

# Norms, Interests and Humanitarian Intervention

Luke Glanville

MIntS, University of Sydney, 2003

This thesis submitted in fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts (Research)

Department of Modern History  
Division of Humanities  
Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia  
March, 2005

### Statement

Except where otherwise acknowledged in the text, this thesis represents my original research. No part of this work has been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution for any degree or diploma.

Luke Glanville

## Abstract

---

A number of Constructivist and English school scholars have investigated the degree to which humanitarian intervention is allowed and legitimised by international society. In other words, they have examined the nature and strength of a norm permitting humanitarian intervention. It is the contention of this dissertation that another norm of humanitarian intervention – parallel but discrete – has been neglected. It is argued that ideas and beliefs shared by members of international society not only *permit* intervention but *prescribe* it in certain circumstances and this has been largely ignored in the literature. By focussing on questions of when, where and why humanitarian action is *permitted*, scholars have neglected to develop theoretical explanations for the significant inconsistencies in humanitarian action that we observe in the world. By considering when and where humanitarian action is *prescribed*, and the interplay of this prescription with the self-interests of states, we can begin to understand why states respond to some grave violations of human rights and not others; by examining the obligations that states endure and interests that states perceive, we can begin to comprehend why they will become meaningfully engaged with one humanitarian crisis while simply trying to contain or even ignore another.

This dissertation investigates the nature and strength of what is termed the *prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention*. The central objective is to examine the extent to which the norm became internalised and institutionalised in American foreign policy in

the period between 1992 and 1999 by exploring the decisions of two American presidents, George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, to either intervene or fail to intervene in response to grave violations of human rights. It is concluded that, while the norm does have some degree of explanatory power, intervention during this period relied on a convergence of normative beliefs with a clearly perceived threat to US material or strategic self-interest.

‘Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, in being very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross.’

St. Paul, Philippians 2:4-8, *The Bible*.

## Acknowledgements

---

*I would like to acknowledge and thank my two supervisors, Dr George Parsons and Dr Geoffrey Hawker. Their kind words, encouragement and direction over the last two years made my research much more enjoyable and pain-free and than it otherwise would have been.*

*I would also like to acknowledge and thank Dr Paul Keal and Dr Bob Howard. Their provision of insight and intellect during early periods of doubt and worry was invaluable.*

*Finally, I must thank my friends and family whose love and support made this dissertation possible. A special thanks to my father, whose constant interest in my research, enduring willingness to read poorly written drafts, and persistent reminders of the value of thoughtful scholarship in God's world has meant so much to me.*

# CONTENTS

---

<b>Introduction</b>	1
<b>1. Norms, Interests and Humanitarian Intervention</b>	13
<i>Norms</i>	14
<i>Constructivism and Rationalism</i>	15
<i>Constructivist and Rationalist Understandings of Norms</i>	18
<i>The Function of Norms</i>	23
<i>Krasner's Critique of Constructivism</i>	26
<i>Interests</i>	29
<i>Distinguishing Between Self-Interest and the 'National Interest'</i>	30
<i>Norms and Interests</i>	33
<i>Humanitarian Intervention</i>	34
<i>Norms, Interests and Humanitarian Intervention</i>	39
<i>Permissive and Prescriptive Norms of Humanitarian Intervention</i>	40
<i>The Content of the Prescriptive Norm of Humanitarian Intervention</i>	49
<i>The Strength of the Prescriptive Norm of Humanitarian Intervention</i>	52
<i>Why do Norms Impact of States?</i>	52
<i>Methodological Challenges Faced in Determining the Strength of a Norm</i>	55
<i>Controlling for Self-Interest</i>	60

<i>To Investigate the Prescriptive Norm of Humanitarian Intervention</i>	65
<i>Competing Theoretical Explanations for Intervention</i>	68
<i>A Final Note about the Empirical Investigation</i>	71
<i>The Cases</i>	73
<b>2. Bosnia and Somalia</b>	77
<i>Bosnia and the Bush Administration</i>	79
<i>The Descent into War</i>	80
<i>Perceived Causes of the Balkan Wars</i>	87
<i>No Interest in Intervening</i>	88
<i>‘Norms Are What States Make of Them’</i>	90
<i>Somalia</i>	96
<i>The American Use of Force</i>	99
<i>The Decision to Intervene</i>	99
<i>The Intervention</i>	108
<i>Disaster</i>	110
<i>An Ideational False Start</i>	113
<i>Conclusion: An Ideational Retreat</i>	121
<b>3. Rwanda</b>	123
<i>A Prelude to Genocide</i>	125
<i>The Involvement of the West</i>	131
<i>Genocide Begins</i>	137
<i>The American Position</i>	140



<i>The American Response</i>	147
<i>'Genocide'</i>	151
<i>To Violate a Norm</i>	159
<i>A Final Gesture of Indifference</i>	169
<i>The Aftermath</i>	171
<i>What Might Have Been?</i>	173
<i>Conclusion</i>	176

#### **4. The Clinton Administration and the Balkan Wars** 180

##### ***Bosnia*** 183

<i>Containment</i>	184
<i>'Genocide'</i>	188
<i>Choosing NATO over Bosnia</i>	191
<i>Srebrenica</i>	195
<i>Engagement</i>	197
<i>Norm or Self-Interest?</i>	203

##### ***Kosovo*** 208

<i>Background to the Conflict</i>	208
<i>1998</i>	210
<i>The Descent into War</i>	213
<i>Why did Clinton go to War?</i>	216
<i>A Quick War?</i>	218
<i>Means of War</i>	220

<i>To Win a War</i>	225
<i>'Madeleine's War'</i>	228
<i>To Comply with a Norm</i>	231
<b><i>Conclusion: The Convergence of Norms and Interests</i></b>	236
<b>Conclusion</b>	238
<i>Humanitarian Intervention as an Imperfect Positive Duty</i>	244
<i>Self-Interest Reconsidered</i>	247
<i>Humanitarian Intervention in a Post-September 11 World</i>	251
<i>Genocide in Sudan</i>	256
<i>Conclusion</i>	262
<b>Bibliography</b>	267

## INTRODUCTION

---

Around two and a half thousand years ago, Corcyra was at war with Corinth. Representatives of Corcyra went to Athens with a proposal for an alliance against Corinth. Fearing that the combined strength of the navies of Athens and Corcyra would prevent them from winning the war, the Corinthians sent their own representatives to persuade the Athenians to reject the proposed alliance.

The Corcyraean representatives spoke to the Athenian assembly first. They appealed to the material self-interest of the Athenians. They believed that it was this language of interests rather than obligations that would sway the Athenians:

We must therefore convince you first that by giving us this help you will be acting in your own interests, or certainly not against your own interests; and then we must show that our gratitude can be depended upon. If on all these points you find our arguments unconvincing, we must not be surprised if our mission ends in failure.<sup>1</sup>

It is a situation where we, whom you are helping, will be grateful to you, the world in general will admire you for your generosity, and you yourselves will be stronger than you were before. There is scarcely a case in history where all these

---

<sup>1</sup> Thucydides [460-400 BC], *History of the Peloponnesian War*, translated by Rex Warner (London: Penguin, 1972), 1:32 (Book: Verse).

advantages have been available at the same time...such a course would be very much in your own interests.<sup>2</sup>

The Corinthian representatives then addressed the assembly. Faced with the power-political reality that Athens would indeed benefit in the short-term from some form of alliance with Corcyra, the Corinthians instead appealed to the rules and norms of Hellenic society:

...it would not be right or just for you to receive them as allies...You would not only be helping them, but making war on us who are bound to you by treaty...All this we have a perfect right to claim from you by Hellenic law and custom...Do not think: “The Corinthians are quite right in what they say, but in the event of war all this is not in our interest.”<sup>3</sup>

They insisted that the Athenians had an enlightened and longer-term interest in obeying these societal norms:

(By accepting the Corcyraen offer), you will be establishing a precedent that is likely to harm you even more than us...The power that deals fairly with its equals finds a truer security than the one which is hurried into snatching some apparent but dangerous advantage.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 1:33-5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 1:40-42.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 1:40-42.

Ultimately, the Athenians would choose to ignore the normative exhortations of the Corinthians and enter into a defensive alliance with the Corcyraeans in accordance with their perceived self-interest. Perhaps this was to be expected. Then and now, an understanding of the self-interest of states remains the best predictor of outcomes in international relations. Rational choice theories, which have dominated the academy for so many years, assume that the interests of states are egoist. For rationalists, the power and utility-maximising preferences of states are unproblematic as they are formed prior to interaction. States inevitably act upon rational cost-benefit calculations in pursuit of given interests. Thus, the focus of the contemporary debate between two theories with a shared rational focus on material ontology – neo-realism and neo-liberalism – takes the self-interested state as the starting point and focuses on how the behaviour of states generates outcomes.<sup>5</sup>

While the focus on material ontology has generally prevailed, students of politics have wrestled with questions about the influence of ideas on human behaviour for millennia. While, in the above example, the normative appeals of the Corinthians may have fallen on deaf ears, enduring ideational phenomena ranging from self-sacrificial moral restraint to violent xenophobias have played an evident role in determining the behaviour of states which scholars have struggled to articulate. The last two decades has seen a re-emergence of interest in ideas and beliefs and a renewed focus on the impacts of norms and rules on state behaviour. This renewed focus can be partly attributed to the advance of the constructivist argument in recent years. Constructivism asserts that human interaction is

---

<sup>5</sup> Alexander Wendt, 'Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics,' *International Organization*, 46/2: 391-425 (1992), pp. 391-3.

shaped not only by material factors but by ideational factors; the identities and interests of actors are constructed by shared beliefs. The advance of this argument has been so considerable in the post-cold war era that most constructivist scholars are now more concerned with questions of how, when and why rather than consideration of whether norms matter.

This dissertation does not seek to resolve the constructivist/rationalist debate. Moreover, it is by no means clear that this debate can or even should be resolved. Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein contend that there is no necessary relationship between rationalism and constructivism. Constructivism can either compete with or complement rationalism depending on empirical findings.<sup>6</sup> More specifically, norms and self-interests are not always antithetical explanations of state behaviour. There is nothing mutually exclusive about calculations of self-interest and awareness of social constraints and requirements. If we treat them as competing explanations for state behaviour, Martha Finnemore suggests, we ignore the ‘potentially more interesting question of how the two (self-interest and norms) are intertwined and interdependent.’<sup>7</sup>

The interaction between norms and self-interests leads to state behaviours that neither rationalism nor constructivism can predict on their own. Sometimes, they can interact in quite a complementary fashion; where they conflict, the interaction becomes far more complex. Sometimes norms will constrain self-interest and sometimes self-interest will

---

<sup>6</sup> Ronald L. Jepperson, Alexander Wendt and Peter J. Katzenstein, ‘Norms, Identity and Culture in National Security,’ in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia Press, 1996), 68.

<sup>7</sup> Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force* (London: Cornell University Press, 2003), 16.

constrain norms.<sup>8</sup> Jon Elster calls the coexistence of norms and self-interest ‘a parallelogram of forces that jointly determine behaviour.’<sup>9</sup> The concern of the present dissertation is to exploit the insights offered by both constructivism and rationalism to discover the reasons why states act the way they do.

In his classic text, *Discord and Collaboration*, Arnold Wolfers observes the difficulty as well as the necessity of seeking to understand the causal reasons for the behaviour of states:

As soon as one seeks to discover the place of goals in the means-end chain of relationships, almost inevitably one is led to probe into the dark labyrinth of human motives, those internal springs of conscious and unconscious actions which Morgenthau calls “the most illusive of psychological data.” Yet if one fails to inquire why actors choose their goals, one is forced to operate in an atmosphere of such abstraction that nothing is revealed but the barest skeleton of the real world of international politics.<sup>10</sup>

The great scholar and theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, stresses that to overemphasise man’s sin leads to cynicism; to overstress his capacity for mutuality leads to sentimentality. Each perspective must balance the other.<sup>11</sup> This dissertation attempts to find the middle ground between these two extremes that is chosen by the United States

---

<sup>8</sup> Gregory A. Raymond, ‘Problems and Prospects in the Study of International Norms,’ *Mershon International Studies Review*, 41: 205-245 (1997), pp. 233.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in Raymond, ‘Problems and Prospects,’ 232.

<sup>10</sup> Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1962), 70.

<sup>11</sup> Robert C. Good, ‘The National Interest and Political Realism: Niebuhr’s “Debate” with Morgenthau and Kennan,’ *Journal of Politics*, 22/4: 597-619 (1960), p. 616.

with regard to humanitarian action. It is hoped that a healthy pragmatism that acknowledges the inevitable role of self-interest is balanced by recognition of the potential for shared normative beliefs to impact on state behaviour. With such a balance, we can begin to understand the interplay of norms and interests with regard to humanitarian intervention.<sup>12</sup>

The literature dealing with norms of humanitarian intervention is often confused. Some of this confusion can be traced to inadequate description of the injunction of a norm. A norm can be *prohibitive*, *permissive*, or *prescriptive*. In literature that deals with specific norms, the distinct implications of each of the three terms are often neglected and, consequently, the terms are employed in ways that do not accurately describe the true nature of a norm's impact. This neglect of normative typology is a particular feature of literature dealing with humanitarian intervention.

In some of the literature regarding humanitarian intervention, permissive and prescriptive norms are confused with one another. As a consequence, meaning is sometimes imputed into a norm that it does not possess. The debate that considers whether the post-cold war world has witnessed the emergence of a norm that legitimates and permits intervention in response to grave violations of human rights is a debate over the existence of a *permissive* norm. Arguments that there exists an emergent norm that compels states or (re)constitutes their interests so that they have a preference for pursuing meaningful

---

<sup>12</sup> It should be noted, however, that I do not ascribe a necessary morality to humanitarian normative beliefs and to find a violation of a humanitarian norm by a state should not imply a particular ethical assessment of the actions of decision makers. This is not to say that moral assessment of humanitarian action is inappropriate or impossible. It is simply beyond the scope of this investigation. See chapter one for a brief discussion of this issue.



responses to human rights violations can be best understood as arguments about a *prescriptive* norm. It is one thing to say that humanitarian intervention is seen as a legitimate response to human rights violations; it is quite another thing to suggest that states feel obliged or have a (re)defined national interest in responding to these violations.

This dissertation focuses on what is termed the '*prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention*.' The central objective is to investigate the extent to which the norm became embedded, internalised and institutionalised in American foreign policy in the period between 1992 and 1999 by investigating the decisions of two American presidents, George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, to either intervene or fail to intervene in response to grave violations of human rights.

Constructivists and English school theorists have had some success in establishing a causal relationship between permissive humanitarian norms and humanitarian action. However, by focussing on questions of when, where and why humanitarian action is *permitted*, scholars have neglected to develop theoretical explanations for the significant and obvious discrepancies and inconsistencies in humanitarian action that we observe in the world. By considering when and where humanitarian action is *prescribed*, we can begin to understand why states respond to some grave violations of human rights and not others; by examining the interests that states perceive and the obligations that states are confronted with, we can begin to comprehend why they will become meaningfully engaged with one humanitarian crisis while simply trying to contain or even ignore another.

Chapter One defines and discusses the three key terms for our investigation: norms, interests and humanitarian intervention. The interplay of the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention with the material self-interest of states with regard to the responses of states to grave violations of human rights is conceptualised. Finally, a theoretical and methodological framework is established for understanding the decisions of states to intervene or fail to intervene. This framework emphasises the need to control for self-interest while investigating the causal explanatory power of the prescriptive norm.

The three chapters that follow are case studies of US decision making processes in the 1990s. Chapter Two examines the response of the Bush administration towards the ethnic cleansing that took place in Bosnia and the responses of Presidents Bush and Clinton to the humanitarian disaster in Somalia in the first half of the decade. In neither of these cases do we find a clearly perceived and articulated self-interest for intervention.

In the absence of a clear self-interest for ending the atrocities in the Balkans, American policy was to be one of containment rather than engagement. We find evidence for the existence of a weak norm of intervention in this case in the attempts of the administration to frame an ambiguous situation in a way that made violation of the norm socially acceptable and in the efforts of President Bush to appear to at least be ‘doing something’ in response to the crisis.

The intervention in Somalia in 1992-4 is described as an ideational false start. While there was no perceived material or strategic interests at stake, the constituted identity and interests of the United States, as understood by the Bush administration, led to a preference for intervention. President Bush's learnt values and interests led him to conclude that the United States should respond to the starvation that was occurring on the other side of the world because this was the appropriate response of a great power with the capacity to do so. However, as US troop casualties mounted and opposition to the intervention within the United States increased, Bush's successor, President Clinton, chose not to sacrifice his mandate for domestic change by ignoring the political costs of compliance with the norm of humanitarian intervention where no strategic or economic interests were at stake. The subsequent decision to withdraw from Somalia represents an ideational retreat from which the US may still not have fully recovered.

This ideational retreat was confirmed by the American response to the Rwandan genocide of 1994. In Chapter Three, we find that the interplay between norms and interests did not generate any meaningful action by the United States to prevent the slaughter of 800,000 Rwandans. The existence of the prescriptive norm of intervention is evinced by the Clinton administration's determination to frame the situation in Rwanda in a way that made violation of the norm socially acceptable. Similarly, the reluctance to use the word 'genocide' demonstrates a concern that a finding of 'genocide' might have carried with it obligations to 'prevent and punish' as expressed in the Genocide Convention. Nevertheless, the reality is that the norm was so weak that the administration did not need to work hard to eschew the political costs of inaction.

Over the course of the Balkan wars, the interplay between norms and interests with regard to humanitarian intervention began to slowly change. In Chapter Four, we find that, for two and a half years, President Clinton maintained the futile policy of containment of the Bosnian war that was developed by the Bush administration. However, in 1995, a number of forces combined in a way that led to a meaningful commitment to end the Bosnian war. As the crisis worsened and it became clear that the policy of containment was not working, normative beliefs and moral impulses were finally buttressed by clear material interests as well as international and domestic political pressures for intervention and a new policy direction was forged.

By 1999, the norm-based reconstitution of US policy preferences in favour of intervention had progressed a little further. The United States certainly had a material interest in responding to the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. NATO's intervention served to protect the stability of Europe and the credibility of the alliance. Nevertheless, normative humanitarian concerns were also a crucial determinant in the decision to go to war against Slobodan Milosevic. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright acted as 'norm entrepreneur' forging a new direction for US foreign policy. Albright was able to successfully transfer her personal commitment to the norm of intervention into a clearly articulated American foreign policy decision.

NATO's intervention in Kosovo represented an important step in the interplay of norms and interests with regard to humanitarian action. It represented the clearest case yet of

compliance with the emerging prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention. However, some key factors limit the extent to which we can attribute the intervention to the causal impact of a strong norm. Most importantly, the supposed commitment to the norm of intervention was undermined by the reluctance of the US to accept troop casualties. The consequent decisions not to commit ground forces and to emphasise high-altitude bombing inevitably led to greater numbers of civilian casualties. The norm of intervention conflicted with the norm of force protection. The commitment to humanitarian principles was shown to be ‘intense but also shallow.’<sup>13</sup>

Finally, some tentative conclusions are drawn for a post-September 11 world. The future of humanitarian intervention remains uncertain. States such as the US may come to understand that state sponsored violence and the grave violations of human rights that so often attend state failure breed undesirable spawn such as terrorism, refugee flows, drug trafficking, arms smuggling, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and regional and global instability. The Corinthians tried to persuade the Athenians that a rejection of the Corcyraean offer was not only in accordance with the norms and rules of Hellenic society but was also in their long-term interests. Today, many scholars contend that the attacks of September 11, 2001, perceived, in part, as a product of Western hubris and neglect, demonstrate that meaningful responses to humanitarian crises are not only morally appropriate and socially expected, but that they also satisfy the enlightened and long-term self-interests of powerful states. On the other hand, as the Athenians did in forming an alliance with the Corcyraeans, the United States may choose short-term material and strategic interests over compliance with humanitarian norms. The

---

<sup>13</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond* (London: Vintage, 2000), 4.

prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention may be trumped by a narrowly conceived  
'war on terror.'

## **Norms, Interests and Humanitarian Intervention**

This dissertation is an investigation into the interplay between norms and interests with regard to humanitarian intervention. In particular, it will focus on the power of what I term the ‘prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention’ to explain the responses of states to grave violations of human rights. The literature dealing with interests and norms, especially with regard to humanitarian intervention, is often confused. Too busy proving the validity of their own theories, many rationalists and constructivists speak past one another and ignore valid competing claims for explanations of state behaviour. Some scholars are guilty of employing flawed methodology in which the causal effects of self-interest or norms are implied and assumed rather than ascertained empirically. The objective of this first chapter is to overcome these problems – both theoretical and methodological – and lay a solid platform for our investigation into the interplay between norms and interests with regard to humanitarian intervention. A discussion of norms, interests and humanitarian intervention can lead to almost immediate confusion unless the terms of the debate are defined clearly and competing arguments sympathetically considered. This chapter will define and discuss these three terms. Once we have a firm understanding of each concept, we will consider how norms and interests can complement or conflict with each other when states either decide to or fail to intervene to stop grave violations of human rights. This will require a discussion of the specific norm

that is the focus of this dissertation, the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention, and the need to control for self-interest while investigating the causal explanatory power of this norm. Once we establish a framework for understanding the reasons why states intervene or fail to intervene, we will turn to our empirical studies.

## *Norms*

Students of politics have wrestled with questions about the influence of ideas on human behaviour for millennia. However, the focus of rational choice theories on material ontology for most of the cold war era left the study of norms languishing in the background. The last two decades has seen a re-emergence of interest in ideational phenomena and a renewed focus on the impact of norms and rules on state behaviour.<sup>14</sup> This renewal can be partly attributed to the advance of the constructivist argument regarding the emergence and impact of norms in international relations. This advance has been so considerable in the post-cold war era that most constructivist scholars are now more concerned with questions of how, when and why rather than consideration of whether norms matter. Before examining these questions, we must first understand the terms of the debate between constructivists and rationalists.

---

<sup>14</sup> Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,' *International Organisation*, 52/4: 887-917 (1998), p. 889-90; and Gregory A. Raymond, 'Problems and Prospects in the Study of International Norms,' *Mershon International Studies Review*, 41: 205-245 (1997), p. 206.



## *Constructivism and Rationalism*

Constructivist international relations theory is not a single unified theory and interrogation of the range of different constructivist approaches is beyond the scope of this dissertation. The ‘constructivists’ referred to in this dissertation are those that Ted Hopf refers to as ‘conventional constructivists,’ as distinct from the post-modern epistemology of critical theory.<sup>15</sup> While, even within this ‘conventional’ range of constructivist literature, there is a broad range of variant contentions, an underlying argument can be found. Conventional constructivism is a movement with great ontological and epistemological variety yet there is an underlying contention that values and ideas impact upon international relations; identities, interests and possible actions are socially constructed; and systems, norms, and relationships can change. Constructivism asserts that human interaction is shaped not only by material factors but by ideational factors. The most important ideational factors for a society are ‘intersubjective’ beliefs. These shared beliefs construct the identities and interests of actors.<sup>16</sup>

In order to understand constructivism, it is useful to first understand the rationalist approach that it critiques. While scholars have tended to divide international relations theory into three competing schools of realism, liberalism and Marxism, the rise of

---

<sup>15</sup> Ted Hopf, ‘The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory,’ *International Security*, 23: 171-200 (1998). I was alerted to this distinction upon reading Vaughn P. Shannon, ‘Norms Are What States Make of Them: The Political Psychology of Norm Violation,’ *International Studies Quarterly*, 44: 293-316 (2000), p. 293. For alternative means of distinguishing between the various constructivist theories, see Christian Reus-Smit, ‘Imagining Society: Constructivism and the English School,’ *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 4/3: 487-509 (2002).

<sup>16</sup> Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, ‘Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics,’ *Annual Review of Political Science*, 4: 391-416 (2001), pp. 391-3.

constructivism reconfigures the debate as constructivists critique all three approaches, now categorised together as 'rationalist' or 'neo-utilitarian' approaches.<sup>17</sup> Rationalist approaches treat the identities and interests of actors (states) as exogenous to interaction. That is, states inevitably pursue given power and utility-maximising goals based on rational cost-benefit calculations. State preferences are unproblematic as they are formed prior to interaction. Thus, debate between neo-realists and neo-liberals takes the self-interested state as the starting point and focuses on divergent approaches to how the behaviour of states generates outcomes.<sup>18</sup>

Constructivists, on the other hand, working from a sociological perspective, contend that the identities and interests of states are endogenous to interaction.<sup>19</sup> States are said to take their cues from the social environment in order to determine who they are, what their interests are and how they should behave. Alexander Wendt, for example, argues that the identities of states are not given, they are formed in relation to other states. These identities are the basis of state interests. Rather than having a 'portfolio' of given interests, states define their interests in the process of defining their situation. While the realist would reply that the anarchical nature of international relations creates a necessary system of self-help, a constructivist such as Wendt responds that self-help is not a

---

<sup>17</sup> John M. Hobson, *The State and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 145. 'Rationalism' in this sense should not be confused with 'rationalism' as described by English school theorist Martin Wight as one of three traditional conceptions of international society: realism, rationalism and revolutionism. Martin Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions* (London: Leicester University Press, 1991).

<sup>18</sup> Alexander Wendt, 'Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics,' *International Organisation*, 46/2: 391-425 (1992), pp. 391-3.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 394.

constitutive property of anarchy but one that emerges ‘causally from processes in which anarchy plays only a permissive role.’<sup>20</sup>

It is important to note that constructivists are not alone in their opposition to the rationalist assertion that identities and interests are exogenous to interaction. The emergence of constructivism in the United States in the 1990s was paralleled by the rejuvenation of the English school in the United Kingdom and Europe. A foundational English school work, Hedley Bull’s *The Anarchical Society*,<sup>21</sup> argued that states exist in society with each other. Scholars following Bull and other classic English school theorists such as Martin Wight and John Vincent have continued to emphasise the social aspects of international life.<sup>22</sup> A contemporary English school theorist, Timothy Dunne, has argued that considerable similarities can be found between English school theory and constructivist thought in the sense that both find the rules of interaction and the interests of actors to be socially constructed rather than given: ‘both interrogate the meaning of the international system/society according to the intersubjective practices through which it is constituted.’<sup>23</sup> The striking resemblances that constructivism and the English school bear should come as no surprise as both have self-consciously drawn ideas from each other in recent years.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 396-403.

<sup>21</sup> Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).

<sup>22</sup> Reus-Smit, ‘Imagining Society,’ 488.

<sup>23</sup> Timothy Dunne, ‘The Social Construction of International Society,’ *European Journal of International Relations*, 1/3: 367-389 (1995), p. 384. While he agrees that the constructivist and English school projects complement each others, Christian Reus-Smit cautions that ‘scholars in each school have worked largely with stereotypes of the other, and this has greatly impeded productive dialogue and cross-fertilisation.’ Reus-Smit, ‘Imagining society,’ 487.

<sup>24</sup> Reus-Smit, ‘Imagining Society,’ 489; and Dunne, ‘The Social Construction of International Society.’ See, for example, Ronald L. Jepperson, Alexander Wendt and Peter J. Katzenstein, ‘Norms, Identity and

### *Constructivist and Rationalist Understandings of Norms*

A prime source of scholarly debate between rationalists and constructivists concerns the impact that norms have on the behaviour of states. A commonly accepted constructivist understanding of norms describes them as ‘collective expectations for the proper behaviour of actors within a given identity.’<sup>25</sup> It is rare to find a scholar who denies the existence of norms. Rather, the source of debate between constructivists and rationalists is the impact that these norms have on state behaviour. The debate focuses on the independent explanatory power and ideational causality of norms.

Rationalists see states as acting upon rational, utilitarian calculations in pursuit of given interests. For them, compliance with norms is simply dependent upon whether such action would serve the state’s defined interests.<sup>26</sup> A weaker version acknowledges the norms have a limited impact but maintain that this impact takes the form of an intervening variable mediating between interests and behaviour.<sup>27</sup> Broadly speaking, rationalists accord norms very little or no independent explanatory power. The two key variants of the rationalist approach are realism and neo-liberalism.

For realists, the existence of norms is of trivial importance as they do not impact on the behaviours of states. Put simply, states will comply with norms when it is in their

---

Culture in National Security,’ in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia Press, 1996), 45.

<sup>25</sup> Peter J. Katzenstein, ‘Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security,’ in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia Press, 1996), 5.

<sup>26</sup> Shannon, ‘Norms are What States Make of Them,’ 295-6.

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, Stephen Krasner, ‘Structural Causes and Regime Consequences,’ *International Organisation*, 36: 185-206 (1982).

interests to do so and they will violate these norms when compliance is not in their interest. Writing in the 1930s, E. H. Carr seemed to suggest that norms are causally irrelevant when he argued that supposed universal principles of morality are simply a reflection of the interests of dominant powers.<sup>28</sup>

Some of the most heated debates between realists and their critics which took place in the two decades immediately following the Second World War concerned whether states were bound by considerations of moral norms or whether the pursuit of the 'national interest' was an overriding moral obligation. Realists such as Hans Morgenthau argued that, in the absence of a higher sovereign with coercive power to compel compliance with norms, statesmen must necessarily pursue the national interest, 'for if he does not take care of the national interest, nobody else will, and if he puts (the state's) security and liberty in jeopardy the cause of liberty everywhere will be impaired.'<sup>29</sup> Consequently, realists inform us, states cannot afford to comply with international norms unless such action happens to coincide with the overriding political and moral duty to pursue the national interest, described by Morgenthau as the 'one guiding star, one standard of thought, one rule for action.'<sup>30</sup>

However, Morgenthau acknowledges that we should not deny that 'statesmen and diplomats are moved by anything but considerations of material power,' noting that states

---

<sup>28</sup> E. H. Carr [1939], *The Twenty Years' Crisis: 1919-1939* (London: MacMillan Press, 1989).

<sup>29</sup> Hans Morgenthau, 'Another "Great Debate": The National Interest of the United States,' *The American Political Science Review*, 46/4: 961-988 (1952), p. 987.

<sup>30</sup> Hans Morgenthau, *American Foreign Policy: A Critical Examination*, published in USA under the title *Defence of the National Interest: A Critical Examination of American Foreign Policy* (London: Methuen, 1952), 242.

refrain from doing certain things on moral grounds ‘even though it would be expedient to do them.’<sup>31</sup> In recent years some realists have accepted the inevitable impact that norms have on state behaviour and have attempted to integrate this reality with a realist theory of power politics.<sup>32</sup>

Neo-liberals attach more importance to norms than do realists. They acknowledge that norms do constrain actors by forcing or at least encouraging them to consider longer-term gains and the reputational costs of violating norms. Robert Keohane, for example, acknowledges that the institutions of international society constrain activity and even ‘prescribe behavioural roles.’<sup>33</sup> However, Jeffrey Checkel charges that, for neo-liberals, norms are ‘still a superstructure built on a material base.’<sup>34</sup> While neo-liberals accept that norms play an important role, their rationalist framework is so pervasive that any ethical meaning remains ‘essentially a gloss on material interests.’<sup>35</sup> Like realists, neo-liberals generally continue to relate norm compliance to calculations of self-interest which is given as exogenous to interaction.

---

<sup>31</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau [1948], *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, revised by Kenneth W. Thompson, brief edition (Boston: McGraw Hill, 1993), 224, 225. This seems to contradict an earlier assertion in Morgenthau’s classic text: ‘A realist theory of politics will also avoid the other popular fallacy of equating the foreign policies of a statesman with his philosophic or political sympathies, deducing the former from the latter.’ (p.6).

<sup>32</sup> See for example Coral Bell, ‘Force, Diplomacy and Norms,’ in Albrecht Schnabel and Ramesh Thakur (eds.), *Kosovo and the Challenge of Humanitarian Intervention: Selective Indignation, Collective Action and International Citizenship*, (Tokyo: UN University, 2000). For an interesting work which deliberately attempts to integrate constructivist thought with realism, see Gary Goertz and Paul F. Diehl, ‘International Norms and Power Politics,’ in Frank W. Wayman and Paul Diehl, *Reconstructing Realpolitik* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

<sup>33</sup> Quoted in Christian Reus-Smit, *American Power and World Order* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), 49.

<sup>34</sup> Jeffrey T. Checkel, ‘The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory,’ *World Politics*, 50/2: 324-348 (1998), p. 327.

<sup>35</sup> Neta Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics: Ethics, Decolonization and Humanitarian Intervention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 95.

While the rationalist approach to norms and international relations theory more generally has prevailed at least since the Second World War, their assumptions have recently been challenged by constructivist literature. Employing both theoretical and empirical techniques, constructivists have argued that norms have independent explanatory power and are not simply reflections of hegemonic state interests as some rationalists have claimed. For constructivists, norms are expectations held by many actors that serve to define the actors, their interests, and the possibilities for acting on those interests. Some better known and oft cited empirical examples in the emerging constructivist canon include studies demonstrating the impact of norms on phenomena of decolonisation,<sup>36</sup> opposition to racism,<sup>37</sup> the rules of war,<sup>38</sup> and the use of chemical weapons.<sup>39</sup>

For constructivists, norms (re)constitute interests and define what policy options are legitimate by limiting some and promoting others. They not only constrain actors; they constitute the actors themselves and enable action. Audie Klotz suggests ‘Norms are not simply an ethical alternative to or constraint on self-interests...System level norms play an explanatory role. The shifting importance of contending global norms offers a theoretical explanation of interest (re)formation.’<sup>40</sup> Checkel concurs: ‘Norms are no longer a superstructure on a material base; rather, they help to create and define that

---

<sup>36</sup> Neta Crawford, ‘Decolonisation as an International Norm: The Evolution of Practices, Arguments and Beliefs,’ in Laura Reed and Carl Kaysen (eds.), *Emerging Norms of Justified Intervention* (Cambridge, MA: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1993); and Crawford, *Argument and Change*.

<sup>37</sup> Audie Klotz, ‘Norms Reconstituting Interests: Global Racial Equality and U.S. Sanctions Against South Africa,’ *International Organisation*, 49/3: 451-78 (1995).

<sup>38</sup> Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

<sup>39</sup> Richard Price, *The Chemical Weapons Taboo* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997).

<sup>40</sup> Klotz, ‘Norms Reconstituting Interests,’ 460.

base.’<sup>41</sup> Constructivists problematise identities and interests while realists and neo-liberals take them for granted.<sup>42</sup>

For constructivists, norms are widely accepted patterns of behaviour. Some scholars suggest that the term ‘norms’ should be reserved for describing ‘normal practices.’ That is, a norm describes the dominant practice or behaviour.<sup>43</sup> Neta Crawford suggests that we distinguish between ‘normative beliefs’ which refers to appropriate behaviour and ‘behavioural norms’ which refers to dominant behaviour.<sup>44</sup> For our purposes, the term ‘norm’ shall not necessarily identify actual behaviour; it simply refers to notions of what appropriate behaviour ought to be. There are countless normative beliefs that do not have sufficient strength, or acceptance, to cause dominant behaviour. Moreover, there are always exceptions to dominant behaviour. Constructivists have shown that constant repetition of an act may not lead to the creation of a norm, while a norm may originate as a result of just one precedent.<sup>45</sup> So long as we are clear that norms can vary in their strength, acceptance, and causal impact, we need not feel compelled to reserve the term ‘norm’ for those behaviours that have become sufficiently dominant or typical. Using this

---

<sup>41</sup> Checkel, ‘The Constructivist Turn,’ 328.

<sup>42</sup> Theo Farrell, ‘Constructivist Security Studies: Portrait of a Research Program,’ *International Studies Review*, 4/1: 49-72 (2002), p. 50. Roland Paris contends that constructivism does not necessarily have to be seen in opposition to neo-liberalism. It can be seen as a complementary way of understanding more deeply how norms impact on states. Not only do norms constrain the behaviour of actors, they (re)constitute the actors themselves. Roland Paris, ‘Broadening the Study of Peace Operations,’ *International Studies Review*, 2/3: 27-44 (2001).

<sup>43</sup> See, for example, Janice E. Thompson, ‘Norms in International Relations: A Conceptual Analysis,’ *International Journal of Group Tensions*, 23: 67-83 (1993).

<sup>44</sup> Crawford, *Argument and Change*, 40-43.

<sup>45</sup> Raymond, ‘Problems and Prospects,’ 217.



definition of norms, we can then investigate, to use Jeffrey Legro's phrase, 'which norms matter',<sup>46</sup> and which norms do not.

### *The Function of Norms*

There are four key aspects that distinguish one norm from another: the nature of the injunction; the content; the strength of the causal impact on state behaviour; and the nature of the functional impact on state behaviour. The first three shall be considered later in the chapter and integrated with the concepts of state interest and humanitarian intervention. The final element – the function of norms – is dealt with here as it facilitates a more nuanced comprehension of the difference between rationalist – particularly neo-liberal – and constructivist approaches to norms. A functional distinction is commonly made between *regulative* and *constitutive* norms.<sup>47</sup> Raymond takes regulative norms to encompass those that *constrain* and those that *enable* certain behaviours.<sup>48</sup> Others restrict regulative norms to only include those norms that constrain behaviour and treat enabling norms as a third category.<sup>49</sup> Such a distinction, however, deals with more with the injunctive nature of the norm than the function it serves in influencing state behaviour.

---

<sup>46</sup> Legro, 'Which Norms Matter?'

<sup>47</sup> See, for example, Raymond, 'Problems and Prospects'; Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society*; Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change'; Legro, 'Which Norms Matter?'; and Jepperson et al., 'Norms, Identity and Culture.' Neta Crawford adds to these two function types 'procedural' and 'meta-normative' norms. Crawford, *Argument and Change*, 89.

<sup>48</sup> Raymond, 'Problems and Prospects,' 214.

<sup>49</sup> See, for example, Annika Bjorkdahl, 'Norms in International Relations: Some Conceptual and Methodological Reflections,' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 15/1: 9-23 (2002), p. 16.

When US Secretary of State, James Baker, likened international norms to ‘rules of the road,’ he captured the regulative sense of international norms.<sup>50</sup> It has become common to describe regulative norms as serving as road rules or road maps that suggest legitimate and effective policy choices. The regulative function of norms is the function that is understood and accepted by many rationalists – particularly neo-liberals. For a rationalist, actor behaviour is governed by rational means-ends logics. March and Olsen have termed this logic, the ‘logic of expected consequences.’<sup>51</sup> Norms regulate or constrain behaviour by altering the consequences of a given behaviour and thereby forcing a recalculation of how to best achieve given interests.

Constructivists join with rationalists in accepting that norms regulate and constrain the behaviour of actors. However, they also contend that the effects of norms can reach deeper – they are shared understandings that constitute the identities and interests of the actors themselves. Constitutive norms are said to create new actors, new interests, and new categories of action.<sup>52</sup> Constitutive norms are seen as directly related to collective identities and are, therefore, interconnected with the national interests of states.<sup>53</sup> This understanding of political action as a product of rules, roles and identities stipulating appropriate behaviour is described by March and Olsen as a ‘logic of appropriateness.’<sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup> Raymond, ‘Problems and Prospects,’ 214.

<sup>51</sup> James G. March and Johan Olsen, ‘The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders,’ *International Organization*, 52: 943-969 (1998).

<sup>52</sup> Jepperson et al., ‘Norms, Identity and Culture,’ 54.

<sup>53</sup> See, for example, Klotz, ‘Norms Reconstituting Interests’; Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society*; Finnemore and Sikkink, ‘International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,’ 891; and Bjorkdahl, ‘Norms in International Relations,’ 16.

