had no mandate from Congress to conduct nation building in Operation Uphold Democracy, congressional attempts to reign in the President in Haiti or in peacekeeping in general were thwarted by Democrats refusal to let Republicans criticize him or rain on his only foreign policy "success". Promoting the imagery of grateful Haitians greeting troops and inoculating children was the "band-aid" approach to spinning success in Haiti, although nothing was really being done to fix what was systematically wrong with Haitian society.

In this schizophrenic nature of the quasi-nation-building operation, force protection became the overarching goal of U.S. ground commanders. Raids and weapon seizures were few, and violence continued as long as it no longer embarrassingly done right in front of U.S. troops captured by CNN cameras. Meanwhile, U.S. troops looked paranoid sweating their full body armor compared to other lightly armed contingents, as the Americans took the low-risk approach of avoiding too much contact with the locals. This ensured that much needed local intelligence was limited, but the lack of interaction with the population would also prevent Americans from

doing any real policing. The preoccupation for American commanders wasn't creating security for Haitians, but rather creating operations based on the primary goal of "no casualties." The exceptions to this were the Special Forces scattered throughout the countryside, but they were in conflict with the "hunker down" mentality of U.S. risk avoidance policy of higher headquarters in the capital. None of this much mattered in Washington, as the building the image of creating general security was the important goal to achieve in order that the UN would come and take Haiti off the American's hands.

Meanwhile, the effort to create a new human rights-based police force continued to be the crux of creating a secure environment-- whatever that phrase actually meant. Despite the millions spent in aid, the transition phases from FRAPH to ISPF to HDF created nothing but an underfunded, undertrained, underequipped, and corrupt police force that was little different than before. No magically embedded seeds of justice and rule of law took serious root, and the IPMs were of little help either, proving that international assumption of police training was a hollow goal. Aristide simply used the final product of the HDP as his own political tool anyway, making the entire exercise a waste of time. The police vacuum led to more crime and riots, and the primitive court and prison system was equally dysfunctional, even after much help from glorified but extremely limited international aid and training. Aristide also removed most of the qualified bureaucrats in the regions and replaced them as positions of graft, and recklessly gutted the military simply to prove to everyone who was in charge. Against American protests, he also instituted pointless leftist agendas geared towards reaping vengeance on the country's elites while foolishly destroying the healthiest segments of the economy. Aristide had returned Haiti to its traditional predatory state of corruption, poverty, and dysfunction. Real reform was proving to be a fantasy.

In another serious act of ingratitude, Aristide also poked the open wound in Clinton's side by fuming over repatriation and refugee issues. The administration brushed Aristide's protests aside about not granting the refugees held in Guantanamo asylum, but it allowed itself to open itself up to the machinations of extremist leftist groups to allow U.S. Courts address the status of these refugees. After much difficulty in caring for thousands of asylum seekers and a squashing a riot in Guantanamo, the system finally closed in on itself before the extremist's attorneys were able to crack open the door for a wave of Haitian refugees to enter the United States. Clinton quietly allowed a few thousand sneak through back door channels to appease emotional liberals, but the immigration door was closed after he announced that only regular channels would only be utilized via standard applications. Guantanamo too would be emptied of its asylum seekers first voluntarily for repatriation, then involuntarily, which sent Aristide on another tirade. Despite all his rhetoric, Clinton was happy to make the Haitian refugee problem simply go away without fulfilling his promises to change Bush's "cruel and heartless" policies. Clinton had already won enough points with the Black Caucus and hawkish liberals by returning Aristide to power and dumping millions in aid into Haiti, and he was done taking any more political risks for Haitian refugees.

As the occupation of Haiti continued into 1995, the administration continued to spin Haiti as a success based on the image driven policies. Haiti was sold as "secure" even though violence continued and American troops were avoiding policing the population other than creating a sense of general order to Haitian society. The image of American military control of the mission was augmented by the same dual-hatting concept seen in Somalia, although this again was a mirage invented to make it look like the UN was capable of taking over operational control of the mission, even though the American troops were still doing all the heavy lifting and providing

most of the logistical assets. The imagery surrounding massive international aid was heavily spun by the administration, although the topic of the *results* of billions being poured down the sieve of the woeful Haitian economy was carefully danced around. The image of elections, however, were the primary source of deception, as conducting elections were indispensably symbolic to restoring democracy and meeting the Wilsonian goals of the mission. Of course, the reality of the rigged and flawed elections over the next few years that proved that the Haitians themselves generally regarded the government as corrupt and elections a pointless exercise was systematically brushed aside as somehow irrelevant to the great success of Operation Restore Democracy.

