

# The Failed and Failing State and the Bush Administration: Paradoxes and Perils

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An nescis, mi fili, quantilla sapientia mundus regatur?

Don't you know then, my son, how little wisdom rules the world?<sup>1</sup>

"We'll let our friends be the peacekeepers and the great country called America will be the pacemakers."—George W. Bush, Houston, Texas, Sept. 6, 2000 (Slate, Bushisms)

"Redefining the role of the United States from enablers to keep the peace to enablers to keep the peace from peacekeepers is going to be an assignment."—George W. Bush Interview with the New York Times, Jan. 14, 2001-

"But the true threats to stability and peace are these nations that are not very transparent, that hide behind the—that don't let people in to take a look and see what they're up to. They're very kind of authoritarian regimes. The true threat is whether or not one of these people decide, peak of anger, try to hold us hostage, ourselves; the Israelis, for example, to whom we'll defend, offer our defenses; the South Koreans."—George W. Bush, Media roundtable, Washington, D.C., March 13, 2001 (Slate, Bushisms)

I said what I meant and I meant what I said,  
An elephant is faithful one hundred percent.<sup>2</sup>

## Introduction

In the early weeks of the George W. Bush presidency, the new President and his foreign policy team devoted very little public time to the issue of failed and failing states. Domestic politics and the old "high politics" of international relations, particularly issues surrounding nuclear weapons and missile shields and their impact on relations with Russia and China have dominated the administration's foreign policy agenda. However, some of the senior officials and the new president himself have provided significant clues as to the assumptions upon which they might build a policy vis-a vis failed states and the approach to the problems such states pose might take. In this paper we shall examine these clues within the context of what we have learned from U.S. and international

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1 Said by the Swedish chancellor Axel Oxenstierna to encourage his son Johan when he doubted his ability to represent Sweden at what became known as the Treaty of Westphalia peace talks.

2 Horton in Horton Hatches the Egg, Dr. Seuss, Random House, 1940.

action and inaction with respect to failed states in the past decade and assess the likelihood of a successful U.S. policy from the Bush Administration.

As with any new administration, and particularly with one that involves a change in political party, Bush and his senior foreign policy officials have sought to distinguish their approach from that of their predecessors. While there have been few foreign policy initiatives thus far, the Bush team, despite some of the expected differences in approach among the three bureaucracies responsible for foreign policy formulation, State, Defense and the NSC, has thus far been quite consistent with respect to their published views and campaign utterances. Thus, National Missile Defense (NMD) has come to the forefront, "Rogue Nations" have reentered the vocabulary and South Korea's president has been informed that the policy of constructive engagement towards North Korea is at an end as far as the U.S. is concerned. Further, the United States has warned and bombed Iraq and an attempt to construct a new sanctions regime is underway. We will need many more months to discover if this particular set of Republican elephants will be as faithful as Horton to their stated intentions and assumptions, but in their initial days they have indicated their intention to try. They have also given clues that underlying their approach are assumptions of American exceptionalism, unilateralism and a self-consciously realist variant of national security policy.

Let us begin with the most complete statement of the "Bush" perspective, that of Condoleeza Rice, the National Security Adviser, whose views were presented a year ago in Foreign Affairs, Rice (2000:46-47) wrote:

"American foreign policy in a Republican administration should refocus the United States on the national interest and the pursuit of key priorities. These tasks are:

- to ensure that America's military can deter war, project power, and fight in defense of its interests if deterrence fails;
- to promote economic growth and political openness by extending free trade and a stable international monetary system to all committed to these principles, including in the western hemisphere, which has too often been neglected as a vital area of U.S. national interest;
- to renew strong and intimate relationships with allies who share American values and can thus share the burden of promoting peace, prosperity, and freedom;
- to focus U.S. energies on comprehensive relationships with the big powers, particularly Russia and China, that can and will mold the character of the international political system; and
- to deal decisively with the threat of rogue regimes and hostile powers, which is increasingly taking the forms of the potential for terrorism and the development of weapons of mass destruction (WMD)."

The most obvious omission in this list, particularly given our interest in discussing policy towards failed and failing states, is their absence from the list of priorities. We would argue that this omission is quite conscious. Mr. Bush and his foreign policy team have focused on what they characterized as the misuse of the military and other strategic resources in the Clinton Administration's concern with nation-building, humanitarian intervention and other aspects of what Michael Mandelbaum (1996) labeled "Foreign Policy as Social Work." Throughout the past year the Bush team has argued that these concerns damaged U.S. military readiness because they diverted resources from core national security or national interest concerns.

[Foreign policy will] "proceed from the firm ground of the national interest, not from the interests of an illusory international community (Rice 2000:62)."

Inherent in these assertions about the proper use of military power and appropriate interests are assumptions derived from a "realist" approach to foreign policy which help define the particulars of the U.S. "National interest" that may appear from afar as clear, coherent and consistent but have been as numerous critiques have aptly demonstrated less clear, coherent and consistent than realists recognize (see for example Vasquez, 1983, 98 and Donnelly 2000). The particular variant emphasizes particular regions, problems and approaches over other equally legitimate "realist" variants. We shall need to look more fully into the particulars of these assumptions for the Bush team.

### **The Clinton Record**

Before doing that we need first to briefly look at the Clinton policy with respect to failed states. We need to distinguish between theoretical policy frameworks, declaratory policy and policy implementation.

Loosely speaking, we would argue that the Clinton Administration developed a policy approach vis-à-vis toward failed or failing states that had three component parts: attack the root causes of conflict within fragile states, promote collective security with respect to responses to needs and engage in preventive diplomacy. In terms of root causes this led to a policy approach most often enunciated by Agency for International Development Administrator Brian Atwood. This policy stressed open markets and the development of economic links, the promotion of democracy and human rights with a heavy emphasis on the development of civic structures and the strengthening of the organs of government and particularly finance and the judiciary to enable states to resolve their own conflicts. Atwood was vigorous in his attempt to obtain support to combat and prevent "complex humanitarian emergencies" which arise out of the combination of environmental disasters, ethnic conflict, and resultant state failures.

"Bosnia, Haiti, Rwanda. These troubling and unique crises in disparate regions of the globe share a common thread. They are the dark

manifestations of a strategic threat that increasingly defines America's foreign policy challenge. Disintegrating societies and failed states with their civil conflicts and destabilizing refugee flows have emerged as the greatest menace to global stability (Atwood, 1994)."