<sup>54</sup> March and Olsen, ‘The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders,’

Thus, constructivism does not necessarily have to be seen in opposition to neo-liberalism. It can be seen as a complementary way of understanding more deeply how norms impact on states. Not only do norms constrain the behaviour of actors, they (re)constitute the actors themselves.<sup>55</sup> For constructivists, international norms influence state behaviour both in a constitutive sense – shaping states identities and interests – and in a regulative sense – whereby state decision makers draw conclusions about ‘whether a class of actions is required, forbidden, or allowed.’<sup>56</sup> While the distinction between regulative and constitutive norms may be useful, it is possible for norms to influence behaviour in both a regulative and a constitutive sense. Norms often supply states with preferences as well as legitimated and effective strategies for pursuing these preferences.<sup>57</sup> While some important scholarly works draw a clear distinction between the two functions of norms,<sup>58</sup> Nicholas Onuf insists that norms are simultaneously constitutive and regulative. Onuf maintains that ‘ostensibly regulative norms have constitutive effects, just as constitutive norms work regulatively.’<sup>59</sup> Jeffrey Checkel contends that not enough scholars have recognised this joint function that norms can serve because their desire has been to develop and defend theories rather than solve problems.<sup>60</sup> In reality, norms often perform both regulative and constitutive functions. The norm to be investigated in the present dissertation, the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention, confers a joint effect.

---

<sup>55</sup> Roland Paris, ‘Broadening the Study of Peace Operations,’ *International Studies Review*, 2/3: 27-44 (2001).

<sup>56</sup> Max Black. Quoted in Raymond, ‘Problems and Prospects,’ 214.

<sup>57</sup> Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society*, 15.

<sup>58</sup> See, for example, Peter J. Katzenstein, (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. (New York: Columbia Press, 1996). This book divides case studies into two sections: those concerned with the effects of regulative norms on interests and policies and those where the identities of actors are conferred by constitutive norms.

<sup>59</sup> Nicholas Onuf, ‘The New Culture of Security Studies,’ *Mershon International Studies Review*, 42: 132-134 (1998), p. 134.

<sup>60</sup> Jeffrey T. Checkel, ‘International Norms and Domestic Politics: Bridging the Rationalist-Constructivist Divide,’ *European Journal of International Relations*, 3/4: 473-495 (1997), p. 474.

Not only does the norm create expectations and prescribe appropriate behaviour; over time it can (re)constitute the actors' own interests and identities.

The distinction between regulative and constitutive norms can be clouded by the justifications of statesmen when complying with a norm. Statesmen will often discuss the impact of norms in a constitutive sense regardless of the true function of the norm. A statesman is more likely to argue that it is in the state's interest to comply with a norm rather than acknowledge that action in pursuit of the material self-interest of the state has been constrained by a norm. For example, the case studies in the present dissertation observe the impact of norms of humanitarian action on the decisions of states to intervene to resolve humanitarian crises in other states. When states choose to respond to these crises, statesmen do not claim that intervention was not in their interest and that action was prescribed by the norms of international society. Justification for action is inevitably couched in terms of a national interest to intervene in order to promote, for example, the nation's values or security or the stability of the international system.

### *Krasner's Critique of Constructivism*

The most formidable critique of the constructivist project to date is Stephen Krasner's text, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*.<sup>61</sup> It is Krasner's contention that, in international relations, logics of consequences trump logics of appropriateness. Following March and

---

<sup>61</sup> Stephen Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

Olsen, he suggests that ‘If actors find themselves in a situation in which they have multiple and contradictory roles and rules...but the results of different courses of action are obvious, a logic of consequences will prevail.’<sup>62</sup> He argues that this is the situation that obtains in international relations for three reasons: international rules can be contradictory; there is no authority structure to adjudicate controversies; and the asymmetrical distribution of power in the international system allows stronger states to pick and choose among different rules and select the one that best suits their instrumental objectives.<sup>63</sup>

Krasner particularly targets the ‘organized hypocrisy’ which characterises the practice of strong states with regard to what he terms ‘Westphalian sovereignty’. ‘Westphalian sovereignty’ refers to political organisation based on the exclusion of external actors from the territory of a state. Krasner suggests that ‘The logic of appropriateness of Westphalian sovereignty...has been widely recognised but also frequently violated...

Outcomes in the international system are determined by rulers whose violation of, or adherence to, international principles or rules is based on calculations of material and ideational interests, not taken-for-granted practices derived from some overarching institutional structures or deeply embedded generative grammars.<sup>64</sup>

---

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

The purpose of the present study is not to rebut Krasner's claims. It is simply to investigate the nature and strength of a norm. Through this investigation we may begin to determine whether the claims of rationalists such as Krasner hold up to rigorous empirical examination but that is not our objective. Before we begin the investigation, however, one important observation needs to be made in response to Krasner. Demonstrating that the Westphalian logic of appropriateness does not always prevail in international relations does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that logics of appropriateness are being trumped by logics of consequences. It may be that an alternative story can be told. It may be that alternative logics of appropriateness wield more causal force than Westphalian sovereignty. Certainly power and interests are important explanatory tools for an examination of violation of Westphalian sovereignty. However, as the present study will reveal, so too are norms of human rights. By framing violation of Westphalian sovereignty as 'hypocrisy,' Krasner accords Westphalian sovereignty a normative quality that can only be challenged by the non-normative certainties of power and interest. In reality, there is no reason for us to assume that Westphalian sovereignty cannot be challenged by alternative normative beliefs regarding human and minority rights; there is no reason why violation of Westphalian sovereignty must be motivated by a hypocritical pursuit of material self-interest; there is no reason to assume that a *constituted* respect for Westphalian sovereignty cannot be gradually replaced by humanitarian norms that may *reconstitute* state identities and interests.

But we are getting ahead of ourselves. The explanatory power of humanitarian norms, and the relative importance of their regulative and constitutive functions, shall be

examined later in this chapter. To make sense of all of this, we must first discuss the concepts of interests and humanitarian intervention.

### *Interests*

Some have argued that focussing on the interests of states ignores the interests of other non-state actors which are of increasing importance to international relations. Studies of interdependence between states and non-state actors, for example, show us the inadequacy of a simple ‘billiard ball’ conception of international relations where states are the sole and autonomous actors.<sup>65</sup> However, while interdependence has brought us greater complexity, the state remains in a central position. Whether or not the state is declining in importance as a political unit, the process of decline is many years away from an end. In the immediate future, states will remain the dominant actors in the international system.

A fuller analysis of this debate is beyond the scope of these pages.<sup>66</sup> In the meantime, there is little doubt that political leaders will continue to attach great importance to the concept of state interest in their perceptions of the objectives of policies and in their justifications for pursuing them. To the extent that this continues, the interests of states will remain a concept that requires analysis.

---

<sup>65</sup> The classic examination of interdependence is Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co, 1977).

<sup>66</sup> For an excellent discussion of the place of the state in contemporary international relations, see Hobson, *The State and International Relations*.

### *Distinguishing Between Self-Interest and the 'National Interest'*

Constructivists emphasise that social norms constitute the identities and interests of actors within a society. In order to understand the causal impacts of norms, we must first have a clear understanding of the notion of 'interests.' For the purposes of this dissertation, a distinction shall be made between two concepts which are often conflated: the 'self-interest' of states and their 'national interest.'<sup>67</sup>

'Self-interest' shall be taken to mean what realists traditionally define as the rationally objective and logically deductive national interest of states. This refers to the egoist objectives of survival, security and political and territorial integrity, secured by means of the pursuit of power. This self-interest can also be referred to as 'material interest' or 'strategic interest.' Realists such as Hans Morgenthau contend that 'International politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power. Whatever the ultimate aims of international politics, power is always the immediate aim.'<sup>68</sup> For them, the rationally objective self-interest of states represents the ultimate guide to the behaviour of states. It must be acknowledged that the struggle for security and prosperity is a powerful explanatory tool for analysing state action. In Stephen Krasner's words, this kind of reasoning has

---

<sup>67</sup> The distinction between the concepts of self-interest and national interest is based in part on two alternative definitions of the 'national interest' provided by Stephen Krasner in his well-known early text, *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investments and US Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978). Here, Krasner divides definitions of the national interest into two main camps: logical deductive and empirical inductive. While Krasner employed this distinction 'to demonstrate the empirical plausibility of the realist assertion that states can be treated as unified rational actors' (Stephen Krasner, 'Realism, Imperialism and Democracy: A Response to Gilbert,' *Political Theory*, 20/1: 38-52 (1992), p. 46), the present investigation will use the distinction to serve a much less rationalist inquiry.

<sup>68</sup> Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 29.



provided 'the most powerful theoretical orientation toward the study of international politics.'<sup>69</sup>

The realist assertion that a state will act to ensure its survival and to protect its territorial and political integrity is certainly an indispensable guide but it does not tell the whole story. There is a considerable amount of rationalist scholarship that criticises this logical deductive definition of interest.<sup>70</sup> In particular, a number of scholars have questioned whether the material and strategic self-interests of states that realists describe actually accords with the interests that all states, in reality, over time and throughout the world, choose to pursue. It is beyond the scope of this work to investigate these criticisms in detail. For our purposes, it is sufficient to note that the behaviour of states is not dictated by self-interest alone.

The 'interest' that is ultimately constructed to guide state action shall be referred to as the 'national interest.' The national interest refers to the perceived interests of states, or, more specifically, the preferences of the central decision makers that can be induced from

---

<sup>69</sup> Krasner, *Defending the National Interest*, 40.

<sup>70</sup> Some excellent examples include David W. Clinton, *The Two Faces of the National Interest* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994); Francis Fukuyama, 'The Ambiguity of "National Interest,"' in Stephen Sestanovich (ed.), *Rethinking Russia's National Interests* (Washington DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1994); Krasner, *Defending the National Interest*; Miroslav Nincic, 'The National Interest and its Interpretation,' *The Review of Politics*, 61/1: 29-56 (1999); James N. Rosenau, 'National Interest,' *International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, vol. 11 (New York: Free Press, 1968); Warner R. Schilling, 'The Clarification of Ends, or, Which Interest is the National?' *World Politics*, 7: 566-578 (1956); Fred A. Sonderman, 'The Concept of the National Interest,' *Orbis*, 21/1: 121-139 (1977); Michael J. Smith, *Realist Thought from Weber to Kissinger* (London: Louisiana State University Press, 1986); and Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1962). Note, realists tend to refer to the material and strategic self-interests of states as the 'national interest.' Most of the scholarship listed here takes issue with this definition of the 'national interest' but do not necessarily agree on how the 'national interest' of a state should ultimately be understood.

empirical evidence. Charles Beard defined the national interest in similar terms over 70 years ago:

The question – what is the national interest? – can be answered, if at all, only by exploring the use of the formula by responsible statesmen and publicists and by discovering the things and patterns of conduct – public and private – embraced within the scope of the formula.<sup>71</sup>

Such a definition of the national interest accepts that the self-interest that realists emphasise often prevails in the construction of the national interest. However, it also acknowledges that states can and do define their interests however they like. The empirical inductive definition of national interest allows for states to define their national interests egoistically but it also allows for the constructivist contention that national interests are not given but are socially constituted and do not have to be selfish. Thus, in the construction of the national interest, we can observe the interplay of self-interest and norms. In practice, national interests can be and often are (re)constituted by norms. Self-interest does not always prevail.

Ruizhuang Zhang's neo-realist doctoral dissertation castigates such a definition of national interest, which is described as 'the perception of freewheeling policy makers,' on the grounds that it turns 'an independent variable into a dependent variable which asks for its own explanation and thus makes the original equation too complicated and

---

<sup>71</sup> Charles A. Beard. [1934], *The Idea of National Interest* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1966), 26.

indefinite to solve.’<sup>72</sup> The defects of such a criticism are clear. One should not criticise the decision to describe a variable as dependent if that is indeed what it is, no matter how complicated and indefinite such a decision makes the resulting equation. The logical deductive definition would describe the national interest as an independent variable but, as many have observed, this is not always validated by reality. Zhang is right to assert that the national interest is usually defined by ‘a number of well-established objectives’<sup>73</sup> but we must also allow it to be redefined in response not only to changes in power relations and alterations in the international system but also to emergent international norms and changes in the choices of objectives that states choose to pursue. As the present investigation will demonstrate, the choices that states make cannot be pinned down to convenient and simplistic formulae.

### *Norms and Interests*

The interaction between norms and self-interests leads to state behaviours that neither rationalism nor constructivism can predict on their own. Sometimes, they can interact in quite a complementary fashion; sometimes they conflict. Jon Elster calls the coexistence of norms and self-interest ‘a parallelogram of forces that jointly determine behaviour.’<sup>74</sup> It is the manner in which *self-interest* and *norms* interact that determines the *national interest* which can be empirically induced. Thus we must consider both norms and self-

---

<sup>72</sup> Ruizhuang Zhang, *American Foreign Policy Motives*, Ph.D. Dissertation (Berkeley: University of California, 1997), 15.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Quoted in Raymond, ‘Problems and Prospects,’ 232.

interest for explaining state behaviour. The state behaviour that is to be examined in this dissertation is humanitarian intervention. Before we examine the interplay between norms and self-interest with regard to humanitarian intervention, we must first understand what this term means.

### ***Humanitarian Intervention***

The post-cold war era has seen the study of international relations flooded with literature on humanitarian intervention. It seems every scholar worth their salt has deemed it necessary to develop an opinion on the benefits or costs, legitimacy or illegitimacy, moral responsibility or cultural imperialism, self-interest or self-abnegation inherent in attempts by states to intervene in response to grave violations of human rights in other states. This dissertation does not attempt to assess the legality, the morality, or the outcomes of humanitarian intervention. It is also not intended that we will address claims for the emergence of a norm permitting humanitarian intervention in international society. This claim has been thoroughly addressed by many scholars elsewhere.<sup>75</sup> The goal of this

---

<sup>75</sup> Some excellent examples include works by Nicholas Wheeler and Martha Finnemore. For example see Nicholas J. Wheeler, *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Nicholas J. Wheeler, 'Review Article: Humanitarian Intervention after Kosovo: Emergent Norm, Moral Duty or the Coming Anarchy?' *International Affairs*, 77/1: 113-128 (2001); Martha Finnemore, 'Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention,' in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, (New York: Columbia Press, 1996); Martha Finnemore, 'Paradoxes in Humanitarian Intervention,' paper presented to the Symposium on Norms and Ethics of Humanitarian Intervention at the Centre for Global Peace and Conflict Studies, University of California, April 14, 2000, revised September 2000; and Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force* (London: Cornell University Press, 2003). On the related changes in norms of sovereignty and non-intervention, see J. Samuel Barkin and Bruce Cronin, 'The State and the Nation: Changing Norms and the Rules of Sovereignty in International Relations,' *International Organisation*, 48/1: 107-130 (1994); J. Samuel Barkin, 'The Evolution of the Constitution of Sovereignty and the Emergence of Human Rights Norms,' *Journal of International Studies*, 27/2: 229-252

investigation is simple and clear; it aims to assess the extent to which a norm that *prescribes* humanitarian intervention in certain circumstances has emerged in international society and the causal nature and strength of its impact on the behaviour of states. Before we begin this investigation, however, we must have a clear understanding of what we mean by the term, ‘humanitarian intervention.’

Humanitarian intervention can be defined as the use of force by a state or group of states aimed at preventing or ending grave and widespread violations of human rights in another state without the consent of that state. Although a concept of intervention to end violations of human rights can be found as early as the writings of Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century,<sup>76</sup> the doctrine was not established until the early nineteenth century. Since that time norms of humanitarian intervention – and the norms of non-intervention and state sovereignty which in some senses work in opposition to humanitarian norms<sup>77</sup> – have enjoyed periods of strength and periods of weakness.<sup>78</sup>

---

(1998); and Jarat Chopra and Thomas G. Weiss, ‘Sovereignty is No Longer Sacrosanct: Codifying Humanitarian Intervention,’ *Ethics and International Affairs*, 6: 95-117 (1992). The supplementary volume that accompanies the report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty provides an excellent bibliography of literature on humanitarian intervention published prior to mid-2001. Literature is divided up into subject areas and key works are briefly summarised. International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), *Supplementary Volume: Background Research* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001).

<sup>76</sup> Michael Bazylar, ‘Reexamining the Doctrine of Humanitarian Intervention in Light of the Atrocities in Kampuchea and Ethiopia,’ *Stanford Journal of International Law*, 23: 547-619 (1987), p. 571.

<sup>77</sup> Christian Reus-Smit, however, persuasively argues that, rather than antagonistic regimes, sovereignty and human rights should be seen as two normative elements of the inherently contradictory modern discourse of legitimate statehood. Sovereignty is socially constructed and our present day understanding of sovereignty is constituted by human rights norms; the justificatory foundations for state sovereignty are the human rights that states are supposed to protect. Christian Reus-Smit, ‘Human Rights and the Social Construction of Sovereignty,’ *Review of International Studies*, 27: 519-538 (2001). De Almeida contends that, whereas the institutions of sovereign statehood and humanitarian intervention were once in conflict in international society, the relationship now seems to be complementary. Joao Marques de Almeida, ‘Review Article: Pluralists, Solidarists and the Issues of Diversity, Justice and Humanitarianism in World Politics,’ *International Journal of Human Rights*, 7/2: 144-163 (2003).

<sup>78</sup> See Charles W. Kegley Jr., Gregory A. Raymond and Margaret G. Hermann, ‘The Rise and Fall of the Non-intervention Norm: Some Correlates and Potential Consequences,’ *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*

There continues to be ongoing debate amongst scholars regarding the extent to which the doctrine of humanitarian intervention was established under customary international law before the Second World War.<sup>79</sup> There is consensus, however, that the self-interests of states played a primary role in decisions to intervene or to refrain from intervening during this period. Certainly, in some cases, decisions to intervene were dictated at least in part by genuine humanitarian concern for victims of suffering. On each occasion, however, this concern was accompanied by a desire to protect material or strategic interests or to maintain the economic or political status quo. Further, where humanitarian concerns were just as great but economic or political interests were not at stake, intervention often failed to occur.<sup>80</sup>

The intervention of Great Britain, France and Russia in aid of Christian Greek insurgents against the ruling Ottomans in 1827 is commonly cited as the earliest example of humanitarian intervention.<sup>81</sup> The European powers claimed to be concerned that a Christian people were being forcibly absorbed into the Muslim empire, often with great

---

*Journal*, 22: 81-97 (1998); Barkin and Cronin, 'The State and the Nation; and Finnemore, 'Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention.'

<sup>79</sup> Examples arguing that humanitarian intervention was legal in the pre-charter era can be found in the many articles by Richard B. Lillich on the topic including 'Forcible Self-Help by States to Protect Human Rights,' *Iowa Law Review*, 53: 325-351, (1967); and, more recently, Barry M. Benjamin, 'Unilateral Humanitarian Intervention: Legalising the Use of Force to Prevent Human Rights Atrocities,' *Fordham International Law Journal*, 16: 120-158 (1992). Scholars arguing that international law prohibited humanitarian intervention or at least was ambiguous before WWII include Louis Henkin, among whose many articles on the topic, a recent example is 'Kosovo and the Law of "Humanitarian Intervention,"' *The American Journal of International Law*, 93/4: 824-828 (1999); and Simon Chesterman, *Just War or Just Peace? Humanitarian Intervention and International Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>80</sup> Thomas M. Franck and Nigel S. Rodley, 'After Bangladesh: The Law of Humanitarian Intervention by Military Force,' *The American Journal of International Law*, 67: 275-305 (1973), pp. 278-9; and Robert Kolb, 'Note on Humanitarian Intervention,' *International Review of the Red Cross*, 85/849: 119-134 (2003), pp. 122-3.

<sup>81</sup> See for example Bazylar, 'Reexamining the Doctrine of Humanitarian Intervention,' 582; Franck and Rodley, 'After Bangladesh,' 275-305; and, more recently, Simon Chesterman, *Just War or Just Peace?*

cruelty. Indeed there is no reason to doubt this claim. Franck and Rodley insist that ‘the humanitarian motives behind the Concert’s recurrent interventions in Ottoman affairs are probably not to be dismissed as bogus.’<sup>82</sup> Nevertheless, power considerations also played their part in the decision to intervene.<sup>83</sup> While there are other cases of intervention pre-1945 that are considered to be motivated, at least in part, by humanitarian concerns,<sup>84</sup> this period is also littered with interventions that were spuriously justified on humanitarian grounds and which were in fact clearly motivated by imperial desires for expansion. The Japanese, for example, claimed that their invasion of Manchuria enjoyed a humanitarian pretext.<sup>85</sup> Hitler also used the excuse of humanitarian intervention both to annex Czechoslovakia and invade Poland. Writing to British Prime Minister Chamberlain, on September 23, 1938, Hitler contended that ethnic Germans and ‘various nationalities in Czechoslovakia have been maltreated in the unworthiest manner, tortured, economically destroyed and, above all, prevented from realising for themselves also the right of nations to self-determination.’ They were subject to the ‘brutal will to destruction of the Czechs’ who had forced 120,000 refugees to flee the country while the ‘security of more than 3,000,000 human beings’ was at stake.<sup>86</sup> Hitler’s subsequent invasion of Poland was also justified on the grounds that German nationals living in Poland were being mistreated.<sup>87</sup>

During the cold war, states continued to invoke humanitarian claims to justify unilateral intervention. However, the restrictions imposed on the use of force by the UN Charter

---

<sup>82</sup> Franck and Rodley, ‘After Bangladesh,’ 281.

<sup>83</sup> See Chesterman, *Just War or Just Peace?*; and Franck and Rodley, ‘After Bangladesh.’

<sup>84</sup> The French occupation of Syria in 1860-1 and the US intervention in Cuba in 1898 are the two other most commonly cited examples of pre-1945 humanitarian intervention.

<sup>85</sup> Franck and Rodley, ‘After Bangladesh,’ 284.

<sup>86</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 284.

<sup>87</sup> Bazylar, ‘Reexamining the Doctrine of Humanitarian Intervention,’ 584.

and the prevailing norms of international society which had turned hard against a unilateral right of intervention meant that states were careful to also employ justifications that the international community would more readily perceive as legal and legitimate such as that of self-defence. The three most commonly cited examples of humanitarian intervention in the cold war era are the Indian intervention in East Pakistan in 1971, Vietnam's intervention in Pol Pot's Cambodia in 1978-9, and Tanzania's intervention in Idi Amin's Uganda in 1979. Each of these cases, though very different from each other in many ways, provides us with an example of self-interest converging with a need for humanitarian action. While some scholars may suggest that these cases provide evidence of a norm *permitting* humanitarian intervention, and many others would deny such a claim, none would suggest that these interventions evince the existence or strength of a norm *compelling* states to respond to violations of human rights. Indeed the US imposed sanctions on India for a period of time after the intervention in East Pakistan and the response of the international community to Vietnam's overthrow of Pol Pot was even more hostile. Heavy sanctions were imposed on Vietnam, the new government in Phnom Penh was not recognised and the Khmer Rouge retained its seat in the UN General Assembly. Needless to say, these interventions did not occur as a result of felt international obligations.

The interventions that took place in the 1990s were seen by virtually all scholars to enjoy greater legitimacy than earlier cases. The UN Security Council passed resolutions authorising coercion in most of the cases; states intervened multilaterally or at least with the assent of a significant proportion of the international community; and explicitly



humanitarian concerns were recognised as legitimate justification for intervention. As has been noted, there is a great deal of literature arguing for the emergence of a norm permitting humanitarian intervention during this time. The emergence of a prescriptive norm, on the other hand, is another question altogether.

### *Norms, Interests and Humanitarian Intervention*

Distinctions are often made between various types of norms based on four key elements: the nature of their injunction; their content; the strength of their causal impact on state behaviour; and the nature of the functions that they serve.<sup>88</sup> The constitutive and regulative functions of norms have already been discussed. The other three distinctions will now be examined in turn. After identifying the injunction and content of the particular norm which is the focus of the present study, I will discuss how the nature and strength of the functional impact on state behaviour will be investigated in the empirical case studies.

### *Permissive and Prescriptive Norms of Humanitarian Intervention*

An important distinction between types of norms, and one that has been largely overlooked in literature, refers to the nature of the norm's injunction. A great deal of the

---

<sup>88</sup> An excellent overview of the usefulness and inadequacies of various typologies can be found in Raymond, 'Problems and Prospects.'

confusion in the literature regarding norms of humanitarian intervention can be traced to a lack of consideration of the injunctive nature of norms and a conflation of the various terms that describe the normative command. With regard to injunction, a distinction can be made between three types of norms: those that restrict or constrain certain behaviour; those that permit or allow certain behaviour; and those norms that prescribe or require certain behaviour. These norms can be respectively labelled *prohibitive*, *permissive*, and *prescriptive*. Distinguishing between injunctions is of vital importance. In the literature that deals with norms, the three terms (as well as related terms such as ‘proscriptive,’ ‘restrictive’ and ‘enabling’) are often bunched together and their distinct implications are often neglected. Consequently, the terms are employed in ways that do not accurately describe the true nature of a norm’s impact. This neglect of normative typology is an unfortunate feature of the discussion of norms of humanitarian intervention and, as a consequence, this discussion is often confused.

Most scholars acknowledge that different norms impact on states in different ways and a single norm can be distinguished from others based on a number of variables. However, discussion of humanitarian intervention often conflates different types of norms into one or imputes meaning into a norm that it does not possess. It is important to have a clear conception of norms of humanitarian intervention in order to understand what patterns of behaviour they define as acceptable. It is imperative that the distinction between injunctions is understood.

The norm of non-intervention with regard to the sovereign political and territorial integrity of other states that was particularly stressed during the cold war<sup>89</sup> is an example of a *prohibitive* norm. The debate that considers whether the post-cold war world has witnessed the emergence of a norm that legitimates and permits intervention in response to grave violations of human rights is a debate over the existence of a *permissive* norm. Arguments that there exists an emergent norm that compels states or (re)constitutes their interests so that they have a preference for pursuing meaningful responses to human rights violations can be best understood as arguments about a *prescriptive* norm.

In much of the literature regarding humanitarian intervention, permissive and prescriptive norms are confused with one another. It is one thing to say that humanitarian intervention is seen as a legitimate response to human rights violations; it is quite another thing to suggest that states feel obliged or have a (re)defined national interest in favour of responding to these violations. To fully appreciate the difference, it is perhaps helpful to return to our functional typology of regulative and constitutive norms discussed earlier. Both permissive and prescriptive norms of humanitarian intervention can be understood in regulative as well as constitutive senses. Where a certain action is simply *allowed* by a permissive norm, a regulative understanding sees the norm as permitting the action and a constitutive understanding sees the norm as allowing a state to consider the action as one of a range of possible policy choices that may or may not coincide with its national

---

<sup>89</sup> Of course the restrictive impact of the norm and its relationship to the ebbs and flows of political will during this period remains a matter of some debate. Simon Chesterman has recently argued that states have ‘demonstrated their willingness to intervene on any number of dubious bases.’ With regard to humanitarian intervention, Chesterman contends that action, if restricted, was always restricted by a lack of political will rather than the constraints of norms of non-intervention and state sovereignty. Chesterman, *Just War or Just Peace?*

interest. Where a certain action is *prescribed* by a norm, on the other hand, a regulative understanding sees the norm as requiring action and a constitutive understanding sees the norm as shaping and (re)defining the interests of a state so that complicit action is the preferred behaviour. In other words, prescriptive norms do not only allow certain courses of action; these norms do not simply (re)constitute interests so that a certain course of action becomes grouped with a range of legitimate and permitted policy choices. Prescriptive norms can (re)constitute state interests so that norm compliant behaviour is seen as being in the state's interest.

There has been a lack of scholarly attention to prescriptive norms.<sup>90</sup> However, while it is rare for a scholar to describe a norm as prescriptive rather than simply permissive, it is not so rare to find confusing constructivist arguments that describe a norm as permissive but accord it prescriptive qualities. Conflation of permissive and prescriptive norms leads to confusion over the impact of norms of intervention on the behaviour of states.

One scholar who has made a number of important contributions to the discussion of norms of humanitarian intervention is Martha Finnemore. In her early work on the topic, Finnemore emphasised the permissive nature of humanitarian norms. She observed that, while emergent norms appeared to *allow* intervention in response to humanitarian disasters and human rights abuse, these norms did not *require* intervention. The inaction

---

<sup>90</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,' 891.

in response to human rights violations in Burundi and Sudan in the mid-1990s was cited as evidence that the norm was not prescriptive.<sup>91</sup>

However, in this work, Finnemore did not restrict her analysis to the permissive injunctions of humanitarian norms. The scholar asserted that ‘changing norms may change state interests and create new interests.’ An example provided was the emergence of ‘interests in protecting non-European non-Christians.’<sup>92</sup> This assertion dealt not simply with the permission to intervene and the legitimacy of intervention but the change in state preferences so that they now had a perceived interest in intervening. While Finnemore emphasised that humanitarian intervention norms were ‘permissive norms only,’<sup>93</sup> the scholar cited a number of cases that implied a *prescription* to intervene. The two injunctions are quite different. Examining the two without specifically acknowledging their crucial differences leads to confusion. It is unhelpful to label a posited norm which, via interests, *encourages* action as being simply ‘permissive.’

Perhaps the hesitancy in describing a norm as prescriptive rather than simply permissive stems from the knowledge that norms do not necessarily identify actual behaviour; they simply identify what appropriate behaviour ought to be. Finnemore herself notes this. She

---

<sup>91</sup> Finnemore, ‘Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention,’ 181. Michael Barnett and Edward Newman also describe the emergent norm of humanitarian intervention in a permissive sense, suggesting that states see it as a legitimate ‘option.’ Michael N. Barnett, ‘The United Nations and Global Security: The Norm is Mightier than the Sword,’ *Ethics and International Affairs*, 9: 37-54 (1995), p. 50; and Edward Newman, ‘Human Security and Constructivism,’ *International Studies Perspectives*, 2: 239-251 (2001), p. 244. Vincent Auger, on the other hand, implies a prescriptive injunction he speaks of emergent norms that ‘permit or even *demand* humanitarian intervention under certain circumstances (emphasis mine).’ Vincent A. Auger, ‘The Evolution of International Norms: Sovereignty and Intervention in the United Nations,’ paper presented to the 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April 3-6, 2003.

<sup>92</sup> Finnemore, ‘Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention,’ 158.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.

cautions that, while norms shape interests and interests shape actions, ‘neither connection is determinative.’<sup>94</sup> Thus, norms do not prescribe action in the sense that they determine action; factors other than norms may shape interests, and factors other than interests may shape action. By describing a norm as ‘prescriptive,’ scholars may fear that they will be misunderstood as suggesting that the norm dictates how states will behave rather than arguing that the norm simply influences preferences for behaviour.

If our meaning is clear, we need not fear such misunderstanding. A permissive norm of humanitarian intervention may allow and legitimate intervention in response to grave violations of human rights. It is quite different to speak of a norm that serves to reshape state interests towards a preference for such intervention. We must label this norm ‘prescriptive.’ It is acknowledged that this does not imply *actual* state actions but, contra permissive norms, it does suggest appropriate behaviour that *ought* to occur and, as such, through empirical analysis of state compliance with this norm, we can begin to determine its strength.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, in a well known speech to the General Assembly in 1999, referred to a ‘developing international norm in favour of intervention to protect civilians from wholesale slaughter.’ One of the components of this norm was ‘a new commitment to humanitarian action’ and a redefinition of state interests so that ‘the collective interest *is* the national interest.’<sup>95</sup> The Secretary General here is referring to the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention. While much of the debate concerning

---

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Kofi Annan, ‘Speech of the UN Secretary-General to the General Assembly,’ September 20, 1999. <http://www.unis.unvienna.org/unis/pressrels/1999/sg2381.html>

humanitarian intervention has centred upon the conditions under which intervention is appropriate and legitimate – the permissive norm – Annan here suggests that the question of establishing political will to intervene in the absence of material self-interest – the prescriptive norm – is also important.

As mentioned earlier, a number of constructivists and English school theorists have applied themselves to examining the causal relationship between permissive humanitarian norms and humanitarian action. However, by focussing on questions of when, where and why such action is *permitted*, scholars have neglected to develop theoretical explanations for the significant and obvious discrepancies and inconsistencies in humanitarian action that we observe in the world. States do not intervene to prevent human rights violations simply because they are allowed to. By considering when and where humanitarian action is *prescribed*, we can begin to understand why states respond to some grave violations of human rights and not others; by examining the interests that states construct and the obligations that states endure, we can begin to comprehend why they will become meaningfully engaged with one humanitarian crisis while simply trying to contain or even ignore another.

In her most recent book, *The Purpose of Intervention*, Martha Finnemore clarifies her conception of humanitarian intervention norms and implies a distinction between permissive and prescriptive injunctions of humanitarian norms when she notes that ‘states construct rules among themselves about when intervention is *legitimate* or *necessary*.’<sup>96</sup>

---

<sup>96</sup> Emphasis mine. Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention*, 5.

One chapter of her book in particular begins to develop this idea.<sup>97</sup> In this chapter, as in her earlier article, Finnemore argues briefly that contemporary humanitarian intervention cannot be explained by rationalist appeals to material interests; it can only be explained by reference to the changing normative context in which it occurs.<sup>98</sup> She takes her original observation one step further when she replaces her earlier citation of the failure to intervene in Burundi and Sudan with a brief but nuanced analysis of the relevance of the prescriptive norm for understanding the words and actions of the Clinton administration during and after the Rwandan genocide of 1994 despite its failure to prevent or end the atrocities.<sup>99</sup> Finnemore realises that ‘Contemporary humanitarian intervention norms do more than just “allow” intervention.’<sup>100</sup> This idea is the focus of the present dissertation. The present objective is to investigate the nature and strength of the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention. The investigation seeks to examine the extent to which the norm places obligatory pressure on states and reconstitutes interests in favour of intervention.

To examine the prescriptive norm by no means implies that the debate regarding the permissive norm is over. Conjecture over the legitimacy, effectiveness and appropriateness of humanitarian intervention is likely to continue for many years yet.

---

<sup>97</sup> See the chapter, ‘Changing Norms of Intervention,’ in *ibid.*, 52-84. This chapter is based on her earlier article, ‘Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention,’ but the emphasis on humanitarian obligations and (re)constituted interests in favour of intervention has been added in some parts and clarified in others.

<sup>98</sup> However, Finnemore does not support this idea with faultless empirical examples. For example, she suggests that the intervention to reconstruct Cambodia in the early 1990s is an anomaly that rationalists have difficulty explaining (*ibid.*, 55). However, Clinton’s Presidential Decision Directive 25, a directive that emphasized that peacekeeping is an appropriate policy initiative only if it serves American material interests, cited the effort in Cambodia as an example of an operation that ‘served important US national interests.’ *The Clinton Administration’s Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations*, May 1994 (Presidential Decision Directive 25), 2.

<sup>99</sup> Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention*, 79-80.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.



This debate is one in which the academy should remain actively engaged. Moreover, it is clear that the two debates regarding the permissive and the prescriptive injunctions of humanitarian norms are not separate but are interdependent. Doubts about the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention, for example, will obviously mitigate a perceived prescription to intervene.

However, the prescriptive debate is not simply an extension of the permissive debate; it is not a debate that should only begin once the permissive debate is resolved in favour of intervention. The simple reason for this is that, while the permissive debate continues to rage, humanitarian intervention continues to occur. Examination focussed only on the legitimacy and morality of humanitarian intervention cannot, on its own, explain its occurrence. Further, not only does humanitarian intervention continue to occur despite claims by some that it is not permitted, a lack of permission is often not the sole causal explanation for instances where intervention fails to occur. Scholars have shown that it is political will rather than the restrictions imposed by international law and norms of sovereignty and non-intervention that stands in the way of humanitarian action.<sup>101</sup> Kofi Annan agrees: ‘Lack of political will, national interest narrowly defined, and simple indifference too often combine to ensure that nothing is done, or too little and too late.’<sup>102</sup> Regardless of whether it is permitted or otherwise, humanitarian intervention appears to

---

<sup>101</sup> See, for example, Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*; and Chesterman, *Just War or Just Peace?*

<sup>102</sup> Kofi Annan, ‘Secretary General Addresses International Peace Academy Seminar on “The Responsibility to Protect,”’ UN document SG/SM/8125. Elsewhere, Annan has acknowledged that the failure to intervene in Rwanda ‘was driven more by the reluctance of Member States to pay the human and other costs of intervention, and by doubts that the use of force would be successful, than by concerns about sovereignty.’ Quoted in Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 300.

be an enduring phenomenon, and its occurrences, as well as its absences in the face of grave violations of human rights, need to be explained.

Rather than one superseding the other, therefore, the debates about permissive and prescriptive humanitarian norms can and should occur concurrently. There is no reason why the debate over whether states are *allowed* to intervene must be settled before we examine *why* they intervene or fail to intervene.<sup>103</sup>

Realising that political will is often a greater impediment to humanitarian action than international law, some scholars and practitioners have already tried to shift the focus of debate about intervention from permission to prescription; from the rights of states to their responsibilities. The International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), for example, has recommended shifting the terms of the debate from ‘the right to intervene’ to ‘the responsibility to protect.’<sup>104</sup> There is certainly value in the ICISS project exhorting states to recognise their supposed responsibilities as members of the international community. There is also value in investigating the extent to which an acceptance of these responsibilities has already occurred. By understanding the felt obligations and desires of decision makers, by comprehending the pushes and pulls of

---

<sup>103</sup> Moreover, some scholars have noted that the pluralist/solidarist debate within the English school which has often focussed on the permissive norm of intervention appears to have reached an impasse for the present time. See Bellamy, ‘Humanitarian Intervention and the Three Traditions; and Alex Bellamy, ‘Power Rules and Argument: New Approaches to Humanitarian Intervention,’ *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 57/3: 499-512 (2003). Christian Reus-Smit maintains that we are unable to resolve the pluralist/solidarist dichotomy because the debate itself is inherently flawed. Reus-Smit, ‘Imagining Society.’

<sup>104</sup> International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), *The Responsibility to Protect* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001), 17.

norms and interests and the interplay between the two, we can understand why states intervene and fail to intervene.

### *The Content of the Prescriptive Norm of Humanitarian Intervention*

Another key element that distinguishes between norms regards the content of the norm. It is obvious that we must consider what the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention actually prescribes. There is a widening range of internationally agreed norms regarding the rights violations that humanitarian intervention seeks to prevent. The most important of these is the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (adopted by Resolution 260 (III) A of the UN General Assembly, 1948).

Article I of the Genocide Convention provides: ‘The Contracting Parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they *undertake to prevent and punish*.’<sup>105</sup> Article II defines genocide as any of a list of five acts ‘committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.’<sup>106</sup> The broad acceptance of the Convention in international society is signalled by the fact that 133 states have ratified it. Nevertheless it should be acknowledged that what actually constitutes genocide remains a

---

<sup>105</sup> Emphasis mine.

<sup>106</sup> These five genocidal acts are listed in Chapter Two.

contested concept in literature. The extent to which a finding of genocide places a legal obligation upon signatory states to intervene also remains a matter of some debate.<sup>107</sup>

While the minutiae of genocide are debated, it can be argued that opposition to the act of genocide is not only codified in conventions, it is a universal reality. Henry Shue notes that, while the world remains divided by nationality, religion and ideology in many areas, ‘even the wildest enthusiasts for prescriptive relativism usually cannot bring themselves to...advocate toleration for sincerely felt genocidal impulse.’<sup>108</sup> There is a large body of scholarship arguing that there is agreement on the morality of humanitarian action amongst all significant cultural and religious perspectives. While divergence can certainly be found regarding specific rights found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), there is agreement on the right of all individuals to a life free from murder and deliberate harm. There can be found persuasive arguments that these human rights are not a Western invention or Christian imperial impositions but principles which can be found in Islam,<sup>109</sup> Judaism,<sup>110</sup> traditional Asian values<sup>111</sup> and traditional African

---

<sup>107</sup> See the concluding chapter of this dissertation as well as Scott Straus, ‘Contested Meanings and Conflicting Imperatives: A Conceptual Analysis of Genocide,’ *Journal of Genocide Research*, 3/3: 349-375 (2001); Jeffrey S. Morton and Neil Vijay Singh, ‘The International Legal Regime on Genocide,’ *Journal of Genocide Research*, 5/1: 47-69 (2003); and Vaughn P. Shannon, ‘Judge and Executioner: The Politics of Responding to Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans’ (Forthcoming).