The most heinous management of imagery was the conditions set for success themselves. In crafting the mirage of restoring democracy to Haiti, the primary goal was to create the illusion that the U.S. had taken serious steps towards protecting the indispensable institution of democracy in the region and restored the beloved practice to the victimized Haitian people. This venture supposedly signaled American responsibility, benevolence, and willingness to address failed states and the will to conduct nation-building via multilateralism. None of this was even remotely true. American policy was driven by avoiding risks and was fixated on avoiding casualties because the public had no desire to conduct either assertive multilateralism, peacekeeping, or was willing to risk lives to save sacred Haitian democracy. The primary mission of creating a secure environment was the guarantee of getting out of Haiti and claiming a victory before anything happened. Getting out is all that mattered, so *the exit strategy became the mission*. Since force protection, avoiding mission creep, and handing off operations at the earliest possible moment were principle approaches to ground operations, this goal was likely to be met easily and quickly. The goals of the mission were so vaguely defined and set so low that success



could almost be guaranteed under any circumstances that avoided casualties. With proclaiming Aristide as the panacea for Haiti and focusing all main efforts on conducting a symbolism-over-substance election cycle, it was a cheap accomplishment to “restore” democracy without doing anything meaningful to fix Haiti. The Clinton administration crowed about its success in Haiti, and they and their assertive multilateralist allies never relinquished this delusion even years after the façade fell to pieces before everyone’s eyes.

Operation Restore Democracy and its UN follow-on missions in Haiti, however, were not a foreign policy success by any stretch of the imagination. Aristide, as predicted, proved increasingly uncooperative if not obstructive to Western enlightened ideals towards political and economic reform. Aristide instituted disastrous anti-free market policies which angered and frustrated Clinton, but didn’t prevent him from eventually releasing more aid to his old friend’s treasury. Despite the mountains of aid, however, Haiti was neither stable, nor secure. The Haitian economy was anemic, crawling along only because it was being propped up U.S. and international aid, and begging for more. After 1995, however, a hostile Congress was in no mood to allow Haiti stay on the perpetual dole and was moving to curtail aid. Likewise, hundreds of millions were poured into Haiti through relief organizations and international financial institutions, but Haiti’s condition was so abysmal that it made little to no difference. The strongest portions of the economy were the illegal drug and money-laundering trades, which consequently had a negative effect on U.S. national security interests.

UNIMIH’s main goal however, was not fixing the dilapidated economy, but continuing the imagery of conducting elections, which continued to be the U.S. litmus test for its own success in intervening there. Elections were seen as vindications of the Wilsonian success of U.S. policy in Haiti, but even this was a sham as Aristide continued to use his power to seek out and destroy his

political opponents and made elections a joke. Haiti's governmental institutions continued to be dysfunctional, as the courts, prisons, and police failed to meet the lowest expectations of the international community after investing so much towards Haiti's reform. The UN was forced to continuously extend mandates, and Clinton quietly committed U.S. troops to stay on longer and longer to squeeze out more nation-building; his promise to be out in "months not years" turned into nine year commitment. He likewise instituted more backhanded military involvement through the "Fairwinds" annual training exercises, to keep injecting more props into nation-building under the congressional and public radar.

Although reform was not taking place and the economy of Haiti was still a wreck, Clinton continued propping up Haiti and UNIMIH under the spin of "success and progress" under Prèval's presidency. After threatening to stay past his electoral term, the *wunderkind* priest Aristide was no longer in the presidential palace, but he still manipulated the situation behind the scenes making Prèval his mouthpiece. Widespread violence and dysfunction still continued, the government was inept and corrupt, but the Clinton administration refused to admit the truth as the situation deteriorated more and more every year. Prèval got the UN to again extend its mandate to keep aid rolling in, but he it caused him to fall into power struggle with his own party, sending Haiti into an even deeper cycle of near anarchy resulting in Prèval ruling by near decree. Violence exploded and the environment became hazardous for peacekeepers. Congress moved to get the few remaining troops out of Haiti, but Clinton clung to imagery over reality by simply emphasizing a continuous drawdown of American troops to undercut Congress seizing the initiative and making him look bad. Clinton still pinned all policy hopes on Aristide restoring order, the same "unbalanced ingrate"<sup>19</sup> who was ruthlessly angling to take over the presidency again and push Prèval aside in the process. This was the same Aristide who maneuvered to

undermine UN attempts at reforms, and led the Levalas Party push to end the UN mandates and drive out the foreigners that Clinton put his faith in. In this fog of corruption and violence, the UN and pro-Aristide crowd in Washington were stunned into silence as their messianic figure brazenly used thug tactics to cement his return to power in the 2000 elections and reinstated another reign of chaos and intimidation. The situation became so untenable and dangerous that both the UN and U.S. pulled out almost all foreign troops in March 2000, as Aristide illegally seized more power and trampled the constitution in the process. The pro-Aristide assertive multilateralists, however, still refused to hold him accountable and admit the fallacies of their policies. By the time the February 2001 parliamentary elections were held, the remainder of MICAH pulled out as only 10% of the population bothered to vote. After years of Wilsonian occupation and reform, creating democracy in Haiti proved to be a ridiculous fantasy.