For those of us from the United States, the USAID approach under Atwood may be summarized by the old Fram Oil Filter commercial tag line advocating changing your oil and oil filter regularly, "You can pay me now, or pay me later." The argument is simply that preventive maintenance pays dividends. The AID version is declared on its web page in a number of places. For example,

"These threats pose a strategic challenge to the United States. If we do not address them now, we shall have to pay dearly to deal with them later."

... America's security and prosperity are interwoven with that of the entire world. This era offers countless opportunities for progress. But if we turn away from the developing world, we invite more world poverty, more failed nations, more civil wars and more terrorism. The price of peace and stability is far less than the cost of war and reconstruction. Development continues to be one of the best investments we can make in America's future and a better world."

Having said this, it should be noted that the Clinton Administration was not successful in raising the overall level of foreign aid. Further while real dollar aid levels overall continued to decline throughout the decade, Africa, the continent with the greatest risk of failed states, found its overall aid dramatically reduced as aid there (with the exception of South Africa) was transferred to the NIS of the former USSR.

The second pillar, the promotion of collective security, relied on the United Nations and then NATO for a more multilateral rather than unilateral approach. It stressed collective responsibility and burden sharing (often more so than collective decision-making). This is not to suggest that the Clinton Administration was always consistent or successful in the attempt. In fact, many interventions were carried out on U.S. terms, much to the annoyance of U.S. allies. In Somalia, the administration inherited a UN intervention that began as a humanitarian aid mission (under George Bush) and in the spring of 1993 participated in expanding the mission to include the arrest and punishment of those who had attacked UN forces. The intervention remained within the UN mandate. In Haiti, the U.S. intervened independently. In Bosnia, the U.S. worked within the UN framework and then NATO with the creation of the Dayton Accords and the imposition of IFOR. In Kosovo, when diplomacy failed to convince the full Security Council to intervene, the U.S. secured NATO backing for the war and after the NATO backed bombing of Serbia transferred responsibility to the UN led "transitional administration."

The third pillar, engaging in preventive diplomacy, employed roving ambassadors and focussed on arms control and arms transfers as well as human rights. The administration enacted a more vocal condemnatory policy toward repressive regimes (Although, Aryeh Neier (1996-7:96) has charged that the Clinton Administration willingly denounced human rights violations in "pariah states or the governments of countries that are not considered politically or economically important" but refused to condemn repressive governments deemed to be economically or strategically important for U.S. interests). Other conflicting goals such as the promotion of exports often undermined this pillar. In fact, in 1995 the Clinton Administration added domestic economic considerations to the list of criteria for approving weapons exports and has opposed efforts to create a "Code of Conduct" governing countries eligible to receive U.S. weapons based on criteria such as human rights and democracy.

The U.S. also continued to dominate the arms market and constantly used arms sales and training as a substitute for other forms of development assistance. After the end of the Gulf War, the dollar value of U.S. arms sales increased and the percentage of the U.S. share of the total arms market also rose. The Congressional Research Service (CRS) report, "Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations, 1992-1999," revealed that worldwide arms transfer agreements, those that take into consideration both developed and developing countries, totaled approximately \$30.3 billion in 1999. The U.S. had \$11.8 billion worth of arms transfer agreements worldwide (38.9%), up from the world leading \$10.3 billion in 1998. The United States also had the highest value of international arm deliveries in 1999 with \$18.4 billion worth of weapons, more than 54% of the world total. Most importantly for our concerns, at \$8.1 billion worth of agreements, the U.S. was party to 39.2% of the total involving nations in the developing world. In terms of deliveries, the United States delivered \$11.4 billion worth of arms to developing countries for 50.1% of the world total and some of the regimes that were receiving arms exports – such as Colombia – should have been those that were condemned by the President for their violations or banned under the spirit if not the letter of Section 502b of the amended 1961 Foreign Assistance Act that bars arms sales to countries that show a pattern of "gross and consistent" human rights abuses.

When the U.S. wasn't selling weapons, the Clinton Administration used its military know-how to train foreign militaries and peacekeepers, often as a substitute for involving U.S. troops in unilateral, multilateral and international initiatives. The U.S. spends tens of millions dollars every year training foreign militaries, including programs within and outside the United States. According to a U.S. Law, known as the Leahy Law, the United States must "make every reasonable effort" to ensure that troops receiving U.S. military aid and training are not guilty of human rights abuses. This law has vetted troops in Colombia that are receiving U.S. military training (the accuracy and effectiveness of which is thus far unclear), but the U.S. continues to train militaries in fragile countries and those involved in conflict, such as Rwanda and Uganda.

Thus, overall, the administration developed a reasonably responsible theoretical approach to the long term issues of preventing failed states, and indeed moved close to the rhetorical position argued by Rotberg and Weiss (1996:179) that "the political values, moral stature and domestic tranquility of the United States are genuinely threatened by instability and strife wherever in the world they occur-even well beyond our usual geographical areas of concern," when Mr. Clinton made his mea culpa for not intervening in Rwanda. However, the Clinton Administration was often unsuccessful in implementing the policy and also undertook actions that undermined both the policy and the assumptions that underlay it. Further, the administration was never able to move beyond the parameters and assumptions of the Weinberger-Powell doctrines set by the Pentagon and the military during the previous twelve years under Reagan and Bush. These conditions for the when and the how of military deployment "boil down to an elaborate intellectual excuse for not using force at all except in the most favorable strategic, operational, and domestic political circumstances Record, 2000:11)" and established the fear of American casualties and the need for overwhelming force as the two key legs of military policy. While this had the positive impact of lessening the chances of military interventions, it also had the negative impact of delaying the possibility of such interventions until much later in the development of crises, when interventions are by necessity much larger. These inconsistencies culminated in the sequence of military actions in Kosovo. Bombing became the only acceptable option for U.S. political and military commanders because the implementation of the primary requirement of intervention, preventing U.S. casualties, could only be accomplished from the air. It has also prevented the development of an appropriate force structure for dealing with the threat that failed states pose (see Record, 2000. With respect to the need for that more appropriate force structure, O' Hanlon Fall 2000 concurs.)

The administration also never developed a clear decision matrix for actually intervening in failed states. Why intervene in Haiti, but not in Sudan, Sierra Leone, Rwanda or Congo? Why intervene so late in Bosnia? Daalder and O'Hanlon (1999) argue that "Ever since the Somalia debacle of 1993, the United States has intervened decisively only when humanitarian crises occurred near U.S. territory or in Europe, only when extremely few U. S. casualties were expected, and only when the president's own rhetoric had essentially forced the administration to do something."