<sup>108</sup> Henry Shue, ‘Let Whatever is Smouldering Erupt? Conditional Sovereignty, Reviewable Intervention and Rwanda 1994,’ in A. J. Paolini, A. P. Jarvis and C. Reus-Smit (eds.), *Between Sovereignty and Global Governance* (London: MacMillan, 1998), 63.

<sup>109</sup> See for example, Oliver P. Ramsbotham, ‘Islam, Christianity, and Forcible Intervention,’ *Ethics and International Affairs*, 12: 81–102 (1998).

<sup>110</sup> See Michael Walzer, ‘Universalism and Jewish Values,’ 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Morgenthau Memorial Lecture on Ethics and Foreign Policy, (Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs, 2001).

<sup>111</sup> See Amartya Sen, ‘Human Rights and Asian Values,’ 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Morgenthau Memorial Lecture on Ethics and Foreign Policy (Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs, 1997).

societies.<sup>112</sup> Claims to the contrary are most often made by states with a desire for protection from outside scrutiny and condemnation. Michael Ignatieff reminds us that ‘All nations formally accept that torture, rape, massacre and forcible expulsion are violations of international humanitarian law.’<sup>113</sup> It should be noted that wide agreement on the morality of humanitarian action in response to rights violations does not prove that such action is moral. The point to be made is simply that such action is *accepted* as being an appropriate moral response. But what are the implications of this acceptance? This dissertation examines the extent to which forcible intervention is the expected and appropriate behaviour of states to grave violations of human rights. This requires examination of the strength of the norm prescribing intervention.

### *The Strength of the Prescriptive Norm of Humanitarian Intervention*

The final key feature that distinguishes norms from each other is the strength of their causal impact on state behaviour. The present study aims to investigate the strength of the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention. In order to assess this strength, we must first address three foundational and methodological issues. Firstly, we must be clear

---

<sup>112</sup> See Francis Deng, ‘Universal Morality,’ In Kenneth M. Jensen and Elizabeth P. Faulkner (eds.), *Morality and Foreign Policy: Realpolitik Revisited* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1991). For a discussion of divergent moral traditions that notes both the divergent foundations and the convergent practices and conventions, see David A. Welch, ‘Can We Think Systematically About Ethics and Statecraft?’ *Ethics and International Affairs*, 8: 23-37 (1994).

<sup>113</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond* (London: Vintage, 2000), 82-3.

about the reasons why a norm may impact on the behaviour of a state. Secondly, we must adopt a methodology for determining the functional nature and the strength of a norm through examination of its impact on state behaviour. Finally, acknowledging that norms and self-interests are not always antithetical explanations of state behaviour, we must address the need to control for self-interest while examining the impacts of a norm.

### *Why do Norms Impact on States?*

Neta Crawford persuasively argues that the role of practical reason and the importance of beliefs rooted in culture can explain much foreign policy decision making. Crawford insists that norms impact on states via the content of arguments and the processes of reason. Her ‘argument about arguments’ is crystalised thus:

The content of world politics is found in particular beliefs, and the process of politics is shaped by the arguments and beliefs of everyday discourse, public political rhetoric, legislation, court proceedings, and private memos. In turn, the process of argument and the content of beliefs are institutionalised in practices – organisational routines and knowledge-making processes – that are part of the cultural environments of domestic and world politics.<sup>114</sup>

Argument and reason shape the content of politics in specific ways. One of these ways is the impact of normative belief on the conscience of state decision makers. The moral or

---

<sup>114</sup> Crawford, *Argument and Change*, 9-10.

ethical implications of a norm may weigh on a leader's conscience and, especially in periods of relative international stability, the range of foreign policy decisions in which conscience-based motivations can potentially come into play becomes quite large.<sup>115</sup> Jon Elster suggests that there is mounting evidence from research that norms 'are sustained by the feelings of embarrassment, anxiety, guilt and shame that a person suffers at the prospect of violating them, or at least of being caught violating them.'<sup>116</sup> These normative beliefs can affect not only the statesman but all officials involved in the decision making process. These beliefs can determine policy outcomes.

Beyond the beliefs of statesmen, a key element of an examination of the impact of a norm is the analysis of domestic decision making processes. Norms clearly have different impacts on different states. The impacts of international norms cannot be understood without recognising that the domestic politics of a state plays an important role in its decision to comply with or violate the norm. Finnemore and Sikkink caution us to understand the domestic processes behind reactions to norms while not ignoring the 'large overall shifts in the global normative fabric.'<sup>117</sup> A key player in the decision making process can be the 'norm entrepreneur.'<sup>118</sup> If a statesman is not convicted of a particular normative belief, senior officials can act as norm entrepreneurs and forge new directions for government policy. Finnemore and Sikkink suggest that, rather than appearing out of thin air, norms are 'actively built by agents having strong notions about

---

<sup>115</sup> Robert W. McElroy, Robert W., *Morality and American Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 40-3.

<sup>116</sup> Quoted in Raymond, 'Problems and Prospects,' 234.

<sup>117</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, 'Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program,' 398.

<sup>118</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,' 896-899; and Checkel, 'International Norms and Domestic Politics.'

appropriate or desirable behaviour in their community.’<sup>119</sup> Norm entrepreneurs frame issues in new ways and adopt different ways of talking about them. In constructing their frames, however, ‘they face firmly embedded alternative norms and frames that create alternative perceptions of both appropriateness and interest.’<sup>120</sup>

A related causal mechanism that weighs on the decision making process is domestic public opinion and the impact of societal interest groups. Robert McElroy suggests that there are two key avenues for domestic influence on state leaders. These are the requirement to maintain ‘policy legitimacy’ and the desire to retain popularity either because of electoral considerations or a concern for one’s reputation in history.<sup>121</sup> A further causal mechanism comes from outside the state. Reputational pressures from the international community, including both other states and NGOs, can compel or at least influence a state towards adopting a norm observant course of action.<sup>122</sup>

The empirical studies in the present dissertation provide examples of each of these causal mechanisms of norms impacting on foreign policy decisions: policy decisions will be affected by the conscience of American Presidents and concern for their own reputation; decision making processes will be influenced by the normative beliefs of senior policy officials; norm entrepreneurs will forge new directions in foreign policy; and domestic and international influences will pressure states towards norm compliance.

---

<sup>119</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, ‘International Norm Dynamics,’ 896.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 897.

<sup>121</sup> McElroy, *Morality and American Foreign Policy*, 43-6.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 46. See also Raymond, ‘Problems and Prospects,’ 216; and Finnemore, ‘Paradoxes of Humanitarian Intervention,’ 6.



### *Methodological Challenges Faced in Determining the Strength of a Norm*

Christian Reus-Smit informs us that early constructivists insisted on an interpretive methodology requiring scholars to grasp the relationship between ‘intersubjective meanings’ which ‘derive from self-interpretation and self-definition, and the social practices in which they are embedded and which they constitute.’<sup>123</sup> More recently, however, ‘methodological conventionalists,’ driven by a desire for concrete empirical analysis, have claimed that their constructivist explanations for state behaviour do not need to depend upon ‘any special interpretive methodology.’<sup>124</sup> Explanatory arguments, they claim, need not assume any special causal imagery. Norms are invoked as affecting the interests that inform policy choices. Where ‘constitutive processes’ of identity formation are discussed, the analytic problem concerns the shape of identities that inform interests. While this is a theoretical development that the rationalist perspective overlooks, it is not a methodological development.<sup>125</sup> This positivist, pragmatic approach to research into norms is the approach taken in the present investigation. The investigation into the nature and strength of the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention, found in the following chapters, is grounded in concrete empirical research and the methodology employed is recognisably conventional. Through empirical examination of decision making processes, this study will seek to recognise the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention, establish how it matters and determine how much it matters relative to other factors.

---

<sup>123</sup> Reus-Smit, ‘Imagining Society,’ 495.

<sup>124</sup> Jepperson et al., ‘Norms, Identity and Culture,’ 67. See also Reus-Smit, ‘Imagining Society,’ 495-6.

<sup>125</sup> Jepperson et al., ‘Norms, Identity and Culture,’ 65-8.

Jeffrey Checkel charges that much constructivist work is 'plagued' with 'empirical ad hocism.'<sup>126</sup> To avoid drawing dubious conclusions, we must be sure of our techniques for identifying and examining norms. Checkel suggests that, for a norm to exist, 'it must embody clear prescriptions, which provide guidance to agents as they develop preferences and interests on an issue.'<sup>127</sup> But how do we discover these clear prescriptions? International charters and treaties as well as decisions of international legal bodies can provide us with evidence of norms. I have already noted the widespread ratification of the Convention on Genocide. However, codification of a norm does not necessarily tell us anything about the likely compliance of states. Moreover, many norms are not formalised or codified by states and can only be recognised by examination of other indirect evidence. Because norms, by definition, are intersubjective, evidence for them can be found in patterns of behaviour amongst states. However, to focus on patterns of state action alone would limit our examination to norms that states have already agreed to comply with.<sup>128</sup> Once compliance with a norm becomes a pattern, the norm is already fairly strong. Often, weaker norms cannot be observed through patterns of behaviour. Thus, the other prime source of evidence for norms must be found in the discourse of state decision makers regarding a particular behaviour.

This discourse refers both to the confidential communications between senior decision makers and the public justifications for state behaviour. The internalisation of a norm can

---

<sup>126</sup> Checkel, 'The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory,' 325.

<sup>127</sup> Jeffrey T. Checkel, 'Why Comply? Social Norms Learning and European Identity Change,' *International Organisation*, 55/3: 553-88 (2001), p. 583.

<sup>128</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,' 892; and Bjorkdahl, 'Norms in International Relations,' 13.

be traced through the trails of communication between decision makers. Private memos and correspondence often only come to light years after the events occur but they represent valuable evidence for the nature and strength of norms. Public justifications are also of key importance. Martha Finnemore suggests that when states justify intervention, this is 'literally an attempt to connect one's actions to standards of appropriate and acceptable behaviour. Thus through an examination of justifications we can begin to piece together what those internationally held standards are and how they may change over time.'<sup>129</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink suggest that the example of the explanations of the United States for its continued use of land mines in South Korea reveals that it recognises an emerging norm against the use of such mines though it continues to violate the norm. If there was no such norm, they observe, no explanation would be necessary.<sup>130</sup>

Gregory Raymond suggests that norms vary with regard to 'communal meaning, perlocutionary effect, degree of internalisation, extent of conformity, patterns of deviance, and so on.'<sup>131</sup> Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein contend that norm strength varies along a continuum from mere discursive receptivity, through contested models, to reconstructed 'common wisdom.'<sup>132</sup> The strength of a norm relates to the question of when and where a norm will impact on states and what kind of impact it will have. The process of recognising a norm and determining its strength is difficult but possible. We can gauge the nature and strength of a norm by examining the degree to which it is evident in discourse, encoded in institutions and implemented in policies.

---

<sup>129</sup> Finnemore, 'Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention,' 159.

<sup>130</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,' 892.

<sup>131</sup> Raymond, 'Problems and Prospects,' 89.

<sup>132</sup> Jepperson et al., 'Norms, Identity and Culture,' 55.

Some scholars are sceptical of the value of discourse analysis.<sup>133</sup> In particular, they are sceptical of the potential for a causal relationship between norms and behaviours to be uncovered by simply taking statesmen at their word. While discourse analysis cannot establish a causal relationship on its own, analysis of both internal trails of communication and public justifications for behaviours provides valuable insight into the impact of a norm. Analysis of private memos and discussions serves to demonstrate which norms and preferences impact on the policy decisions that are made. We must be more careful when we examine the public arguments and justifications of these policy choices. While realists charge that international rules are instruments that states manipulate in their self-interest, English school scholars have long argued that these rules are not infinitely malleable. Hedley Bull, for example, argues that the public justifications for action that states provide indicate that ‘they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another.’<sup>134</sup> The legitimations for action that states provide, therefore, cannot be groundless rationalisations but are open to debate in international society. Further, if a state chooses to justify action on a particular ground, this circumscribes the range of policies and means available to the state in undertaking this action. States are compelled to appeal not to self-interest but shared rules and norms and are then bound by their own justifications.<sup>135</sup>

---

<sup>133</sup> For an interrogation of this critique, see Vaitla Srinivas, *Norms and Interests of Humanitarian Interventions*, M.A. Dissertation (The American University, 2002).

<sup>134</sup> Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 13.

<sup>135</sup> For an excellent discussion of these ideas, see Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 1-26. In his book, Wheeler finds evidence of the permissive norm of humanitarian intervention in the discourse of statesmen. Goertz and Diehl find the same regarding decolonisation norms. Gary Goertz and Paul F. Diehl, ‘Towards a Theory of International Norms: Some Conceptual and Measurement Issues,’ *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 36: 634-664 (1992). Similarly, Checkel finds appeals to norms of Europeanisation in the words of decision makers. Jeffrey Checkel, ‘Norms, Institutions, and National Identity in Contemporary Europe,’

Of course there are exceptions. While discourse analysis is a valuable method for determining the beliefs and motivations of decision makers, we must not be fooled by rhetoric. We must recognise that actions can be publicly justified under the guise of ‘humanitarian concern’ which are in fact motivated by self-interest. Where they are to be found, we must discover concealed self-interests that can more adequately explain inconsistency and selective action. We must not only look at the words of decision makers but the actions that accompany these words, and we must endeavour to recognize when statesmen abuse language and disguise their true motivations. Adolf Hitler professed to British Prime Minister Chamberlain an interest in aiding ethnic Germans and various nationalities in Czechoslovakia in ‘realising for themselves...the right of nations to self-determination.’<sup>136</sup> Knowing the real interests behind Hitler’s annexation of Czechoslovakia, we know that we must be careful not to too readily accept the claims of statesmen more recently who may claim a national interest in humanitarian action but whose selective and inconsistent policies reveal a more complex web of interests. We must endeavour to control for self-interest.

### *Controlling for Self-Interest*

---

*International Studies Quarterly*, 43/1: 83-114 (1999). See also Carola Weil. *People vs. Borders: Competing International Norms of Protection in Complex Humanitarian Emergencies (Rwanda)*, Ph.D. Dissertation (University of Maryland College Park, 2003), 2-3.

<sup>136</sup> Quoted from a letter written on September 23, 1938, in Franck and Rodley, ‘After Bangladesh,’ 284.

Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein contend that there is no necessary relationship between rationalism and constructivism. Constructivism can either compete with or complement rationalism depending on the empirical findings.<sup>137</sup> More specifically, norms and self-interests are not always antithetical explanations of state behaviour. There is nothing mutually exclusive about calculations of self-interest and awareness of social constraints and requirements. If we treat them as competing explanations for state behaviour, Martha Finnemore suggests, we ignore the 'potentially more interesting question of how (self-interest and norms) are intertwined and interdependent.'<sup>138</sup> Sometimes norms and self-interests conflict; sometimes they can interact in quite a complementary fashion. We will deal with the former first, then the latter.

On occasions, self-interest would see the state pursue one action while the prevailing norms suggest another. In this situation, the state can choose to act in its self-interest or comply with norms or to pursue a mixture of the two. Sometimes norms will constrain self-interest and sometimes self-interest will constrain norms.<sup>139</sup> It is rarely disputed that norms can constrain the pursuit of self-interest. Well known case studies in the emerging constructivist canon that identify norm influenced state action which cannot be readily explained by reference to the self-interest of states have already been cited. At the same time, it is undeniable that not all norms constrain the self-interests of all states all the time and to the same degree. That is why we speak of strong and weak norms. When the perceived self-interest of states comes into conflict with the expectations of the

---

<sup>137</sup> Jepperson et al., 'Norms, Identity and Culture,' 68.

<sup>138</sup> Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention*, 16.

<sup>139</sup> Raymond, 'Problems and Prospects,' 233.

appropriate behaviour of states, we enter what Vaughn Shannon calls ‘a grey area where norm violations may occur.’<sup>140</sup>

Shannon suggests (in a clever reference to Alexander Wendt’s classic constructivist article, ‘Anarchy is What States Make of It’) that ‘norms are what states make of them.’<sup>141</sup> He and others have observed that states are able to manipulate the empirical facts of a case and its salient normative issues in order to present violation of a norm as socially acceptable.<sup>142</sup> He suggests that, when norms and self-interests conflict, a choice is made and that choice is made easier or harder by the clarity and strength of the norm and the clarity of the situation.

On other occasions the dictates of self-interest and norms coincide and the state can be expected to pursue the course of action that both self-interest and norms suggest. In these instances, the causal explanatory power of the norm in question may not be readily discernable. Correlation is not causation. When examining the strength of a norm, we must be careful to only credit the norm with behaviours to which it helped cause. In other words, we should not credit state actions to the impact of a norm if they can be better explained by other factors.<sup>143</sup> In addition, where a norm *has* impacted on states’ policies, we must still consider the impact of conjunctive factors as this helps us in our assessment of when and where particular norms matter.

---

<sup>140</sup> Shannon, ‘Norms Are What States Make of Them,’ 300.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> While Shannon focuses on how decision makers can manipulate ambiguous situations, Alex Bellamy describes how decision makers can emphasise particular normative issues in order to justify a certain course of action. Alex Bellamy, ‘Humanitarian Intervention and the Three Traditions,’ *Global Society*, 17/1: 3-20 (2003), pp. 7-9.

<sup>143</sup> Legro, ‘Which Norms Matter?’ 34.

Regardless of whether a norm and a state's self-interest are conflicting or complementary, therefore, the scholar must control for self-interest when determining the strength of a norm. This requirement poses what Gregory Raymond calls 'a daunting methodological challenge.'<sup>144</sup> Constructivists have been criticised for employing flawed methodology in which the causal effects of norms are implied and assumed rather than ascertained empirically.<sup>145</sup> Neta Crawford observes that rational actor theorists can easily fall into the same trap by assuming that actors will rationally pursue their own self-interest.<sup>146</sup> This dissertation acknowledges the difficulties inherent in each approach and attempts to overcome them by consciously considering the impact of self-interest while investigating the nature and strength of the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention.

This is by no means straightforward. As Shannon suggests, statesmen frame the empirical facts of a situation in order to legitimize inaction in response to grave violations of human rights. The ability to deny, justify, or excuse norm violation depends on the clarity and strength of the norm and the ambiguity of the situation. In other words, violation of a norm may be motivated by self-interest, but it is made possible by the nature and strength of the norm and the circumstances, 'which conditions one's ability to define a situation in a way that allows socially accepted violation.'<sup>147</sup> Also, as Alex Bellamy suggests, decision makers frame the normative issues at stake in a manner which makes

---

<sup>144</sup> Raymond, 'Problems and Prospects,' 233.

<sup>145</sup> Bjorkdahl, 'Norms in International Relations,' 12.

<sup>146</sup> Crawford, *Argument and Change*, 125.

<sup>147</sup> Shannon, 'Norms Are What States Make of Them,' 300.



intervention or a failure to intervene socially acceptable.<sup>148</sup> Where they wish to justify intervention, statesmen emphasise solidarist values arguing that there is agreement on what constitutes a supreme humanitarian emergency, on the importance of human rights, and on the rules governing the use of force in international society. Where they wish to excuse violation of the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention, statesmen appeal to pluralist concerns regarding the sanctity of the sovereign state and the need to preserve international order by protecting the integrity of the norm of non-intervention in international society. Snyder, Bruck and Sapin refer to the human choices that must be made when self-interest and norms conflict as ‘the art of combining the desirable and the justifiable.’<sup>149</sup> The performance of this art with regard to humanitarian intervention at the very least demonstrates the substance of the prescriptive norm in a regulative sense. The difficulty that decision makers face in justifying violation of the norm by performing this art speaks to the strength of the norm.

If a state professes an intention or desire to act a certain way then it is important that we examine the extent to which this is borne out in the state’s behaviour. The strength of the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention can be evinced by the extent to which a state makes a meaningful commitment of human and economic resources to support its verbal claims. Further, the means employed by the intervening state can enlighten us to whether humanitarian norms have reconstituted the state’s interest in a meaningful way or whether the state merely wishes to appear to its constituents or the international community to be ‘doing something.’ However a complete assessment of the outcomes of

---

<sup>148</sup> Bellamy, ‘Humanitarian Intervention and the Three Traditions,’ 7-9.

<sup>149</sup> Quoted in Shannon, ‘Norms Are What States Make of Them,’ 298.

intervention is not necessary for us to judge the strength of a prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention. The strength of the norm is not necessarily reflected in the outcomes of state action in response to the norm. 'Humanitarian' principles can be applied with less than humanitarian outcomes even when the motives are pure and the desires of actors are honourable. For example, there is a growing body of literature that criticises states and NGOs for prolonging or increasing the suffering of victims of war through humanitarian action. NGO policies of neutrality and impartiality have resulted in inadequate responses to barbarous and complex conflicts in recent years. The International Committee of the Red Cross, in particular, has been condemned for prolonging wars by 'feeding the criminals'; resourcing both sides of a conflict so that they can continue to kill each other; and even opening itself to the manipulation of aggressors and becoming inadvertently complicit in ethnic cleansing.<sup>150</sup> Nevertheless, while the outcomes of intervention may not equate to the intentions of the intervenors, the extent to which a state makes a meaningful commitment of human and economic resources is an important indicator of the nature and strength of the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention.

### ***To Investigate the Prescriptive Norm of Humanitarian Intervention***

---

<sup>150</sup> For an excellent critique of the global aid industry, see Fiona Terry, *Condemned to Repeat? The Paradox of Humanitarian Action* (London: Cornell University Press, 2002). For an analysis of the moral dilemma posed by the ICRC's policy of neutrality see Michael Ignatieff, 'The Warrior's Honor,' in *The Warrior's Honor* (London: Vintage, 1998), 109-163. See also Thomas G. Weiss, 'Principles, Politics, and Humanitarian Action,' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 13: 1-22 (1999) and the reply from Joelle Tanguy and Fiona Terry, 'Humanitarian Responsibility and Committed Action,' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 13: 29-34 (1999).

The central objective of this dissertation is to observe the extent to which the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention became embedded, internalised and institutionalised in US foreign policy in the 1990s. It is hoped that this investigation may make an important contribution to the study of humanitarian norms. While many scholars have examined related norms and others have hinted at the qualities of this norm,<sup>151</sup> it is difficult to find any detailed examination of the prescriptive norm of intervention. This study will require assessing both the strength of the norm and the function that it performs – whether it (re)constitutes the actors and their interests or merely regulates their behaviour. The methodological challenges that have been discussed above can be met, to some degree, by an examination of several case studies. It is plausible that, from an examination of a number of case studies, we could begin to draw some conclusions regarding the strength and impact of the norm by observing the interplay between the norm and the perceived self-interest of the United States over time. We can consider the reasons for compliance in some situations and violation in others from the perspective of the self-interest of the state in relation to each case. Great care is required in tracing the causal relations of norms and behaviours through particular cases.

For the purposes of the present investigation, it is important that we limit our study to the actions and behaviours of just one state. It is accepted that, by their very nature,

---

<sup>151</sup> Hermann and Shannon, for example, have conducted a similar study that finds a robust prescriptive norm of non-intervention whose violation states are prepared to punish. Richard K. Herrmann and Vaughn P. Shannon, 'Defending International Norms: The Role of Obligation, Material Interest, and Perception in Decision Making,' *International Organization*, 55/3: 621-654 (2001). Brian Frederking analyses how the international community collectively punishes states that break the rules and norms of international society with particular reference to the Kosovar intervention. Brian Frederking, 'Constructing Collective Security in Kosovo,' [http://www.class.uidaho.edu/martin\\_archives/Kosovo.htm](http://www.class.uidaho.edu/martin_archives/Kosovo.htm). Both of these articles focus on how the international community responds to norm violation. The present dissertation looks at whether the international community's response to violation of norms of human rights has emerged as a prescriptive norm in its own right.

international norms impact on many states rather than just one. However, it is also acknowledged that norms will impact on various states in various ways. Indeed, it has been suggested that this reality provides potentially fruitful data for discussion in the science of comparative politics.<sup>152</sup> Consequently, in order to control for as many variables as possible, only one state will be considered. While self-interest may vary from situation to situation and evolve over time, the reasons for variation and evolution will be more readily discernable than were we to consider the impact of the norm upon a number of states.

There are a number of reasons for choosing to focus on the United States. One reason is that the US possesses an unusually great capacity to adhere to the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention and put an end to grave violations of human rights especially with the end of bi-polar tensions that prevailed during the cold war. In addition, the post-cold war period saw the US crucially involved in several key cases of intervention within a period of only a few years. We are able to closely observe the interplay between self-interest and norms with regard to these different cases. Further, the ready availability of primary sources and the attention given to the motives, justifications and behaviour of the US in recent scholarship makes it an ideal object of investigation. Finally, as hegemon, the US is enormously influential. As Kegley and Raymond suggest, 'When the reigning hegemon promotes a new set of norms, the code of conduct changes for virtually

---

<sup>152</sup> See, for example, Finnemore and Sikkink, 'Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program.'

everyone. What the strongest do eventually defines what everybody should do, and when that practice becomes common, it tends to take on an aura of obligation.’<sup>153</sup>

It is recognised that the US is by no means a typical state, if there is such a thing, and as such, the conclusions that we reach regarding the impact of norms on the US cannot necessarily be attributed to all, if any, other states. Ted Hopf observes that interests are a product of identity and, consequently, having the identity of a ‘great power’ implies a set of interests different from those of, say, a ‘European Union member.’<sup>154</sup> Nevertheless, the leadership, power and significance of the US in the international system today means that the usefulness of any conclusions we are able to draw from our investigation should not be underestimated simply because the study is limited to one state. The United States is a powerful and influential state whose response to present and future grave violations of human rights will continue to be a crucial feature of international relations.

### *Competing Theoretical Explanations for Intervention*

Historical research must be informed by theory so that we can identify the mechanisms responsible for producing causation between variables.<sup>155</sup> Only by acknowledging the competing explanations for state actions produced by leading theories can we begin to

---

<sup>153</sup> Charles W. Kegley Jr. and Gregory A. Raymond, ‘Global Terrorism and Military Preemption: Policy Problems and Normative Perils,’ *International Politics*, 41: 37-49 (2004), p. 41.

<sup>154</sup> Hopf, ‘The Promise of Constructivism,’ 176. See also Crawford, *Argument and Change*, 42.

<sup>155</sup> Farrell, ‘Constructivist Security Studies,’ 62.

show how a norm that we cannot directly observe shapes the behaviours that we can observe.

A weakness of the rationalist or, more particularly, the realist argument with regard to humanitarian intervention is that it underestimates the impact of humanitarian norms on state behaviour. Scholars who refuse to acknowledge the impact of norms are unable to explain the increase in the occurrence of humanitarian intervention since the end of the cold war. Many realists will reply that humanitarian action can be explained by the presence of vital material interests. However, Michael J. Smith observes that these are the same realists that criticise humanitarian action on the ground that states have no business risking the lives of their soldiers or aid workers to save strangers. These arguments can be seen to be self-contradictory. If states are presumed to only engage in humanitarian action to defend or advance their interests, then questions regarding the legitimacy of risking soldiers' lives to save strangers should never arise.<sup>156</sup> By criticising humanitarian action, realists acknowledge that it occurs without prudent regard for self-interest, but their constructed understanding of international relations does not offer them an alternative explanation.

A weakness of the constructivist argument with regard to norms of humanitarian intervention is that it too readily discounts questions of self-interest when pointing to the explanatory power of norms. Martha Finnemore, for example, suggests that it was the absence of humanitarian norms that precluded interventions by the United States in response to the massacres of indigenous peoples in Guatemala in the 1980s and political

---

<sup>156</sup> Michael J. Smith, 'Ethics and Intervention,' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 3: 1-26 (1989), pp. 6-9.

‘disappearances’ in Argentina and Chile during the 1970s.<sup>157</sup> However, this explanation seems insufficient as we are then unable to explain the United States’ decision to intervene in Grenada in 1983. These cases can be more adequately explained by consideration not only of norms but of interests. Intervention failed to occur in Guatemala, Argentina and Chile in the absence of both a norm of humanitarian intervention and a conceived self-interest for intervening. Intervention occurred in Grenada in spite of the absence of a norm of humanitarian intervention because the US conceived that its self-interest warranted such action. In a recent examination of many cases of intervention in the last 200 years, Simon Chesterman argues that responses to human rights violations are rarely impeded by consideration of the norm of non-intervention or the absence of a norm of humanitarian intervention. Inadequate responses to suffering can almost always be traced to the absence of political will.<sup>158</sup>

Finnemore also criticises traditional security analyses of intervention since the end of the cold war which explain the interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo as a response to ‘the need to protect NATO’s credibility and maintain stability in Europe.’ Finnemore makes the valuable suggestion that to focus on questions of security alone ignores the emerging nature of ‘humanitarianism’ as an interest of states.<sup>159</sup> However, the empirical studies in the present dissertation show that these security motivations *were* powerful determinants impacting on decisions to intervene. While constructivists are right to emphasise emergent humanitarian interests, an understanding of the interplay of these interests with traditional material self-interests such as security and regional stability is crucial if we are

---

<sup>157</sup> Finnemore, ‘Paradoxes in Humanitarian Intervention,’ 4.

<sup>158</sup> Chesterman, *Just War or Just Peace?*

<sup>159</sup> Finnemore, ‘Paradoxes in Humanitarian Intervention,’ 1.

to explain not only those cases where intervention takes place but those where it fails to occur.

As Vaughn Shannon suggests, ‘norms are what states make of them.’<sup>160</sup> They are not as powerful as some constructivists contend yet they are not as weak as some rationalists would argue. ‘Actors feel both obligated to conform to societal expectations and compelled to pursue individual (or national) drives.’<sup>161</sup> The reluctance of some rationalists to accept the impact that norms have on the behaviour of states and the tendency of constructivists to over-emphasise this impact can lead to a debate in which neither side considers each other’s quite valid arguments. This dissertation attempts to draw the two arguments together. It is only through a sympathetic consideration of arguments for the explanatory power of both self-interest and norms on state behaviour that we can begin to understand, on one hand, why states today sometimes construct a national interest in favour of intervening in response to grave violations of human rights where these crimes would once have been ignored, and, on the other hand, why these same states still ignore comparable violations of human rights in other parts of the world.

#### *A Final Note about the Empirical Investigation*

The case studies in this dissertation include examples of both compliance and violation of the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention by the administrations of Presidents

---

<sup>160</sup> Shannon, ‘Norms Are What States Make of Them.’

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 294.



George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton. An important point to note is that the word ‘violation’ should not imply a particular moral or ethical assessment of the actions of these decision makers. This is not to say that moral assessment of decisions to intervene, or of the failure to intervene, is inappropriate or impossible. It is simply beyond the scope of this investigation. A norm is a construction of international society which may not necessarily accord with conceptions of universal morality. ‘Bad’ norms of xenophobia and violent nationalism can emerge as readily as ‘good’ norms of anti-slavery and nuclear restraint.<sup>162</sup> There is no reason, therefore, to assume that ‘violation’ of a norm is either immoral or moral. Indeed, the ‘morality’ or desirability of compliance with the norm that prescribes intervention is the subject of ongoing debate between realists and so called liberal internationalists.<sup>163</sup> Further, the debate regarding the primacy of order or justice between pluralists and solidarists, as first described by Hedley Bull,<sup>164</sup> today often focuses on the interplay between complementary pluralist norms and institutions of sovereignty, non-intervention, diplomacy, and territorial boundaries and the challenge posed by solidarist norms of human rights and humanitarian intervention.<sup>165</sup> It is

---

<sup>162</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink suggest that, to some extent, the constructivist focus on ‘nice’ norms has been an inevitable product of the engagement with neorealist and neoliberal theories that tended to understand state interests consistently as selfish. The constructivist attempt to combat these rationalist theories led to a search for social construction projects that these dominant theories could not explain. Thus, the explanatory power of ‘nice’ norms was explored to explain state actions that were not necessarily products of egoism. Finnemore and Sikkink, ‘Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program,’ 403-4.

<sup>163</sup> Compare, for example, the realism found in Condoleezza Rice, ‘Promoting the National Interest,’ *Foreign Affairs*, 79/1: 45-62 (2000), with the liberal internationalism found in Tony Blair, ‘Doctrine of the International Community,’ speech by the British Prime Minister to the Economic Club of Chicago, Hilton Hotel, Chicago, USA, Thursday, April 22, 1999. [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk).

<sup>164</sup> Hedley Bull, ‘The Grotian Conception of International Society,’ in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds.), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1966).

<sup>165</sup> Compare for example the pluralist scholarship of Robert Jackson with the solidarist arguments of Nicholas Wheeler. See, for example Robert Jackson, *The Global Covenant: Human Conduct in a World of States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); and Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*. Alex Bellamy has recently written two excellent articles that seek to breach the impasse between pluralists and solidarists with respect to humanitarian intervention, see Bellamy, ‘Humanitarian Intervention and the Three Traditions’; and Bellamy, ‘Power, Rules and Argument.’

implausible that both norms of non-intervention and humanitarian intervention could both represent absolute moral standards. The purpose of this dissertation is not to cast judgement where the norm is violated but to simply to investigate the nature and strength of the norm through consideration of cases of both violation and compliance. A related point that must be recalled is that to accord an idea a label as a 'norm' does not imply that it has particular strength. It is sufficient for a 'norm' to have *some* explanatory power in some cases for its label to be justified and it remains for us to determine the nature and significance of this explanatory power.

### *The Cases*

Through an examination of case studies for the period between 1992 and 1999, this dissertation traces the emerging nature and strength of the prescriptive norm of intervention. Shannon describes the divergent responses to violations of human rights in different parts of the world, and at different times, as the 'anarchic enforcement' of human rights in international society.<sup>166</sup> While this may be an apt description, we are not prevented from discovering patterns and understanding the conditions under which meaningful intervention occurs.

The intervention in Somalia in 1992-4 is described as an ideational false start.<sup>167</sup> While there was no perceived material or strategic interests at stake, the constituted identity and

---

<sup>166</sup> Shannon, 'Judge and Executioner.'

<sup>167</sup> Note, this dissertation does not examine the establishment of no fly zones and safe havens in northern and southern Iraq in 1991, following the Gulf War. While this case is the first significant example of humanitarian intervention in the post-cold war era, it is omitted from discussion for reasons of space and

interests of the United States, as understood by the Bush administration, led to a preference for intervention. President Bush's learnt values and interests led him to conclude that the United States should respond to the starvation that was occurring on the other side of the world because this was the appropriate response of a great power with the capacity to do so. However, mounting US troop casualties provided a sharp realisation of a domestic reluctance to accept casualties in the absence of vital self-interests. President Clinton was unwilling to accept the political costs of continued compliance with the norm of humanitarian intervention where no strategic or economic interests were at stake; he was unwilling to sacrifice his mandate for domestic change for the sake of an unpopular foreign policy. Clinton's subsequent decision to withdraw from Somalia represents an ideational retreat from which the US may still have not fully recovered.

This ideational retreat was confirmed by the American response to the Rwandan genocide of 1994. The constituted interests of the United States did not generate any meaningful action to prevent the slaughter of 800,000 Rwandese. Neither did the norm of intervention compel the US to comply with its prescriptions in a regulative sense. The existence of the norm in this regulative sense is evinced by the Clinton administration's determination to frame the situation in Rwanda in a way that made violation of the norm socially acceptable. Similarly, the reluctance to use the word 'genocide' demonstrates a concern that a finding of 'genocide' might have carried with it obligations to 'prevent and

---

the belief that the case does not provide us with insights that the subsequent examples of intervention in the 1990s do not tell us.

punish.’ Nevertheless, the reality is that the norm was so weak that the administration did not need to work hard to avoid the political costs of inaction.

Over the course of the Bosnian War of 1992-5, things began to change. The story of the response of the Bush and Clinton administrations to the first three and a half years of the war is a tale of inadequate threats, sanctions and appeals for peace in an effort to appear to be ‘doing something,’ all the while refusing to accept the risks and costs of meaningful action to end the ethnic cleansing. In the absence of clear self-interests for ending the atrocities, American policy was to be one of containment rather than engagement. As in the Rwandan case, we find evidence for the existence of a weak regulative norm in the Bosnian case in the attempts of the administrations to frame an ambiguous situation in a way that made violation of the norm socially acceptable. In addition, the desire to appear to be ‘doing something’ demonstrates domestic and international pressure to comply with the norm.

In 1995, a number of forces combined in a way that led to a meaningful commitment to end the Bosnian war. As the crisis worsened and it became clear that the policy of containment was not working, the Clinton administration came to understand that the developments in Bosnia were threatening the strategic self-interests of the nation as well as the domestic political interests of the administration itself. Clinton came to realise that ending the war was in America’s self-interest as it was the only way to protect the credibility of the US and to preserve the stability of Europe. At the same time, Clinton himself was facing significant pressure from Congress, the media and NGOs. In addition,

a small number of senior policy officials actively took on the role of norm entrepreneurs and encouraged a new direction in foreign policy. While normative beliefs and moral impulses certainly impacted on the decision making process of the Clinton administration, it was not until they were buttressed by clear material interests as well as international and domestic political pressures that a new policy direction was forged.

By 1999, the reconstitution of US interests in favour of intervention had progressed a little further. The United States certainly had a material interest in responding to the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. NATO's intervention served to protect the stability of Europe and the credibility of the alliance. Nevertheless, normative humanitarian concerns were also a crucial determinant in the decision to go to war against Slobodan Milosevic. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright acted as norm entrepreneur forging a new direction for US foreign policy. Albright was able to successfully transfer her personal commitment to the norm of intervention into a clearly articulated American foreign policy decision.

NATO's intervention in Kosovo represented an important step in the logical progression of American foreign policy. It represented the clearest case yet of compliance with the emerging prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention. However, two key factors limit the extent to which we can attribute the intervention to the causal impact of a strong norm. Firstly, while they remain reluctant to admit it, the available evidence suggests that senior members of the Clinton administration did believe that Milosevic would capitulate sooner than he did. The belief that the war would be over quickly may have led decision

makers to enter into a war with risks and costs that they were not prepared to accept. Nevertheless, the NATO alliance did hold strong and prevailed in its 'humanitarian war.' Secondly, and, more importantly, the supposed commitment to the norm of intervention was undermined by the reluctance of the US to commit ground forces and the decision to emphasise high-altitude bombing that inevitably led to greater numbers of civilian casualties. The norm of intervention conflicted with the norm of force protection. The commitment to humanitarian principles was shown to be 'intense but also shallow.'<sup>168</sup>

---

<sup>168</sup> Ignatieff, *Virtual War*, 4.

## **Bosnia and Somalia**

In 1992, President George H. W. Bush was confronted with a number of major humanitarian crises in the world. Two in particular required a response. As the Balkans descended into war, Somali descended into anarchy. International attention was focussed on the Balkans. Bosnia was recognised as a member state by the UN in May but the bitter struggle for territory and political authority between Bosnian Muslims, Bosnian Serbs and Croats had only just begun. The ridding of a territory of unwanted members of another ethnic group by means of violent threats, murder and rape – ‘ethnic cleansing’ – was not simply a tragic by-product of war; it was the terrible objective of war.

The story of the response of the Bush administration to the Bosnian War is a tale of efforts to appear to be ‘doing something,’ all the while refusing to accept the risks and costs of meaningful action to end the atrocities. In the absence of clear self-interests for ending the atrocities being committed, American policy was to be one of containment rather than engagement. James Gow describes the failure of the international community to respond to the atrocities committed in Bosnia as a ‘failure of will.’<sup>169</sup> Lacking confidence that public opinion would support intervention and unable to articulate a material interest for committing ground troops in the face of lingering sensitivity over

---

<sup>169</sup> James Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will: International Diplomacy and the Yugoslav War* (London: Hurst and Company, 1997), 6

Vietnam, the Bush administration was unwilling to bear the costs and risks of meaningful action to end the war.

While meaningful action was avoided, the desire to appear to be ‘doing something’ demonstrates domestic and international pressure to comply with the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention in a regulative sense. We also find evidence for the existence of this weak regulative norm in the attempts of the administration to frame the war in a way that made violation of the norm socially acceptable.