Attempting to save Haiti was undoubtedly proven a miserable failure and a total waste of money and resources. Jesse Helms was right; the \$4.5 billion in American aid spent there was effectively pouring money “down the rat hole,” and U.S. soldiers were put at risk simply to put a corrupt anti-American ingrate back in power. Democracy was not restored, namely because the Haiti wasn’t ready for such a such complex and fragile institution, and the anomaly of Aristide’s 1990 populist election was no basis to claim that Haiti was a true democratic society in need of valiant restoration. Nor was Haiti a viable candidate for progressive reform and nation-building. The misperceptions of the realities of Haitian society and the total misconceptions placed on Aristide and his commitment to democracy made the approach to addressing Haiti’s problems made failure easily predictable, as did the well addressed fallacies of peacekeeping and nation-building.

Clinton's policies also failed because they lacked depth and public appeal, no one was committed to sacrificing much for Haiti, but the rhetoric ran in direct opposition to what Americans, Congress, or even the international community was willing to sacrifice to "save" Haiti. The emotionally driven liberal elites running policy wanted to jump off into the idealistic abyss but no one wished to follow, and there was no motivation to do so. Putting an unbalanced ingrate back in power while disregarding all other options was not only foolish but the rationale given for doing so had nothing at all to do with national interests. The "feel-good" agenda was a fool's errand to begin with, and its larger context of enlargement and demonstration effect was equally unfounded in the realities of U.S. security and economic interests. Restoring Aristide wasn't worth a single life. Luckily, (especially for Clinton and his risk aversion based policy) casualties failed to materialize as the Haitians were happy to accept intervention as an extensive handout from the international community. Even with few casualties, the costs of Operation Restore Democracy didn't validate the lack of results, nor did Clinton's "at least we gave them a chance" later justifications for failure. The fiasco in Haiti simply proved again that assertive multilateralism, nation-building, peace enforcement, and Wilsonianism adventures are fool's errands that are dangerous and incredibly moronic applications of U.S. foreign policy.

In the final analysis, American foreign policy under Bush and Clinton in Somalia and Haiti was quite irrational and divorced from logic and national interests most of the time. Both the humanitarian operations were driven by imagery, the CNN factor, and political theatre rather than attempting to either protect or expand U.S. national interests, and as many Realists scholars have noted, they made little practical sense and were doomed to fail. The execution of these missions was also image driven rather than focusing on stated strategic or tactical goals, and the results were predictable. Both Somalia and Haiti were formulated under the false assumptions of

Wilsonianism and *noblesse oblige*, and like other recent peacekeeping efforts failed because they ignored the realities of power equations and the cultural histories of their target nations which contained people unwilling, unable, and often hostile to accept outside reform. This reform, which taken from their perspective, was simply outside meddling and interference in their affairs. The adventures in Somalia and Haiti also failed because the fallacies of assertive multilateralism which presents the unsubstantiated idealism that a world community body has the overt right to usurp national sovereignty and impose its will on target populations and drag unwilling member populations along for the ride without their expressed consent. Paradoxically, the impulse for such interference and multilateral collective action only lies within idealist leaders, and not among the majority of their constituents which were systematically ignored thereby undermining their rights as well. Therefore there was no real will in any participating country (including the United States) for assertive multilateralism or its contributing factors of peace enforcement, nation-building and Wilsonian reform projects; these were the results of hubris and overreach by arrogant Western elites who misunderstood the consequences of their actions and sought to empower the dysfunctional United Nations with functions and powers it could not handle and consequently should not have. The policy of the United States in this fuzzy New World Order of the post-Cold War was to harness the benevolent power of humanitarianism, peacekeeping, and nation-building as well as the highly elusive and yet to be validated strategy of democracy enlargement schemes. Bush to a lesser degree, and Clinton very much more so, bought into the dangerous fallacies of Wilsonian idealism, use of benevolent power, assertive multilateralism, and eschewed the proven tenets of realism. In doing so, they *embraced the emotional and rejected the rational*, produced symbolism over substance in foreign policy, and set a fixed course towards disappointment, waste, futility, and failure.