While the Clinton Administration recognized the difficulty that failed states presented to long term peace and stability within the international system but failed to create a consistency in policy, or to build an appropriate international response consistency with its intentions or to overcome the U.S. military's reluctance to create appropriate force structures to implement potential interventions (humanitarian or otherwise), the new Bush team appears unwilling to accept that failed states might constitute a policy concern for the United States. They have given the impression that the Clinton Administrations actions were far less selective than they were and they question that such states provide a strategic rationale for involvement in any case.

In this they stand apart from the assumptions of both the U.S. Commission on National Security/21<sup>st</sup> Century (April 19,2000) and the CIA's "Worldwide Threat 2001:National Security in a Changing World (delivered by George Tenet, Director of Central Intelligence, 7 February 2001), both of which add a sixth concern to Rice's five above, i.e. "to help the international community tame the disintegrative forces spawned by an era of change" in the commission's terms, or "the growing in potential for state fragmentation and failure" in Mr. Tenet's terms.

Analyzing the impact of globalization and the emerging security paradigms that resulted from the end of the Cold War, the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century identified failed and weak states as specific challenges the United States will face with increasing regularity in the next twenty-five years. Failing states represent the ultimate disintegrative force – the inability of the state to provide for the needs of its citizens.

The Commission's recommendation that the United States establish priorities for aiding weak and failing states translates into selective rankings of nations that should be assisted. The Commission pointed to four in particular – Mexico, Colombia, Russia, and Saudi Arabia – whose stability is of "major importance to U.S. interests." Presumably the United States would focus its preventive and reactive strategies first and foremost to these countries. For failing states of lesser U.S. interest, the Commission suggests the United States work with the international community to develop innovative mechanisms to manage the problem of failed states."

Record (2000:7-8) concurs, He writes:

To repeat, strong states are no longer the problem, weak ones are. Failed states have become the primary source of instability in the international political system, not just because war within the advanced industrial world has drastically receded, but also because failed states invite intervention by stronger states. State failure inherently attracts humanitarian intervention even when no strategic interest is present...Scores of states and hundreds of millions of people around the world look to the United States for leadership and security, and it is in America's strategic interest that they do.

### **Distancing the Bush Administration from the Clinton Administration**

Jeff Phillips (BBC News November 4, 2000) reports that "Mr. Bush says the military is to be used 'to fight wars' and then only when America's vital national interests are threatened and the overwhelming use of force would determine the outcome. U.S. forces would not be used in peacekeeping operations or humanitarian interventions. These, he says, are better left to regional security alliances. Whether these alliances would be effective - whether they even exist in many areas of the world - is another question. With respect to Europe, Mr. Bush's chief foreign policy adviser, Condoleezza Rice, has already



said that a Bush Administration would tell its NATO allies that they should be responsible for peacekeeping in the Balkans and U.S. troops be withdrawn. "In the first two months of the Bush Administration, particularly as events in Macedonia become more incendiary, NATO allies are much troubled by the administration's obvious interest in withdrawing U.S. troops from the region.

It has been very important both during the campaign and in the first two months of the new administration, to create distance between the new president and that which the administration characterizes as the failed foreign policies of their predecessor. The Bush team has tried to demonstrate that they have fundamentally different operating principles, purposes and goals. What then underlies the administration's approach to international relations?

First, following in the footsteps of many of the new administrations since the end of the First World War, the Bush team has positioned themselves as the Realists opposing the Idealistic "Wilsonian" (Clinton) approach. In this particular variant, the argument is that their predecessor tried to do too much, did not set appropriate strategic priorities and was interested in saving the world and projecting morality not in simply advancing the national interests of the United States.

"...realism's principal purpose is to warn against moralism, progressivism, and similar "optimistic" orientations. It emphasizes what is unlikely or difficult in international relations, rather than what is worth striving for (Donnelly 2000:194)." As a rhetorical device it is a very successful strategy to take the "responsible, hard headed political ground." It acts to both assume and assert at the very same time that considerations beyond the narrowest definitions of national security in terms of military power cannot, by definition, be in the national interests. However, even if we grant that states "act as they must, in view of their interests as they see them" (Morgenthau 1962: 278) there is no reason why states cannot, if they wish, define their national interest (in part) in moral terms. Further, as Kantner (2000:7) argues, the

"distinction between "interests" and "values" that in practice amounts to a false dichotomy. Not only is it very much in the U.S. national interest to foster an international environment that is compatible with our values- including democratic norms, human rights, and free markets- but from a purely pragmatic perspective, our moral authority is an indispensable element of American leadership an influence.

Thus, As Donnelly has argued, " If citizens of a country value alleviating suffering in other countries, they are free to define their national interest to include, for example, providing clean water or preventing torture overseas (2000,166)". It has been quite common for Americans and U.S. administrations to do so and, as we shall see below, not simply those on the liberal side of the political spectrum.

Second, the Bush appointees, during the campaign and since taking office, have criticized Clinton's multilateral approach. Again, this is not an unusual tension in the competing approaches for American leadership in the last 90 years.

Wills (1999:52-53) argues that:

"The view that the United States acts authentically only when it acts independently has recurred, from Thomas Jefferson's warning against "entangling alliances" through the Monroe Doctrine, manifest destiny, and rejection of the League of Nations to the current distrust of the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Criminal Court, and any agencies set up to monitor seas, pollution, or land mines. Whatever else this suspicious attitude does, it cripples America's ability to lead other countries."

We would argue that in addition to the "realist" assumptions that the Bush team brings, there are assumptions about what the post Cold War world means for the conduct of foreign policy. The establishment "debates" of the past decade, from the triumphalism of the first Bush Administration through the Clinton presidency provides a lens through which to interpret the new administration. Many of the themes developed within the debate have served to support the already very firm views about the world and the U.S. public's interpretations and reactions to them. These views appear to be held by the major participants even though they themselves have not been major players in the debates. Traub highlights just how much distance is being created.

"What is striking about George W. Bush and his inner circle is not how different they sound from Bill Clinton but how different they sound from the first President Bush. The New World Order is as distant a memory as the evil empire.

Not very long ago, an American president said, "We have a vision of a new partnership of nations. . . . based on consultation, cooperation and collective action . . . whose goals are to increase democracy, increase prosperity, increase the peace and reduce arms. "A chairman of the joint chiefs said: "In every corner of the world our troops are at work. These warriors of freedom, these men and women who love peace, who are prepared to die for its preservation, are doing their important part to help fulfill the concepts of the United Nations Charter." The president was George Bush -- the other George Bush -- and the military man was Colin Powell. It seems almost incredible that, only a decade later, that faith in the moral purposes of American power could come to seem so soft-headed, so ill suited to the real world. Perhaps the old language, in retrospect, was too big; but the new language is very, very small. Has the world changed so very much since then? Or is it we who have changed (Traub, 2001)?"