The story of the response of President Bush and his successor, President Bill Clinton, to the unfolding tragedy in Somalia is more complex. The intervention in Somalia in 1992-4 can be described as an ideational false start. While there was no perceived material or strategic interests at stake, the constituted identity and interests of the United States in the eyes of the Bush administration led to a preference for intervention. However, the commitment to intervention in Somalia in the face of mounting US troop casualties proved to be unsustainable. President Clinton was unwilling to accept the political costs of continued compliance with the norm of humanitarian intervention where no strategic or economic interests were at stake; he was unwilling to sacrifice his mandate for domestic change for the sake of an unpopular foreign policy. Clinton’s subsequent decision to withdraw from Somalia represents an ideational retreat from which the US may still have not fully recovered.



There are some important aspects of the Somalia crisis that set it apart from the crises in Bosnia, Rwanda and Kosovo. The international response to Somalia was not, in the main, a response to grave violations of human rights. Whereas civilians in Rwanda and the Balkans were threatened by state sponsored genocide or ethnic cleansing, the humanitarian crisis in Somalia was a by-product of war and famine. The US-led response to the crisis in Somalia was prompted by a desire to alleviate the suffering and starvation produced by the descent into anarchy which was, in turn, a product of what has become known as 'state failure.' Nevertheless, the intervention in Somalia serves as a valuable case for examination not only because of the wealth of data it provides regarding the emergent nature and strength of the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention in its own right but because understanding the events of October 1993 in Mogadishu, where 18 American Rangers lost their lives, and America's response to these deaths, is crucial for understanding American decision making with regard to all subsequent humanitarian crises. We can trace much about the Clinton administration's subsequent disposition towards compliance with the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention to its response to what quickly became known as the 'Somalia debacle.'

### ***Bosnia and the Bush Administration***

The purpose here is not to retrace the events leading to the break-up of Yugoslavia and the descent into war. Nor is it to describe in great detail the international response to the

war in Bosnia. This story has been told elsewhere.<sup>170</sup> The purpose is to examine the interplay between norms and interests in the decision of President Bush to contain rather than engage with the Bosnian war and to defer to European leadership. The focus is on what causal impact, if any, the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention had on the policy making process of the administration.

The story of the response of the Bush administration to the war in Bosnia is a tale of inadequate threats, sanctions and appeals for peace in an effort to appear to be ‘doing something,’ all the while refusing to accept the risks and costs of meaningful action to end the genocide. By appearing to do something President Bush endeavoured to avoid the domestic political costs of inaction. In essence, he endeavoured to make violation of the prescriptive norm of intervention socially acceptable. So long as the conflict remained contained within Bosnia, Western states were content to allow the war to run its course as they did not perceive an interest in ending atrocities that were as predictable as they were terrible.

### *The Descent into War*

Founded at the end of World War One, the state of Yugoslavia was made up of six nations: Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Montenegrins, Macedonians, and Bosnian Muslims.

---

<sup>170</sup> Excellent examples include Steven L. Burg and Paul S. Shoup, *The War in Bosnia Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2000); Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will*; and Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995).

Conflict between ethnic groups climaxed during the Second World War when an estimated 300,000 Serbs died at the hands of the Ustasha state installed in Croatia by the Nazis.<sup>171</sup> After the war, Josip Broz Tito became the leader of Yugoslavia and struggled to forge a new 'Yugoslav' identity. This required the suppression of ethnic nationalisms which he achieved with some success. After his death in May, 1980, these ethnic nationalisms resurfaced. The revival of Serbian nationalism culminated with the rise of Serb leader, Slobodan Milosevic, who took control of Serbia's Communist Party in 1987 and forged an alliance with nationalists who dreamed of a 'Greater Serbia.' Milosevic revived the memories and symbolisms of great battles from as long as six hundred years ago and spoke of a common Serb history of struggle against the 'other.' Slovenes, Croats and Bosnian Muslims responded with their own forms of ethnic nationalism.<sup>172</sup>

Between June and October, 1991, four of the six republics comprising Yugoslavia declared their independence. On May 22, 1992, Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia were recognised as member states of the UN. By this time, much of what became known as the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) had descended into war and a blanket arms embargo had been imposed by the UN.<sup>173</sup> The secession of Slovenia from the FRY was relatively bloodless. With a mostly homogenous ethnic population, Slovenia was able to resist Serbian attempts to forcefully thwart its separatist program. The process of self-

---

<sup>171</sup> Nicholas Wheeler, *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 244.

<sup>172</sup> Anthony D. Smith describes a three step process by which ethnic groups can be mobilised through nationalism. The rediscovery of memories and symbols becomes a weapon used by politicians which leads to the desire for sanctification of the culture through ethnic purification. We can observe each of these steps emerging in the language and actions of not just Serbs but Slovenes, Croats and Bosnian Muslims throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. Cited in William J. Durch and James A. Scheier, 'Faultlines: UN Operations in the Former Yugoslavia,' in William Durch (ed.), *UN Peacekeeping, American Policy, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1996), 194.

<sup>173</sup> UNSC Resolution 713 (1991).

determination in Croatia was a much bloodier story. A sizeable Serb minority in Croatia joined the Serb dominated Yugoslav National Army (JNA) in a seven month war resisting Croatian independence. While atrocities were committed by both Croatians and Serbs, the conflict provided early warnings of the extent to which Belgrade was committed to the brutal establishment of a 'Greater Serbia.' Inaction by the West in the face of violence in Croatia emboldened the Serbs to extend their campaign to Bosnia. The most ethnically heterogeneous of Yugoslavia's republics with 43 percent Muslim, 35 percent Orthodox Serb and 18 percent Catholic Croat, Bosnia clearly faced a bloody future.

There was no failure of intelligence that caused the Bosnian war to catch the US by surprise. The CIA had warned of the break-up of Yugoslavia in 1990 and suggested that it would likely be accompanied by violence.<sup>174</sup> However, as the FRY began to disintegrate, the Bush administration decided that the use of force to end the conflict was not an option. Secretary of State James Baker summed up the position of the US government with his notorious comment, 'We don't have a dog in that fight.'<sup>175</sup> James Gow observes, 'Because the costs of involvement might prove greater than the Bush administration was prepared to countenance, it was judged better not to enter the frame to begin with.'<sup>176</sup> Consequently, the administration refused to take the lead, instead abdicating leadership and deferring Western policy on Bosnia to its European allies. It was felt that European states would have more substantial interests in ensuring the

---

<sup>174</sup> Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will*, 204.

<sup>175</sup> Quoted in John Shattuck, *Freedom on Fire: Human Rights Wars and America's Response* (London: Harvard University Press, 2003), 119.

<sup>176</sup> Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will*, 206.

stability of its own backyard and would also have more influence over outcomes in the Balkans due to historical and diplomatic relations. Washington was sensitive to accusations of neo-imperialism following the Gulf War and did not want to develop a reputation of being an international policeman especially in an area of more immediate importance to its European partners. The Europeans eagerly took control of policy design and implementation declaring it was ‘the hour of Europe.’<sup>177</sup> Jacques Poos, Luxembourg’s Foreign Minister confidently proclaimed, ‘If anyone can do anything here, it is the EC. It is not the US or the USSR or anyone else.’<sup>178</sup> It was soon realised, however, that the disintegration of Yugoslavia was too big a problem for the Europeans to solve on their own.

A particular phenomenon that emerged in the Balkan wars was to become known as ‘ethnic cleansing.’ The ridding of a territory of unwanted members of another ethnic group by means of violent threats, murder and rape was not simply a tragic by-product of war; it was the terrible objective of war. Samantha Power observes that ethnic cleansing in the Balkans was both predicted and expected within the United States. In February, 1991, Lawrence Eagleburger, then Deputy Secretary of State, returned from a tour of the region with the assessment, ‘It is going to be bloody as hell.’<sup>179</sup> Democrat Congressman Frank McCloskey visited the Balkans during the war in Croatia and, upon seeing bodies of victims of Serb atrocities, was warned by a US embassy official in Belgrade that,

---

<sup>177</sup> Quoted in Ivo Daalder, *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America’s Bosnia Policy* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 6.

<sup>178</sup> Quoted in Samantha Power, *“A Problem from Hell”: America and the Age of Genocide* (London: Flamingo, 2002), 258-9.

<sup>179</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 253.

although the conflict in Croatia was bad, Bosnia would produce a ‘real slaughter.’<sup>180</sup> Power suggests that ‘No other atrocity campaign in the twentieth century was better monitored and understood by the US government.’<sup>181</sup> A classified memorandum from Assistant Secretary of State for Europe Tom Niles to Eagleburger, dated April 14, 1992, demonstrates the accuracy of the administration’s interpretation of Serb intentions and policies:

The clear intent of Serbian use of force is to displace non-Serbs from mixed areas...to consolidate Bosnian Serb claims to some 60% of Bosnian territory...in a manner which would create a “Serbian Bosnia.”<sup>182</sup>

Despite their clear understanding of the tragedy that lay ahead, as Bosnia descended into conflict and the Serbs began to ‘cleanse’ non-Serbs from areas under their control, the Bush administration continued to defer to a non-existent European leadership. Hard and soft intervention proposals were raised and rejected. Bush refused to lift the arms embargo which had left the Bosnian Muslims severely disadvantaged as Bosnian Serbs were supported by Belgrade which possessed about 85 percent of the equipment of the former Yugoslav National Army.<sup>183</sup> The Bush administration took some tame diplomatic steps aimed at signalling displeasure; this of course had no impact on the Serbs’ program of ethnic cleansing whatsoever.

---

<sup>180</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 255.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 264.

<sup>182</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 264. For documentation of the Bush administration’s advanced knowledge of Serb atrocities in the middle months of 1992 see *ibid.*, 264-269.

<sup>183</sup> International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), *Supplementary Volume: Background Research* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001), 92.

It was not until Western media won access to Serb concentration camps in mid-July, 1992, that President Bush was forced to respond. Lower-level analysts were reporting the existence of the camps to the administration since May but the first reports in the media did not surface until July 19. While officials in the State Department provided conflicting statements on the veracity of the reports, Bush continued to declare that military force ‘is an option that I haven’t thought of yet.’<sup>184</sup> When the first images of emaciated Bosnian Muslims began to be broadcast around the world on August 6, inaction became untenable.<sup>185</sup>

At this stage, President Bush had not announced Operation Restore Hope in Somalia and the impact of the deaths of 18 Rangers in Mogadishu was not to be felt for another year yet. Upon seeing images of concentration camps in Europe for the first time since the Holocaust, American public approval for US air strikes rose from 35 percent to 53 percent.<sup>186</sup> The American media was instantly flooded with Holocaust analogies. The administration’s platitudes about the responsibility of ‘all factions’ for the atrocities, later echoed by the Clinton administration both with regard to Bosnia and Rwanda, were compared to Chamberlain’s appeasement of Hitler at Munich. President Bush responded. On August 7, he himself drew parallels with the Holocaust:

---

<sup>184</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 273.

<sup>185</sup> Michael Ignatieff provides an insightful assessment of how Milosevic exploited the principles of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the hunger for ratings of the Western media in allowing limited access to concentration camps in order to facilitate ethnic cleansing. See the chapter, ‘The Warrior’s Honor,’ in Michael Ignatieff, *The Warrior’s Honor: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience* (London: Vintage, 1998).

<sup>186</sup> Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 276.

The shocking brutality of genocide in World War II in those concentration camps are burning memories for all of us. That can't happen again, and we will not rest until the international community has gained access to any and all detention camps.<sup>187</sup>

Having decided to act, results came quickly. Within six weeks, the US intelligence community gathered information on more than 200 concentration camps. The commitment made to document Serb atrocities, however, was not accompanied by a plan to stop them. A UN Security Council Resolution passed on August 13 authorised 'all necessary measures' to facilitate the delivery of aid.<sup>188</sup> Hopes that this implied willingness to use force would encourage the Serbs into ceasing the slaughter were dashed, however, when President Bush continued to refuse requests for troops and Assistant Secretary of State Tom Niles admitted, 'The hope is that the adoption of the resolution would obviate the need for force.'<sup>189</sup> It is generally accepted that, while the depiction of the Bosnian war as a 'crisis' following the discovery of the concentration camps created pressure on the Bush administration to 'do something,' it was insufficient to dictate a meaningful change in policy.<sup>190</sup> The Bush administration was able to manipulate the public's perception of a complex war and appear to be doing something while eschewing the costs and risks of meaningful action.

---

<sup>187</sup> George Bush, 'The President's News Conference,' August 7, 1992.

<http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/paper.html>

<sup>188</sup> UNSC Resolution 770 (1992).

<sup>189</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 282.

<sup>190</sup> Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, 164.



## *Perceived Causes of the Balkan Wars*

The break-up of Yugoslavia, and the subsequent wars, atrocities, and ethnic cleansing that dominated relations between Balkan nation groups in the 1990s, have been described as a product of history. The extent to which the disintegration of the Yugoslav state should be attributed to an inevitable expression of irresolvable historical disputes or was needlessly precipitated by a climate of fear of the 'other' engendered by ethnic nationalist leadership remains the matter of some debate.<sup>191</sup> The Balkan wars were portrayed by the administrations of both George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton to the American public as the product of ancient hatreds. It was suggested that while the leadership of the various nation groups had stirred up these hatreds, there was little that the West could do to calm them. Officials believed their own claims at least to a degree. A book which reportedly framed the perspectives of members of the Clinton administration on the Balkan wars, including the President himself, was Robert Kaplan's *Balkan Ghosts*. While *Balkan Ghosts* emphasised the deep roots of religious and ethnic conflict in the region, Kaplan prefaced it by observing that 'nothing I write should be taken as a justification, however mild, for the war crimes committed by ethnic Serb troops in Bosnia, which I heartily condemn.'<sup>192</sup> Nevertheless, while not justifying war crimes, books such as Kaplan's led many in the United States to believe that war in the Balkans was inevitable and that

---

<sup>191</sup> Compare, for example Robert Kaplan's book, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History* (New York: St Martin's, 1993) that describes centuries of Balkan war and emphasises the deep roots of ethnic and religious conflict with Michael Ignatieff's analysis of the psychology of fear that precipitated the descent into conflict: 'The Narcissism of Minor Indifference,' in Ignatieff, *The Warrior's Honor*.

<sup>192</sup> Quoted in Shattuck, *Freedom on Fire*, 138, n. 19. Madeleine Albright, President Clinton's Ambassador to the UN during the Bosnian war, rejected the 'ancient hatreds' argument suggesting that this 'ignored the centuries during which these same populations had lived together in peace and the intermarriages that had long diluted the pretensions of many to ethnic purity.' Madeleine Albright, *Madam Secretary: A Memoir* (London: Macmillan, 2003), 179.

meaningful intervention beyond simply containing the problem would be too difficult and, therefore, was out of the question. Throughout the 1990s, it was clear that the ultimate responsibility for the atrocities committed lay at the hands of Milosevic and Croatian leader, Franjo Tudjman, regardless of ancient hatreds, yet it was felt by many that the deep roots of Balkan conflict could not be solved by Western intervention. In 1992, Bush's Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger would justify intervening in Somalia rather than Bosnia based partly on these conclusions: 'There are other parts of the world where things are equally tragic, but where the cost of trying to change things would be monumental - in my view, Bosnia is one of those.'<sup>193</sup>

### *No Interest in Intervening*

On August 14, 1992, the day after UN Security Council Resolution 770 was passed authorising the facilitation of the delivery of aid to Bosnia, Bush announced a US military airlift of aid to Somalia to provide food for 'those who desperately need it.'<sup>194</sup> The attention of the American public was deflected from Bosnia to Somalia. Soon Bush would be defeated by Democrat candidate, Bill Clinton. Bush left office having done nothing to stop the deaths of thousands of Bosnians which were as predictable as they were terrible. He reportedly never paid much attention to the Balkan conflict. National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft recalls that at one stage, after 70,000 Bosnians had

---

<sup>193</sup> Lawrence Eagleburger interview, 'This Week with David Brinkley,' *ABC News*, December 6, 1992, Transcript #580.

<sup>194</sup> Quoted in Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 179.

been killed in seven months, Bush would ask him about once a week, ‘Now tell me again what this is all about?’<sup>195</sup>

Humanitarian action in Bosnia was simply never perceived by the Bush administration to be in America’s national interest. As the 1992 election approached, both President Bush and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell acknowledged that they were yet to be persuaded that there was any political or strategic interest for engagement in the Balkans.<sup>196</sup> Secretary Baker later recalled, ‘Our vital interests were not at stake. The Yugoslav conflict had the potential to be intractable, but it was nonetheless a regional dispute.’<sup>197</sup> Scowcroft remembers:

We could never satisfy ourselves that the amount of involvement we thought it would take was justified in terms of the US interests involved...We were heavily national interest oriented, and Bosnia was of national interest concern only if the war broke out into Kosovo, risking the involvement of our allies in a wider war. If it stayed contained within Bosnia, it might have been horrible, but it did not affect us.<sup>198</sup>

The primary deterrent to intervention in Bosnia was the perceived risks and costs of responding to a situation where vital self-interests were not at stake. Employing the bogey-word, ‘Vietnam,’ the Joint Chiefs of Staff warned of the potential quagmire which the US military could find itself in if it decided to confront the impenetrable mountainous

---

<sup>195</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 287.

<sup>196</sup> Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, 298, n. 40.

<sup>197</sup> Quoted in Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, 201.

<sup>198</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 288.

terrain which Tito's Partisans had defended for months against the Nazis. Estimates on the number of troops needed to enforce a ceasefire were as high as 400,000.<sup>199</sup> Wanting to ensure that the US would not interfere with their plans, the Serbs played on these fears throughout the course of the war. In late 1994, for example, Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic would warn, 'The United States sends 2,000 marines, then they have to send 10,000 more to save the 2,000... That is the best way to have another Vietnam.'<sup>200</sup>

Throughout 1992, it was clear that compliance with the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention was not an option where the risks and costs of an operation were predicted to be high, where there was no perceived self-interest for intervening, and where the complexity and ambiguity of the situation were such that it could be framed in a way that made violation of the norm socially acceptable.

### *'Norms Are What States Make of Them'*

Just as the Clinton administration would do in Rwanda and Bosnia, the Bush government manipulated the ambiguity of the situation in the Balkans in order to make violation of the prescriptive norm of intervention socially acceptable.<sup>201</sup> Vaughn Shannon describes a

---

<sup>199</sup> Lieutenant Barry McCaffrey, assistant to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, to the Senate Armed Services Committee. Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 283.

<sup>200</sup> Roger Cohen, 'NATO and the UN Quarrel in Bosnia as Serbs Press On,' *New York Times*, November 27, 1994, 1.

<sup>201</sup> We should perhaps remind ourselves at this point that the word 'violate' brings with it moral or normative connotations which we need not necessarily impute to the actions of either the Bush or Clinton administrations. A norm is a construction of international society which may not necessarily accord with conceptions of universal morality. There is no reason, therefore, to assume that 'violation' of a norm is

process by which politicians interpret and portray an ambiguous situation favourably in order to justify norm violation. This is exactly what the Bush administration did in Bosnia. As Shannon suggests, often ‘norms are what states make of them.’<sup>202</sup>

The Bush administration’s program of avoiding an obligation to engage with the Balkan conflict in any meaningful sense involved certain use of language to describe both the nature of the atrocities being committed in the war and the causes of the war. In Samantha Power’s investigation into American responses to genocide in the twentieth century, the scholar found that the debate in the US media and amongst government officials over whether ‘genocide’ was occurring in Bosnia was more vocal than any previous debate since Raphael Lemkin had first coined the term during the Holocaust.<sup>203</sup>

Article I of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (adopted by Resolution 260 (III) A of the UN General Assembly, 1948) provides: ‘The Contracting Parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and punish.’ The Bush administration avoided describing the atrocities being committed by Bosnian Serbs as ‘genocide’ for fear that such a finding would create an imperative to ‘prevent and punish’ it. The day after images of concentration camps began to be broadcast across the world, Bush announced, ‘We know there is horror in these detention camps...But in

---

either immoral or moral. This is not to say that moral assessment of decisions to intervene, or of the failure to intervene, is inappropriate or impossible. It is simply beyond the scope of this investigation.

<sup>202</sup> Vaughn P. Shannon, ‘Norms Are What States Make of Them: The Political Psychology of Norm Violation,’ *International Studies Quarterly*, 44: 293-316, (2000).

<sup>203</sup> Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 289.

all honesty, I can't confirm to you some of the claims that there is indeed a genocidal process going on there.'<sup>204</sup>

Article II of the Genocide Convention provides: 'Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- a) Killing members of the group;
- b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.'

Bosnian Serbs were committing atrocities that corresponded with each of the above categories except for the last. While the Serbs were not killing every Bosnian Muslim, it was clear to the Bush administration that they were intent on destroying the Bosnian Muslim ethnic group.<sup>205</sup>

Although the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention was not sufficiently strong to compel the Bush administration to respond to Serb atrocities, its reluctance to use the

---

<sup>204</sup> George Bush, 'Remarks on the Situation in Bosnia and an Exchange with Reporters in Colorado Springs,' August 6, 1992. <http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/paper.html>

<sup>205</sup> A detailed discussion of whether Serb atrocities constituted genocide which is perhaps more sympathetic to the complex decisions confronting the Bush administration can be found in Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, 181-185.

term ‘genocide’ demonstrates the substance of the norm. It seems reasonable to surmise from this semantic reticence that the Genocide Convention serves as an accepted codification of the norm of intervention. The refusal to acknowledge that genocide was occurring demonstrates fear that this would lead to an obligation or prescription to intervene. This obligation would have been felt in international society as there is an understood logic of appropriateness concerning the behaviour of states that have ratified the Convention. The compulsion to ‘prevent and punish’ would also have been felt domestically as the values and interests of Americans are stirred by the use of the term ‘genocide.’ A ‘later poll’ showed that, while 54 percent of Americans favoured military intervention in Bosnia, that figure rose to 80 percent when participants were informed that an independent commission had found the occurrence of genocide.<sup>206</sup>

It wasn’t until January 1993, as Bill Clinton prepared to move into the White House, that Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger finally agreed that genocide was occurring. But by this time it was too late for the administration to do anything about it. Eagleburger thought it would be unfair on the Democrats to find the occurrence of genocide, having done nothing to stop it, just as the Clinton administration was taking over. On January 19, the last day of the Bush administration, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Patricia Diaz Dennis provided a final, if somewhat confusing, statement on the position of the outgoing government:

In Bosnia, our report describes widespread systematic atrocities, including the rapes and killings of civilian victims to the extent that it probably borders on

---

<sup>206</sup> Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 289.

genocide. We haven't yet decided whether or not it's a legal matter. The conduct in Bosnia is genocide, but clearly the abuses that have occurred over the last year are such that they, as I said, border on that particular legal term.<sup>207</sup>

In addition to the refusal to describe the atrocities as 'genocide,' the Bush administration framed the causes of the war in a manner that made violation of the norm of intervention more likely to be accepted socially. Knowledge and understanding of the Balkans was minimal not only amongst the American public but among the Washington elite. The Bush administration was able to reduce a highly complicated conflict down to a simplified tale of ancient hatreds in which outside intervention would be costly and of little use. Emphasising the broad ethnic hatred rather than the nationalistic political machinations of individuals, the officials implied that conflict had been ongoing for centuries and would likely rage for centuries to come. Defence Secretary Dick Cheney told CNN, 'It's tragic, but the Balkans have been a hotbed of conflict for centuries.' In a White House briefing, Bush told reporters that the war was a 'complex, convoluted conflict that grows out of age-old animosities (and) century-old feuds.' Eagleburger justified America's inaction in similar terms: 'This war is not rational. There is no rationality at all about ethnic conflict. It is gut, it is hatred; it's not for any common set of values or purposes; it just goes on. And that kind of warfare is most difficult to bring to a halt.' As Clinton would do in Rwanda and Bosnia, the Bush administration framed the conflict as a civil war rather than primarily a Serb war of aggression which brought with it the clear intent of establishing a 'Greater Serbia.' Eagleburger again: 'The tragedy is not something that can be settled from outside and it's about damn well time that

---

<sup>207</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 293.



everybody understood that. Until the Bosnians, Serbs, and Croats decide to stop killing each other, there is nothing the outside world can do about it.’<sup>208</sup>

By portraying the situation as an irresolvable product of ancient hatreds, the Bush administration and, as we shall observe in chapter four, the administration of President Clinton endeavoured to eschew the costs and risks of meaningful engagement with the crisis while avoiding the political costs of norm violation. Whether or not the Balkan wars could be explained solely or even principally as the product of ‘ancient hatreds,’ the engagement of the US with the problem following the fall of Srebrenica in 1995 demonstrated that meaningful action could produce or impose peace, however tenuous. Susan Woodward blames the West for defining the origins and causes of Balkan conflict as ethnic conflict and nationalist revolution in a manner that produced self-fulfilling outcomes. Woodward suggests that, without regard for the real conditions of multi-nationality in the FRY or a willingness to enforce their recognition of the sovereign borders of seceding states, Western powers made war over territory inevitable.<sup>209</sup>

After three and a half years of muddling while more than 200,000 people died in Bosnia, US leadership produced NATO’s Operation Deliberate Force and the brokering of the peace accords in Dayton, Ohio which ended the war. This action is dealt with in chapter four. The success of this meaningful action undermines the justifications for norm violation which argued that the war was a product of ‘ancient hatreds’ about which the West could do little. In 1999, on the eve of the Allied attacks on the FRY in response to

---

<sup>208</sup> All quotes are from *ibid.*, 282-3.

<sup>209</sup> Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, 198.

ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, Clinton would acknowledge the inadequacy of this ‘age-old conflict’ argument: ‘It was an insult to them to say that somehow they were intrinsically made to murder one another. That was the excuse used by countries and leaders for too long.’<sup>210</sup>

### ***Somalia***

In January, 1991, the brutal dictator, Siad Barre, was forced from power and Somalia quickly descended into clan-based civil war. Within two months the US State Department had declared Somalia to be in an official state of disaster and began providing humanitarian aid largely through NGOs and UN agencies. War and drought combined to produce famine and by late January, 1992, 140,000 Somali refugees were reported to have fled to Kenya. In April of that year, the first United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I) was deployed with the consent of the respective leaders of the two leading Somali factions, General Mohamed Farah Aidid and Ali Mahdi Mohamed. Deployment of UNOSOM I was slow and chronic lawlessness prevented aid from being distributed. By October 1992, an estimated 300,000 Somalis had died since the civil war began. A further 4.5 million of a population of only 6 million were threatened by severe malnutrition and disease. At least 1.5 million of these Somalis were deemed to be at mortal risk.<sup>211</sup>

---

<sup>210</sup> Bill Clinton, ‘Excerpt from Remarks by President Clinton,’ March 23, 1999. in Philip E. Auerswald and David P. Auerswald (eds.), *The Kosovo Conflict: A Diplomatic History through Documents* (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 2000), 697.

<sup>211</sup> Report of the Secretary General, UN Document A/47/553 (1992).

In the first six months of 1992, the crisis in Somalia failed to generate significant interest in the Bush administration. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for African Affairs between 1986 and 1994, James Woods, recalls that while US administrations had perceived a substantial strategic interest in Somalia in the 1980s, the end of the cold war and the departure of the Russians and Cubans from East Africa had seen this interest give way to ‘a new attitude approaching indifference.’<sup>212</sup> While Andrew Natsios, Director of the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance declared in January, 1992, that Somalia was ‘the greatest humanitarian emergency in the world,’ and staff at the Bureau of African Affairs tried to attract the attention of the State Department, Woods recalls that the violence and starvation remained ‘a third tier issue’ for the administration.<sup>213</sup> He suggests that ‘there existed a hope at intermediate and high policy levels that the United States could avoid the costs and complications of a deeper involvement.’<sup>214</sup> The absence of any significant media interest in the crisis, in contrast to the strident calls for the protection of Kurds in northern Iraq the previous year, meant that the Bush administration could ignore the Somali crisis with little or no political cost.<sup>215</sup>

From July, however, a number of forces began to combine to change the administration’s approach. That month, President Bush received a telegram from the US Ambassador to Kenya that described the humanitarian situation in Somali refugee camps. The emotional

---

<sup>212</sup> James L. Woods, ‘U.S. Government Decisionmaking Processes During Humanitarian Operations in Somalia,’ in Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst (eds.), *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 151.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., 153.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., 153.

<sup>215</sup> Woods recalls that State officials were called six times to give formal testimony on Somalia before House and Senate committees in the period January to June, 1992. However, this did not translate into media interest or Congressional pressure. Ibid., 155.

description of suffering reportedly prompted Bush to order a policy review and instruct the State Department to become 'forward leaning' with regard to Somalia.<sup>216</sup> At the same time, the Democratic challenger in the presidential election campaign, Bill Clinton, was becoming increasingly critical of Bush's failure to respond to the suffering in both Somalia and Bosnia. As the humanitarian situation deteriorated, humanitarian relief agencies and some members of Congress began to clamour for action. In August, Bush announced a US military airlift of food declaring that 'starvation in Somalia is a major human tragedy' and that the US would provide food for 'those who desperately need it.'<sup>217</sup> Prior to this, the three main American news networks had only mentioned the crisis in Somalia in fifteen stories.<sup>218</sup> Bush's announcement, however, made Somalia a significant domestic issue and the subsequent sustained media coverage put pressure on Bush to back up his words with more decisive action. Food aid could only reach so many in the absence of security on the ground. As the situation continued to deteriorate, a realisation emerged that ground troops were essential if 'those who desperately need it' were to receive food. The Bush administration was aware that only the US could mount an operation, alone or leading a coalition, that could bring dramatic improvement in a short space of time.

---

<sup>216</sup> Robert C. DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians: US Interventions from Northern Iraq to Kosovo* (London: John Hopkins University Press, 2002), 50. It was this same Ambassador, Smith Hempstone, who would later warn that Somalia could become a 'tarbaby' for the United States: 'If you liked Beirut, you'll love Mogadishu.' Quoted in Don Oberdorfer, 'The Path to Intervention; A Massive Tragedy "We Could Do Something About,"' *Washington Post*, December 6, 1992, A1.

<sup>217</sup> Quoted in Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 179.

<sup>218</sup> Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 286, n. 82.

### *The American Use of Force*

During the presidencies of Ronald Reagan and George Bush, a doctrine that became known as the Weinburger-Powell Doctrine guided administration decisions on the use of force. First articulated by Reagan's Secretary of Defence Casper Weinburger in 1984, this doctrine outlined six requirements to be considered before committing US troops to an operation. These included the conditions that vital national interests were at stake and that overwhelming force should be employed to ensure victory.<sup>219</sup> Towards the end of Bush's presidency, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Colin Powell reiterated in *Foreign Affairs* journal the main themes of the doctrine emphasising an aversion to limited and incremental uses of force. Overwhelming force should be used in order to achieve quick and decisive victories.<sup>220</sup> As Bush began to speak out on the crisis in Somalia, there was little enthusiasm in the Pentagon for the employment of overwhelming force in the absence of vital material interests.

### *The Decision to Intervene*

In the second week of November, having lost the presidential election to Bill Clinton, Bush gathered his security team and instructed them to develop ways to stop the starvation in Somalia. While Colin Powell and the Pentagon were initially opposed to

---

<sup>219</sup> Casper W. Weinburger, 'The Uses of Military Power,' Address to the National Press Club, Washington DC, November 28, 1984.

<sup>220</sup> Colin Powell, 'US Forces: Challenges Ahead,' *Foreign Affairs*, 71/5: 32-45 (1992/93). For a brief analysis of the Weinburger-Powell Doctrine, see Charles A. Stevenson, 'The Evolving Clinton Doctrine on the Use of Force,' *Armed Forces and Society*, 22/4: 511-535 (1996), pp. 511-535.

intervention, they did not impede Bush's determination to act. Within a couple of weeks Admiral David Jeremiah, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, declared in a Deputies Committee meeting, 'If you think US forces are needed, we can do the job.'<sup>221</sup> Bush decided that, if other nations would commit troops and the UN Security Council would provide authorisation, the US would lead a multinational intervention into Somalia. On December 3, 1992, the Security Council passed Resolution 794 authorising the US-led Operation Restore Hope.

There were a number of stimuli impacting on Bush's decision to intervene. Certainly, the increased media coverage of the crisis since Bush's promise in August to provide food and the subsequent congressional pressures were important factors. Acting Secretary of State at the time, Lawrence Eagleburger, recalls:

...television had a great deal to do with President Bush's decision to go in. I was one of those two or three that was strongly recommending he do it, and it was very much because of the television pictures of these starving kids (and) substantial pressures from the Congress that came from the same source.<sup>222</sup>

---

<sup>221</sup> Quoted in William Durch, 'Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and "State Building" in Somalia,' in William Durch (ed.), *UN Peacekeeping, American Policy, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s*, (New York: St Martin's Press, 1996), 319.

<sup>222</sup> Quoted in Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 180. Some have argued, however, that the so-called CNN effect is often exaggerated. See, for example, Andrew Natsios, 'Illusions of Influence: The CNN Effect in Complex Emergencies,' in Robert I. Rotberg and Thomas G. Weiss, *From Massacres to Genocide: The Media, Public Policy, and Humanitarian Crises* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 1996); and Warren P. Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy: The News Media's Influence on Peace Operations* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1997). For an examination of the congressional pressures placed on the Bush administration during the Somali crisis, see Harry Johnston and Ted Dagne, 'Congress and the Somalia Crisis,' in Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst (eds.), *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997).

A few days after the announcement of the operation, a *New York Times*/CBS poll confirmed that Bush had made a popular decision. 81 percent of respondents agreed that ‘the US is doing the right thing in sending troops to Somalia to make sure food gets to the people there.’ 70 percent agreed that the mission was even worth the possible loss of American lives.<sup>223</sup>

Despite its popularity, available evidence suggests that the decision to intervene was motivated by President Bush’s genuine humanitarian concern for the suffering Somalis as much as any other factor. Bush outlined this motivation when he addressed the nation the day after Resolution 794 was passed:

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.<sup>224</sup>

In addition to the emotional telegram from the Ambassador to Kenya, Andrew Natsios recalls the President describing to him a famine in Sudan that he had witnessed first hand in the 1980s. Natsios suggests that these memories ‘had clearly affected his decision to send troops into Somalia.’<sup>225</sup> Bush’s use of the military in response to humanitarian crises reflected what Natsios believed was Bush’s view of America’s pre-eminent role in the world and its responsibility for international leadership.<sup>226</sup> Natsios claimed in an

---

<sup>223</sup> Durch, ‘Introduction to Anarchy,’ 320.

<sup>224</sup> George Bush, ‘Address to the Nation on the Situation in Somalia,’ December 4, 1992. <http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/paper.html>

<sup>225</sup> Natsios, ‘Illusions of Influence,’ 161, n. 10.

<sup>226</sup> Natsios, ‘Illusions of Influence,’ 161.

interview, ‘I know why Bush made that decision... “No one should have to die at Christmas” (Bush said)...It’s not more complicated than that.’<sup>227</sup> While this may be a simplistic explanation, it does likely capture an important aspect of Bush’s motivation.

Some have argued that the timing of Bush’s acknowledgement that Somalia was ‘a major human tragedy,’ almost a year after the outbreak of civil war, must cast doubt on the extent to which concern for the Somalis influenced Bush’s decision.<sup>228</sup> However, regardless of how long it took him to react to the crisis, his eventual decision does appear to have been motivated by humanitarian concern. James Woods recalls:

It was truly his personal decision, based in large measure on his growing feelings of concern as the humanitarian disaster continued to unfold relentlessly despite the half measures being undertaken by the international community.<sup>229</sup>

A factor which likely impacted on Bush’s humanitarian impulse was that he was coming to the end of his term as President. It is widely accepted that concern for his presidential legacy contributed to Bush’s decision to intervene. An insight into this concern is provided by a Defence Department official who said at the time, ‘I had the feeling that no matter what was said (by his advisors), he would not want to leave office with 50,000 people starving that he could have saved.’<sup>230</sup> The explanatory power of Bush’s exceptional position as a ‘lame duck’ president should not be ignored. Having already lost the 1992 election to Bill Clinton, Bush was relatively unhampered by the day to day

---

<sup>227</sup> Quoted in DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 60.

<sup>228</sup> See, for example, Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 179.

<sup>229</sup> Woods, ‘US Government Decisionmaking Processes,’ 158.

<sup>230</sup> Don Oberdorfer, ‘The Path to Intervention.’



domestic constraints on foreign policy decisions which weighed heavily on his successor's mind throughout the 1990s.

Any explanation for President Bush's decision to intervene must also account for the failure to take meaningful action to stop the atrocities occurring at the same time in Bosnia. How do we reconcile Bush's determination to refrain from sending troops to Bosnia with his decision to send troops to Somalia, where the self-interests of the US were threatened even less? How do we reconcile Bush's violation of the norm of intervention in Bosnia with his concurrent compliance with the same norm in Somalia attributed, in part, to genuine humanitarian concern for starving Somalis? Any reconciliation must necessarily dilute the strength of the emergent norm of intervention that some scholars have discovered in the Somali case.

An important reason for the choice of intervention was that the risks and costs of troop deployment in Somalia were perceived to be less than those that would accompany the deployment of troops in Bosnia.<sup>231</sup> Bush's humanitarian impulses prevailed in the absence of a material interest for intervention in Somalia partly because the operation was predicted to be relatively risk-free and short-term. At a National Security Council meeting in late November, Lawrence Eagleburger argued that 'we could do this...at not too great a cost and, certainly, without any great danger of body bags coming home.'<sup>232</sup> It was around this time that Colin Powell agreed to support military intervention. Woods

---

<sup>231</sup> It has been suggested that intervention in Somalia was also perceived to be a reasonable alternative to Bosnia because it was a Muslim country. Intervention in Somalia would quiet claims that the US government was ignoring the plight of Muslims. See, for example, Oberdorfer, 'The Path to Intervention.'

<sup>232</sup> Quoted in Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 181.

describes this support of the Joint Chiefs as ‘the clinching factor’ which gave Bush the opportunity to choose to pursue a maximalist course of action.<sup>233</sup> While Powell expressed concerns regarding an exit strategy, as did National Security Advisor Brent Showcroft, he was prepared to support the operation provided that it was restricted to protecting the delivery of humanitarian aid in certain regions of Somalia and that there was an understanding that US troops would hand over to a UN peacekeeping force shortly after Bill Clinton came into office.<sup>234</sup> With Bush pressing for intervention, the best Powell could hope for was to have the intervention conducted his way. The use of overwhelming force in pursuit of limited objectives was perceived as more achievable and risk-free than an equivalent response to the Bosnian conflict.

It has been argued that intervening in Somalia satisfied Bush’s desire to deflect attention away from calls for the use of force in the Bosnian conflict.<sup>235</sup> While it would have been much easier to articulate a national interest to intervene in the Balkans – a particularly combustible part of Europe – the supposed risk-free nature of the Somali operation was more appealing. In a discussion about American national interests, Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger defended the decision to intervene in Somalia:

...this debate is around this issue of our national interest and that’s a legitimate issue, but the fact of the matter is that a thousand people are starving to death

---

<sup>233</sup> Woods, ‘US Government Decisionmaking Processes,’ 158.

<sup>234</sup> Ioan Lewis and James Mayall, ‘Somalia,’ in James Mayall (ed.), *The New Interventionism 1991-1994: United Nations experience in Cambodia, former Yugoslavia and Somalia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 111.

<sup>235</sup> See, for example, John L. Hirsch and Robert B. Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995), 42; and Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 181.

every day, that this is not going to get better if we don't do something about it, and it is in an area where we can, in fact, affect events. There are other parts of the world where things are equally tragic, but where the cost of trying to change things would be monumental – in my view, Bosnia is one of those.<sup>236</sup>

President Bush was simply willing to accept the risks and costs of intervention in Somalia but not in Bosnia. The US arguably had more to gain materially by intervening in Bosnia to ensure a stable Europe than saving the lives of distant Somalis far from the spotlight of strategic or economic concerns. Pressure from the domestic media to intervene in Bosnia was arguably greater than in Somalia – at least until Bush announced the military airlift of aid into Somalia. However, the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention was not strong enough to compel the Bush administration to engage with European efforts and take meaningful action to stop the slaughter of Bosnian Muslims. For all the values and interests that we observe Bush imputing into American foreign policy at the end of his presidency, the case of Bosnia must dilute any conclusions that we draw about the strength of the prescriptive norm of intervention to which Bush responded in Somalia. Nevertheless, we do not have to ignore Bosnia to conclude that humanitarian norms had a causal impact on the decision to intervene in Somalia.