Toward these idealistic ends, both administrations convinced themselves that they could produce cheap victories and produce stepping stones towards American led assertive multilateralism. The linchpin of these efforts, however, was wholly predicated on avoiding risks. It was “bungee-jumping” foreign policy-- taking on dangerous multilateralist humanitarian adventures without the need-- and promising victory without the commitment. This was especially true throughout most of the 1990s as U.S. policy can be summed up as “seeking success without sacrifice.” American intervention policy in this decade under Bush and Clinton was designed to look helpful in times of plight for the television cameras but ignored grappling with serious internal problems. It was always geared towards creating a quick fix that avoided taking on any real risk and dealing with the harder long term root problems that created the humanitarian situation in the first place. In Clinton parlance, it was “smoking without inhaling”. American leadership, know-how, money, and technology were always supposed to plow under the messy details of intervention, as elites hid behind antiseptic policies based on a perception of placid public opinion toward aiding strangers or the ability to manipulate public perceptions through spin and deception.

Congress too deserves its share of the blame for the peacekeeping fiascos as well. Congress feared making policy decisions as the Cold War ebbed away, and let the executive branch dominate foreign policy with little interruption until the Democrats lost their traditional control of the House in 1994. Congress effectively challenged neither Bush nor Clinton, and abdicated its constitutional role in foreign policy. Partisan politics trumped national security in both situations, especially as Clinton ignored Congress and his party ran interference for his rudderless policies that steered American policy further from the will of the public to please only a tiny handful of liberal elites.

The Pentagon also acquiesced to peacekeeping forays in order to find a new role in a post-Soviet threat environment, but only did so in situations in which Powell and others believed operations would be militarily a pushover and they could create an exit strategy simply by avoiding mission creep, the declaring victory and handing off the mess to the UN. The Pentagon planners knew that Clinton's idealistic policymakers weren't going to give them a clear mandate, so their primary goal was simply to get out as fast as possible. To this end the military avoided taking risks and focused more on protecting itself and avoiding casualties than creating real and definable mission goals and accepting the necessities of small war doctrine. To the military's credit, however, it institutionally sensed that these humanitarian missions were of no real importance and that it was heavily emphasized to them by their civilian masters that casualties or collateral damage would unhinge the whole façade of nation-building and image driven political theater. To this end, almost all military operations were short term, unaggressive, and produced few viable results. Vaunted U.S. technology too proved of little use in these dog-and-pony shows and American leadership was too afraid to either kill or be killed, as it in turn looked for tactical victories on the cheap. At its best, in Haiti American military power looked impotent and useless. At its worst, the imagery mindset hatched by Clinton's cabinet created the situation in Mogadishu which sadly left American soldiers without the assets to conduct even these limited operations and left them overly vulnerable and got several brave Americans killed and wounded.

Unsurprisingly, the risk aversion mindset driving policy became its own undoing. The Americans weren't willing to take risks, and their enemies knew it. Farah Aideed banked his successful insurgency strategy on it, and both Raul Cedras and Jean Bertrand Aristide exploited the fatal weakness until they got what almost everything they wanted. Peacekeeping and nation-building have no chance of success if it is apparent that leaders implementing them have no

political will to make sacrifices or take real risks; peace cannot be kept if there is no tolerance for casualties or a willingness to get dirty on the battlefield. UN troop deployments, however, are *based* on risk aversion, hence peace enforcement and imposing an outside will on others will fail especially if they are willing to wait out impatient quick fix attempts or engage in messy protracted guerilla warfare even on a small scale. If interventionists are afraid to embrace the ugly images of war as a natural part of war, then certainly the brutality of even small wars will create a stream of images in the modern media formats that will expose such weakness, lack of commitment, and nonexistent political will to embrace risks. Humanitarian interventions are not risk-free; they by their own nature incur unnecessary risks that grow in proportion to the involvement in nation-building. The low-risk humanitarian intervention, based on its arrogant Wilsonian meddling, however, ironically invites a guerilla response or a subverting of political goals and siphoning of aid by unscrupulous power blocs in the target nation. Somalia and Haiti prove this to be true, and also goes to show that in humanitarian operations, no good deed goes unpunished.