While the Clinton Administration primarily tinkered with the policies of Bush, a debate raged between the foreign policy establishment and those who felt betrayed by first the Bush Administration's reluctance to seize the victory of the Cold War and then the Clinton Administration's refusal. The debates conducted through the pages of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, the Atlantic Monthly and other establishment organs concerning "the End of History" the "Clash of Civilizations" and "Pandemonium" and "Anarchy" set the stage for the return of unilateralism and hard headed realism. The discussions served to reinforce traditional ignorance and apathy with respect to the global south, while conveniently consigning states (and their peoples) to the "dustbin of history " thus justifying inaction with respect to their plight.

For example, there is no doubt that the immediate effect of reading Kaplan's *Balkan Ghosts* or *The Ends of the Earth* is despair. When we enter his world, these places he describes cannot be saved - and furthermore do not deserve to be, because of their incompetence and corruption. The scope of the problems he describes and the catalogue of calamity leaves the reader no hope for change or improvement. The parallel with the assault on social programs at the beginning of the 1980s during the Reagan Administration and the subsequent policy justifications for blaming the victims and the abandoning of the cities and more specifically the plight of the people of the inner cities is striking. Those who run foreign policy have no difficulty with the image of "gated communities," created with and for private persons who can afford to live behind the gate. The result is that which in the Western world is intolerable becomes tolerable if it occurs in the global ghetto. Given that the United States is the sole superpower, there are few states that can pose military threats and it is unnecessary to invest in knowing much about the external world beyond the major potential threats (identified as Russia and China by Rice) and "Rogue Nations," terrorists and narco terrorists.

With respect to our concern, failed and failing states, rarely in the works involved in the establishment debate was it argued that "Failed states are not simply a reflection of African incompetence or corruption but can be explained by such other factors as weapons proliferation, repressive regimes, external interference and Scarcity (Rotberg and Weiss, 1996:182)."

Rather, for example it is proclaimed that the events in the Balkans are the result of centuries old tribal feuds and in any case their history of ethnic warfare makes "the Balkans the original Third World (Kaplan, 1994:23 cited by Mason 1996)," thus placing them outside the civilization of Western Europe and outside of the security concerns of the United States.

While saying very little about the issue during the campaign, Mr. Bush did indicate that he did not believe that events in Africa concerned the U.S. national interest and that he did not believe "nation-building" was a proper role for the United States military. For example,

"At some point in time the president has got to clearly define what the national strategic interests are, and while Africa may be important, it doesn't fit into the national strategic interests..."

And in the debates with Al Gore he indicated that he would not have engaged in "nation building" in Haiti, intervened in Rwanda to prevent genocide, or become involved in the Balkans. But, he did approve of the Australians intervention in Timor.

In the decade following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the market was anointed king. This has dramatically altered the prominence of economic factors and motives in the U.S. foreign policy debates. The market, your place in it and therefore your potential contribution to the economic well being of the system has replaced communism as the key determinant of being noticed. In short, "It's the economy, stupid." For the most part, peoples of the ghetto and global south have little to contribute and thus are of minimal importance and need not be noticed. Both Mr. Bush and Ms. Rice have indicated that they believe that the United States needs to encourage the integration into the market of the nations of the world, that until they are major players they are not of importance. They echo Mr. Kissinger's oft quoted remark,

"I am not interested in, nor do I know anything about, the southern portion of the world from the Pyrenees on down".<sup>3</sup>

More importantly, as is becoming clearer with each passing day for the rest of the world, it also means that market considerations as defined by U.S. corporate interests are foremost in determining the administration's response to a variety of problems, from energy needs to the environment and public health.

In short the administration has positioned itself in the tradition of American exceptionalism, unilateralism and triumphalism in an era when most of its friends and allies are seeking cooperative, multilateral and consultative relations. The Leader in the Guardian of March 30, 2001, perhaps sums up the frustration in the most direct way yet (This follows increasing concern in European capitals as witnessed also in the previous week in an editorial in the Sueddeutsche Zeitung, had a brisk headline in English: "Bully Bush")

Friday March 30, 2001  
The Guardian

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3 According to Richard Falk (1974), "The remark attributed by Gabriel García Marquez to Kissinger may not have been actually said, but it undoubtedly expresses the Kissinger outlook." See Marquez, "The Death of Salvador Allende" Harper's Magazine pp: 46-53, p.46."

Suddenly, in the space of two short months, America, the "indispensable nation", begins to resemble the ultimate rogue state. George Bush's decision to trash the Kyoto global warming treaty is appalling. He does not grasp the basic truth that America's national interest is inextricably intertwined with the global interest. America, for all its dominance, is but a part of the world we share. Instead of a shining city on a hill, the world sees a dark smokestack belching fumes. From a nation that began by heroically trumpeting its belief in universal values common to all mankind comes a devastatingly different, divisive and nationalistic jingle: we do what we want, for ourselves, regard less of the consequences for you. Is this message sent on purpose? In other words, does the Bush Administration actually understand what it is doing? For look at the record so far: It has dangerously upset the strategic balance by proposing a new national missile defence system while scrapping another treaty, the key ABM accord with Russia. It has attacked Iraq while signalling elsewhere, notably in the Balkans, that it will reduce its commitment to shared security, especially through the UN. It has gone out of its way to antagonise Russia and done much to convince China that it must ready itself for war. Its economic policy has meanwhile merely stoked fears of a U.S.-exported recession.

Bush's America has all but abandoned, for now at least, its leading role in the Middle East and gone a long way towards scuppering détente on the Korean peninsula. On a range of fronts, not least over NATO and trade, Washington is also shaping up for conflict with the EU. And now, to cap it all, ignoring the Stockholm summit's direct plea, and at the very moment the German chancellor is crossing the White House doorstep, it tells Europe that Peoria's pocketbook comes first, so take your fossil fuel fuss and stuff it.

But that even the oldest friendships have limits Is a lesson Mr. Bush has yet to learn. Humility is another. Wisdom may be too much to hope for.<sup>4</sup>

## Preparing for Failed States

While the administration has clearly declared its disinterest in the problem, it will soon find that its simplistic approach of not interested, should not be interested and will not be interested will be tested in short order and found wanting. As what Madeline Albright referred to as the "indispensable nation", a role that many Americans and much of the rest of the world, most importantly, our strategic friends and allies as well as the leaders of the multilateral institutions recognize as necessary. The administration will find that it will need a more sophisticated answer than NO. The appropriate questions are:

- Why should the U.S. be interested?