Martha Finnemore's constructivist contention is that realists are unable to account for the evidence of a changing international normative context shaping the interests of actors that we observe in the Somali intervention. The scholar argues that the absence of geo-strategic or economic advantages to be gained for the US indicates that intervention can

---

<sup>236</sup> Lawrence Eagleburger interview, 'This Week with David Brinkley'.

only be explained by reference to norms.<sup>237</sup> While some scholars have attempted to discover economic interests in the decision to intervene,<sup>238</sup> there is little support for this contention in the literature. It is generally conceded that no significant strategic or economic interests were at stake. Finnemore argues that Somalia is ‘perhaps the clearest example of military action undertaken in a state of little or no strategic or economic importance to the principal intervenor.’<sup>239</sup>

Michael Desch disagrees, arguing that Somalia does not pose a serious ‘puzzle’ for realist theory. While realists cannot accept intervention that undermines the strategic or economic interests of the intervening state, he argues, the Somali intervention posed no such threat to the US.<sup>240</sup> Indeed, as Eagleburger argued, the attraction of the intervention in Somalia was that it did not bring with it the costs associated with a Balkan intervention. Nevertheless, states act for reasons. They do not intervene in a far off land simply because to do so will not endanger their security. President Bush’s decision to intervene to alleviate starvation in Somalia is an example of a compliant response to the humanitarian norm of intervention. This can be understood by considering the norm in both a regulative and a constitutive sense. Pressures from Congress and the media, combined with a desire to alleviate pressure over Bosnia and concern for his historical legacy may have prompted a rational decision by President Bush to respond to the norm of intervention in the absence of a material interest to do so. Constructivists, neo-liberals

---

<sup>237</sup> Martha Finnemore, ‘Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention,’ in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia Press, 1996), 154; and Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force* (London: Cornell University Press, 2003), 55.

<sup>238</sup> See, for example, David N. Gibbs, ‘*Realpolitik* and Humanitarian Intervention: The Case of Somalia,’ *International Politics*, 37: 41-55 (2000).

<sup>239</sup> Finnemore, ‘Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention,’ 154.

<sup>240</sup> Cited in Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 202.

and even some realists have described this regulative causal effect.<sup>241</sup> However, the explanatory power of this rationalist description is insufficient. Writing about the constitutive effects of norms, Jeffrey Checkel describes how individuals can be exposed to new information and values which are promoted by international norms. This learning can lead elite decision makers to adopt new preferences and interests in the absence of material interests to do so.<sup>242</sup> The available evidence regarding the decision making process inside the administration and the motivations of George H. W. Bush appears to correspond with the learning mechanism that Checkel describes. Having adopted a personal preference for intervention, Bush drove the decision to intervene in Somalia in a manner not repeated in any other intervention of the 1990s. State officials such as James Woods and Andrew Natsios have described their perception of the President's genuine concern for the suffering Somalis. The adoption of a preference for intervening to alleviate this suffering embodies the implementation and 'empowerment' of a norm of intervention.<sup>243</sup>

The absence of material self-interest in intervening in Somalia could have been regarded as a positive development in the emergence of an international norm to rescue those suffering from the effects of war and famine. As we shall observe, however, the absence of a clear self-interest for intervention opened the door to consequences that have had a lasting inhibitory impact on the way the United States, and other states, think about humanitarian intervention.

---

<sup>241</sup> See Chapter One.

<sup>242</sup> Jeffrey T. Checkel, 'International Norms and Domestic Politics: Bridging the Rationalist-Constructivist Divide,' *European Journal of International Relations*, 3/4: 473-495 (1997).

<sup>243</sup> The term 'empowerment' describes how norms become a focus of political attention or debate and are, over time, internalised in the interests and identities of the actors.

### *The Intervention*

On December 4, 1992, President Bush sent 28,000 US troops into Somalia as Unified Task Force, or UNITAF. They were expected to police a ceasefire agreement but, for various reasons, the security situation had deteriorated significantly in Mogadishu by May 4, the following year, when the Clinton administration formally handed control over to the second UN operation, UNOSOM II. What had begun to occur was the dreaded ‘mission creep’ that so frightened Washington. There remains disagreement about who was to blame but history shows that operations gradually expanded to include nation-building and disarmament. Shortly after control was handed over to UNOSOM II, clan leader General Aidid, bitter about what he perceived to be partisan support for his rival, Ali Mahdi, ‘orchestrated’ attacks on Pakistani peacekeepers conducting weapons inspections and distributing food in Mogadishu.<sup>244</sup> 24 Pakistanis were killed and a further 57 were wounded. President Clinton shared the UN’s resolve to respond to Aidid’s attacks declaring that military action was necessary to strengthen the credibility of ‘UN peacekeeping in Somalia and around the world.’<sup>245</sup> This determination stands in stark contrast to Clinton’s reaction in the face of the deaths of US troops in Mogadishu only a few months later.

---

<sup>244</sup> An Independent Commission of Inquiry called for by the UNSC in Resolution 885 concluded that Aidid ‘orchestrated the attacks,’ Quoted in Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 194.

<sup>245</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 194.

The crisis quickly escalated and US involvement deepened. The reasons for this have been explored in great detail elsewhere.<sup>246</sup> Charles Stevenson summarises reasons commonly given which include a combination of 'high-level inattentiveness in Washington, on-scene bureaucratic infighting, a puzzling command structure, and ad hoc responses to particular incidents that changed the substance of policy without re-evaluating accompanying assumptions and plans.'<sup>247</sup> Of great importance for future humanitarian interventions was the fact that some members of Congress and the Clinton administration believed that blame should be placed on UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for demanding that troops disarm rival factions, thereby dragging the US deeper into the clan-based conflict. Whatever the reasons for 'mission creep,' Stevenson observes that 'the result was inconsistency, confusion, and then disaster.'<sup>248</sup>

UNOSOM II, now engaged in a manhunt, attacked Aidid's forces killing over 100 civilians in the process. Aidid, aware of American reluctance to accept casualties, responded by killing four US soldiers on August 8.<sup>249</sup> When six Americans were wounded by a landmine on August 22, Clinton sent in the Delta Force and Army Rangers.

---

<sup>246</sup> An excellent resource which draws on the perspectives of a number of members of the Clinton administration as well as those on the ground at the time in Somalia is *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ambush](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ambush) which accompanies the documentary: 'Ambush in Mogadishu.' See also Durch, 'Introduction to Anarchy'; and a number of chapters in Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst (eds.), *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997).

<sup>247</sup> Stevenson, 'The Evolving Clinton Doctrine on the Use of Force,' 524.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> A spokesman for Aidid's Somali National Alliance reportedly stated in July, 'If you could kill Americans, it would start problems in America directly.' Quoted in Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 197, n. 113.

The foreign policy team that Clinton created when he assumed office had outlined its objectives with an imperative for what the new Ambassador to the UN, Madeleine Albright, labelled ‘assertive multilateralism.’ In April, Secretary of State Warren Christopher had announced that the administration was placing ‘a new emphasis on promoting multinational peacekeeping and peacemaking.’<sup>250</sup> This emphasis was not mere lip-service. At the height of UNOSOM II, as many as 68 nations were contributing to the peacekeeping operation.<sup>251</sup> In July, Albright had told the House Committee on Foreign Affairs that ‘Peacekeeping has become instrumental in meeting three fundamental imperatives of our national interest: economic, political and humanitarian.’<sup>252</sup> One could have been forgiven for thinking that the euphoria of the end of the cold war had shaped a (re)constitution of US interests in the form of a preference for complying with the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention.

However, the Clinton administration quickly discovered that its hopes and plans for the post-cold war era were premature. As casualties began to build, so did domestic opposition to the Somali intervention. Republican Senator Robert Byrd wrote an op-ed piece in the *New York Times* concluding that ‘Lacking congressional and popular support, US combat forces in Somalia should be removed as soon as possible.’<sup>253</sup> In September,

---

<sup>250</sup> Quoted in Ivo H. Daalder, ‘Knowing When to Say No: The Development of US Policy for Peacekeeping,’ in William Durch (ed.), *UN Peacekeeping, American Policy, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1996), 41.

<sup>251</sup> Admiral Jonathan Howe (Special Representative to Secretary General Boutros-Ghali) interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ambush](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ambush).

<sup>252</sup> Quoted in Daalder, ‘Knowing When to Say No,’ 41.

<sup>253</sup> Robert C. Byrd, ‘The Perils of Peacekeeping,’ *New York Times*, August 19, 1993, A23.



both the Senate and the House passed non-binding resolutions with large majorities urging Clinton to report by October 15 on the goals and objectives of the mission in Somalia and to receive by November 15 congressional authorisation to continue US deployment.<sup>254</sup> Criticism of US policy in Somalia was accompanied by a more general critique of Clinton's policy of 'assertive multilateralism' which many claimed abdicated responsibility for US interests to the UN. Jeane Kirkpatrick, Ronald Reagan's Ambassador to the UN, criticised what she saw as 'a vision of foreign policy from which national self-interest is purged.' Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger emphasised the drawbacks of Clinton's enthusiasm for US participation in UN operations: 'the risk is American involvement in issues of no fundamental national interest, as is happening in Somalia.'<sup>255</sup>

The Clinton administration responded to growing criticism by publicly refocussing on US material and strategic interests. In September, Secretary Christopher emphasised that multilateralism is warranted 'only when it serves the central purpose of American foreign policy: to protect American interests.' National Security Advisor Anthony Lake agreed: 'We should act multilaterally where doing so advances our interests – and we should act unilaterally when that will serve our purpose.'<sup>256</sup> On September 28, President Clinton outlined this tougher stand on peacekeeping to the UN General Assembly in New York:

---

<sup>254</sup> Quoted in Daalder, 'Knowing When to Say No,' 50.

<sup>255</sup> Both quotes are from *ibid.*, 50.

<sup>256</sup> Both quotes are from *ibid.*, 55.

The United Nations simply cannot become engaged in every one of the world's conflicts. If the American people are to say yes to UN peacekeeping, the United Nations must know when to say no.<sup>257</sup>

With respect to Somalia, the administration began to explore alternatives to the forceful disarming of rival factions which was costing American lives. Defence Secretary Les Aspin called for less focus on the military side of the operation and a reopening of negotiations with Aidid and other clan leaders. Christopher agreed and wrote to Boutros-Ghali to challenge the military focus of UNOSOM II.<sup>258</sup> As the Clinton administration explored the possibilities of dialogue with Aidid, however, US Rangers continued to hunt him down.

On October 3, 1993, a disastrous raid against Aidid's forces resulted in a sixteen hour fire-fight that saw the death of between 500 and 1000 people. Almost all were Somalis. Many were civilians. Most significantly, 18 of the casualties were US Rangers. Across the world, televisions depicted images of a dead Ranger being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu. Senator Byrd led the call for withdrawal: 'Americans by the dozen are paying with their lives and limbs for a misplaced policy on the altar of some fuzzy multilateralism.'<sup>259</sup> Within days, President Clinton completed his administration's public retreat from multilateral peacekeeping, ceded to congressional and public pressure that had been building at least since August, and promised to bring US forces home by the

---

<sup>257</sup> Bill Clinton, 'Address by the President to the 48<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly,' September 27, 1993. <http://www.clintonpresidentialcenter.org/legacy/092793-speech-by-president-address-to-the-un.htm>

<sup>258</sup> Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 198.

<sup>259</sup> Quoted in Daalder, 'Knowing When to Say No,' 56.

end of March 1994. He informed America, 'It is not our job to rebuild Somalia's society or even to create a new political process that can allow Somalia's clans to live and work together in peace.'<sup>260</sup>

### *An Ideational False Start*

For our purposes, the US-led intervention in Somalia can at best be understood as representing a false start for the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention.<sup>261</sup> A key factor in the decision to intervene in Somalia was the belief that there was little risk of casualties. As soon as US troops began to accept a small number of casualties, support for the operation, within and outside the new Clinton administration, vanished. The Clinton administration's retreat from the norm of intervention can be directly attributed to the loss of American lives. Referring to the 'Somalia debacle,' Michael Walzer chided that if it is a cause for which we are prepared to see American soldiers die, 'then we cannot panic when the first soldier or the first significant number of soldiers...are killed in a firefight.'<sup>262</sup> The problem was that Somalia was never a cause for which either the Bush or the Clinton administration was prepared to see American soldiers die. When

---

<sup>260</sup> 'Clinton's Words on Somalia: 'The Responsibilities of American Leadership,' *New York Times*, October 8, 1993, A15.

<sup>261</sup> Of course Operation Provide Comfort in northern Iraq probably represents the 'start' of an effectual norm of intervention. Both the humanitarian interventions in Iraq and Somalia occurred amidst the early euphoria of the post-cold war era and it is argued that this period, generally, represented a false start for humanitarian norms. The reason for not examining the humanitarian operations in northern and southern Iraq is one of space and the belief that the case does not provide us with particular insights into the nature and strength of the norm of humanitarian intervention that the subsequent examples of intervention in the 1990s do not tell us.

<sup>262</sup> Michael Walzer, 'The Politics of Rescue,' *Social Research*. 62/1: 53-66 (1995).

casualties began to mount, the reality that the US had no material interests at stake quickly overwhelmed any commitment to moral norms and US troops were withdrawn.

Martha Finnemore emphasises the importance of examining ‘the interwoven and interdependent character of norms.’<sup>263</sup> Without attending to the relationships between norms, Finnemore argues, we make the mistake of only observing norms in isolation and miss out on the larger picture of norms interacting in a structured social context. She notes the mutually reinforcing nature of international humanitarian norms such as those abolishing slavery, those limiting the rights of sovereign states to inflict harm on their own citizens, and those relating to humanitarian intervention.<sup>264</sup> Finnemore’s works on humanitarian intervention also feature far-reaching examinations of the confluence of norms regarding who constitutes ‘humanity’<sup>265</sup> and those of multilateralism<sup>266</sup> with norms of humanitarian intervention. Under-examined in scholarship, however, is the conflicting relationship between norms of humanitarian intervention that exist in both the international and the domestic space and norms against troop casualties that find their strength primarily in the domestic realm.

The forces impacting on President Bush’s decision to intervene were both domestic and international. The regulative prescription was to be found in the domestic realm – namely, pressures coming from presidential candidate Bill Clinton, Congress, the media, associated pressures regarding Bosnia, and Bush’s concern with his own legacy. If the

---

<sup>263</sup> Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention*, 57.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Finnemore, ‘Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention.’

<sup>266</sup> Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention*.

causal forces were domestic only, one might argue that the relationship between the two competing norms of intervention and casualty minimisation is readily discernable – one must only discern the relative domestic pulls of the decision to intervene and risk American lives or to refrain from intervening and avoid risking lives in order to explain the decision behind intervening and the subsequent decision to withdraw.

However, in all of the cases that we examine, including Somalia, we see that norms derive some of their strength from the construction of the identities and interests of states in relationship with each other. This is the constitutive impact of norms that constructivists describe. Conceptions of the self and other, and understandings of the appropriate and acceptable response to human suffering, create logics of appropriateness which are constructed within the context of the society of states. In the Somali case, President Bush's learnt values and interests led him to conclude that the United States should respond to the starvation that was occurring on the other side of the world because this was the appropriate response of a great power with the capacity to do so. The relationship of this international norm with a domestic reticence towards accepting casualties in the absence of vital self-interests is highly complex. Moreover, the relationship is indeterminate to the extent that it is dependent on the ability and desires of elites to shape domestic perceptions of what constitutes a cause that is worth the loss of American lives.

An adequate assessment of the relationship between norms of intervention and domestic requirements for casualty-free warfare is beyond the scope of this dissertation and is

worthy of a fuller investigation. Suffice to note that the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention cannot be considered in isolation and the impact of the reluctance to accept casualties in humanitarian operations, which was a feature of realist criticism of the use of American force in the 1990s, must be considered with regard to each case. Two things can be tentatively suggested at this point. Firstly, there does appear to be a direct relationship between a willingness to accept troop casualties and a threat posed to vital self-interests. The intervention in Somalia probably saved hundreds of thousands of lives. Only 50,000 to 100,000 of those 1.5 million threatened with imminent starvation in October 1992 actually died and half of the 1.5 million refugees returned a year later. Yet, in the absence of material self-interests, domestic pressure caused Clinton to pull US troops out after the death of only thirty-six American soldiers.<sup>267</sup> We find a different story, however, when we examine wars that were waged in defence of supposedly vital US interests. 58,000 Americans died in Vietnam,<sup>268</sup> 10,000 body bags were ordered for potential American casualties in Iraq in 1991 while the electorate were told to prepare for as many as 25,000 casualties,<sup>269</sup> and American casualties in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion, at the time of writing, exceed 1,400. The work of Bruce Jentleson, in particular, has shown that the American public does not simply have a low tolerance for casualties; it has a low tolerance for casualties that are perceived to be lost in vain.<sup>270</sup> We will

---

<sup>267</sup> Stephen A. Garrett, *Doing Good and Doing Well: An Examination of Humanitarian Intervention* (London: Praeger, 1999), 171.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

<sup>269</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond* (London: Vintage, 2000), 168.

<sup>270</sup> Bruce W. Jentleson, 'The Pretty Prudent Public: Post-Vietnam American Opinion on the Use of Military Force,' *International Studies Quarterly*, 36: 49-74 (1992); and Bruce W. Jentleson and Rebecca L. Britton, 'Still Pretty Prudent: Post-Cold War American Public Opinion on the Use of Military Force,' *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 42: 395-417 (1998). See also Mark J. Conversino, 'Sawdust Superpower: Perceptions of U.S. Casualty Tolerance in the Post-Gulf War Era,' *Strategic Review*, 25/1: 15-23 (1997); and, more generally, Steven Kull and I. M. Destler, *Misreading the Public: The Myth of a New Isolationism* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1999).

discover in subsequent chapters, however, that this correlation is not automatic and decision makers can sometimes be accused of being more reticent towards risking American lives than their publics.

Secondly, where intervention does occur in the absence of vital interests, the commitment to humanitarian norms may be undermined by the employment of means prioritising the avoidance of casualties. In Somalia, the impact of casualty aversion was discernable not only in the decision to withdraw but in the means employed during the peacekeeping operation. During the operation, a reluctance to accept casualties led to tactics which minimised American casualties but cost more Somali lives. This served to undermine the humanitarian nature of the operation. Soon after the fire-fight in Mogadishu, Richard Falk observed that the desire to minimise casualties ‘inevitably shifts the main burden of suffering to the civilian population of the target society, which is supposedly the beneficiary of the intervention. America is too ready to kill indiscriminately, and too unwilling to accept death selectively on its side in order to sustain humanitarian claims when these are tested by resistance.’<sup>271</sup> It is scary how a benign humanitarian mission, such as Somalia, could deteriorate to the point where troops were killing civilians. The argument used by a UN military spokesman to justify an incident during the intervention where UN troops had killed a number of civilians – ‘Everyone on the ground in that vicinity was a combatant, because they meant to do us harm’<sup>272</sup> – is frighteningly

---

<sup>271</sup> Richard Falk, ‘Intervention Revisited: Hard Choices and Tragic Dilemmas,’ *The Nation* (December 20, 1993), 760.

<sup>272</sup> Quoted in Adam Roberts, ‘The Road To Hell: Humanitarian Intervention,’ *Current*, 363: 24-28 (1994), p. 27.

reminiscent of orders to soldiers before the My Lai massacre – ‘They’re all V.C.’s, now go and get them.’<sup>273</sup>

The Somali experience placed the reluctance to accept casualties firmly at the forefront of the minds of American decision makers.<sup>274</sup> Since Mogadishu, the reluctance to accept casualties has stood in the way of intervention. Moreover, as we will observe in the Kosovo case study, if a decision to intervene is made, the art of casualty minimisation can be pushed to morally problematic extremes. The desire to avoid troop casualties has become one of the significant road blocks to a strong norm of humanitarian intervention.

The Somalia debacle altered the approach of the Clinton administration towards UN peacekeeping operations. A few days after the fire-fight in the streets of Mogadishu, President Clinton reaffirmed his retreat from assertive multilateralism and questioned the future of American participation in UN-controlled military operations:

The reports today say that 300 Somalis were killed and 700 more were wounded in the firefight that cost our people their lives last week. That is not our mission. We did not go there to do that...My experiences in Somalia would make me more cautious about having any Americans in a peacekeeping role where there was any ambiguity at all about what the range of decisions were which could be

---

<sup>273</sup> Quoted in Michael Walzer [1977], *Just and Unjust Wars*, third edition (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 310.

<sup>274</sup> In his recent auto-biography, Clinton notes that Mogadishu provoked a heightened realization of the consequences of troop casualties on domestic support for the American use of force. Bill Clinton, *My Life*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), 554.



made by a command other than an American command with direct accountability to the United States here.<sup>275</sup>

Not minding the fact that the debacle of October 3 was instigated by US forces operating under US control, Clinton here followed Congress in placing blame for the Somalia debacle on the United Nations. This apportionment of blame, whether justified or otherwise, has played heavily on the minds of all American decision makers considering the use of American force in conjunction with the United Nations to this day. The most immediate impacts were played out in the development of Clinton's own doctrine on the use of force. President Clinton was elected with a mandate for domestic reform. He readily ceded to congressional and public demands to retreat from multilateralism and shun notions of 'nation-building' which threatened to undermine plans to implement his domestic mandate. As it was, neither Bush nor Clinton was ever willing to accept the risks and costs of a long-term commitment in Somalia. As Clarke and Herbst remind us, 'Nations do not descend into anarchy overnight, so intervenors should expect neither the reconciliation of combatants nor the reconstruction of civil society and national economies to be swift.'<sup>276</sup> Yet both the Bush and Clinton administrations had refused to recognise this reality. Bush ensured that UNITAF would only remain in Somalia for a few months and during that time, did not take the opportunity to disarm the warring factions. Clarke and Herbst suggest that the warlords simply waited for UNITAF to be replaced by the weaker UNOSOM II before challenging them.<sup>277</sup> Clinton's decision to

---

<sup>275</sup> Bill Clinton, 'Presidential Press Conference on Somalia,' October 14, 1993.

<http://www.clintonpresidentialcenter.org/legacy/101493-presidential-press-conference-on-somalia.htm>

<sup>276</sup> Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst, 'Somalia and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention,' *Foreign Affairs*, 75/2: 70-85 (1996), p. 71.

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*, 74-78.

remove his troops at the first sign of resistance demonstrates that he also failed to accept the costs of effective and long-term nation-building. In the absence of clear and vital material self-interests, intervention was not supported by an acceptance of the inevitable costs – in terms of troop casualties, domestic support or economic costs – of achieving long-term and substantial change. Today, although the crisis has abated, Somalia remains a failed state; unfriendly to Western visitors and a breeding ground for terrorism.<sup>278</sup>

By the time Clinton had articulated his revised doctrine on the use of force, through his Presidential Decision Directive 25 (PDD 25), in 1994, his administration had endured Somalia and the impact of the debacle is clear.<sup>279</sup> Clinton's revised doctrine which governed, to varying degrees, the uses of American force for the remainder of the decade is discussed in more detail in the next chapter. Suffice to note that the Clinton Doctrine, Presidential Decision Directive 25, bears witness to a number of the lessons learnt in Somalia and ultimately displays a remarkable resemblance to the original Weinburger-Powell Doctrine. The Weinburger-Powell Doctrine's requirement for clear objectives came to be understood as the need for an exit strategy, and it was perceived that the best way to avoid humiliating exits was not to allow the US to be drawn into conflict in the first place. With the initial euphoria of the end of the cold war now well and truly put to rest, compliance with the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention in the absence of vital self-interests was perhaps as unlikely as ever.

---

<sup>278</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *Empire Lite: Nation-Building in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan* (London: Vintage, 2003), 5, 12.

<sup>279</sup> PDD 25 was formally released as *The Clinton Administration's Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations*, May 1994. An insightful discussion of the drafting and re-drafting of PDD 25 in the context of the Somalia debacle can be found in Daalder, 'Knowing When to Say No.'

### *Conclusion: An Ideational Retreat*

Jeffrey Checkel argues that the causation effects of norms on liberal states such as the US are more likely to take the form of regulative and rational means-ends calculations rather than constitutive learned logics of appropriateness which are more common to 'state-above-society' regimes.<sup>280</sup> In other words, in a state such as the US where much decision making is politicised and the circle of participants in the decision making process is quite large, norms may impose societal pressures on decision makers that constrain or compel certain actions but are less likely to (re)constitute state interests by teaching elite decision makers new values and interests.<sup>281</sup> Perhaps the apparent constitutive impacts of the norm of humanitarian intervention on President Bush's decision to intervene in Somalia can be attributed to the fact that he was an outgoing President less burdened with anxiety for the long-term political consequences of his decisions and more able to respond to what he perceived as the moral requirements of an American president. Perhaps, this also helps explain why Bush's compliance with the norm of intervention represents an ideational false start for US foreign policy. President Clinton who assumed office during the Somali intervention was not free from the typical burdens of an American President as Bush may have been. The first Democrat in the White House for twelve years, Clinton was in no position to sacrifice his mandate for domestic change by ignoring the political costs of compliance with the norm of humanitarian intervention where no strategic or economic interests were at stake. In addition, the initial public support for intervention did not

---

<sup>280</sup> Checkel, 'International Norms and Domestic Politics.'

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

survive the unforeseen deepening of American involvement and Clinton was unwilling to accept the subsequent political costs of a meaningful and multilateral commitment to nation building. Moreover, the reluctance of President Bush to engage with the Bosnian War perhaps belies the depth of the ideational commitment to humanitarian norms in the first place.

The immediate impacts of the Somalia debacle were felt only a couple of months later when Rwanda descended into genocidal anarchy. It is unlikely that its influence will ever fully fade away so long as the image of a dead soldier being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu remains vivid in the memories of American decision makers.

## **Rwanda**

On April 6, 1994, a plane was shot down over Kigali airport. All on board were killed including the Presidents of Burundi and Rwanda. Over the next one hundred days, a well orchestrated program of genocide was carried out in Rwanda. 800,000 people were killed. The ideational retreat following Mogadishu was confirmed by the American response to this genocide. In the absence of material interests for intervention, the United States chose not to respond to grave violations of human rights. The prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention was too weak to compel the Clinton administration to do anything to stop the slaughter of more than one in every ten Rwandans.

This tragic case study provides us with some rich insights into the attributes of the norm of intervention. A rationalist perspective is unable to account for some of the statements and policies of members of the Clinton administration. The reluctance to describe what was occurring in Rwanda as genocide points to the substance of the norm. The administration seemed aware that if the Rwandan crisis was portrayed as genocide, there would be increased pressure to ‘prevent and punish’ it. Their semantic reticence implies an understanding that acknowledgement of genocide would carry with it a felt obligation to respond. The evidence of the prescriptive norm here can be understood more clearly in a regulative sense than a constitutive sense. While US national interests were not

(re)constituted towards a preference for intervention, we can observe an awareness amongst administration officials that a certain portrayal of the situation could create certain expectations of an appropriate response. While the norm of intervention was by no means strong enough to compel action in the absence of self-interests, its impact can be noted in the care taken by the Clinton administration to ensure that norm violation was socially acceptable.

Nevertheless, the reality is that the norm was so weak that the administration did not need to work hard to eschew the political costs of inaction in the face of genocide. In the few years leading up to the genocide, information trickled and eventually flooded out of Rwanda warning of the massacres to come. Inaction from the international community in response to the genocide was not a consequence of a lack of information. The intelligence provided to the Clinton administration was clear and accurate. Moreover, extremists did not go to great lengths to keep plans for genocide secret anyway; genocidal propaganda was being broadcast on Rwandan radio for months before the killing began. Yet, when the genocide began, the administration did not have too much difficulty portraying the crisis in a way that would allow violation of the norm of intervention with little or no political cost. Most of the work was done for them. There was little or no domestic support for peacekeeping missions in the wake of the Somalia debacle. Congress was vocally opposed to future expeditions that cost lives and resources without serving the material interests of the United States and humanitarian organisations were unable to create public pressure for action. Moreover, the American media was not about to change people's minds. Not only were the press generally opposed to any commitment of troops,

they misrepresented the crisis in ways that made intervention seem out of the question. In this context, violation of the norm of intervention was not only plausible, it was politically prudent.

### *A Prelude to Genocide*

The Rwandan genocide of 1994 was described by some journalists and politicians as yet another eruption of an age old animosity between two people groups. This was not true. The systematic violence between Hutu and Tutsi can be traced to the relatively recent policies and influences of Western colonialism. It was Western colonizers that made ethnicity the ‘defining feature of Rwandan existence.’<sup>282</sup> It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to delve too deeply into the responsibility of the West for creating the conditions that led to genocide. Moreover, this has been expertly covered elsewhere.<sup>283</sup> Nevertheless, a cursory glance at Rwandan history is necessary if only to demonstrate the inaccuracy and perhaps inherent racism in claims that the genocide was but one phase of an age old, civil conflict that nobody could hope to resolve by intervening. As the genocide unfolded in Rwanda, the portrayal of the conflict in this way by the American press and some politicians and officials allowed the Clinton administration to violate the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention with little or no political cost.

---

<sup>282</sup> Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families* (London: Picador, 2000), 57.

<sup>283</sup> Excellent examples include Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You*; and Linda Melvern, *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide* (London: Zed Books, 2000). For a history of the division between Hutu and Tutsi, see Catharine Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression: Clientship and Ethnicity in Rwanda, 1860-1960* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).

There is some disagreement amongst scholars regarding the origins and nature of the distinction between Rwanda's two main people groups, Hutu and Tutsi. There is consensus, however, that colonial powers emphasised this distinction in ways that altered the fabric of Rwandan society with tragic consequences. In 1863, English explorer, John Hanning Speke, published his *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* in which he compared the physical and moral ugliness of Africa's 'primitive races' to a 'superior race' that he 'discovered.'<sup>284</sup> This superior ruling class were the Tutsi and they were supposed to have come from the north, perhaps Ethiopia, and were more similar in looks, intelligence and refinement to the 'noble Europeans' than other Africans. By the time the League of Nations had given Rwanda to Belgium as a spoil of World War I, the distinction between ethnic identities in the eyes of the west was clear cut. The polarisation of Hutu and Tutsi formed the basis of the Belgians' colonial policy.<sup>285</sup>

In 1933-34, the Belgians issued 'ethnic' identity cards which labelled every Rwandan as either Hutu (85%) or Tutsi (14%) or Twa (1%). The Belgian regime then divided the Tutsi and the Hutu further with its program of forced labour. The majority Hutu were required to toil on the plantations, on road construction and foresting while the Tutsi were commanded to be often brutal taskmasters.<sup>286</sup> The differences between Hutu and Tutsi were politicised and the Tutsi were explicitly privileged as the ruling group. Nevertheless, even by the 1950s, when Monsignor Louis de Lacger wrote his classic history of Rwanda, the missionary was able to write of the 'surprising phenomena

---

<sup>284</sup> Quoted in Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 8.

<sup>285</sup> For more detail see Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You*, 47-54; and Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 7-10.

<sup>286</sup> Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You*, 56-57.



of...the contrast between the plurality of races and the sentiment of national unity. The natives of this country genuinely have the feeling of forming but one people...There are few people in Europe among whom one finds these three factors of national cohesion: one language, one faith, one law.'<sup>287</sup> However, the Belgian policy of privileging one people group over another meant that this national cohesion could not last. Alison Des Forges describes the poisonous result of this system: 'Extremist Tutsis, encouraged by European admiration and influenced by the amalgam of myth and pseudo-anthropology, moved from elitism to racism, and a corresponding and equally virulent formulation (developed) on the part of extremist Hutus.'<sup>288</sup>

The 1940s and 1950s saw the spread of ideas of democratisation and decolonisation through Africa. The Hutu majority began to agitate for greater participation in government. In 1959, the first cases of systematic political violence between Hutu and Tutsi were recorded.

During the genocide of 1994, CNN's Gary Streiker would report that 'what's behind this story is probably the worst tribal hostility in all of Africa; hostility that goes back centuries long before European colonisation.'<sup>289</sup> This report was typical of the mischaracterisation of the crisis as age-old and unsolvable. The West significantly contributed to the development of animosity within Rwanda and there is no reason to

---

<sup>287</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 54.

<sup>288</sup> Quoted in John Shattuck, *Freedom on Fire: Human Rights Wars and America's Response* (London: Harvard University Press, 2003), 28.

<sup>289</sup> Quoted in Samantha Power, *"A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide* (London: Flamingo, 2002), 355.

assume that violence between Hutu and Tutsi became an inevitable and perpetual reality that the West was incapable of ameliorating.

The Tutsi anticipated support from the Belgians to quell the Hutu uprising that began in 1959 but, as it was, Belgium had decided to pull out of Rwanda. By 1962, Rwanda was an independent state and a Hutu president was in power. The first Rwandan President, Gregoire Kayibanda, remained in power until he was replaced in 1973 by another Hutu, Juvenal Habyarimana, in a bloodless coup.

To outsiders, Rwanda came to be seen, over time, as a relatively stable and progressive country. Within the Habyarimana regime, however, there emerged ‘an unofficial and clandestine political and social movement’ known as *Hutu Power*.<sup>290</sup> Hutu Power comprised an inner circle of power known as the *Akazu*, dominated by the president’s wife, Agathe, and her family, which aimed to resist democracy and increase its own control of Rwandan politics. The *Akazu* was supported by a wider circle, *Network Zero*, from which emerged *Interahamwe* militias and death squads. In the 1990s, French and Belgian intelligence began to provide terrifying warnings about the objectives and plans of the *Akazu*. In 1992, the Belgian ambassador to Rwanda, Johan Swinnen, reported to Brussels: ‘This secret group is planning the extermination of the Tutsi of Rwanda to resolve once and for all, in their own way, the ethnic problem and to crush the Hutu

---

<sup>290</sup> Minear and Guillot. Quoted in Robert C. DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians: US Interventions from Northern Iraq to Kosovo* (London: John Hopkins University Press, 2002), 63.

opposition.’<sup>291</sup> By the end of that same year, Hutu militia had purchased over half a million machetes – one for every third adult Hutu male.

The leadership of the Akazu and its intentions were well known. A French journalist wrote in the Paris-based *Liberation*, on February 9, 1993, ‘France is supporting a regime which for two years, with a militia and death squads...are operating a genocide against the Tutsi, as though it were a public service.’<sup>292</sup> A report by the Rwandan human rights group, ADL, described massacres of Tutsi in Gisenyi and Ruhengeri in 1990-2 as ‘genocide.’ In March 1993, a report was published by international human rights experts which made it clear that extremists within Habyarimana’s regime were guilty of systematic abuses of the rights of Tutsi. It revealed that, in the previous two years, those in high authority, including the President, were responsible for the deaths of 2,000 Tutsi while a further 10,000 Tutsi and members of the political opposition had been arrested or detained without charge. A press release distributed with this report labelled the crimes ‘genocide’ citing its definition in Article II of the 1948 Genocide Convention: ‘acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group.’<sup>293</sup> In April, 1993, a report by Waly Bacre Ndiaye, special rapporteur for the UN, concluded that genocide had been committed, and recommended that a ‘mechanism for the protection of civilian populations against massacres should be immediately set up in terms of both prevention and intervention.’<sup>294</sup>

---

<sup>291</sup> Quoted in Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 43.

<sup>292</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 44.

<sup>293</sup> Reports cited in *ibid.*, 44, 55-56.

<sup>294</sup> *Report by Mr B. W. Ndiaye, Special Rapporteur, on his mission to Rwanda from 8-17 April, 1993*, E/CN.4/1994/7/Add.1, August 11, 1993, paragraph 64.

Meanwhile, Habyarimana's government was also fighting a civil war. In the 1950s and 1960s, many Tutsi had fled to Uganda. On October 1, 1990, many of these Tutsi and some Hutu invaded Rwanda under the name of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) led by Paul Kagame. While the Akazu pressured the President to support their doctrine of Hutu superiority, Juvenal Habyarimana was also feeling pressure to democratise. Coupled with the strains of civil war was the fact that international aid was increasingly becoming conditional upon constitutional change and an improved human rights record. So the President entered into negotiations with the RPF.

On August 4, 1993, President Habyarimana and the RPF signed the Arusha Accords in Arusha, Tanzania. These accords included a right of return for Rwandan refugees, the integration of the two warring armies into a national force, and a power sharing arrangement for a transitional government where Habyarimana would remain President pending elections. The UN Security Council agreed on October 5 in Resolution 872 to deploy the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) to monitor the implementation of the peace process outlined in the accords.

Philip Gourevitch contends that the Arusha Accords amounted to a 'political suicide note' for Habyarimana.<sup>295</sup> The more the President negotiated away the power of the Akazu while the international community failed to respond to massacres of Tutsi civilians, the more the idea of a 'final solution' to the Tutsi problem became the most

---

<sup>295</sup> Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You*, 99.

obvious and rational way, in the minds of extremists, of eliminating the need for compromise with the RPF.<sup>296</sup>

As the Accords were being signed, Radio Television Libres des Milles Collines (RTLHC) began broadcasting from Kigali.<sup>297</sup> The station was funded by members and friends of the Akazu, including the President, and was dedicated to genocidal propaganda. The pro-Hutu message of RTLHC was clear and direct in its opposition to Arusha and its hostility towards Tutsi. On November 26, 1993, one announcer was bold enough to call for the assassination of Agathe Uwilingiyimana, the pro-democracy prime minister in the coalition government formed under Arusha. Western diplomats in Kigali, however, did not take RTLHC seriously. David Rawson, the US Ambassador to Rwanda, said that its euphemisms were subject to various interpretations and that the United States believed in freedom of speech.<sup>298</sup>

### *The Involvement of the West*

Only two days before Resolution 872 was signed, establishing UNAMIR, eighteen US Rangers were killed in Mogadishu. As was observed in chapter two, the deaths of these Rangers created significant opposition in the US to committing to UN peacekeeping

---

<sup>296</sup> Nicholas Wheeler, *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 212.

<sup>297</sup> There is some confusion in the literature as to the date on which RTLHC began broadcasting. Melvern suggests that the date was July 8, one month before the signing of the Accords. Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 70; Gourevitch records the date as August 8, just after the signing of the peace agreement. Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You*, 99.

<sup>298</sup> Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You*, 99; and Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 71.

operations. Senate Republican leader, Bob Dole, who only two months earlier had outlined a perceived national interest for intervening in Bosnia,<sup>299</sup> now argued, in reference to Rwanda: ‘We must stop placing the agenda of the UN before the interests of the US.’<sup>300</sup>

The timing of the deaths in Mogadishu was unfortunate. The US were reluctant to commit to a UN mission for Rwanda and made it clear that there would be no support for a large mission. However, the Nigerian ambassador to the UN argued that the US had encouraged Rwanda to democratise and so had a moral obligation to support it through its transition under Arusha. The resulting resolution was a compromise. The peacekeeping mandate given to UNAMIR in Resolution 872 only authorised UNAMIR to monitor the ceasefire and the implementation of the Accords. It relied on the assumption that both sides would hold to the agreement.<sup>301</sup> It was not within UNAMIR’s mandate to impose the agreement or to enforce the peace. As the appointed commander of UNAMIR, Major-General Romeo Dallaire put it in February, 1994, ‘the minute there is a significant ceasefire violation by either side...my mandate does not exist here anymore.’<sup>302</sup>

On December 3, 1993, an anonymous letter written by ‘a group of senior officers from the Rwandan army’ was sent to Dallaire.<sup>303</sup> This letter was passed on to the US embassy in Rwanda amongst others. In hindsight, the warnings contained in the letter are

---

<sup>299</sup> Bob Dole, ‘Bosnia: It’s Not Too Late,’ *Washington Post*, August 1, 1993, C7.