In the final analysis, American foreign policy after the Cold War failed because it abandoned realism and embraced a combination of flawed assertive multilateralism and risk aversion strategies that were driven by meaningless rhetoric, image management, spin, and political theater. In these elitist laboratories experimenting in reckless collective security exercises and humanitarian based foreign policy, billions were wasted in pointless boondoggles that put Americans at risk without the true consent of the people. In the end, the critics of nation-building were proven correct. Although casualties were luckily few, intervening in Somalia and Haiti wasn't worth a single American life in either situation. American interests were no better served and the world wasn't any safer or better off. The United States had "plowed the sea" with its



pointless image-driven humanitarian interventions in the 1990s, and had produced nothing but waste, failure, and humiliation. It was simply irresponsible to enter wars without need, to sell war without risk, to place imagery over substance, and promise victory without commitment. There are no wars without risk.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Quote made by U.S. Congressman Tom Lantos, Congress, House, *Withdrawal of U.S. Forces from Somalia*, Markup before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., Washington, D.C., 3 November 3, 1993.

<sup>2</sup> See Adrian R. Lewis, *The American Culture of War: The History of U.S. Military Force from World War II to Operation Iraqi Freedom*, and Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace*.

<sup>3</sup> Some the sophisticated weaponry the Army attempted to field with RMA in mind was plagued with problems or inferior to what was already in the inventory. Many funds were wasted on needless and poorly designed hi-tech systems that failed to pan out such as the Sergeant York anti-aircraft system of the 1980s. Many new systems were much more expensive and technologically sophisticated but less reliable than older systems, and much effort was wasted because the Army would not utilize effective weapon systems already employed by the U.S. Marines or NATO allies. Some new systems were necessary upgrades, but were overpriced and overly sophisticated underperformers such as the Bradley Fighting Vehicle and the Stryker Armored Combat Vehicle. The most heinous attempt in RMA is the Army's failing attempt to field the Land Warrior System, a ridiculous attempt to equip the basic infantry soldier with a heavy but somewhat fragile computerized system of hi-tech digitalized imagery connected to his head and weapon. The system promotes itself as being "the only real technological upgrade the infantryman has seen since WWI," which indicates how much planners miss the point of what infantry is supposed to be and shows that under the RMA view that inexplicably *everything* now has to be technological complicated and sophisticated on the battlefield. The costly system under development since 1992 is still not ready for deployment as time of this writing eighteen years later.

<sup>4</sup> Williamson Murray, "Lessons Learned and Not Learned: The Gulf War in Retrospect," in H.W. Brands, ed., *The Use of Force After the Cold War*.

<sup>5</sup> Tony Smith, "Good, Bad, or Smart Samaritan: A Case for U.S. Military Intervention for Democracy and Human Rights," in H.W. Brands ed., *The Use of Force After the Cold War*.

<sup>6</sup> Phrase borrowed from Cynthia Peters, *Collateral Damage: The New World Order at home and Abroad*, xiii. Peters work is an excellent collection of essays on American technologically driven military strategies.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Colin Powell, *My American Journey*, 521.

<sup>8</sup> Schwartzkopf's objections on the issue are still a matter of debate among the participant's recollections.

<sup>9</sup> See Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace*, 319.

<sup>10</sup> See David Halberstam, "War in a Time of Peace."

<sup>11</sup> Robert R. Mockaitis, *Peace Operations and Intrastate Conflict: The Sword or the Olive Branch?*

<sup>12</sup> Patrick Glynn, "The Doable War," *New Republic*, 16 August, 1993, 15.

<sup>13</sup> Some are undoubtedly Somali pirates that are routinely raiding international shipping at the time of this writing.

<sup>14</sup> It was the only time in the history of warfare where someone swept the sky of enemy aircraft simply through correspondence. Aided, in fact, had no surface-to-air missiles but his gambit which played on the cowardice of his enemies to risk casualties worked to perfection.

<sup>15</sup> The Pakistanis, Canadians, and Nigerians were notable exceptions.

<sup>16</sup> Daniel P. Bolger, *Savage Peace: Americans at War in the 1990s*, 329.

<sup>17</sup> In his autobiography, *My Life*, Clinton contradicts himself in his decision to send in the Rangers. One account has him putting the decision on Powell, while on another he says he made the decision. He also claims he wasn't clearly aware what they were doing operationally and didn't order the raids, and yet another where he regrets ordering the raid in the Bakara Market. He also fails to concede that nation-building or peace enforcement were in any way ingredients of failed policy.

<sup>18</sup> Boredom, depression and suicide among American soldiers were an issue as soldiers felt trapped in the squalor of Haiti witnessing the suffering of the masses while doing nothing to help with the problems they believed they were there to address. Suicide attempts among ground troops which were four to five times higher than experienced in the more intense combat zone in Somalia.

<sup>19</sup> Quote refers to Jesse Helms and the CIA assessment of Aristide from 1992.

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