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<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the authors of the Guardian leader need reference to the opening quote of this paper for guidance!

- How can we lessen the chances of having to go in through diplomacy and assistance?
- Should we go in if states fail?
- When should we go in?
- How should we go in- alone, with allies, with the UN etc?
- Military, on the ground, in the air, only as logistics support
- How long should we stay?
- What is the exit strategy and what is the post intervention commitment

### **Why should the U.S. be interested?**

Many of these arguments as old as the republic, but even in the era of the “American Century” and “Globalization” the basic conflicts remain within the American polity. However, in this era the arguments should be concerned primarily with the “how” and the “why” of full engagement in international affairs not he need. This is not an argument about isolationism vs. internationalism (in the peculiarly American variant of isolationism there have been very few who actually were against some participation, see e.g. Adler, 1957). Rather, to repeat Wills (1999) above, it is about exceptionalism and unilateralism. This debate is more of the how and the when of engagement and the unwillingness to accept agreements, treaties or commitments that would subject the United States to decisions outside the United States (the international criminal court, the various human rights conventions not yet signed, the ban on landmines all are recent examples). Sometimes these unilateralist positions get joined by “fortress America” and “non- entanglement” inclinations and, particularly on the right create pressures to avoid the “messes of others.”

“There are two simple reasons why Americans have a national interest in preventing disorder beyond our borders. First, events and actors out there can hurt us; and second, Americans want to influence distant governments and organizations on a variety of issues such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, drugs, shared resources, and the environment (Nye, 99:27-28.)”

Referring back to the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century April, 2000 report’s sixth and final key national security objective, “help the international community tame the disintegrative forces spawned by an era of change,” exporting U.S. military know-how is not a replacement for peace-building and peacekeeping. The United States should also support and fund programs that assist with the demobilization of ex-combatants, their reintegration into society, and the destruction of their destabilizing weapons. At the same time, programs that rebuild the society’s infrastructure, judicial and legal systems, as well as those that spur development and economic recovery cannot be overlooked. Training soldiers to “enforce” the peace, without addressing the roots of the conflict and the unique needs of a particular country will not lead to success. The United States would do well to support indigenous programs,

enlisting the help of the citizens on the ground, which facilitate a country's recovery and promote alternatives to violence and conflict. As long as the United States' contribution to peacekeeping and peace-building operations remains focused on providing weapons and training, sustained peace and real progress will remain elusive.

In addressing the weak and failing state, the Commission argues that preventive diplomacy should be the first reaction for the United States and its allies, including the use of political and economic initiatives. However, if preventive diplomacy fails, the Commission stresses that the United States "should be prepared to act militarily in conjunction with other nations in situations characterized by the following criteria: when U.S. allies or friends are imperiled; when the prospect of weapons of mass destruction portends significant harm to civilian populations; when access to resources critical to the global economic system is imperiled; when a regime has demonstrated intent to do serious harm to U.S. interests; and when genocide is occurring." The Commission contends that just one of these factors may be enough to justify military intervention.

There does appear to be some consensus on the appropriate context and requisites to consider intervention within the center of the American political debate. For example Michael O'Hanlon (2000:34) argues that "The answer is to focus on those where the scale of death and suffering is greatest, where intervention is unlikely to create great-power conflicts, and where a mission can be designed that promises many lives saved at low cost to intervening soldiers." While Rep. Stephen Solarz (2000) creates an interesting metric designed not only to address the issues of pain and suffering of the victim but the relative cost to those "responsible" for considering intervention.

"We should be prepared to intervene when

1. the actual or anticipated loss of life exceeds the lives lost to violence in the United States
2. The military operation to stop the massive loss of life would not put at risk anything close to the number of lives it would save.
3. The United States is able to secure the participation of other countries in the military intervention."

Adopting the triage metaphor, Dorff (2000) advanced the proposition that "Not all failing states can be fixed, and not all of them should be. We need to find the organizational framework, staffed by the right kinds of actors, that will allow tough decisions to be made about what countries are most and less important, what can and indeed needs to be done, with what kinds of instruments, in order to accomplish realistic and meaningful objectives."

In short most recognize that not all "insignificant" failing states and humanitarian crises can be ignored. There are conditions when the scale of the potential devastation "trumps" the narrower strategic issues. Even Rice

recognizes that the U.S. will intervene in “insignificant locations” at some point if the tragedy assumes large enough proportions.

But what if our values are attacked in areas that are not arguably of strategic concern? Should the United States not try to save lives in the absence of an overriding strategic rationale? The next American president should be in a position to intervene when he believes, and can make the case, that the United States is duty-bound to do so. "Humanitarian intervention" cannot be ruled out a priori. But a decision to intervene in the absence of strategic concerns should be understood for what it is (Rice, 2000:53).

The planning problem, of course, is how one determines that the issue itself trumps strategic importance. We do know that neglect increases the chance that the scale of failure and its consequences will be larger. In an age of “globalization” fewer locations are outside the domain of concern, particularly for the world’s only remaining multihemispheric economic, military and cultural power.

While the Bush Administration derides military intervention (not in all cases a negative for peace considerations), it seems quite content to continue promoting U.S. arms exports and training. Arms exports clearly have strong financial benefits to key actors in the American economy and strong political backing within the congress, many of these arms exports also may extract a toll in contributing to further instability and declining abilities elsewhere. Sustainability or peace; it only furthers arms races and boosts industry profits. The U.S. must reconsider its arms export strategies and limit the number of weapons it sends to already overly saturated and struggling economies and instead consider offering assistance to rebuild infrastructures, assist with healthcare, fund development programs, and improve educational opportunities.

In addition, the administration will have to recognize that the pressures within the world community have built for intervention to assist in crises and recognize that there is a genuine debate on principles of security - national security, international security and human security that divide current approaches to security policy in nations around the world. There is an expectation that the United States is in Joseph Nye’s (1990) phrase “bound to lead.” It is only the nature of that leadership and what the U.S. chooses to do with it that is at issue.

The past decade has changed the context and parameters of the intervention debate.

In Somalia “The norm that was invoked by President Bush and by others was not the conventional pluralist notion of international peace and security. It was a cosmopolitan notion of human security (Jackson, 2001:288)” Jackson has characterized the debate as one of a “new global civic ethic (2001:385).

With respect to the Clinton Kosovo intervention, Jackson (2001: 285-86) cites Gerson and Carpenter



[NATO's bombing] 'flouts the traditional interpretation of the charter...but it is compatible with the emerging humanitarian law that recognizes the rights of individuals to be protected from genocidal practices, torture, and other gross human rights abuses.