<sup>300</sup> Quoted in Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 78.

<sup>301</sup> Anthony F. Lang Jr., ‘Global Governance and Genocide in Rwanda,’ *Ethics and International Affairs*, 16/1: 143-150 (2002), p. 146; and Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 79-80.

<sup>302</sup> Quoted in Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 214.

<sup>303</sup> Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 89.

devastatingly accurate. It advised of a plan to prevent the implementation of the Arusha Accords designed by Habyarimana and a handful of military officers. The plan involved massacres that would spread throughout Rwanda, starting in areas where Tutsi were heavily concentrated. The RPF would thereby be incited to break the ceasefire and resume the civil war. The letter also suggested that opposition politicians would be assassinated. Two politicians were named. Attempts were made on both their lives in mid-February the next year; one was killed.<sup>304</sup>

Then, on January 10, UNAMIR received an extraordinary warning. A man, code-named Jean-Pierre, came forward claiming to be a senior trainer in the Interahamwe militia. He claimed that Habyarimana had lost control of the extremists within his regime and that these extremists were now planning to encourage the withdrawal of UNAMIR by killing Belgian troops and begin the extermination of the Tutsi. He, and others like him, had been ordered to make lists of all Tutsi in Kigali, and the Interahamwe was being trained to kill up to 1,000 people every twenty minutes. The informant was willing to back-up his claims by providing the location of a major weapons cache in exchange for UN protection of himself and his family. The following day, Dallaire cabled the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) with this information and requested permission to seize the weapons.<sup>305</sup> The UN Secretary-General's special representative for UNAMIR, Jacques-Roger Booh-Booh confirmed the reliability of Jean-Pierre with the Rwandan Prime Minister-designate. Nevertheless, Iqbal Riza, an Assistant Secretary

---

<sup>304</sup> Ibid., 89, 100.

<sup>305</sup> Transcript available at William Ferroggiaro (ed.), 'The US and the Genocide in Rwanda 1994: Evidence of Inaction,' *The National Security Archive*, August 20, 2001, [www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/index.html](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/index.html).

General in the DPKO replied to Dallaire that arms seizures were beyond the mandate of UNAMIR. Dallaire was simply instructed to share his information with the Belgian, French and US Ambassadors to Rwanda as well as President Habyarimana.<sup>306</sup>

Some officials and scholars have defended the response of the DPKO on the grounds that Dallaire's cable was a warning that was relatively run-of-the-mill for peacekeeping operations and rightly ignored. Alan Kuperman, for example, contends that 'Erroneous warnings of coups and assassinations are not uncommon during civil wars. UN officials were prudent to direct Dallaire to confirm the allegations with Habyarimana himself.'<sup>307</sup> However, neither oversight nor scepticism were to blame. Michael Barnett, working as a US Council on Foreign Relations Fellow at the UN during the genocide, suggests that the January 11 cable was not treated just like any other cable. As soon as the cable arrived, high-level officials within the DPKO convened an emergency meeting while Booh-Booh confirmed the veracity of Jean Pierre.<sup>308</sup> Yet the DPKO refused to act. In the words of Riza, who replied to Dallaire's cable, the warning was 'alarming,' but the DPKO view was 'not Somalia again.'<sup>309</sup> Barnett charges that, in the minds of bureaucrats at the UN, 'genocide was acceptable if the alternative was to harm the future of the UN.'<sup>310</sup>

Individual states such as the US who were informed of the January 11 cable did not press

---

<sup>306</sup> Tony Marley, a political military advisor for the US State Department at the time, recalls that these warnings must have been passed on to the State Department because he was aware of them. Tony Marley interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil) to accompany the documentary: 'The Triumph of Evil.'

<sup>307</sup> Alan J. Kuperman, 'Rwanda in Retrospect,' *Foreign Affairs*, 79/1: 94-118 (2000), p. 113.

<sup>308</sup> Cited in Lang, 'Global Governance and Genocide in Rwanda,' 149; see also Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 93. However, while the DPKO may not have treated the January 11 cable like any other cable, Kuperman's arguments are supported by Tony Marley's recollections that he and others in the US State Department discredited the accuracy of the cable as they had been hearing warnings of genocide at least since 1992. Tony Marley interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil).

<sup>309</sup> Quoted in Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 216.

<sup>310</sup> Michael N. Barnett, 'The UN Security Council, Indifference, and Genocide in Rwanda,' *Cultural Anthropology*, 12/4: 551-578 (1997), p. 562.



for action. After 23 Pakistani peacekeepers had been killed during a weapons inspection in Somalia, an incident which led to the escalation of conflict and ultimately the deaths of 18 US Rangers in Mogadishu, no state was willing to accept the risk of more peacekeepers being killed while seizing weapons.

Over the next three months, increasingly alarming warnings came out of Rwanda. At the end of January, the Human Rights Watch Arms Project issued a report warning that Rwanda was flooded with weapons. The report noted that, 'In light of the widespread and horrifying abuses committed by civilian crowds and party militia armed primarily with machetes and spears, it is frightening to ponder the potential for abuses by large numbers of ill trained civilians equipped with assault rifles.'<sup>311</sup> The allegations of Jean Pierre were further substantiated during the months of February and March by a network of informers established by the Belgian intelligence unit. Dallaire reported on Feb 23 that he was drowning in information about death-squad target lists.<sup>312</sup> Internal UNAMIR intelligence reports detailed more secret meetings between the presidential party, army officers, and the Interahamwe where plans were made to sabotage UNAMIR's work and distribute weapons to the Interahamwe. Further, a system of communication was set up to allow the Interahamwe to keep in touch with local militia leaders.<sup>313</sup> The RTLMC called for the 'extermination' of the Tutsi.<sup>314</sup> The extremist Hutu press were predicting that 'something big' was about to happen.<sup>315</sup> An internal UNAMIR report dated 2 March quoted an

---

<sup>311</sup> Quoted in Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 96.

<sup>312</sup> Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 345.

<sup>313</sup> Bjorn Willum, 'Legitimizing Inaction towards Genocide in Rwanda: A Matter of Misperception?' *International Peacekeeping*, 6/3: 11-30 (1999), p. 16; and Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 102.

<sup>314</sup> Alan J. Kuperman, 'The Rwanda Failure,' *The Washington Post*, December 29, 1998, A15.

<sup>315</sup> Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 102.

informant saying that a plan had been prepared at the headquarters of the Presidential party for the extermination of Tutsis if war with the RPF resumed.<sup>316</sup>

In spite of all these warnings, the international press was not interested in Rwanda and neither was the Clinton administration. In February, the Belgian Foreign Minister, Willy Claes, visited Rwanda and was shocked to find that stockpiles of weapons were not hidden from view and arms were being openly distributed to civilians in the streets. Claes claims that he warned UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali that Dallaire was unable to achieve anything practical and needed a stronger mandate. Boutros-Ghali replied to the Belgian Ambassador to the UN, Paul Noterdaeme, that the US and UK were opposed to any expansion of the mandate or increase in troop numbers for financial reasons.<sup>317</sup>

On April 5, five days after it had extended the mandate of UNPROFOR in Bosnia and increased its strength by 3,500 troops, the Security Council met to discuss UNAMIR. The President of the Security Council at the time, New Zealand's Ambassador, Colin Keating, recalls that the agenda at the UN was crowded with renewed chaos in Bosnia and troops withdrawing from Somalia. While permanent members of the Security Council such as the US and France, with their own intelligence networks in Rwanda, were kept well-informed of the situation, non-permanent members were kept in the dark. They were not even informed of Dallaire's January 11 cable, reporting the warnings of Jean Pierre, sent

---

<sup>316</sup> Willum, 'Legitimizing Inaction towards Genocide in Rwanda,' 16.

<sup>317</sup> Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 104.

almost three months earlier. Keating maintains that, with better information, ‘the council might have proceeded quite differently.’<sup>318</sup>

President Clinton was facing pressure from Congress which was increasingly opposed to peacekeeping operations since the ‘Somalia debacle.’ He had earlier told the UN that it needed to learn ‘when to say no.’<sup>319</sup> Wanting to demonstrate toughness to Congress, the Clinton administration’s officials at the UN argued that, unless the transitional government was established immediately, in accordance with Arusha, UNAMIR should pull-out of Rwanda. With a change in the mandate from peacekeeping to peace enforcement ruled out, discussion turned to how long UNAMIR would remain in Rwanda. Resolution 909 was passed which extended the mandate of UNAMIR but suggested that the UN would pull out of Rwanda unless the transitional government provided for under Arusha had been established within six weeks time. In Linda Melvern’s words, the Security Council ‘played straight into the hands of the extremists.’<sup>320</sup> The genocide began the next day.

### *Genocide Begins*

On April 6, 1994, a ground to air missile struck a plane approaching Kigali airport. All on board were killed including President Ntaryamira of Burundi and Rwandan President

---

<sup>318</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 111-2.

<sup>319</sup> Bill Clinton, ‘Address by the President to the 48<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly,’ September 27, 1993, <http://www.clintonpresidentialcenter.org/legacy/092793-speech-by-president-address-to-the-un.htm>

<sup>320</sup> Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 113.

Habyarimana. There remains disagreement to this day over who was responsible for the attack. Some blame the RPF. Others assert that Hutu extremists killed Habyarimana because he was perceived as too moderate and then blamed his death on the Tutsi in order to precipitate the genocide. Within hours of the plane crash, the genocide had begun. Road blocks were set up all over Kigali and the names of Tutsi and moderate Hutus began to be crossed off the lists that militias had spent the past few months preparing. RTLMC broadcast incitements to kill Tutsi and issued instructions for militias. Gerard Prunier quotes an example:

You have missed some of the enemies in this or that place. Some are still alive.

You must go back there and finish them off...The graves are not yet quite full.

Who is going to do the good work and help us fill them completely?<sup>321</sup>

The next day, the moderate Hutu Prime Minister, Agathe Uwilingiyimana was murdered by government soldiers. The ten Belgian peacekeepers protecting her were captured, tortured and murdered; their bodies were dismembered.

On April 8, Dallaire cabled New York detailing a 'very well-planned, organised, deliberate and conducted campaign of terror initiated principally by the Presidential Guard.'<sup>322</sup> Violence was being targeted at opposition leaders, the RPF contingent based in Kigali in accordance with Arusha, ethnic Tutsi and UNAMIR. Dallaire was short of ammunition and medical supplies. Roadblocks prevented any movement of UNAMIR.

---

<sup>321</sup> Gerard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: 1959-1994* (London: Hurst and Company, 1995), 224.

<sup>322</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 349.

Nevertheless, he assured New York: ‘There must be no doubt, that without the presence of UNAMIR the situation here would be much worse.’<sup>323</sup> The Department of Peacekeeping Operations replied that he should negotiate a ceasefire.

On April 9, the first large massacre of the genocide was discovered by peacekeepers. At about nine a.m., 500 people attended mass at a church in Gikondo, a parish in Kigali. Interahamwe, led by two Presidential Guards and two gendarmes entered the church and began to slaughter everyone inside. The killing lasted two hours and then the killers looted the bodies and finished off the wounded. The next day, the Interahamwe returned to find survivors hiding in a small chapel. They poured petrol through the windows and threw in hand grenades. This attack was reported two days later in the French newspaper, *Liberation*. The author, Philippe Ceppi predicted that, by the time the RPF, who had responded to the genocide by relaunching their offensive, reached Kigali, the genocide of the Tutsi would be complete. Another French newspaper, *Le Monde*, reported the same story the following day. This report included a Red Cross estimate that 10,000 people had already been killed.<sup>324</sup>

A few hours before the assassination of Habyarimana, an American Colonel, Charles Vuckovic, turned up in Kigali with a non-combatant evacuation order. Vuckovic got all American citizens out of Rwanda by April 9. The Americans travelled out of Rwanda in a convoy of cars, protected by an escort of UNAMIR peacekeepers. 300 marines were transferred from Somalia to Burundi to help with the evacuation of 257 Americans. On

---

<sup>323</sup> Quoted in Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 130.

<sup>324</sup> Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 132-7.

April 10, the American embassy was closed. Thirty-five Rwandan employees of the US embassy were killed during the genocide.<sup>325</sup> Senate Republican Leader Dole, echoed the prevailing mood on Capitol Hill when he reflected on the successful evacuation of Americans: 'The Americans are out, and as far as I'm concerned, that ought to be the end of it...I don't think we have any national interest there.'<sup>326</sup>

### *The American Position*

When President Bill Clinton assumed office in early 1993, Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs at the Defence Department, James Woods, was asked to list possible serious crises that the Clinton administration might face. Rwanda was placed on that list but Woods then received guidance from 'higher authorities.'<sup>327</sup> In his words, they told him:

Look, if something happens in Rwanda-Burundi, we don't care. Take it off the list. US national interest is not involved and we can't put all these silly humanitarian issues on lists, like important problems like the Middle East, North Korea and so on. Just make it go away.<sup>328</sup>

---

<sup>325</sup> Arthur Jay Klinghofer, *The International Dimension of Genocide in Rwanda* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 91; Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 352; and Linda Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide*. (London: Verso, 2004), 128.

<sup>326</sup> Quoted in Shattuck, *Freedom on Fire*, 54.

<sup>327</sup> James Woods interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil)

<sup>328</sup> Ibid.

Nevertheless, the CIA kept an eye on Rwanda. In January 1993, it warned of the likelihood of large-scale ethnic violence. In December of that year, the CIA found that 40 million tonnes of small arms had been imported into Rwanda from Poland. In January, 1994, the CIA predicted to the State Department that the Arusha Accords would fail. They also warned that, if the cease-fire was broken, ‘the worst case scenario would involve one-half million people dying.’<sup>329</sup> Yet at no point did the US try to convene the Security Council to discuss these warnings or the many other warnings provided by human rights organisations, French and Belgian intelligence or Major-General Dallaire. The Security Council meeting of April 5 was only required because UNAMIR had completed its standard six-month operating period and decisions had to be made regarding whether its mandate would be extended.

John Shattuck, Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour at the time of the genocide, recalls how crowded the US foreign policy agenda already was as the genocide began. At a daily staff meeting of senior officials on April 7, at which Shattuck was present, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Pru Bushnell reported that the Presidents of Rwanda and Burundi had been killed and that government ministers were being murdered. The meeting then turned to other crises that were also breaking that day – political pressure was mounting on Clinton to grant China most favoured nation status as a trading partner in spite of its human rights record and its reluctance to improve it; in Bosnia, Serbs and Croats were continuing the slaughter of Bosnian Muslims and each other; and thousands of Haitians were fleeing repression,

---

<sup>329</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 338; see also Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 91.

being intercepted, and being returned home by the US Coast Guard.<sup>330</sup> The Rwandan tragedy had begun a battle for attention that it would never win.

The most pertinent determinant of US reluctance to become involved in Rwanda was the ‘Somalia debacle’. Eighteen American Rangers had been killed in Mogadishu only months earlier and the image of a dead American soldier being dragged through the streets lingered. The reluctance of the Clinton administration to allow itself to become embroiled in ‘another Somalia’ was echoed in the press. *The New York Times*, for example, argued in late April that ‘Somalia provides ample warning against plunging open-endedly into a “humanitarian mission.”’<sup>331</sup>

In an appeal for action, Alison Des Forges argued that there were problems with applying the Somalia analogy to Rwanda when she testified before a House Subcommittee on Africa in early May. The consultant for Human Rights Watch contended that ‘Rwanda is not Somalia and many of the lessons of that experience do not apply here.’ Rwanda was not a failed and disintegrated state like Somalia, Des Forges observed. Moreover, a proposed intervention would not be between rival armed factions, as eventuated in Somalia, but ‘a rescue operation to protect civilians from a band of murderers.’<sup>332</sup> After the genocide was over, Democrat Senator Paul Simon questioned the point of the Somalia analogy arguing that while some American lives had been lost in Somalia, ‘hundreds of

---

<sup>330</sup> Shattuck, *Freedom on Fire*, 39-40. Madeleine Albright also recalls that the alarms coming out of Rwanda had to compete with numerous other crisis spots around the world for attention in early 1994. Madeleine Albright, *Madam Secretary: A Memoir* (London: Macmillan, 2003), 148-9.

<sup>331</sup> ‘Cold Choices in Rwanda,’ *New York Times*, April 23, 1994, A24.

<sup>332</sup> Testimony of Alison Des Forges, Subcommittee on Africa, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, ‘The Crisis in Rwanda,’ May 4, 1994 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1995), 66.



thousands of lives were saved.’<sup>333</sup> Nevertheless, the analogy prevailed throughout the genocide and was even appealed to in order to restrict the American contribution to the humanitarian relief effort after the genocide had ended.<sup>334</sup>

Bill Clinton’s Presidential election victory over George H. W. Bush was widely interpreted as a mandate to concentrate on domestic issues. Running on a platform which argued ‘it’s the economy, stupid,’ Clinton’s victory was over a candidate who had been criticised for ignoring domestic politics and not doing enough to bring America out of recession. The assertive multilateralism of the Somali intervention was initially thought to offer a way to remain engaged internationally without having to be the sole bearer of the costs of global leadership. As criticisms of multilateralism and the United Nations rose to fever pitch in the wake of Mogadishu, Clinton chose to agree with critics in order to defend his own domestic political agenda. The Democrats had wandered in the political wilderness for twelve years. They were not about to return there for the sake of a Central African state which they themselves could not place on a map.

President Clinton called for a review of the administration’s policy regarding peacekeeping. The result was Presidential Decision Directive 25 (PDD 25).<sup>335</sup> This

---

<sup>333</sup> Subcommittee on Africa, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, ‘Crisis in Central Africa,’ July 26, 1994 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1994), 13.

<sup>334</sup> Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Robert Byrd, stated on July 30 that the US should stick to relief and not get involved in security issues in Rwanda: ‘We had enough of that in Somalia.’ Quoted in Klinghofer, *The International Dimension of Genocide in Rwanda*, 96.

<sup>335</sup> An insightful discussion of the drafting and re-drafting of PDD 25 in the context of the Somalia debacle can be found in Ivo H. Daalder, ‘Knowing When to Say No: The Development of US Policy for Peacekeeping,’ in William Durch (ed.), *UN Peacekeeping, American Policy, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1996).

directive was formally released on May 5, four weeks into the genocide.<sup>336</sup> It was circulating amongst officials within the administration and on Capitol Hill as the slaughter began, however, and it can be read as a guideline for the US response to the genocide. PDD 25 affirms that ‘peacekeeping can be a useful tool for advancing US national security interests in some circumstances’ but, hinting at Somalia, emphasises that the policy is informed by ‘the concerns of the Congress and our experience in recent peace operations (and) aims to ensure that our use of peacekeeping is selective and more effective.’<sup>337</sup> PDD 25 goes on to outline strict standards which must be met before the administration will recommend US participation in a given peace operation. These include requirements that US interests are advanced, risks to personnel are considered acceptable, objectives and endpoints are clear and domestic and congressional support exists or can be marshalled. In addition, the directive outlined criteria that must be met before the US will vote in favour of a proposed new UN peace operation even where US personnel are not involved. Two of these criteria explain in cold detail the story of the administration’s failure to respond to genocide in Rwanda. One requirement is that a ceasefire be in place before a peacekeeping operation is deployed. This was the condition upon which UNAMIR was deployed. Another requirement is that for a peace *enforcement* operation to be approved, the threat to international peace and security must be considered significant. This echoes the requirements for the use of force outlined in Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The combined effect was to work against UN operations when hostilities were occurring in Rwanda. UNAMIR was mandated to be a

---

<sup>336</sup> PDD 25 was formally released as *The Clinton Administration’s Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations*, May 1994.

<sup>337</sup> *The Clinton Administration’s Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations*, May 1994 (Presidential Decision Directive 25), Executive Summary, 1, and Key Elements, 3.

peacekeeping operation in the context of ceasefire. When the ceasefire was broken, the US no longer supported a peacekeeping operation and the 'threat to international peace and security' was not considered 'significant' enough to warrant enhancing UNAMIR's mandate to one of peace enforcement. Thus when the genocide began, the Clinton Administration's policy favoured a complete withdrawal of UNAMIR. House Representative, David Obey, asserted at the time that the directive was an attempt to satisfy a desire for 'no involvement, and zero degree of risk, and zero degree of pain and confusion.'<sup>338</sup> James Woods summed up the policy with one phrase: 'We'll only go where we're not needed.'<sup>339</sup>

So not only did PDD 25 appear to rule out US participation in an intervention in Rwanda, it recommended withholding American support for initiatives put forward by other states to stop the genocide. As the UN Security Council began to deliberate about how to respond to the slaughter, US Ambassador Madeleine Albright's staff at the UN suggested that it would be unjust and inappropriate for the US to vote in favour of action by the UN if the US did not consider its own participation acceptable. An alternative view suggests that the US was reluctant to approve a meaningful response to the genocide by the UN as the US may be then called to bail them out and become embroiled in another Somalia. There was a perception among some US officials that the deaths of US Rangers were a result of 'mission creep' which could be attributed to Secretary General Boutros-Ghali's demands that US forces seize weapons. The feeling was that the best way to avoid the US becoming embroiled in another Somalia was to not allow the UN to get involved in the

---

<sup>338</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem From Hell*, 342.

<sup>339</sup> James Woods interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil)

first place. The restrictive guidelines of PDD 25 made it possible for the US to remain inactive and to discourage the actions of other states in the face of genocide.

In reference to PDD 25, one ‘senior State Department official’ quipped, ‘it was almost as if the Hutus had read it.’<sup>340</sup> If provoking the RPF into resuming hostilities was not enough to ensure the US would take no meaningful steps to stop the genocide, the murder of ten Belgian peacekeepers amounted to an extra insurance policy against intervention. Clearly cognisant of the reluctance of Western powers to accept peacekeeping casualties in the wake of Somalia, Hutu extremists had been planning to murder peacekeepers as early as January 10 when Jean Pierre informed UNAMIR of such plans. One senior US official recalls:

When the reports of the deaths of the ten Belgians came in, it was clear that it was Somalia redux, and the sense was that there would be an expectation everywhere that the US would get involved. We thought leaving the peacekeepers in Rwanda and having them confront the violence would take us where we’d been before. It was a foregone conclusion that the United States wouldn’t intervene and that the concept of UN peacekeeping could not be sacrificed again.<sup>341</sup>

---

<sup>340</sup> Quoted in Thomas Weiss, ‘Overcoming the Somalia Syndrome: “Operation Rekindle Hope?”’ *Global Governance*, 1: 171-187 (1995), p. 172.

<sup>341</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 366-7.

### *The American Response*

On April 10, Dallaire telephoned New York and asked for reinforcements. He requested that his troop strength be doubled to 5,000 and that his mandate be expanded so that peacekeepers could intervene and stop the killing. On April 12, British Ambassador to the UN, David Hannay, presented the Security Council with four possible responses to the crisis in Rwanda. The fourth option was to pull out most of UNAMIR leaving behind 'some elements.' Hannay warned that, while this option may initially attract some public criticism, it represented the safest course of action. The Americans agreed. Around this time, Belgian Foreign Minister, Willy Claes, called the US State Department informing them that Belgium was pulling out of Rwanda but did not want to be seen as deserting the mission. Secretary of State Warren Christopher agreed to support Belgian requests for a full UN exit. Political Military Advisor for the State Department at the time, Tony Marley, recalls that the recommendation to withdraw UNAMIR therefore both satisfied US desires to avoid becoming involved and enhanced bilateral relations with Belgium.<sup>342</sup> On April 13, Belgium informed the Security Council that it planned to withdraw its forces from UNAMIR. It justified its decision on the grounds that the mission was 'pointless within the terms of its present mandate' and that Belgian soldiers were being exposed 'to unacceptable risks.'<sup>343</sup> Christopher cabled US Ambassador Albright at the UN instructing her to demand a full withdrawal of UNAMIR.

---

<sup>342</sup> Tony Marley interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil)

<sup>343</sup> Quoted in Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 219.

Over the following few days, the US grew increasingly adamant at Security Council meetings that there was no role for the peacekeepers in Rwanda. On April 15, the US State Department cabled the US mission to the UN instructing the mission to ‘oppose any effort at this time to preserve a UNAMIR presence in Rwanda.’<sup>344</sup> The subsequent position of the US mission was that the Security Council needed a resolution providing for the evacuation of UNAMIR. The US claimed to have an ‘independent assessment’ of the situation which left UNAMIR no choice but to pull out. The implication was that the crisis was so extreme that peacekeepers were placed in an unacceptably dangerous position. This seems to contradict later claims made by Albright, Clinton and some scholars that the nature and scale of the violence was not known for weeks. Throughout the crisis, the US was reticent in sharing with the Security Council the intelligence it had gathered from satellite and other intelligence-gathering capabilities including Special Forces that participated in a reconnaissance mission in Kigali in the first week of the genocide. By not sharing intelligence with other members of the Security Council, the US and the UK were able to portray the situation in ways that non-permanent members, without their own intelligence capabilities, had no reason not to believe.<sup>345</sup>

By chance, one of the non-permanent members of the Security Council at this time was Rwanda. This meant that a Rwandan ambassador was privy to all Council discussions. Details of these discussions were passed on to the Rwandan ‘interim government’ and, on April 16, confident that there would be no significant international opposition, the

---

<sup>344</sup> Document available at Ferroggiaro, ‘The US and the Genocide in Rwanda 1994: Evidence of Inaction,’ [www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/index.html](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/index.html).

<sup>345</sup> Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder*, 200. I discuss the intelligence gathered by the Clinton administration by this stage of the genocide in greater detail later in this chapter.

extremists who made up this government decided to expand the genocide throughout the south of Rwanda.<sup>346</sup>

On April 19, Human Rights Watch sent a letter to the Security Council which stated that as many as 100,000 people had already been killed. The letter observed that what was occurring in Rwanda was ‘a systematic campaign to eliminate the Tutsi.’ It suggested that this campaign amounted to genocide as defined by Article II of the Genocide Convention.<sup>347</sup> The following day, however, UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali provided the Security Council with a report which characterised the crisis as a civil war rather than as genocide. This characterisation reinforced the view that the situation required an all or nothing response and legitimated the desires of the US and the UK to refrain from intervening. The US continued to call for the peacekeepers to be pulled out of Rwanda. Michael Barnett contends that the US mission at the UN was able to justify its calls to reduce UNAMIR on the supposedly moral grounds that the Security Council had ‘a duty and an obligation to protect the lives of the peacekeepers and that the failure to do so would make it harder to obtain troops for future operations and, perhaps, further the decline in the UN’s reputation.’<sup>348</sup>

On April 21, the UN finally passed its first resolution on Rwanda since the genocide had begun two weeks earlier. UN Security Council Resolution 912 reduced UNAMIR from a force of around 2,500 to a skeletal force of 270 peacekeepers.<sup>349</sup> The White House

---

<sup>346</sup> Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 153-163.

<sup>347</sup> Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 220; and Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 169.

<sup>348</sup> Barnett, ‘The UN Security Council, Indifference, and Genocide in Rwanda,’ 560.

<sup>349</sup> In the end, 503 peacekeepers remained with UNAMIR until the genocide was over.

portrayed the reduction of UNAMIR as ‘recognition of the need to ensure their (UNAMIR personnel’s) safety and security.’<sup>350</sup> The American stance was that UNAMIR was a mission in peacekeeping that was not going to change into one of peace enforcement. Consequently, until a ceasefire had been established, UNAMIR should be reduced as there was no peace to keep.<sup>351</sup> In defence of the reduction of UNAMIR, George Moose Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, told a House Subcommittee:

In the end, only the Rwandans can bring peace to their country and no outside effort can succeed without a commitment to peace by the combatants themselves. The influence of the international community on internal conflicts of this type is limited.<sup>352</sup>

Holly Burkhalter, a Rwandan expert working for Human Rights Watch describes the reduction of UNAMIR as ‘the single most important decision made with respect to Rwanda.’<sup>353</sup> Howard and Adelman suggest that it ‘must go down in history as one of the most ignominious actions of the international community in general and the Security Council in particular.’<sup>354</sup> Six days after the reduction of UNAMIR, the Security Council authorised for UNPROFOR in Bosnia to be strengthened by up to 6,550 additional troops.

---

<sup>350</sup> White House statement in Subcommittee on Africa, ‘The Crisis in Rwanda,’ 68.

<sup>351</sup> Testimony of George Moose, *ibid.*, 5.

<sup>352</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>353</sup> Holly J. Burkhalter, ‘The Question of Genocide: The Clinton Administration and Rwanda,’ *World Policy Journal*, 11/4: 44-55 (1994), p. 47.

<sup>354</sup> Quoted in Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 221.



On April 23, Mark Doyle, a BBC journalist, reported that up to 100,000 people had been killed since the genocide began.<sup>355</sup> That same day, a *New York Times* editorial suggested that ‘What looks very much like genocide has been taking place in Rwanda.’<sup>356</sup>

### ‘Genocide’

Article I of the Genocide Convention provides: ‘The Contracting Parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and punish.’ The extent to which this convention serves as an accepted codification of the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention is evidenced by the lengths to which the Clinton administration went to avoiding calling the Rwandan crisis ‘genocide.’ The administration’s reticence in using the term demonstrates fear of an obligation or prescription to intervene if it was acknowledged that genocide was occurring.

Throughout the violence in Rwanda, the Clinton administration refused publicly to use the word ‘genocide’ for fear that this would commit them to ‘prevent and punish’ it. Recently de-classified documents, however, show that senior officials in the administration were using the term ‘genocide’ privately for more than a month before its occurrence in Rwanda was acknowledged publicly. On April 23, the CIA’s national intelligence daily, which was circulated to hundreds of senior officials including the

---

<sup>355</sup> Quoted in Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 176.

<sup>356</sup> ‘Cold Choices in Rwanda,’ *New York Times*, April 23, 1994, A24.

President, reported that the RPF would continue to fight to ‘stop the genocide, which is spreading south.’ On April 26, the State Department’s intelligence briefing for officials including Secretary of State Christopher, noted ‘genocide and partition’ in Rwanda and reported declarations of a ‘final solution to eliminate all Tutsis.’<sup>357</sup>

Dallaire used the word ‘genocide’ for the first time in his reports to New York in the last week of April. However, he did not enter into arguments over the use of the term: ‘We had enough proof that it was genocide, and for those who didn’t agree, we had crimes against humanity on a massive scale. What more did we need to know what we had to do?’<sup>358</sup> Whatever the merits of Dallaire’s argument, there is no doubt that the word ‘genocide’ was felt to carry with it a particular obligation to act. As the weeks passed, the administration’s justifications for refusing to acknowledge the occurrence became more and more elaborate. A State Department briefing by spokeswoman, Christine Shelley, on April 28, provides us with a tortuous example of how convoluted the official description of the situation became and is worth quoting at some length:

Question: A British aid agency, Oxfam, today described what was happening as genocide. Does the State Department have a comment on that or a view as to whether or not what is happening could be genocide?

Ms. Shelley: As I think you know, the use of the term ‘genocide’ has a very precise legal meaning, although it’s not strictly a legal determination...

---

<sup>357</sup> Rory Carroll, ‘US Chose to Ignore Rwandan Genocide,’ *The Guardian*, March 31, 2004, 14.

<sup>358</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 358.

Question: Does determining that genocide has or has not happened, does that also require the US government to do certain things, like try to stop it?...

Ms. Shelley: Again, my understanding of the issue is whereas there is not an absolute requirement if a determination of genocide is made to intervene directly in the particular crisis under international law – and particularly under the 1948 Genocide Convention – there are several ways which are outlined – several avenues that are outlined – in that for proceeding under international law to investigate and ultimately take actions related to the crime of genocide.<sup>359</sup>

Only two days earlier, the Red Cross had declared that ‘at least 100,000 but perhaps as many as 300,000’ Rwandans had been killed. The day of Shelley’s briefing, Oxfam suggested that as many as 500,000 people had been reported missing.<sup>360</sup>

On April 29, three weeks into the slaughter, the Security Council finally addressed the question of genocide. The repeated calls for ceasefire by the international community had misrepresented the crisis and done nothing to reduce the slaughter. Czech ambassador, Karel Kovanda, told the Security Council the previous day, ‘It was rather like wanting Hitler to reach a ceasefire with the Jews.’<sup>361</sup> Security Council President, Colin Keating, drafted a presidential statement on the Rwandan atrocities which included the word ‘genocide.’ A number of Council members, including the US, expressed their opposition to the use of the word. UK Ambassador, David Hannay, suggested that they would

---

<sup>359</sup> Department of State Daily Press Briefing, April 28, 1994, [http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily\\_briefings/1994/9404/940428db.html](http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1994/9404/940428db.html).

<sup>360</sup> Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 357.

<sup>361</sup> Quoted in Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 179.

become a ‘laughing stock’ if the word was used yet the Council had refused to act. After Keating threatened to force members into a public vote, a compromise was reached whereby a statement was issued which included phrases from the Genocide Convention but did not use the word ‘genocide.’<sup>362</sup>

A discussion paper prepared by the Office of the Secretary of Defence, dated May 1, reveals how self conscious the administration’s decision to avoid using the term ‘genocide’ was. With regard to an investigation into whether genocide had occurred, the paper advised: ‘Be Careful. Legal at State was worried about this yesterday – Genocide finding could commit (the US government) to actually “do something.”’<sup>363</sup>

On May 5, The Clinton administration publicly released PDD 25. At a press conference, National Security Advisor, Anthony Lake, explained America’s inaction in Rwanda:

Some of these internal conflicts challenge our interests, and some of them do not. But the cumulative effect of all these internal conflicts around the world is significant...I want to work to end every conflict...And I know the president does, and I know the American people do. But neither we nor the international community have the resources nor the mandate to do so. So we have to make distinctions. We have to ask the hard questions about where and when we can

---

<sup>362</sup> Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 225-6; and Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 179-180. See UN document S/PRST/1994/21, April 30, 1994.

<sup>363</sup> Document available at Ferroggiaro, ‘The US and the Genocide in Rwanda 1994: Evidence of Inaction,’ [www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/index.html](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/index.html).

intervene. And the reality is that we cannot often solve other people's problems;  
we can never build their nations for them.<sup>364</sup>

Reflecting Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell's long standing position,  
Lake emphasised:

Let us be clear: peacekeeping is not at the centre of our foreign or defence policy.  
Our armed forces' primary mission is not to conduct peace operations but to win  
wars.<sup>365</sup>

On May 6, the Security Council finally began to act – slowly. Non-permanent members,  
Spain, New Zealand, Argentina and the Czech Republic, presented a draft resolution  
calling for UNAMIR to be reinforced. For the first time, the Security Council began to  
debate informally the question of an intervention force to protect civilians from being  
slaughtered. A requested report from Boutros Boutros-Ghali arrived one week later which  
recommended the deployment of 5,500 troops to create safe conditions for the protection  
of displaced people and the delivery of humanitarian aid.<sup>366</sup> This planned operation,  
which would be called UNAMIR II, was quite similar to Dallaire's original plan.

Meanwhile, internal briefings in the Clinton administration continued to confirm the  
occurrence of genocide. A May 9 internal Defence Intelligence Agency report observed

---

<sup>364</sup> 'Press Briefing by National Security Advisor Tony Lake and Director for Strategic Plans and Policy  
General Wesley Clark,' Washington D.C., May 5, 1994, <http://clinton6.nara.gov/1994/05/1994-05-05-lake-and-clark-briefing-on-peacekeeping-policy.html>

<sup>365</sup> Ibid.

<sup>366</sup> See UN document S/1994/565, May 13, 1994.

that the killing was planned; lists of victims were prepared well in advance and the killing was directed by the interim government – ‘An organised parallel effort of genocide (is) being implemented by the army to destroy the leadership of the Tutsi community.’<sup>367</sup> Nevertheless the use of the word ‘genocide’ continued to be resisted publicly.

In the early hours of May 17, Resolution 918 was passed authorising 5,500 troops for UNAMIR. Dallaire believes that tens of thousands of lives could have still been saved if the troops mandated in Resolution 918 had been deployed speedily and effectively.<sup>368</sup> However, that was not to be the case. Throughout May, the US blocked Boutros-Ghali’s plan to airlift troops into Kigali. Concerned for the safety of their personnel, the US argued for the expanded operation to be based outside Kigali. They proposed the creation of ‘protective zones’ at Rwanda’s borders with Tanzania and Congo. The US were determined to keep the mission casualty free. Dallaire bitterly recalls that ‘The two plans (his and the US’) had very different objectives...My mission was to save Rwandans. Their mission was to put on a show at no risk.’<sup>369</sup> When the Americans finally relented, the compromised resolution was virtually useless. While a number of African states had offered troops, no equipment had been made available for them; there was no means to get troops and equipment into Rwanda; and there was no plan for what they would do once they got there. Colin Keating advised the New Zealand administration: ‘As you will see, the US has essentially gutted the resolution...in reality the expansion is a fiction.’<sup>370</sup>

---

<sup>367</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 355.

<sup>368</sup> Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 198.

<sup>369</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 378. Michael Barnett, however, defends the US opposition to Boutros-Ghali’s plan on the grounds that it was impractical and states would be unlikely to supply the necessary troops anyway. Barnett, ‘The UN Security Council, Indifference, and Genocide in Rwanda,’ 560.

<sup>370</sup> Quoted in Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 198.

On May 24, a whole month after Human Rights Watch, *The New York Times* and internal briefings in the Clinton administration had first used the term, ‘genocide,’ to describe the killings in Rwanda, Secretary of State Warren Christopher partially relented. He gave his diplomats at the UN Human Rights Commission permission to state that ‘acts of genocide’ have occurred or that ‘genocide has occurred in Rwanda.’<sup>371</sup> State Department officials outside of the Human Rights Commission were only authorised to state publicly that ‘acts of genocide’ have occurred. Thus, the dance continued. The semantic act now consisted of attempting to justify an assertion that ‘acts of genocide’ had occurred yet ‘genocide’ had not occurred.

On May 30, Boutros-Ghali reported to the Security Council that between 250,000 and 500,000 had been killed in a ‘frenzy of massacres.’ He noted that, since Rwanda’s population numbered only 7 million, this was proportionately equivalent to the slaughter of 9 to 18 million American lives.<sup>372</sup> Yet the semantics continued. When asked on June 8 before a House Subcommittee on Africa whether the massacres occurring in Rwanda met the definition of genocide, George Moose stuck by the administration’s line that ‘we believe that acts of genocide have occurred’ and that a UN rapporteur was instructed to

---

<sup>371</sup> A recently released internal State Department memo to Secretary Christopher written on May 21 with regard to the upcoming UN Human Rights Commission sessions advises that ‘A USG (United States Government) statement that acts of genocide have occurred would not have any particular legal consequences’ yet acknowledges that such a statement ‘could increase pressure for USG activism in response to the crisis.’ Document available at Ferroggiaro, ‘The US and the Genocide in Rwanda 1994: Evidence of Inaction,’ [www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/index.html](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/index.html).

<sup>372</sup> UN document S/1994/640, May 31, 1994, pp. 2-3.

‘investigate those allegations.’<sup>373</sup> On June 10, US ambassador to Rwanda, David Rawson, defended this line: ‘As a responsible Government, you just don’t go around hollering ‘genocide.’ You say that acts of genocide may have occurred and they need to be investigated.’<sup>374</sup> That same day, State Department spokeswoman, Christine Shelley, was again questioned on what was occurring in Rwanda. Reuters correspondent, Alan Elsner, challenged Shelley as she attempted to defend Christopher’s new description of the atrocities:

Question: How would you describe the events taking place in Rwanda?

Ms Shelley: Based on the evidence we have seen from observations on the ground, we have every reason to believe that acts of genocide have occurred in Rwanda...

Question: How many acts of genocide does it take to make genocide?

Ms. Shelley: Alan, that’s just not a question that I’m in a position to answer...There are formulations that we are using that we are trying to be consistent in our use of.