Likewise, Jackson-Preece (2000) argued that this "normative shift in international attitudes towards ethnic cleansing is arguably evidence of a larger normative transformation in international society itself wherein the right conduct of states within their sovereign jurisdictions across an expanding range of issues has become a legitimate concern of international relations and not simply a matter of domestic politics. By the end of the twentieth century, states had become subject to an ever expanding body of international law and policy which not only constrained their actions but increasingly also required particular actions as, for example, with regard to how states treated citizens and non-citizens, responded to ethnocultural diversity, organized government, waged war, etc." The international response to ethnic cleansing within Kosovo during 1998/9 provided clear evidence of this solidarist transformation and "underscores the fundamental shift in normative thinking on ethnic cleansing which has occurred in the period since 1948."

Traditional realists (such as Kissinger) complained when Mr. Clinton (and Mr. Blair) pushed the intervention in Kosovo (as summarized by Jackson 283-4)

"Russia and China are of much greater importance to NATO and the West than the domestic politics of a small Balkan state. Dividing the great powers, or even risking that division, is always the most dangerous policy. There is a basic responsibility not to split the great powers into antagonistic camps if it can be avoided. Even actions that risk dividing them require compelling justification."

Given the Bush Administration's actions in its first two months, it is clear that these particular "Realist" concerns of Mr. Kissinger are not necessarily shared by Mr. Bush. His administration does not appear unwilling to antagonize the weak Russia or potentially strong China that he faces. However, Bush hasn't yet shown much concern for NATO and other friends and allies either.

Eventually, Mr. Bush will have to decide the question of how bad does it have to get in particular places (certainly not all places, as U.S. inaction in Rwanda under Clinton has shown) before public opinion within the United States (and in Europe and elsewhere) will force him to make a decision. He will need to explain why the United States is not doing whatever it is that needs to be done to rescue innocents or to assist in the prevention of further deterioration. The administration will need to discover that to obtain friends and allies assistance on issues that it deems important it will need to also bend to the interests and needs of others.

In the case of the most egregious cases, the bottom line is summarized by Burkhalter (2000:23).

The United States, which leads in almost every other international endeavor, cannot simply exempt itself when mass murder of unarmed people unfolds.

### **With whom to go in**

If the Bush Administration does in the end make a decision to intervene in the context of a "failing or failed" state, it will have to solve the problems of how and with whom. Who in short is the "we" that will intervene? That is, will the United States be in the words of Samuel Huntington (1999:42) and Garry Wills (1999:50), "the rogue superpower," or "the bully of the free world," or will it learn to lead through multilateral actions. The tension and arguments within the new administration are predictable even if the outcome is not. On the one hand there is the example of the grand coalition put together in 1991 by the first Bush Administration in which Powell, Cheney and Rice all played an active role. One of the legacies of that coalition was a constant critique of Mr. Clinton, for both not maintaining it to oust Saddam Hussein and for not following its example when he sought interventions elsewhere. Further, it was argued that such interventions also contributed to a decline in the ultimate power of the United States military by wasting its resources and even recently to states of unpreparedness because those on duty in the Balkans could not continue training.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand there is also the continuing assertions of unilateralism and the desire to go it alone. On the one hand there is also the wish to limit U.S. casualties by recruiting others to do the dangerous work on the ground, but on the other hand there is the unwillingness to submit to consultations, let alone cooperation and planning.

If the new administration were to argue with its NATO allies or to the United Nations as O'Hanlon (2000:34) suggests that:

It seems unreasonable-not to mention politically unsustainable for U.S. troops to do most everything... "

They would undoubtedly receive little criticism. But the administration must recognize when making calculations of what needs to be done and how to do it what General Powell certainly knows better than most:

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5 Interestingly, in their volume on foreign policy during the Bush presidency, George Bush and Brent Scowcroft (1998) neglect to mention Bosnia and Somalia. The only reference to Somalia or Bosnia in their book is in a reference on page 23 with respect to Colin Powell's concern for his troop during the humanitarian operations in Somalia.

Unfortunately, other countries in general have neither the forcible entry capabilities nor the sustainable logistics to intervene in distant lands to save lives...U.S. capabilities are generally needed at least initially, in the face of armed opposition. And the United States will need to contribute troops to postwar missions in places like the Balkans if it wishes to influence their conduct (O'Hanlon, 2000:34-37).

Mr. Bush must also recognize that:

It is difficult to be a superpower on the cheap. Second, the United States has to recognize a basic proposition of public-goods theory: if the largest beneficiary of a public good (such as international order) does not provide disproportionate resources toward its maintenance, the smaller beneficiaries are unlikely to do so. This puts a different twist on Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright's phrase that the United States is "the indispensable nation,"(Nye, 99:27-28)

However, should Mr. Bush truly wish to not use U.S. troops in any conceivable situation, the administration needs to confront the issue, within the language of the corporate frame in which it is comfortable, of how much it would be willing to contribute to "outsource" the fighting or train the "alternative" troops.

O'Hanlon (2001) suggests, "We can provide equipment, training and general financial support so that African troops can carry out more of the missions that we prefer to avoid." But this is not inexpensive. The Bush Administration has inherited the Africa Crisis Response Initiative to help militaries in the region prepare for difficult operations. It has been suggested the cost would be in the billions if it were properly funded, which of course the administration could split with allies if it recognized the utility (O'Hanlon, 2001).

But even if agreement between analysts can be reached, the political will for intervention must still be attained. In Rwanda, Bosnia, Kosovo and Sierra Leone the U.S. was very slow or too late and ineffectual in its involvement.

Mr. Bush believes that the United States should have been involved in none of these situations. Of course, if we are not involved in the intervention we also don't have to worry about the post conflict/crisis program of support. And while the President has indicated that he doesn't think U.S. forces should engage in nation building, in the failed state, after the distribution of emergency supplies, it is governance and nation building that is the issue in the post crisis period.

As Condoleeza Rice put it sardonically in an interview last fall, "We don't need to have the 82nd Airborne escorting kids to kindergarten" in Bosnia and Kosovo (Traub, 2001).

## **Conclusion**

But in a world grown closer, the *weakness* of other nations can harm the lives of our citizens as much as, or more than, the military strength of potential foes.

Anthony Lake, 6 Nightmares, 2000 p.x (italics original)

Widespread deadly conflict threatens global stability by eroding the rules and norms of behavior that states have sought to establish. Rampant human rights abuses are often the prelude to violence. They reflect a breakdown in the rule of law, and if they are allowed to continue unchecked, the result will be weakened confidence in states' commitment to the protection of human rights, democratic governance and international treaties. Moreover the lack of response- particularly by states that have an obvious capacity to act- will encourage a climate of lawlessness in which disaffected peoples or opposing factions will increasingly take matters into their own hands. The effort to help avert deadly conflict is thus not only a matter of humanitarian obligation, but also of enlightened self –interest.

Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict (1997:105)

There is no doubt that the problem of failing and failed states will be a major threat to international security and American leadership in the coming decades. There also seems no doubt at the moment that the response will be ad hoc and late in the game, plagued by political indecisiveness, confusion, or contention at home and by conflict with allies over the interests at stake. The public, outraged at what is apparent on the television screen will demand a military response, but without much information or debate about the military's proper role or the place of military assets in the problem.

Woodward (1999) pp.15 of 18

The Bush Administration must recognize that it is operating in an era when the rules have changed. It is simply not prudent to develop a foreign policy whose two pillars are “we are not the Clinton Administration and “the rules are the same as they always were.” There are decisions about when, who and how to intervene that will have to be confronted whether the President and his advisors want to or not.

Thus what needs to be done is to limit the potential of such crises by diplomatic activity in advance. That requires a policy of engagement not distance. It means confronting by diplomatic means those problems that may create public pressures for intervention

The world south of the Pyrenees may not be as powerful in military terms but its power to “disrupt” is enormous and its potential to create crises immense.

Americans still cling to their myth of exceptionalism and if the media play to the exceptional and the core values of that exceptionalism they will create public pressure to intervene (as only the U.S. can) when scenes of appalling suffering come to the TV screens. If you are going to want others to be the main participants on the ground in the world "South of the Pyrenees," then it will be necessary to provide the logistical support for that to happen and to be prepared (by previous training programs, support services, supplies) to pay for the preparation. While thus far, as indicated earlier, the administration has been willing to ignore friends and allies, there are indications that there are three incipient crises in which the "disengagement" intentions of the Bush Administration will shortly be tested. These cases are Macedonia, Sudan and Colombia.

In each of these cases there appears to be enough media, pressure group or potential partisan political interest to generate pressure for some "intervention." Thus, the needed reservoir of political support might already exist. Of further concern is that all three are areas struggling with the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons. The Washington Post reported on February 3, 2001 that "the proliferation of light weapons is seriously impeding political and economic reforms in developing countries from Congo to Colombia... and the resulting downward spiral could threaten U.S. national security." Small arms are a significant threat to international security; they perpetuate violent conflict, last long after the wars in which they are used have ended, and create new cycles of violence and crime. These three countries are all struggling with increased violence, crime, and conflict due to small arms proliferation.

Moreover, children have been documented as being used as soldiers in at least two of the mentioned "hot spots," and it is almost a certainty that children are used in the other (Macedonia,) indicative of the complete breakdown of norms and standards. Much of the prevalence of the use of child soldiers can be linked to the proliferation of small arms, combined with the extended length of many of these conflicts. Often, these circumstances have made using children as combatants possible, and from the viewpoint of some armed groups, preferable. (Some adult combatants recognize that they can use children's vulnerability and immature understanding of conflict to physically or emotionally coerce children into undertaking dangerous tasks.) As a result, children as young as eight years of age are being taught to fire assault rifles and machine guns, to throw grenades, and to carry and repair mortars and rocket-propelled grenade launchers. Regardless of the reasoning, the children being used in Colombia and Sudan, and most assuredly in Macedonia reflect an additional challenge for the Bush Administration in terms of dealing with the reality that the armed groups U.S. troops might face will include children.

In recognizing these challenges, the first area where a U.S. reaction of some sort is imminent is Macedonia. In the last several weeks, Macedonian militants (believed to be ethnic Albanians from Kosovo and Albania) have

targeted Macedonian police and military outposts demanding independence from Macedonia and union with Kosovo. To date, the U.S. has been vague on its potential response. The Economist reported on March 26, 2001 that European allies are losing their patience with the lack of American involvement and then on the 29<sup>th</sup> “No senior American official has been to Skopje. This is the first time since the wars of the Yugoslav succession began that a big Balkan initiative has had no serious American involvement.” In the meantime there is constant coverage in the U.S. media, interrupted only by the drama of the arrest of Milosevic. To make matters worse, Macedonia has faced an influx of weapons from neighboring Kosovo and Albania, which have allowed rebels to easily acquire weapons for use in their insurgence. This pipeline and weapons availability is in no danger of drying up in their near future.

But, even if the flames in Macedonia are extinguished (with or without U.S. intervention), the entire region will remain a trouble spot for the United States. In Presevo Valley, part of Serbia adjacent to Kosovo, Albanian nationalists clash with the Serbian police with dozens of casualties. In Kosovo itself, violent incidents between the Serbs and Albanians have marred NATO’s peacekeeping mission from its inception. And of course, Bosnia remains divided into three antagonistic regions along ethnic and religious lines. A prudent course of U.S. action, therefore, would be to address the Macedonian situation with a degree of urgency. First and foremost, the United States should urge the government of Macedonia not to use disproportionate force against the Albanian militants, so as not to inflame the conflict further. Second, the United States needs to keep the question of the status of the Kosovo province on the table. The uncertainty surrounding the political future of this majority ethnic Albanian part of the former Yugoslavia inspires secessionist tendencies in surrounding republics. Thirdly, the United States must stay engaged in the Balkans. The United States cannot carry through on Mr. Bush’s and Ms. Rice’s stated intentions leave the Balkans to the Europeans alone. The U.S. must continue to be part of a proactive and Balkan peacekeeping/making force.

The second area of concern is the Sudan. The Washington Post March 24, 2001 reported that: “...passionate appeals are quickly making the 17year old Sudanese civil war the first test of the Bush Administration’s posture toward humanitarian crises abroad. Although the fighting has contributed to more than 2 million deaths from violence and hunger, no clear U.S. national interests are at stake...It appears to be precisely the kind of place that President Bush and his advisers said they wanted to avoid during last year’s election campaign, when they criticized the Clinton Administration for undertaking “nation building” and failing to focus on the “big” foreign policy issues such as Russia and China.”

This was followed by recent articles in the Sunday New York Times Magazine and Newsweek on the “Lost Boys of Sudan” and the program to resettle thousands of Sudanese in the United States. In addition, UNICEF recently secured the release of over 2,500 children, ages 8-18 that had been used by the

Southern People's Liberation Army (SPLA), from combat zones in southern Sudan. (Unfortunately, UNICEF estimates that approximately 9,000 other children remain soldiers throughout the region. The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda brings abducted children to southern Sudan to undergo training for the LRA's war against the Ugandan government.)