The semantic squirming continued:

---

<sup>373</sup> Testimony of George Moose in Subcommittee on Africa, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, ‘Conflict Resolution in Africa: Recent Developments,’ June 8, 1994 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1995), 18.

<sup>374</sup> Quoted in Klinghofer, *The International Dimension of Genocide in Rwanda*, 99.



Question: So you say genocide happens when certain acts happen, and you say that those acts have happened in Rwanda, so why can't you say that genocide has happened?

Ms Shelley: Because, Alan, there is a reason for the selection of words that we have made, and I'm not a lawyer. I don't approach this from the international legal and scholarly point of view. We try best as we can to accurately reflect a description and in particularly addressing that issue, the issue is out there. People have obviously been looking at it.<sup>375</sup>

Eventually, Shelley acknowledged the reasons behind her tortuous semantic act: 'There are obligations which arise in connection with the use of the term.' Gourevitch notes that during the time this exchange took place – around two minutes – an average of eleven Tutsis were killed.<sup>376</sup>

### *To Violate a Norm*

According to its prevailing conception, the national interest of the United States was not engaged by the tragedy of the Rwandan genocide. The crisis was confined to one state which was distant from any strategic considerations. Michael Barnett recalls how he viewed the violence as tragic but was unable 'to make the necessary strategic link to

---

<sup>375</sup> U.S. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, June 10, 1994, [http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu.ERC/briefing/daily\\_briefings/1994/9406/940610db.html](http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu.ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1994/9406/940610db.html)

<sup>376</sup> Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You*, 153.

justify the deployment of US troops.’ Rwanda activated the language of obligations rather than interests. Justifications for sending troops, Barnett argues, needed to be connected to the language of state interests rather than international obligations.<sup>377</sup> In the absence of a material self interest for intervention, the Clinton administration desired to violate the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention.

Samantha Power notes that the Clinton administration simultaneously believed that the American public would oppose intervention in Rwanda and feared that the public might support intervention if they realised that genocide was occurring.<sup>378</sup> Tony Marley recalls that calculations among administration officials were based on ‘whether or not there was popular pressure to take action rather than taking action because it was the right thing to do.’<sup>379</sup> The Clinton administration realised that, so long as they themselves remained silent regarding the genocide that was occurring, the silence in the streets, the media, Congress and internationally meant that they need not fear that they would pay a price for inaction. The existence of the prescriptive norm is confirmed by the reluctance of the administration to acknowledge the occurrence of genocide.<sup>380</sup>

Vaughn Shannon contends that the likelihood that states would comply with a norm is influenced by the clarity of the situation and the potential for decision makers to portray the situation in such a way that does not necessitate action.<sup>381</sup> One senses a fear among

---

<sup>377</sup> Barnett, ‘The UN Security Council, Indifference, and Genocide in Rwanda,’ 572.

<sup>378</sup> Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 373.

<sup>379</sup> Tony Marley interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil)

<sup>380</sup> This argument is supported by Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force* (London: Cornell University Press, 2003), 79-80.

<sup>381</sup> Vaughn P. Shannon, ‘Norms Are What States Make of Them: The Political Psychology of Norm Violation,’ *International Studies Quarterly*, 44: 293-316 (2000).

members of the administration that they may have faced legal and normative obligations to respond if the situation in Rwanda was constructed in a certain way. Consequently, the administration ignored the genocide as much as possible and, when silence was untenable, framed the crisis in terms of a civil war that was a product of the breakdown of Arusha. On April 22, the White House press secretary called on the Rwandan army and the RPF to ‘agree to an immediate ceasefire and return to negotiations...The United States is prepared to participate, as in the past, in renewed negotiation in the context of the Arusha Agreement...The principles of a negotiated agreement and power-sharing in that agreement remain valid bases for a return to peace in Rwanda.’<sup>382</sup> As late as July 24, Secretary of State Christopher was portraying the reality of Rwanda as a ‘tremendous civil war.’<sup>383</sup>

While the reluctance to use the word ‘genocide’ and the desire to frame the atrocities in a way that made inaction socially acceptable confirms the existence of the norm of intervention, the norm was very weak. Nicholas Wheeler uses the case of Rwanda to argue that norms of intervention have developed that ‘enable’ new practices of intervention but do not ‘determine’ that intervention will take place.<sup>384</sup> In other words, while intervention may have been *permitted*, Rwanda showed that it was, at best, weakly *prescribed*. During the three months of genocide, President Clinton did not convene a single meeting with senior policy advisors to discuss possible courses of action with regard to Rwanda. Neither did National Security Advisor Anthony Lake ever gather the

---

<sup>382</sup> White House statement in Subcommittee on Africa, ‘The Crisis in Rwanda,’ 68.

<sup>383</sup> Quoted in Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 230.

<sup>384</sup> Nicholas Wheeler, ‘Enforcing Human Rights,’ in Gene M. Lyons and James Mayall (eds.), *International Human Rights in the Twenty-First Century* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), 178-9.

cabinet-level members of the foreign policy team.<sup>385</sup> Whenever the subject came up at high levels, it was as an adjunct to discussions about Somalia or Haiti or Bosnia or China. The genocide in Rwanda was of such low priority that meaningful action was never considered. James Woods recalls: ‘At the higher levels, they chose not to be well-informed and they chose not to think too much about it and hope too it would all go away.’<sup>386</sup> Moreover, there is no evidence to suggest that senior members of the administration even met to discuss a plan to defend inaction. The weakness of the prescriptive norm of intervention is highlighted not only by US inaction over Rwanda but by the fact that this inaction did not cost the Clinton administration anything politically. In the regulative sense of the norm, there was simply never any meaningful pressure from Congress, the media, the public or other states to compel Clinton to respond to the crisis. In the constitutive sense of the norm, there were no suggestions at the time that a meaningful response to the genocide could or should be conceived as a valued national interest. The weakness of the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention was demonstrated not only by American inaction but by how simple it was to decide not to act and how easy it was to defend this decision.

Linda Melvern observes that, in the first four weeks of genocide, the fact that Tutsi and moderate Hutu were being systematically slaughtered in Rwanda was not once discussed at length at Security Council meetings. Everyone was pre-occupied with the civil war. As a result, there was an implied assumption that only a large and dramatic intervention would be of any use and such an intervention, in light of Somalia, was simply out of the

---

<sup>385</sup> Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 366.

<sup>386</sup> James Woods interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil)

question. No attention was given to the possible contribution that peacekeepers could make to end the slaughter of civilians.<sup>387</sup> Dallaire, meanwhile, continued to believe that a small number of reinforcements could help save thousands of lives. He recalls that the genocide and the civil war were separate problems: ‘What was going on at the front had nothing much to do with the killings of civilians going on in the back.’<sup>388</sup>

A previously cited discussion paper prepared by the Office the Secretary of Defence, dated May 1, demonstrates just how determined officials were to avoid any actions or statements that might set the US on a slippery slope towards intervention. Next to one stated policy objective which was mild to say the least – ‘support the UN and others in attempts to achieve a cease-fire’ – a Pentagon official had written ‘need to change “attempts” to “political efforts” – without “political” there is a danger of signing up to troop contributions.’<sup>389</sup> In the end, however, the Clinton administration did not have too much difficulty in portraying the situation in a way that would preclude a meaningful response. Most of the work was done for them.

The three months of media reporting of the genocide was characterised either by silence or by misinformation and an irresponsible characterisation of the atrocities as tribal anarchy. The silence in the US media regarding Rwanda stands in stark contrast to the indignation vented at US inaction over Bosnia. Samantha Power observes that, while US officials had tried to convince journalists that the conflict in Bosnia was best described as

---

<sup>387</sup> Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 166.

<sup>388</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 350.

<sup>389</sup> Document available at Ferroggiaro, ‘The US and the Genocide in Rwanda 1994: Evidence of Inaction,’ [www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/index.html](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/index.html).

a product of ‘ancient tribal hatreds,’ when it came to the Rwandan genocide, journalists came to this errant conclusion on their own.<sup>390</sup> When the media did report on Rwanda, the genocide was often both misrepresented as a ‘civil war’ and a product of an ‘age old animosity,’ implying not only that the violence was difficult to end but that it may never really end anyway. *The New York Times* described it as an ‘epic struggle between rival ethnic groups’ and quoted a leading Belgian authority on Rwanda suggesting that the genocide was ‘not a story of good guys and bad guys. It’s a story of bad guys. Period.’<sup>391</sup> Another *New York Times* article described an ‘uncontrollable spasm of lawlessness and terror.’<sup>392</sup>

Partly as a product of this mischaracterisation and partly as a hangover from the Somalia debacle, when the media did take notice of Rwanda, they endorsed or at least accepted inaction. On April 10, only four days after the genocide had begun, a *New York Times* editorial suggested that it had almost reached the point where the world may need to ‘stand aside if belligerents cannot agree.’<sup>393</sup> On April 17, a *Washington Post* editorial answered its own question about what might be done in Rwanda: ‘not much.’ It went on to suggest, ‘The United States has no recognisable national interest in taking a role; certainly not a leading role.’<sup>394</sup>

---

<sup>390</sup> Ibid., 355.

<sup>391</sup> Quoted in Gourevitch, *I Wish to Inform You*, 185-186.

<sup>392</sup> Elaine Sciolino, ‘For West, Rwanda is Not Worth the Political Candle,’ *New York Times*, April 15, 1994, A3.

<sup>393</sup> ‘Double Tragedy in Africa,’ *New York Times*, April 10, 1994, E18.

<sup>394</sup> ‘One Two, Many Rwandas?’ *Washington Post*, April 17, 1994, C6.

On April 23, the same *New York Times* editorial quoted earlier acknowledging that ‘What looks very much like genocide has been taking place in Rwanda’ also warned: ‘The horrors of Kigali show the need for considering whether a mobile, quick response UN force under UN aegis is needed to deal with such calamities. Absent such a force, the world has little choice but to stand aside and hope for the best.’<sup>395</sup>

While calling on the Clinton administration to acknowledge that the atrocities in Rwanda amounted to genocide, the American press remained opposed to the involvement of the US military to stop it. On May 18, the day after the expansion of UNAMIR, a *New York Times* editorial warned the US not to become embroiled in an ‘undefined mission’ as it had in Somalia: ‘However anguishing the slaughter, there is no effective international force for ending it.’<sup>396</sup> On June 15, an editorial in the *New York Times* criticised the slow response of the Clinton administration but repeated that US troops should not be sent.<sup>397</sup> The same newspaper praised Clinton on July 30 for not having acted despite the genocide as there was no vital national interest at stake.<sup>398</sup>

On May 25, President Clinton linked PDD 25 to Rwanda when he declared that the United States had no vital interest there and, consequently, should not intervene. He noted that the US could not send troops whenever American values were ‘offended by

---

<sup>395</sup> ‘Cold Choices in Rwanda,’ *New York Times*, April 23, 1994, A24.

<sup>396</sup> ‘Look Before Plunging Into Rwanda,’ *New York Times*, May 18, 1994, A22.

<sup>397</sup> ‘Shameful Dawdling on Rwanda,’ *New York Times*, June 15, 1994, A24.

<sup>398</sup> ‘Lifesaving Aid for Rwanda,’ *New York Times*, July 30, 1994, 18.

human misery.’<sup>399</sup> Always conscious of domestic opinion of his foreign policies, Clinton had clearly realised that there would be no public outcry if the US refused to act.

Melvorn claims that, throughout the genocide, the number of international reporters in Rwanda was never greater than fifteen. During April and early May, there were 2,500 accredited press personnel in South Africa covering the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as President. When these ceremonies were over, press crews were diverted to cover the mass exodus of refugees fleeing Rwanda into nearby countries. Thus, in early May, the tragic refugee problem became headline news but the ongoing genocide was still virtually ignored.<sup>400</sup>

Congress was also relatively silent compared to the loud conjecture regarding Clinton’s policies towards the Haitian and Bosnian crises. A passing comment by Democrat, Eliot Engel, serving on a House Subcommittee in early May, perhaps best sums up the mood in Washington. Before questioning George Moose regarding possible and realistic US responses to the Rwandan crisis, he stated what was apparently self-evident at the time: ‘Obviously, there would not now be support for American ground troops.’<sup>401</sup> While some NGOs continued to provide excellent assessments of the tragedy that was unfolding before them, they were unable to mobilise sufficient domestic pressure to affect policy. The public was perhaps suffering from what has been called ‘compassion fatigue.’ In the years since the end of the cold war, misery and death in Iraq, Yugoslavia, Somalia, Burundi, Haiti, Sudan, Algeria, Chechnya, Liberia, Angola, Sierra Leone and elsewhere

---

<sup>399</sup> Quoted in Klinghofer, *The International Dimension of Genocide in Rwanda*, 97.

<sup>400</sup> Melvorn, *A People Betrayed*, 178.

<sup>401</sup> Subcommittee on Africa, ‘The Crisis in Rwanda,’ 11.



had been broadcast into millions of American living rooms. Americans had become desensitised to horrors occurring in far-off places.<sup>402</sup> The little of the Rwandan genocide that they saw on US television was unable to move them to demand that their government respond. Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa, Democrat Harry Johnston, agreed in early May with an assertion of Alison Des Forges that the reason for US inaction was that Rwandans ‘are black and there are no resources there.’ He continued: ‘A great deal of our foreign policy now, I think, is based on race.’<sup>403</sup> Nancy Sherman draws a direct link between empathy for victims and humanitarian action. This scholar asserts that a response to violations of human rights usually requires a sense of empathy with the victims that goes deeper than mere respect for them as fellow human beings. Sherman contrasts our tendency to imagine ourselves in the place of fearful, white-skinned Yugoslavs depicted sympathetically on television with our inability to relate to the mutilated bodies of dark-skinned Rwandans harshly depicted as a gruesome result of tribal warfare.<sup>404</sup>

The weakness of the prescriptive norm of intervention in response to genocide in Rwanda is further confirmed by the low expectations of those advocating a meaningful response. After observing that ‘it is unforgivable and shameful to watch a whole generation of Rwandese slaughtered in cold blood,’ House Subcommittee chairman, Harry Johnston acknowledged in early May, ‘We are not going to put in any American troops.’<sup>405</sup>

---

<sup>402</sup> DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 80.

<sup>403</sup> Subcommittee on Africa, ‘The Crisis in Rwanda,’ 31

<sup>404</sup> Nancy Sherman, ‘Empathy, Respect and Humanitarian Intervention,’ *Ethics and international Affairs*, 12: 103-119 (1998). Martha Finnemore contends that affective mechanisms of liking and empathy are important in conferring humanitarian norms their strength. Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention*, 156-8.

<sup>405</sup> Subcommittee on Africa, ‘The Crisis in Rwanda,’ 1, 32.

Similarly, Des Forges, a consultant for Human Rights Watch, advocated intervention at the same hearing but left American troops out of her proposed enlargement of UN forces stating: 'I wouldn't have expected anyone to recommend the sending of US forces.'<sup>406</sup>

Ultimately, not only did the Clinton administration refrain from sending in troops, it did nothing at all that could put them on a slippery slope towards intervention. Jamming the extremist broadcasts of the RTLMC that continued throughout the genocide is a frequently cited example of something that the US could have done to diminish the suffering. Not only were the broadcasts whipping up a frenzy of propaganda and terror, they were a means by which the interahamwe received their orders from military commanders and political leaders.

The question of jamming the broadcasts was raised by a number of concerned Americans. Senator Edward Kennedy wrote to the administration in early June urging such action. The response, in the negative, did not come for eight weeks. The Defence Department's official position was that radio jamming was both technically and legally impossible. The Defence Department, however, did possess the technical capabilities to jam the broadcasts at any point during the genocide. The legal argument was also spurious. Tony Marley, a political military advisor with the State Department recommended jamming radio transmissions or, at least, broadcasting a counter message calling on people to stop the killing. A lawyer from the Pentagon replied that that would be contrary to the First Amendment. Marley suggests that this was 'a completely specious argument because the U.S. constitution doesn't apply to Rwanda -

---

<sup>406</sup> Testimony of Alison Des Forges, Subcommittee on Africa, 'The Crisis in Rwanda,' 26, 32.

I would have greater respect for the lawyer had he at least stated that that would be seen as an act of war and therefore had legal problems. But to try to prevent it on U.S. constitutional grounds was completely without merit as far as I was concerned.<sup>407</sup>

On June 22, the Security Council passed Resolution 929 authorising Operation Turquoise, a French plan of intervention designed to bridge the gap while the 5,500 troops authorised for UNAMIR II arrived and became operational. The actions of the French in this operation and its participation in and response to the genocide in general have been criticised in literature as thoroughly as the inaction of the US and are not to be dealt with here.<sup>408</sup> Meanwhile, the US continued to delay the deployment of UNAMIR II.

### *A Final Gesture of Indifference*

As the RPF came closer to winning the civil war and the genocide came to an end, the US provided Rwanda with one final gesture of indifference. The case of the armoured personnel carriers (APCs) is an oft repeated example of the US dragging its feet and impeding effective action and has come to be seen as ‘a symbol of US policy in general toward the disaster.’<sup>409</sup> On May 19, the UN formally requested 50 APCs from the US in

---

<sup>407</sup> Tony Marley interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil)

<sup>408</sup> Some excellent examples include Gerard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*; and Mel McNulty, ‘France’s Role in Rwanda and External Military Intervention: A Double Discrediting,’ *International Peacekeeping*, 4/3: 24-44 (1997).

<sup>409</sup> Burkhalter, ‘The Question of Genocide,’ 51.

order to provide safe transport for the Ghanaian forces. On May 31, the US agreed to supply UNAMIR with the APCs which would be airlifted from Germany to Entebbe, Uganda. On June 19, one month after the initial request, the US began transporting the APCs to Uganda. By June 25, they were finally ready for use, painted and fitted with gun mounts, but the UN was unable to move them to Kigali until early August, almost three months after the initial request.<sup>410</sup>

Weeks had passed as the Pentagon and the UN negotiated over whether tracked or wheeled vehicles should be used, what colour to paint them, who should cover the cost of the paint, and whether the UN ought to buy or lease the vehicles.<sup>411</sup> James Woods describes the excruciating pace of delivery and the lack of resolve by Washington to make the system work as ‘another indication of a complete lack of enthusiasm at higher policy levels.’<sup>412</sup> When the APCs arrived in Kigali, they were without machine guns, radios, tools, spare parts, or training manuals. Dallaire described them as ‘tons of rusting metal.’<sup>413</sup> They were too late anyway. The genocide was over.

### *The Aftermath*

---

<sup>410</sup> Ibid., 50-1.

<sup>411</sup> Steve Bradshaw, ‘When Good Men Do Nothing,’ *BBC News*, published March 30, 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/fpr/fr/-/1/hi/programmes/panorama/3577575.stm>.

<sup>412</sup> James Woods interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil)

<sup>413</sup> Quoted in Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder*, 240.

On July 18, the RPF declared the civil war won. On that day, nearly two months after Resolution 918 had provided for the reinforcement of UNAMIR II, Dallaire commanded the same 503 peacekeepers that remained after the initial reduction of UNAMIR. No additional troops had been deployed.

No one knows how many people died in just over 100 days of genocide. Reports range from 500,000 to one million people. The figure generally accepted is 800,000. One study has estimated that among the dead were 300,000 children.<sup>414</sup> If these figures are correct, the rate at which Rwandans were killed was five times that achieved by the Nazis during the holocaust.<sup>415</sup> By the end of July, two million Rwandans had fled the country; at least as many again were displaced within Rwanda. Goma, Zaire, to where one million refugees had fled, was host to a media frenzy. Within days there were 500 journalists and technicians broadcasting graphic images of the catastrophe. In response to a massive public outcry, the US contributed \$527 million over the next eighteen months in a massive relief effort. In stark contrast to the delays in the deployment of troops and equipment for UNAMIR II, US troops were on the ground within three days of orders being given from the White House. Up to 4,000 US military personnel supported hundreds of US aid workers. These troops, however, were under strict instructions to limit activities to technical humanitarian tasks, avoid operations that could be seen as peacekeeping, and exit as soon as possible.<sup>416</sup>

---

<sup>414</sup> Cited in *ibid.*, 222.

<sup>415</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>416</sup> Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 222-223, 217-8; and Shattuck, *Freedom on Fire*, 25.

As the US was planning the deployment of these personnel, Dallaire received a phone call from a US officer making some risk assessments. He told Dallaire, 'We are doing our calculations back here...and one American casualty is worth about 85,000 Rwandan dead.'<sup>417</sup> The perception of the administration was still that there was no domestic support for peacekeeping. When he announced the deployment of troops for humanitarian relief, Clinton assured America: 'Let me be clear about this. Any deployment of United States' troops inside Rwanda would be for the immediate and sole purpose of humanitarian relief, not for peacekeeping...Mission creep is not a problem here...I think everyone knows this is a humanitarian effort, and it will be kept at that.'<sup>418</sup>

In 1999, Kofi Annan, now UN Secretary General, established an independent inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the genocide.<sup>419</sup> The subsequent report blamed everyone including the Secretary General, the Security Council and member states. In particular it noted a lack of political will to stop the genocide. Member states were said to have lacked 'political will to act, or to act with enough assertiveness.'<sup>420</sup> The report argued that this lack of will to act was 'all the more deplorable' in the light of the reluctance to use the word 'genocide.' It quoted from the Genocide Convention noting that parties to the convention were responsible to 'prevent and punish' the crime,

---

<sup>417</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 381.

<sup>418</sup> Bill Clinton, 'Presidential Statement on Rwandan Relief Efforts,' July 29, 1994, <http://www.clintonpresidentialcenter.org/legacy/072994-presidential-statement-on-rwandan-relief-efforts.htm>

<sup>419</sup> *Report of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda*. UN document S/1999/1257, December 16, 1999.

<sup>420</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

concluding: ‘The fact that what was occurring in Rwanda was a genocide brought with it a key international obligation to act in order to stop the killing.’<sup>421</sup>

The head of the commission that produced the report, Ingvar Carlsson, noted that during the six month study, the US provided no documents and no senior officials who were involved in decision making during the genocide agreed to meet the panel. While Belgium and France have conducted inquiries into their governments’ responses to the genocide, the US has not.<sup>422</sup>

### *What Might Have Been?*

This dissertation is not concerned with the outcomes of intervention so much as the decisions or failures to intervene. Nevertheless, it is necessary to rebut claims by some that a US led intervention could not have stopped the genocide. The reason for this rebuttal is not to condemn the actions of the Clinton administration but to demonstrate the weakness of the prescriptive norm of intervention. The strength of the norm can be seen to be related to the truth of the justifications. If the particular situation in Rwanda meant that intervention could not have achieved anything, then it could perhaps be argued that this case does not shed any light on the strength of the prescriptive norm of intervention as such intervention was considered inappropriate. If, on the other hand, intervention

---

<sup>421</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>422</sup> Barbara Crossette, ‘Inquiry Says UN Inertia in ’94 Worsened Genocide in Rwanda,’ *The New York Times*, December 17, 1999, A1.

could have saved many lives, and decision makers successfully denied or ignored this reality in order to justify inaction then the norm can be seen to be relatively weak.

During the first few days of the genocide, Dallaire began to formulate a proposal for reinforcements to stop the killing. He believed that even a modest expansion of UNAMIR of between 2,500 and 5,000 troops could put a stop to the broadcasts of the RTLMC, intimidate the gangs roaming the streets to cease committing atrocities and establish sites for the protection of civilians. The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict concluded in 1997 that the rapid reaction force that Dallaire called for, if properly equipped, supported and authorised could have prevented the slaughter of half a million people. If such an intervention had taken place before April 21, the political leaders of the violence may have been dissuaded from expanding the genocide to the south with little or no risk to US soldiers' lives.<sup>423</sup>

Alan Kuperman, however, argues that President Clinton could not have known that genocide was occurring until around April 20. He contends that until that time no credible groups had suggested that genocide was occurring and the crisis was misunderstood as a civil war. Further, he claims that scholars have overestimated how many lives could have been saved had intervention occurred. Consequently, he suggests,

---

<sup>423</sup> Scott R. Feil, *Preventing Genocide: A Report to the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict*, (New York: Carnegie Corporation, 1998), 26-7; and Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 223-4. Clinton has since agreed that he could have done more to save Rwandan lives: 'With a few thousand troops and help from our allies, even making allowances for the time it would have taken to deploy them, we could have saved lives.' Bill Clinton, *My Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), 593.



the Carnegie Commission's report paints an unrealistic picture of what could have been achieved.<sup>424</sup>

The simple response to Kuperman's argument that Clinton could not have known that genocide was occurring until two weeks into the genocide is to ask 'how much did he need to know?' On top of the warnings produced by UNAMIR and NGOs in 1993-4, the CIA had predicted that half a million would die if hostilities resumed after Arusha. As the genocide unfolded, the magnitude of the killings may have been hard to fathom but the US had no reason to doubt the intention of the Hutu killers. By April 7, US Defence Intelligence Agency had intercepted communications from officials in Kigali ordering massacres in outlying districts. Within a day or two, the agency had satellite photographs of mass graves in several parts of the country. In addition, two dozen US Special Forces conducted a one day reconnaissance mission in Kigali around this time and reported on the scale of the slaughter. One US Marine later recalled that there were 'so many bodies on the streets that you could walk from one body to the other without touching the ground.'<sup>425</sup> James Woods recalls that everyone who was following cable traffic, press reports and radio intercepts knew in advance that 'something really bad is going to happen and it's being organised.' After the genocide began, he claims they knew 'within 10 to 14 days' that premeditated and planned atrocities were known to be being carried out 'with the full connivance of the then Rwandan government.'<sup>426</sup>

---

<sup>424</sup> Kuperman, 'Rwanda in Retrospect.'

<sup>425</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 354.

<sup>426</sup> James Woods interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil)

The conclusion Kuperman draws from his contentious argument is that an intervention in response to a credible determination of genocide could have stopped the slaughter of only 125,000 Tutsi. Even if we were to accept Kuperman's case, 125,000 is still a very large number of people. While most scholars estimate that 300,000 to 700,000 could have been saved through intervention,<sup>427</sup> even 125,000 is a significant number. It would seem unreasonable, therefore, to suggest that the prescriptive norm of intervention would not have applied in the case of Rwanda by arguing that little could be done to stop the slaughter. The fact that the Rwandan genocide represented a prime opportunity for humanitarian intervention testifies to the weakness of this norm.

### *Conclusion*

The actions and statements of the Clinton administration regarding the Rwandan genocide tell us much about the interplay between norms and interests in relation to humanitarian intervention. In particular, it tells us about the weight and impact of the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention in the absence of a conceived self-interest to intervene. A cursory examination of the case may lead one to simply conclude that the norm is weak; in the absence of material interests, the United States chose not to respond to grave violations of human rights. A rationalist can point to the failure to respond to the Rwandan genocide as evidence that state actions are motivated by self-interest. No one would use this case to support an argument that the conceived national interest of the

---

<sup>427</sup> See, in addition to Feil's Carnegie Report, Chaim Kaufmann, 'See No Evil,' *Foreign Affairs*, 81/4: 142-149 (2002).

United States was (re)constituted by normative pressures towards a preference for intervention. America chose not to respond to genocide because America had no conceived interest in intervening. While some have claimed that the longer term consequences for the Great Lakes Region of Africa and costs in terms of US aid show that the US actually did have a material interest in sending in troops to stop the genocide,<sup>428</sup> this argument finds little political support to this day and, more importantly, was not heard during the crisis and so does not impact on the present investigation.

However, there is much more to be gained from a closer examination of the Clinton administration's response to the Rwandan genocide. A rationalist perspective is unable to account for some of the statements and policies of members of the administration. These can better be explained by reference to norms. Vaughn Shannon tells us that norms are often what states make of them. The ability of state leaders to violate a norm depends on both the norm and the situation. If the situation is sufficiently ambiguous that states can plausibly claim exemption from the norm, they are able to violate the norm.<sup>429</sup> Yet, through their violation – through their arguments and justifications – we are able to discern the substance of the norm.

The reluctance to describe what was occurring in Rwanda as genocide points to the substance of the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention. It is clear that the Clinton administration understood the norm of intervention to be formalised by the Genocide Convention. The administration seemed aware that if the Rwandan crisis was

---

<sup>428</sup> See, for example, David A. Hamburg, *No More Killing Fields: Preventing Deadly Conflict* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002), 56-7.

<sup>429</sup> Shannon, 'Norms Are What States Make of Them.'

portrayed as genocide, there would be increased pressure to ‘prevent and punish’ it. Their semantic reticence implies that acknowledgement of genocide carries with it a felt obligation to respond. Moreover, we have followed paper trails and discussions within the administration that explicitly acknowledge this connection. On July 26, 1994, George Moose admitted ‘I do not think anybody denied or doubted that acts of genocide had taken place. There was a question of what would happen as a result of such a determination, and what kind of a response we and the international community would put in place.’<sup>430</sup> The evidence of the prescriptive norm here can be understood more clearly in a regulative sense than a constitutive sense. While US national interests were not (re)constituted towards a preference for intervention, we can observe an awareness amongst administration officials that a certain portrayal of the situation could create certain expectations of an appropriate response. While the norm of intervention was by no means strong enough to compel action in the absence of self-interests, its impact can be noted in the care taken by the Clinton administration to ensure that violation was acceptable.

However, the administration did not have too much difficulty portraying the crisis in a way that would allow violation of the norm to intervene with little or no political cost. Most of the work was done for them. There was little or no domestic support for peacekeeping missions in the wake of the Somalia debacle, humanitarian organisations were unable to create public pressure for action and Congress was vocally opposed to future expeditions that cost lives and resources without serving the material interests of the United States. Moreover, the American media was not about to change people’s

---

<sup>430</sup> Testimony of George Moose, Subcommittee on Africa, ‘Crisis in Central Africa,’ 34.

minds. Not only were the press generally opposed to any commitment of troops, they misrepresented the crisis in ways that made intervention seem out of the question. In this context, violation of the norm of intervention was not only plausible, it was politically prudent. Philip Gourevitch accurately sums up the approach of the administration: ‘It wasn’t a failure to act; the decision was not to act.’<sup>431</sup>

---

<sup>431</sup> Philip Gourevitch interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil)

---

## The Clinton Administration and the Balkan Wars<sup>432</sup>

Through the course of the Somalia debacle and the Rwandan genocide, war in the Balkans continued to rage. Until 1995, the perceived interests of the United States in the Balkans were adequately served by a policy of containment rather than engagement. Prepared to express moral indignation but unwilling to accept the costs and risks of meaningful action, the Clinton administration would continue for two and a half years with the futile policy of containing the Bosnian war; a policy that was developed by the Bush administration. A number of scholars have criticised the Clinton administration for a tendency to ‘pronounce in principle’ and ‘prevaricate in practice.’<sup>433</sup> Under Clinton, James Gow argues, ‘US policy approaches graduated from virtually no action to little action – the sum of which was to distract international diplomacy and divert any pressure for serious engagement by the US.’<sup>434</sup> Another scholar suggests that ‘Clinton’s indecisiveness and inconsistency confused the world, and his statements promised much

---

<sup>432</sup> I follow Samantha Power in dividing the Bosnian war into two halves. Chapter two examined the Bosnian War during the Bush administration. This chapter examines the final years of the war (and the subsequent intervention in Kosovo) that took place while President Clinton was in office. Dividing the war in this way allows for a discussion of the Rwandan genocide in between the two halves which aids our understanding of the chronological development of the interplay between self-interests and humanitarian norms. Samantha Power, *“A Problem from Hell”: America and the Age of Genocide* (London: Flamingo, 2002).

<sup>433</sup> James Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will: International Diplomacy and the Yugoslav War* (London: Hurst and Company, 1997), 208.

<sup>434</sup> Ibid.

that his policies could not deliver.’<sup>435</sup> It soon became clear, however, that such policies could not be sustained forever.

In 1995, a number of forces combined in a way that led to a meaningful commitment to end the Bosnian war. As the crisis worsened and it became evident that the policy of containment was not working, the Clinton administration came to understand that the developments in Bosnia were threatening the strategic self-interests of the nation as well as the domestic political interests of the administration itself. In addition, a small number of senior policy officials actively took on the role of norm entrepreneurs and encouraged a new direction in foreign policy.

Normative beliefs and moral impulses certainly impacted on the decision making processes of the Clinton administration. It was not until these beliefs and impulses were buttressed by clear material interests as well as international and domestic political pressures, however, that a new policy direction was forged. In complete contrast to the deferential diplomacy that had characterised the previous two and a half years of the administration’s approach to the war, and the neglect and inactivity that were a feature of their response to Rwanda, President Clinton’s foreign policy team swung into action and made a significant contribution to ending the war.

Conflict in the Balkans, however, was by no means over. Towards the end of the 1990s, ethnic cleansing re-emerged in Kosovo, a province of Serbia. The self-interests of the

---

<sup>435</sup> Wayne Bert. Quoted in Robert C. DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians: US Interventions from Northern Iraq to Kosovo* (London: John Hopkins University Press, 2002), 119.

United States in responding to this eruption of violence were clear if not necessarily vital. NATO's intervention in 1999 served to protect the stability of Europe and the credibility of the NATO alliance. Nevertheless, normative humanitarian concerns were also a crucial determinant in the decision to go to war against Slobodan Milosevic. Driven by a principled concern for human rights, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright acted as norm entrepreneur forging a new direction for US foreign policy. Albright was able to successfully transfer her personal commitment to the norm of intervention into a clearly articulated American foreign policy decision.

NATO's intervention in Kosovo represented an important step in the logical progression of American foreign policy. It represented the clearest case yet of compliance with the emerging prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention. However, two key factors limit the extent to which we can attribute the intervention to the causal impact of a strong norm. Firstly, it seems that senior members of the Clinton administration believed that Milosevic would capitulate sooner than he did. The belief that the war would be over quickly may have led decision makers to enter into a war with risks and costs that they were not initially prepared to accept. Secondly, and, more importantly, the supposed commitment to the norm of intervention was undermined by the reluctance of the US to commit ground forces and the decision to emphasise high-altitude bombing that inevitably led to greater numbers of civilian casualties. The norm of intervention conflicted with the norm of force protection. The commitment to humanitarian principles was shown to be 'intense but also shallow.'<sup>436</sup>

---

<sup>436</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond* (London: Vintage, 2000), 4.



While the reluctance of allied forces to accept casualties limits the conclusions we can draw from the Kosovar intervention, the significance of the case for our study should not be overlooked. For all its faults it does seem reasonable to conclude that the fortunate convergence of humanitarian concern with material self-interests produced an intervention that complied with the prescriptive humanitarian norm to an unprecedented degree.

### ***Bosnia***

Stephen Krasner, a realist, and Alexander Wendt, a constructivist, agree that national interests typically evolve slowly over time.<sup>437</sup> Wendt asserts that interests are usually constructed in a routine manner. The construction of interests, he suggests, reflects state identities which are already constructed in relation to other states. Both scholars have also observed, however, that systemic changes such as alterations in the distribution of power in the international system can present opportunities for a re-evaluation of national interests. Krasner notes such an occasion in the aftermath of the Second World War where American decision makers were temporarily freed from specific strategic and economic concerns and were able to pursue more ideological objectives.<sup>438</sup> Wendt

---

<sup>437</sup> Stephen D. Krasner, *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investments and US Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 14, 44; Alexander Wendt, 'Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics,' *International Organisation*, 46/2: 391-425 (1992), pp. 398-9.

<sup>438</sup> Krasner, *Defending the National Interest*, 15. Krasner uses this point to distinguish his statist model from a structural Marxist position where national interest is simply a tool manipulated for the furtherance of objectives by the capitalist class. He describes the 'non-logical' attempts by American decision makers to change the basic political structures of other states made with a misperception of the external situation to

suggests that states can become less clear about what their interests should be as a result of sudden change in relational identities.<sup>439</sup> In many ways, the end of the cold war epitomises the transitory period that these scholars describe. Relational identities among states changed and this led to some degree of ambivalence, particularly in the United States, regarding the content of the national interest and the appropriate direction of foreign policy.<sup>440</sup> No more was this evident than in the Clinton administration's approach to the Bosnian War.

### *Containment*

During his 1992 Presidential campaign, Bill Clinton had advocated a lifting of the arms embargo and NATO air strikes to stop the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia. Richard Holbrooke, at the time working as a board member for a non-governmental relief organisation, encouraged Clinton with a memo stressing that 'doing nothing now risks a far greater and more costly involvement later.'<sup>441</sup> The Presidential candidate had chided the incumbent administration for 'once again...turning its back on violations of basic human rights and our own democratic values.'<sup>442</sup> However, once in power, the Clinton administration failed to transform rhetoric into action. One of President Clinton's first official acts was to request a review of US policy towards the Balkans. On February 10,

---

the extent that the defeat of Communism became an all-consuming ideological objective. This reality was quite different from the policies that Marxism would predict.

<sup>439</sup> Wendt, 'Anarchy is What States Make of it,' 398-9.

<sup>440</sup> See also Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Erosion of American National Interests,' *Foreign Affairs*, 76/5: 28-49 (1997).

<sup>441</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 280.

<sup>442</sup> Quoted in Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will*, 207-8.

1993, Secretary of State, Warren Christopher released the review announcing, ‘Bold tyrants and fearful minorities are watching to see whether ‘ethnic cleansing’ is a policy the world will tolerate...(Our) answer must be a resounding no.’<sup>443</sup> However, the review contained no mention of the kind of military measures the Clinton campaign had championed. Neither air strikes nor a lifting of the arms embargo, policy options which were to become known collectively as ‘lift and strike,’ were mentioned and Christopher emphasised that US troops would not be deployed in Bosnia unless a comprehensive peace settlement was voluntarily accepted by all parties.<sup>444</sup>

In the first half of 1993, America’s European allies believed that the best chance for ending the Bosnian war was implementation of the ‘Vance-Owen Plan’. This plan, created by UN Special Envoy Cyrus Vance and the EU’s lead negotiator Lord David Owen, was criticised by the US on the grounds that it gave too much to the Serbs. The position of the Clinton administration was that it could not reward ethnic cleansing or the forceful acquisition of territory. Ironically, two and a half years later, the administration would surrender these principles at Dayton and reward Serb aggression by giving them more territory than that provided for by Vance-Owen. A central argument of James Gow’s treatise on the Bosnian war is that it was drawn to a conclusion two and a half years later than necessary. It is generally accepted that the failure of the Vance-Owen Plan in 1993 was caused by the lack of commitment from the US. Fundamentally, the difference between the international support for the Vance-Owen Plan and the Dayton Accords that would be signed in 1995 was the willingness of the US to use force to

---

<sup>443</sup> Quoted in Ivo H. Daalder, *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America’s Bosnia Policy* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 10.

<sup>444</sup> Ibid.

implement the agreements which was absent in 1993 but present two and a half years later.<sup>445</sup>

Gow sees the US handling of the Vance-Owen Plan as indicative of the contradictions that characterised US foreign policy throughout Clinton's two terms in office. There is little reason to doubt that a moral imperative to act to stop the atrocities being committed in Bosnia was clearly felt by some senior members of the administration including the President himself. However, this moral impulse was necessarily subordinated to an overriding desire to protect a domestic agenda from complex and uncertain foreign policy entanglements. Lyndon Johnson's program of domestic reform had been ruined by American entanglement in Vietnam. Elected on a platform of domestic change, the last thing the Clinton administration wanted to do was to have this platform destabilized by another 'Vietnam.'<sup>446</sup>

The manner in which this inherent conflict between moral and political imperatives would be played out can perhaps be best understood by considering a quote from Clinton himself in 1993: 'The US should always seek an opportunity to stand up against – at least speak out against inhumanity.'<sup>447</sup> As one observer has noted, there is 'quite a disparity within that one sentence.'<sup>448</sup> Prepared to express moral indignation but unwilling to accept the costs and risks of meaningful action, the administration would continue with

---

<sup>445</sup> Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will*.

<sup>446</sup> Ibid., 213.

<sup>447</sup> Quoted in ibid., 214.

<sup>448</sup> Elizabeth Drew. Quoted in ibid., 214.

the futile policy of containment and deference to Europe that was developed by the Bush administration.