Sudan, like other war-torn countries in Africa, has easy access to weapons through porous borders and massive proliferation on the continent as a whole. Human Rights Watch has reported that Sudanese government forces receive weapons from China, Iran, Iraq, the Russian Federation, former Soviet Republics and former Warsaw Pact states. Some of these countries sold weapons in exchange for loans to be paid by future oil exports. Weapons from regional conflicts in Uganda, Congo and Ethiopia and Eritrea also have made their way to Sudan's fighting factions.

The Clinton Administration's policy on Sudan was "to isolate the Government of Sudan; to counter the threat it poses to the United States, its neighbors, and its own people; and to press for fundamental change in its policies" [Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Hill Summit on Sudan, November 9, 1999] The U.S. has listed Sudan amongst its list of terrorist sponsors since 1993 and since 1997 Sudan has been under a strict embargo. The United States does not sell weapons to Sudan, nor does it purchase Sudanese oil.

The Bush Administration will be under pressure from Evangelical Christians furious with the past two-decade's policy towards the catastrophic human suffering, particularly in the "Christian" south of Sudan. They will pressure Mr. Bush to increase the food aid program to Sudan (currently the U.S. provides minimal food aid to southern Sudan) and to support faith based charities. Given the administration's connections to the international oil industry, they will also pressure Mr. Bush to push for an end to oil operations that might assist the regime in Khartoum.

The third country that will require a U.S. response is Colombia. Mr. Bush has inherited the \$1.3 billion mainly military aid program "Plan Colombia." The aid package includes high tech weapons, military training, alternative economic development, such as crop substitution programs for opium poppies and aid for local farmers, strengthening the judicial system and aiding displaced refugees. Recently, peace talks with the FARC have stalled, right-wing paramilitaries, often also linked to drugs, have become the fastest-growing military force in Colombia and "neighbouring countries worry that Plan Colombia will push refugees, violence and drugs into their countries. That is already happening in Ecuador, which is economically and politically fragile (The Economist, February 1. 2001)."

Violence and crime are rampant throughout Colombia. Small arms are proliferated widely throughout the country, and new small arms and light weapons will be shipped as part of Plan Colombia. While the effects of

Colombia's instability are felt throughout the country, and amongst the entire population, children suffer this conflict enormously. Of the 1.5 million displaced persons in Colombia, 700,000 are children. More than 1000 children are killed in Colombia each year. Children are also direct participants in Colombia's conflict. In 2000 alone, some 14,000 children are estimated to have been serving for the various armed forces fighting in Colombia (since November 1999, the Colombian government has prohibited under 18s from serving in official government forces). Three thousand children are estimated to participate with right-wing paramilitary groups and government- allied militias; 4,000 serving with the various guerrilla forces; and another 7,000 involved with the urban militias linked to various groups in the conflict. Even if children aren't used as front line combatants, they are used as forced labor. These children collect intelligence, kidnap other children, and guard hostages ([www.child-soldiers.org](http://www.child-soldiers.org))

The United States has justified the major military investment in Colombia by arguing that eliminating drug kingpins and reducing the threat of guerilla forces are important to the long-term stability of Colombia and the reduction in the amount of drugs entering the United States. A senior Colombian official has observed that "drug production feeds all the violence in Colombia, creates the economic problems, hurts the people, and creates problems of human rights." The administration will have to decide if it should continue to back this military solution to the drug problem and if it is willing to disengage if a more severe crisis of state should develop.

The end of the Cold War (and Gulf War as well) left the United States the world's only hegemon. As such, many nations look to the United States for leadership to the global challenges facing the world today, including intra-state conflict, the deprivation of human rights and economic inequality – all significant to our examination of failed states. Under the Bush Administration thus far, the United States continues to promote solutions that benefit the few, with economic benefits to the United States as a major justifier for action. This attitude will continue to result in the United States failing to act in defense of those too small and weak to defend themselves.

The Administration has one clear known outlier at this point. Richard Haass, formerly director of foreign policy studies at Brookings has become director of policy planning at the State Department, the position that George Kennan once held. In a paper presented just after the November election, Haass wrote:

Moreover, primacy is not to be confused with hegemony. The United States will be unable to realize the bulk of its ambitions without the support or at least tolerance of others. Unilateralism offers little promise; except in rare situations, the United States on its own cannot go to war, curb nuclear proliferation, thwart terrorism, open trade, or prevent genocide. As a result, the real task for American foreign policy is one of promoting effective multilateralism, something that more often than not will demand



strong American leadership of (and participation in) regional organizations and less formal coalitions.

A second issue affecting all major U.S. relationships is humanitarian intervention, in some ways the emblematic problem of the first post-Cold War decade. The United States should be prepared to intervene militarily on a selective basis for humanitarian purposes. American foreign policy must have a moral component if it is to enjoy the support of the American people and the respect of the world. At the same time, the United States cannot intervene everywhere human rights or lives are threatened lest it exhaust itself and leave itself unable to cope with contingencies involving vital national interests in the Persian Gulf or Northeast Asia.

There is no all-purpose set of guidelines that will determine policy in all situations. As a rule, however, U.S. willingness to intervene militarily should reflect the potential or actual scale of the violence (fortunately, genocide remains relative rare); the impact of acting (or not acting) on more important national interests; and the potential for designing an operation (with others) that will accomplish considerable good at modest financial, human, and military cost to the United States.

Haass's seniority at least provides a potential internal challenge to the dominant view of the senior staff and the current occupant of the White House. In the early days of the Administration the more "conservative" views of the Pentagon figures Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz have been more prevalent. Mr. Powell has been notably overturned on Korea and quiet on much else. Ms. Rice has been in the background but positions thus far seem more in tune with those of the Pentagon. In our view, the President is more likely to follow his more conservative unilateralist predilections than the nuanced multilateral, collaborative arguments of Mr. Haass. U.S. leadership on preventive aid, peacemaking and post conflict reconstruction in failing and failed states is unlikely for the next four years.

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Naval War College Review, Volume

Failed state, a state that is unable to perform the two fundamental functions of the sovereign nation-state in the modern world system: it cannot project authority over its territory and peoples, and it cannot protect its national boundaries. The governing capacity of a failed state is attenuated. Furthermore, state failure poses pressing humanitarian issues and possible emergency relief and state-building responsibilities for the international community. Consequently, understanding the dynamics of state failure and strengthening weak nation-states in the developing world assumed new urgency. Get exclusive access to content from our 1768 First Edition with your subscription. [Subscribe today.](#)