A number of observers have also noted that the process of foreign policy making in the early days of the Clinton administration was less than structured. General Colin Powell lamented in his memoirs that Clinton ‘was not well served by the wandering deliberations he permitted’ in meetings with his principal advisors.<sup>449</sup> Unable to settle on an approach to Bosnia, the President met with key congressmen but here too he received mixed advice which left him no closer to a decision.<sup>450</sup>

In May, amidst pressure from outside and inside his administration, Clinton re-embraced his original ‘lift and strike’ proposal and sent Secretary Christopher to Europe to ‘sell’ it. However, as Christopher himself later recalled, neither the President nor any of the new administration’s top decision-makers ‘had enthusiasm for commitment of US ground troops to force a settlement. Many, including myself, were concerned that American public opinion would not support a prolonged and risky operation for such a purpose.’<sup>451</sup> The Secretary of State did not try to sell the proposal with any enthusiasm. One NATO official recalls NATO Secretary-General Manfred Woerner realising during a meeting with Christopher that the Secretary was inviting him to think that the proposal was a bad

---

<sup>449</sup> Quoted in DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 122.

<sup>450</sup> Ibid.

<sup>451</sup> Quoted in John Shattuck, *Freedom on Fire: Human Rights Wars and America’s Response* (London: Harvard University Press, 2003), 122. Madeleine Albright’s autobiography provides insights into the various positions of Clinton’s principal advisors regarding the Bosnian war and their influence on his policy decisions. For a brief discussion the arguments made by advisors in the early months of the administration, see Madeleine Albright, *Madam Secretary: A Memoir* (London: Macmillan, 2003), 180.

idea.<sup>452</sup> Having failed to garner support from Europe, the ‘lift and strike’ proposal was abandoned. Christopher’s public description of Bosnia shifted from ‘a test case of America’s ability to nurture democracy in the post-cold war world’ to ‘an intractable problem from hell that no one can be expected to solve.’<sup>453</sup> Ideas of engagement were exchanged for a policy of containment; the US again deferred to Europe. UN ‘safe-areas’ were established in a number of Bosnian cities to protect Bosnian Muslims from Serb attacks. The UN Secretariat reported that a further 32,000 troops in addition to the few thousand that were already present in Bosnia to facilitate aid distribution, would be required in order to demilitarise and defend the safe areas. Fewer than 3,500 troops were sent.<sup>454</sup>

### ‘Genocide’

As their predecessors had done, the Clinton administration took great care in applying certain labels to the atrocities in Bosnia in order to avoid an obligation to prevent and punish. The reluctance to use the ‘g-word’ led to some interesting exchanges between officials and House Subcommittees. On April 1, 1993, Congressman McCloskey, a Democrat, confronted Secretary of State Christopher at a House International Subcommittee hearing:

---

<sup>452</sup> Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 302.

<sup>453</sup> Quoted in Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995), 307.

<sup>454</sup> Nicholas J. Wheeler, *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 253-4.

McCloskey: Previously to the Congress in response to a question as to whether or not genocide has taken place in Bosnia, the reply from State was that acts tantamount to genocide have taken place. I think that's not a clear answer to a very important and policy-driving question. Would you order a clear, explicit determination, yes or no, if the outrageous Serb systematic barbarism amounts to genocide?

Christopher: With respect to the definition of the circumstances in Bosnia, we certainly will reply to that. That is a legal question that you've posed. I've said several times that the conduct there is an atrocity. The killing, the raping, the ethnic cleansing is definitely an atrocious set of acts. Whether it meets the technical legal definition of genocide is a matter that we'll look into and get back to you.<sup>455</sup>

Later that month, outgoing department spokesman Richard Boucher requested a draft statement that said that 'the United States Government believes that the practice of 'ethnic cleansing' in Bosnia includes actions that meet the international definition of genocide.' That statement was reportedly killed by the incoming spokesman Thomas Donilon after consultation with Christopher.<sup>456</sup>

The administration tried to divert attention from the issue of genocide, as the Bush administration had done by claiming that all sides were committing atrocities. While Croats and Muslims had committed atrocities, they were on a much smaller scale than

---

<sup>455</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 300.

<sup>456</sup> Ibid., 300.

those committed by Serbs. Nevertheless, the administration went to great lengths to demonstrate parity regarding the atrocities of the three parties. A subsequent CIA study found that 90 percent of the atrocities committed during the three and a half year war were conducted by Serb forces.<sup>457</sup>

Six months later, the official line used by officials to describe the atrocities being committed had become ‘acts tantamount to genocide.’ On October 13, 1993, Christopher finally approved the drafting of a letter by an assistant secretary acknowledging ‘acts of genocide.’ Several days later, this approval was revoked after Congressman McCloskey published an editorial calling for Christopher’s resignation.<sup>458</sup>

On March 23, 1999, the day before NATO would begin a bombing campaign against Serbia, President Clinton would recall the Bosnian war in dramatically different terms from those used during the war. Wishing to portray Milosevic as an evil tyrant who must be and can be stopped, Clinton described the atrocities committed in Bosnia as ‘genocide in the heart of Europe.’ Also, whereas during the Bosnian war his administration and the administration of George Bush before him had implied that the conflict was a product of age-old animosities about which the West could do little, Clinton now said ‘It was an insult to them to say that somehow they were intrinsically made to murder one another. That was the excuse used by countries and leaders for too long.’<sup>459</sup>

---

<sup>457</sup> Ibid., 310.

<sup>458</sup> Ibid., 321.

<sup>459</sup> Bill Clinton, ‘Excerpt from Remarks by President Clinton,’ March 23, 1999, in Philip E. Auerswald and David P. Auerswald (eds.), *The Kosovo Conflict: A Diplomatic History through Documents* (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 2000), 697.



### *Choosing NATO over Bosnia*

As the situation deteriorated through 1993 and 1994, those within the Clinton administration who advocated a greater US leadership role, such as UN Ambassador Madeleine Albright and National Security Advisor Tony Lake, pressed for an effective response to the crisis. Christopher wrote to Clinton:

I am acutely uncomfortable with the passive position we are now in, and believe that now is the time to undertake a new initiative...It is increasingly clear there will likely be no solution to the conflict if the United States does not take the lead in a new diplomatic effort.<sup>460</sup>

When an artillery shell landed in a crowded Sarajevo marketplace in February 1994, killing 68 people, Clinton was forced to respond. NATO endorsed a US proposal for a threat of air strikes within ten days if the siege of Sarajevo was not lifted. Bosnian Serbs chose to abide by the NATO deadline. This moment was important because the US had now become actively involved in the diplomatic negotiations.

In October, 1994, Bosnian Muslims launched an attack against Serbs from the Bihac safe-area. The Serbs responded and the crisis again escalated. In November, days after the Republicans regained both houses of Congress for the first time in forty years, Clinton responded to domestic pressure by announcing that the US would no longer enforce the arms embargo. The United States also insisted that NATO proceed with air

---

<sup>460</sup> Quoted in Daalder, *Getting to Dayton*, 24-5.

strikes to try and save Bihac. The differences within NATO over Bosnia policy came to a climax.

The European allies were opposed to the lifting of the embargo as they believed that an influx of weapons could only escalate the crisis. They were even more determined to oppose air strikes as it put their peacekeepers on the ground in great danger. When limited air strikes were launched by NATO, the Serbs responded by blockading 200 UN peacekeepers stationed at collection sites around Sarajevo and stopping the movement of all other UN military observers in Bosnia. Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, heightened European fears when he warned, 'If a NATO attack happens, it will mean that further relations between yourselves and our side will be rendered impossible because we would have to treat you as our enemies. All United Nations Protection Force personnel as well as NATO personnel would be treated as our enemies.'<sup>461</sup> If it did not want to precipitate the withdrawal of European and other UN forces and undermine the unity of NATO, the US had to abandon the idea of further air strikes.

The administration decided that the preservation of the territorial integrity of Bosnia would be, henceforth, of lower priority than the containment of the war which was, in turn, less important to US interests than the unity of the NATO alliance.<sup>462</sup> As one senior official stated, 'We are not going to break NATO over this.'<sup>463</sup> A *Washington Post* article at the time suggested that the Clinton administration effectively decided that 'it would be

---

<sup>461</sup> Roger Cohen, 'Fighting Rages as NATO Debates How to Protect Bosnian Enclave,' *New York Times*, November 25, 1994, A16.

<sup>462</sup> Daalder, *Getting to Dayton*, 34.

<sup>463</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 36.

better to answer the question “Who lost Bosnia?” than “Who lost NATO?”<sup>464</sup> One administration official was quoted as saying ‘We’ve been trying and struggling to get NATO air power to be used more aggressively for months (to no avail)...The United States couldn’t keep asking for things that weren’t going to happen. The strains on the alliance, the credibility question, the futility of it all – it was better to be realistic.’<sup>465</sup>

In the absence of sufficient domestic pressure or a clear material interest in intervening, the easing of the strains within NATO took priority. Clinton felt there was not enough public support for him to actively engage with the Bosnia problem. Most importantly, he believed that the public would not accept US casualties for a humanitarian cause in a far off land.<sup>466</sup> Fear of casualties was heightened following the loss of 18 US Rangers in Mogadishu in October 1993. In addition to the lack of domestic support, it was believed that engagement with the crisis was simply not in the national interest. At the beginning of 1993, Warren Christopher had asserted that if one did not ‘try to solve the problem in Bosnia, you may well have the entire Balkans involved...and it could draw in Greece and Turkey...The United States (had) an interest in preventing the world from going up in

---

<sup>464</sup> Ruth Marcus and John F. Harris, ‘Behind US Policy Shift on Bosnia: Strains in NATO,’ *Washington Post*, December 5, 1994, A1.

<sup>465</sup> Ibid.

<sup>466</sup> Stephen Garrett contends that polls actually consistently suggested that ‘a majority of Americans *did* support an active United States role in Bosnia. See Stephen A. Garrett, *Doing Good and Doing Well: An Examination of Humanitarian Intervention* (London: Praeger, 1999), 176. Mark Conversino, on the other hand, cites a *Time* magazine poll in which only 30 percent of respondents considered peace in the Balkans as a ‘very important’ foreign policy goal and ‘barely one-third of respondents favored sending US troops to Bosnia should more than 25 American lives be lost in the operation.’ Mark J. Conversino, ‘Sawdust Superpower: Perceptions of U.S. Casualty Tolerance in the Post-Gulf War Era,’ *Strategic Review*, 25/1: 15-23 (1997), p. 20. See also Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will*, 215-6; Steven Kull and I. M. Destler, *Misreading the Public: The Myth of a New Isolationism* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1999); and Robert J. Lieber, *Eagle Rules? Foreign Policy and American Primacy in the Twenty-First Century* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2002), 32.

flames.’<sup>467</sup> Only five months later he was arguing that ‘it does not affect our vital national interests except as we’re concerned about humanitarian matters and except as we’re trying to contain it.’<sup>468</sup>

Having decided to put NATO first, the United States’ best hope for the Balkans was to contain the war to Bosnia. In addition, the US was unwilling to risk the key benefit of the end of the cold war – improved US-Russian relations and Russian cooperation in the UN Security Council – by compromising its relationship with Boris Yeltsin who could not afford to ignore pro-Serbian public opinion at home.<sup>469</sup> Journalist, David Reiff argues that, so long as the conflict was contained to Bosnia, the West simply wanted to allow the Serbs to win quickly.<sup>470</sup> In the meantime, some would argue, the care taken by Clinton’s administration to provide the American public with the appearance of doing something to alleviate the suffering, often impartially on both sides, perhaps only served to prolong the misery.<sup>471</sup>

---

<sup>467</sup> Quoted in Mats R. Berdal, ‘Fateful Encounter: The United States and UN Peacekeeping,’ *Survival*, 36/1: 30-50 (1994), pp. 36-7.

<sup>468</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 37.

<sup>469</sup> Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, 12.

<sup>470</sup> David Reiff, ‘The Lessons of Bosnia: Morality and Power,’ *World Policy Journal*, 12/1: 76-88 (1995).

<sup>471</sup> See Richard K. Betts, ‘The Delusion of Impartial Intervention,’ *Foreign Affairs*, 73/6: 20-33 (1994). Betts even suggests that impartial intervention ended up costing more lives. Admittedly, this article was written before the conflict ended. Having witnessed Milosevic’s unrelenting brutality through the 1990s towards non-Serbs, most scholars now agree that, without the half-measured intervention that began in 1992, many more would have died.

As the Clinton administration and its European allies continued to negotiate with parties in the Balkans, the UN mission in Bosnia, UNPROFOR, continued to distribute aid and protect Bosnian Muslims located in safe-areas. Adam Roberts has observed that the neutral role of UNPROFOR, attempting to keep the peace amidst ongoing atrocities, was unsustainable. To separate purely humanitarian aspects from political factors that led to the humanitarian disaster and to treat massive violations of human rights as if they were equivalent to a natural disaster, he suggests, was to simply close one's eyes to reality.<sup>472</sup> Susan Woodward argues that the policy of the West was 'to do everything possible to avoid military involvement in support of a particular political objective.'<sup>473</sup> Stanley Hoffman contends Western states tried to treat Bosnia as an aid operation, 'so as to be able to concentrate on domestic politics and to preserve a narrow and short-sighted definition of national security and national interest.'<sup>474</sup> Such a position could not be sustained forever. In May, 1993, Warren Christopher, had described the war as 'a humanitarian crisis a long way from home, in the middle of another continent.'<sup>475</sup> This quote closely resembles Chamberlain's infamous description of the troubles in Czechoslovakia as 'a quarrel in a foreign country between people of whom we know nothing.' The irony is that neither the 'quarrel' in Czechoslovakia nor the 'crisis' in Bosnia remained contained as Britain and the US may have hoped. In 1995, it became

---

<sup>472</sup> Cited in Stanley Hoffman, *The Ethics and Politics of Humanitarian Intervention* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), 56.

<sup>473</sup> Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, 19. See also pp. 273-332.

<sup>474</sup> Hoffman, *The Ethics and Politics of Humanitarian Intervention*, 56.

<sup>475</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 306.

clear that the safe havens would remain safe only as long as the Serbs chose to leave them so.<sup>476</sup>

After a relatively quiet winter, fighting resumed in early 1995. On May 7, a Serb artillery shell exploded in Sarajevo, one of the UN safe areas, killing eleven. The failure of the UN and NATO to respond emboldened Serbs and induced Muslims to launch their own offensives. When NATO did respond to additional Serb attacks with air strikes in late May, the Bosnian Serbs took hundreds of UN peacekeepers hostage. The UN decided that it had to preference the safety of its troops over additional air strikes. Washington agreed to ‘quietly’ suspend the use of air strikes. On June 4, French General Bernard Janvier, the UNPROFOR commander, met secretly with Serb General Ratko Mladic and promised that the UN would not authorise any further NATO air strikes on the condition that UN hostages were released.<sup>477</sup>

On July 6, 1995, Bosnian Serb forces attacked the UN safe area of Srebrenica. On July 11, they seized the safe area and began to undertake the greatest single act of genocide in the Bosnian war. Over the course of the following week, Serb forces proceeded to slaughter some 7,000 unarmed Muslims. Richard Holbrooke recalls that, after the Srebrenica massacre, ‘even the most marginally informed person finally realised that the

---

<sup>476</sup> Ibid., 393.

<sup>477</sup> ‘France Held Secret Talks with Serbs,’ *New York Times*, June 23, 1995, A7; Daalder, *Getting to Dayton*, 40-43; and Shattuck, *Freedom on Fire*, 146-7.

policy was headed for a crash, and that we were headed for military involvement either way.<sup>478</sup>

### *Engagement*

Initially, the United States remained unwilling to deploy ground troops or override European reluctance to conduct air strikes. On July 12, State Department spokesman, Nicholas Burns claimed that the US was ‘not a decisive actor’ in the debate about how the world should respond to the atrocities. The perceived national interests of the United States continued to preclude an effective response. Burns claimed, ‘We’ve chosen not to put troops on the ground because we don’t believe it is in the vital interests of the United States to do so.’<sup>479</sup>

That same day, however, French President Jacques Chirac called for the safe area of Srebrenica to be reclaimed by force. Some observers have suggested that Chirac was bluffing in order to make sure that others would be blamed if no action was forthcoming.<sup>480</sup> Whether or not this is true there is no doubt that the French President’s statements put pressure on Washington to act.

---

<sup>478</sup> Quoted in Steven L. Burg. and Paul S. Shoup, *The War in Bosnia Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*, (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2000), 325.

<sup>479</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 406

<sup>480</sup> Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, 326; and Daalder, *Getting to Dayton*, 69.

At home, Clinton faced pressure from Congress, the media and NGOs to engage with the Bosnian war. Congressional criticism culminated in votes by both the Senate and the House in late July for a unilateral lift in the arms embargo.<sup>481</sup> It was clear that this would likely require a US military role in assisting the withdrawal of UN peacekeepers. Clinton's future presidential campaign opponent, Bob Dole, summed up the reasons for lifting the embargo on the day that Srebrenica fell:

The main argument made by the administration in opposition to withdrawing the UN forces and lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia was that such action would result in enclaves falling and would lead to a humanitarian disaster. Well, that disaster has occurred today – on the UN's watch, with NATO planes overhead.<sup>482</sup>

The media also emphasised the impotence of Clinton's Balkan policies. 'Big mouth, no stick' was how the Richard Cohen described the Clinton administration in the *Washington Post*. In the *New York Times*, William Safire suggested that Clinton's 'failure of nerve' had turned 'a superpower into a subpower.' President Bush's National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, who was once so opposed to intervention, now suggested, 'we have a new element involved, and that is just a total collapse of confidence in both the capability and the will of the West, and we cannot afford to let that happen.' Scowcroft went on to assert that it was worth some American casualties to stop Serb aggression. Many human rights organisations that had never before supported the use of military

---

<sup>481</sup> It has since been revealed that the Clinton administration had been tacitly accepting the smuggling of arms from Iran to Bosnian Muslims throughout its period in office. Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia Herzegovina*, 307-8.

<sup>482</sup> Quoted in Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 426. Dole had been calling for the Clinton administration to uphold the principles of international order since it came into office. See, for example, his *Washington Post* article, 'Bosnia: It's Not Too Late,' August 1, 1993, C7.



force now also called for armed intervention. A coalition of 27 organisations issued a press release with a demand: 'Force must be used to stop genocide, not simply to retreat from it. American leadership, in particular, is required...Nothing else has worked.'<sup>483</sup> The Clinton administration was forced to respond.

One month earlier, Clinton had complained to his senior advisors, 'We need to get the policy (on Bosnia) straight or we're just going to be kicking the can down the road again. Right now we've got a situation, we've got no clear mission, no one's in control of events.'<sup>484</sup> After Srebrenica, a weak and deferential policy was no longer tenable. Samantha Power suggests that 'Clinton often sounded more moved by the damage the fall of Srebrenica was doing to his presidency than by its effect on the lives of defenceless Muslims.'<sup>485</sup> On July 14, realising the political price he could pay for inaction, Clinton proclaimed, 'This can't continue...We have to seize control of this...I'm getting creamed.'<sup>486</sup>

On July 18, the administration principals met in the Oval Office to discuss options. The favoured plan was to defend the safe areas of Gorazde and Sarajevo by threatening air strikes with clear rules of engagement and without relying on the 'dual-key' arrangement whereby strikes could be vetoed by either NATO or UN authorities distant from the conflict. President Clinton was convinced. He concluded 'The United States can't be a

---

<sup>483</sup> All quotes from Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 430-5.

<sup>484</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 422.

<sup>485</sup> *Ibid.*, 436.

<sup>486</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 437. See also Stephen Engelberg, 'How Events Drew US into Balkans,' *New York Times*, August 19, 1995, 1.

punching bag in the world anymore.’<sup>487</sup> At a conference in London, NATO members agreed on this plan.

In complete contrast to the deferential diplomacy that had characterised the previous two and a half years of the administration’s approach to the Bosnian war and the neglect and inactivity that was a feature of their response to Rwanda, President Clinton’s foreign policy team swung into action. During July, the US mission to the UN, the National Security Council, the State Department and the Defence Department each prepared papers on where America’s Bosnia policy should be headed. Time was running out. On July 26, the US Senate had voted to lift the arms embargo and allow Bosnian Muslims to defend themselves. The House followed suit on August 1.

On August 7, the President and the Vice President met with the principals to discuss the papers. National Security Advisor Tony Lake observed that a major difference among the principals related to the interests at stake for the US in the Bosnian war and the risks that the US should be willing to accept to protect those interests. The State and Defence Departments believed that US interests were limited. State believed that America’s primary interest lay in ending the violence. Defence was concerned about avoiding another Vietnam. Lake noted that he and Madeleine Albright’s US mission to the UN shared a different view. They saw national interests at stake that were greater than the immediate crisis. For Lake, ‘the issue was US credibility as a world leader, its credibility in NATO, the United Nations, and at home. That credibility would be enhanced,

---

<sup>487</sup> Quoted in Daalder, *Getting to Dayton*, 73.

moreover, if Washington was prepared to go the extra mile to get a settlement.<sup>488</sup> At the conclusion of the meeting, Clinton decided, 'We should bust our ass to get to a settlement within the next few months.' He feared that if the situation was not resolved soon, the decision to engage would be 'dropped in during the middle of the (presidential election) campaign.'<sup>489</sup>

The following day, Tony Lake departed for Europe. In contrast to Secretary Christopher's weak pitch two years earlier, Lake told the Europeans that the US hoped that Europe would join them in carrying out what they intended to do. On August 28, a shell landed near the same Sarajevo market place where sixty-eight people had been killed in February, 1994. This time, thirty-seven people died. Two days later, on August 30, 1995, NATO began Operation Deliberate Force, a bombing campaign against Serb targets that lasted three weeks. Croatian forces had already begun pushing Serb forces out of Croatia and parts of Western Bosnia. As NATO bombs rained on Serb bunkers, surface-to-air missile sites and communication centres, Croat and Muslim forces retook some 20 percent of Bosnian territory that had been 'cleansed' by Serbs in 1992.

In November, the United States, led by Richard Holbrooke, brokered what became known as the Dayton Peace Accords in Dayton, Ohio. Bosnia was divided up amongst Serbs, Croats and Muslims. 20,000 US troops were deployed to maintain the peace and keep together the three groups in a single country with a weak central government. Republican Senators Bob Dole and John McCain publicly backed the Democrat

---

<sup>488</sup> Ibid., 108.

<sup>489</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 108-9.

President's decision to deploy ground troops. Enough Republicans joined Dole and McCain in supporting Clinton's decision for the Senate to approve the deployment of troops.

Samantha Power observes that, 'For the first time, Clinton saw the costs of non-involvement as greater than the risks of involvement.'<sup>490</sup> Clinton justified his decision to deploy troops: 'You have to ask yourself which decision would you rather defend ten years from now when you're not in office. I would rather explain why we tried...(than why) NATO's alliance was destroyed, and the influence of the United States was compromised for ten years.'<sup>491</sup>

In the three and a half years of war in Bosnia, between 200,000 and 250,000 people died. A further 2 million were displaced.<sup>492</sup> Today, Bosnia remains a partitioned state. Richard Betts argues that Bosnia is at peace today only because the unified political structure established at Dayton does not actually function. The US, NATO and the UN have drifted toward 'open-ended occupation' that involves little cost but also little long-term political stability.<sup>493</sup>

---

<sup>490</sup> Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 441.

<sup>491</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 441.

<sup>492</sup> Journalist David Reiff came to a figure of 250,000 deaths soon after the war ended. More recent estimates put the figure closer to 200,000.

<sup>493</sup> Richard K. Betts, 'The Lesser Evil: The Best Way Out of the Balkans,' *The National Interest*, 64: 53-65 (2001). See also Charles Krauthammer, 'The Short, Unhappy Life of Humanitarian War,' *The National Interest*, Fall: 5-8 (1999).

### *Norm or Self-Interest?*

Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour at the time of the Bosnian War, John Shattuck, contends that no single factor was more important in changing US policy towards the Bosnian war than what took place in Srebrenica. He describes NATO's response to the massacre in Srebrenica as 'a triumph for the most basic principle of human rights – that genocide must never be committed with impunity.' However, he acknowledges that this was 'a triumph preceded by seemingly endless failure.'<sup>494</sup> In order to understand the reasons why US policy on Bosnia changed, we must consider the process by which a new policy was forged and determine whether the change was driven by norms, interests or a combination of the two.

In his detailed account of the Clinton administration's policy towards the war in Bosnia, Ivo Daalder stresses the role of Anthony Lake and, to a lesser extent, Madeleine Albright as policy entrepreneurs who, in 1995, led the effort forging a new direction for US foreign policy.<sup>495</sup> To some degree, the role performed by Lake and Albright corresponds with the function of 'norm entrepreneur' as described by scholars such as Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink.<sup>496</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink suggest that, rather than appearing out of thin air, norms are 'actively built by agents having strong notions about

---

<sup>494</sup> Shattuck, *Freedom on Fire*, 118.

<sup>495</sup> See Daalder, *Getting to Dayton*, 82-116; and Ivo Daalder interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/military](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/military) to accompany the documentary: 'Give War a Chance.'

<sup>496</sup> Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,' *International Organisation*, 52/4: 887-917 (1998), pp. 896-899. See also Jeffrey T. Checkel, 'International Norms and Domestic Politics: Bridging the Rationalist-Constructivist Divide,' *European Journal of International Relations*, 3/4: 473-495 (1997).

appropriate or desirable behaviour in their community.’<sup>497</sup> Norm entrepreneurs frame issues in new ways and adopt different ways of talking about them. In constructing their frames, however, ‘they face firmly embedded alternative norms and frames that create alternative perceptions of both appropriateness and interest.’<sup>498</sup> In a memo to Clinton, Anthony Lake had once observed that prevailing conceptions of the United States’ national interest had led to a ‘weak, muddle-through strategy in Bosnia (that) was becoming a cancer on (Clinton’s) entire foreign policy – spreading and eating away at its credibility.’<sup>499</sup> At the August 7, 1995, meeting with the principals, Lake fought the prevailing conceptions of the national interest and reframed it in terms of America’s reputation and credibility.

Shattuck’s recent book, *Freedom on Fire*, provides insights into the difficulties that norm entrepreneurs face in forging new foreign policy directions within US administrations. He notes that hundreds and sometimes thousands of people from different agencies and bureaucracies are likely to be involved and affected by any major policy decision. Each of these people will work to defend their own piece of turf.<sup>500</sup> Under these conditions, significant normative change is improbable if it is not accompanied by accepted material self-interests.<sup>501</sup> It is reasonable to conclude that Lake’s role as norm entrepreneur did play a part in forging a new direction for US policy on Bosnia. However, we must not be too quick to conclude that August 1995 saw the embedding of the prescriptive norm of

---

<sup>497</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, ‘International Norm Dynamics,’ 896.

<sup>498</sup> Ibid., 897.

<sup>499</sup> Daalder, *Getting to Dayton*, 84.

<sup>500</sup> Shattuck, *Freedom on Fire*, 122-3.

<sup>501</sup> For a discussion of the relationship between forms of domestic politics and the causal impact of international norms, see Checkel, ‘International Norms and Domestic Politics.’

intervention. We must not ignore the interplay of this norm with American material interests as well as the political self-interest of President Clinton.

President Clinton was often criticised by scholars for pursuing values over interests.<sup>502</sup> One scholar laments Clinton's 'political-military doctrine' in which 'the use of force abroad could only be justified by humanitarian considerations, free of sordid calculations of national interests.'<sup>503</sup> Neither criticism is empirically correct. There is no doubt that the Clinton administration experienced difficulty coherently articulating reasons for the use of force now that the cold war was over and the paradigm of a battle of good versus evil no longer prevailed. The debate over humanitarian intervention in the 1990s did reflect the ambivalence regarding American national interests and the policies it should pursue.<sup>504</sup> Nevertheless, the argument that values were accorded primacy over interests in this period does not match the historical record.<sup>505</sup>

---

<sup>502</sup> A well known example is a trenchant article by Michael Mandelbaum, 'Foreign Policy as Social Work,' *Foreign Affairs*, 75/1: 16-32 (1996).

<sup>503</sup> Harvey Sicherman, 'The Revival of Geopolitics,' *Intercollegiate Review*, 37/2: 17 (2002).

<sup>504</sup> For such an assessment of Clinton's foreign policy, see David Reiff, 'The Crusaders: Moral Principles, Strategic Interests, and Military Force,' *World Policy Journal*, 17/2: 39-47 (2000). and Christopher Coker, 'The United States and the ethics of post modern war,' in Karen E. Smith, and Margot Light, (eds.), *Ethics and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

<sup>505</sup> For a reply to Mandelbaum's 'Foreign Policy as Social Work' article, see Stanley Hoffman's chapter, 'In Defense of Mother Theresa: Morality in Foreign Policy,' in his own book, *World Disorders: Troubled Peace in the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998). The present point that Clinton did not preference values over interests in Bosnia aside, Hoffman makes the constructivist contention that the distinction between interests and values is itself 'largely fallacious' (p. 147). There is no reason why the national interest cannot be constructed in a way that incorporates values. Hoffman then takes this point one significant step further: 'Among the reasons the opposition between interests and values is a sham are that a great power has an "interest" in world order that goes beyond strict national security concerns and that its definition of order is largely shaped by its values' (p. 148). This has implications for the interplay between humanitarian norms and the enlightened self-interest of great powers. These implications are explored in the conclusion of the present chapter and the concluding chapter that immediately follows.

Until 1995, the US' perceived interests in the Balkans were adequately served by a policy of containment rather than engagement. As the Dayton Accords were signed, President Clinton noted, 'If war reignites in Bosnia, it could spark a much wider conflagration. In 1914, a gunshot in Sarajevo launched the first of two world wars.'<sup>506</sup> As the crisis had worsened and had it become clear that the policy of containment was not working, the Clinton administration had come to understand that the developments in Bosnia were threatening strategic self-interests of the nation as well as the domestic political interests of the administration itself.<sup>507</sup> James Gow concludes that it was only the eventual activation of political and strategic interests that led the international community to engage meaningfully with the Bosnian war:

(Bosnia) represented the limits of European integration, of humanitarian concern and of political interest. It was the contemporary border between what was close enough not to be ignored, but not so close that it had to be dealt with fully. Nor was it important enough that it had to be clearly understood and something done about it. However, the longer the conflict lasted and the deeper international involvement became, the higher the international stake in the outcome became.<sup>508</sup>

President Clinton came to realise that ending the war was in America's national self-interest as it was the only way to protect the credibility of the US and to preserve the stability of Europe. Richard Holbrooke, chief US negotiator during the Dayton peace talks, recalls what he saw as the vital US interests at stake in the Bosnian war:

---

<sup>506</sup> Quoted in Mandelbaum, 'Foreign Policy as Social Work,' 25.

<sup>507</sup> Burg and Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, 412.

<sup>508</sup> Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will*, 328.



An unchecked aggression, which destabilises all of south-eastern Europe, which slaughters over 200,000 people in the most barbaric way, and which could spread to neighbouring countries, left unchecked...would bring us in, just as we had been brought into three other crises in Europe earlier in the century...We could not remain aloof from this. For larger strategic reasons, for historical reasons, and for humanitarian and moral reasons, American leadership was still needed in Europe, and that leadership was essential because, left to themselves, the European Union members could not deal with the problem.<sup>509</sup>

At the same time, Clinton himself was facing significant pressure from Congress, the media and NGOs. While normative beliefs and moral impulses had certainly impacted on the decision making process within the Clinton administration since it came into office, it was not until they were buttressed by clear material interests as well as international and domestic political pressures that a new policy direction was forged. The political pressures applied by Congress, the media and NGOs and the international community were representative of the regulative function of the norm of intervention. President Clinton came to understand that it was in his political interest to comply with the norm. However, as influential as Lake and Albright were in changing the direction of policy on Bosnia, we should not over-estimate the constitutive impact of the norm on the constructed interests of the United States.

---

<sup>509</sup> Richard Holbrooke interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/military](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/military)

## ***Kosovo***

### *Background to the Conflict*

The antecedents of the Kosovar conflict are centuries old. In 1389, Serbia lost the Battle of Kosovo against the invading Ottoman Empire. This battle, which took place near Kosovo's present day capital, Pristina, marked the beginning of the end of the mediaeval Serbian state. Over the next 600 years, Serb nationalists mythologised this battle and the role of ethnic Albanians, portrayed as sympathisers to the victorious Turks, in the decline of their nation. Ongoing conflicts and interactions in these years led Serbs, Albanians and Turks to develop 'competing historical perceptions, myths, fears and vendettas.'<sup>510</sup> In the early twentieth century, the Ottoman Empire was driven out of the Balkans by various European armies. Serbia reasserted control over Kosovo in 1912 and Kosovo was integrated as a province of Serbia in the new Yugoslavia after the First World War. In 1989, Slobodan Milosevic replaced the relative autonomy that Kosovo had enjoyed under Marshall Tito since 1974 with direct rule from Belgrade. By this time, ethnic Albanians represented between 85 and 90 percent of a population of around two million. Ethnic Albanian politicians in Kosovo responded to Milosevic's move by declaring independence and resisted Serbian rule in the early 1990s through mostly non-violent means.<sup>511</sup>

---

<sup>510</sup> Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's War to Save Kosovo* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 7.

<sup>511</sup> For a more detailed history of the region see particularly Tim Judah, *Kosovo: War and Revenge* (London: Yale University Press, 2000); Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1999); and Independent International Commission on Kosovo (IICK), *The Kosovo Report* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

The United States and its European allies recognised that conflict in Kosovo could easily destabilise a volatile region. If Albanian nationalism were to be stirred up, not only Yugoslavia but Albania, Greece and Macedonia could quickly descend into conflict. This realisation explains why President Bush, in contrast to his hands off stance towards Bosnia, issued a warning to Milosevic that a Serb crackdown on the Albanian population in Kosovo would be met with US military action. In what was to become known as the ‘Christmas warning,’ Bush warned Milosevic in late 1992 that ‘in the event of conflict in Kosovo caused by Serbian action, the United States will be prepared to employ military force against the Serbs in Kosovo and in Serbia proper.’<sup>512</sup> Secretary of State Warren Christopher echoed this warning when the Clinton administration stepped into office in 1993: ‘We remain prepared to respond against the Serbians in the event of conflict in Kosovo caused by Serb action.’<sup>513</sup>

However, given that Kosovo was regarded as a constituent part of Serbia, unlike Bosnia or the other former Yugoslav republics, US policy toward Kosovo did not involve considerations of self-determination. Policy was limited to pressuring Belgrade to improve human rights and grant conditions for greater autonomy for Kosovars. With an emphasis on ensuring Milosevic’s cooperation, the Kosovo question was excluded from the negotiations at Dayton in 1995 although Richard Holbrooke asserts that he consistently repeated the Christmas warning throughout the discussions. It became increasingly clear to ethnic Albanians that the Serbs would not stop their repression and

---

<sup>512</sup> Quoted in Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 9.

<sup>513</sup> Ibid.

the international community would do little to support claims for independence. The lack of results achieved by the strategy of non-violence led to the emergence of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). The low-level guerrilla tactics employed by the KLA provoked brutal Serb responses directed often at civilians. On March 5, 1998, Serb security forces massacred 58 ethnic Albanians at Donji Prekaz. The conflict in Kosovo now demanded international attention.<sup>514</sup>

1998

As violence spread in Kosovo in early 1998, the international community began to respond. This violence triggered three ‘syndromes,’ as identified by Alex Bellamy, which saw meaningful intervention placed on the agenda of the international community: the ‘Srebrenica syndrome’ was a fear of a repeat of the 1995 massacre in Srebrenica; the ‘refugees syndrome’ was a fear that conflict would provoke a flood of Albanian refugees into the West; and the ‘Balkan wars syndrome’ was a fear that violent conflict in Kosovo would spread throughout the region and threaten to involve Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey.<sup>515</sup>

Unilateral military action by the US was out of the question. The Dayton Accords had introduced NATO ground troops, including Americans, into the region. Any military

---

<sup>514</sup> For an excellent analysis of the response of international society to the tension and conflict as it gradually emerged during the 1990s, see Alex Bellamy, *Kosovo and International Society* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

<sup>515</sup> Bellamy, *Kosovo*, 2-3.

action that could put these troops at risk would have to be done through NATO and its unanimous decision-making process. No NATO nation, including the US, wanted to see ground troops fighting their way into Kosovo. One defence planner recalls a meeting of the Joint Chiefs with Defence Secretary William Cohen in the first half of 1998: 'The first question we had to ask was whether the Christmas warning was still on the table. And the fact is the Christmas warning was not on the table. We were not prepared for unilateral action.'<sup>516</sup> Moreover, the Monica Lewinsky scandal had eroded much of President Clinton's moral capital. He was unlikely to find any public or congressional support for war at this stage.<sup>517</sup>

While opposed to the use of ground forces to stop the violence, the international community was eager not to allow another Bosnia to occur. On March 31, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1160 'condemning the use of excessive force by Serbian police forces against civilians and peaceful demonstrators in Kosovo, as well as all acts of terrorism by the Kosovo Liberation Army.' A couple of weeks earlier, Madeleine Albright, now US Secretary of State, had publicly laid down some ground rules in response to the massacre at Donji Prekaz: 'We are not going to stand by and watch the Serbian authorities do in Kosovo what they can no longer get away with in Bosnia.'<sup>518</sup> Albright led the administration's response to the deteriorating situation but she was far out in front of not only America's European allies but her own peers in the administration. By September, they were starting to catch up.

---

<sup>516</sup> Barton Gellman, 'The Path to Crisis: How the United States and Its Allies Went to War,' *Washington Post*, April 18, 1999, A1.

<sup>517</sup> Elaine Sciolino and Ethan Bronner, 'How a President, Distracted by Scandal, Entered Balkan War,' *New York Times*, April 18, 1999, 1; and DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 136-7.

<sup>518</sup> Quoted in Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 381.

On September 23, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1199 demanding, amongst other things, that Yugoslavia ‘cease all actions by the security forces against the civilian population and order the withdrawal of security units used for civilian repression.’ During a meeting of NATO defence ministers immediately following the passage of the resolution, NATO Secretary General Javier Solana observed that Milosevic was mocking NATO with ‘a slow motion offensive aimed at keeping NATO in its torpor.’<sup>519</sup> He claimed that one Serb diplomat had explained that ‘a village a day keeps NATO away.’<sup>520</sup> US Secretary of Defence Cohen agreed that NATO’s credibility was at stake:

NATO has a choice now. They must go forward with this, or it will be seen as simply a hollow warning...(Milosevic’s crackdown in Kosovo is) a challenge I don’t think NATO can afford to walk away from. We can’t simply ignore what he continues to do.<sup>521</sup>

On September 24, NATO issued an ‘activation warning’ for both limited airstrikes and a phased air campaign. While not a decision to use force, it enabled the alliance to quickly prepare for such a decision if necessary. In October, Richard Holbrooke, now US Special Envoy acting on behalf of the six-nation Contact Group established during the Bosnian war, negotiated an agreement with Milosevic concerning the withdrawal of Yugoslav forces and police from Kosovo. The subsequent lull in fighting allowed the KLA to re-establish control of positions vacated by Serb troops. Some writers have claimed that

---

<sup>519</sup> Gellman, ‘The Path to Crisis.’

<sup>520</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*

<sup>521</sup> Quoted in Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 43.

KLA intentions were to provoke the Serbs into committing an atrocity that would necessitate a forceful response by the international community.<sup>522</sup> Whether or not this is true, the Serbs allowed themselves to be provoked and on January 15, 1999, Yugoslav forces assaulted the village of Racak and executed 45 ethnic Albanians.

### *The Descent into War*

Hours before the massacre in Racak was discovered, Clinton's principals gathered in the White House Situation Room. In this meeting, Secretary Albright noted that the October agreement was about to fall apart. Albright suggested that the administration had three policy options: 'stepping back, muddling through or taking decisive steps.'<sup>523</sup> Stepping back, she suggested, was not an option in the face of an emerging humanitarian crisis. Muddling through would at best postpone the inevitable collapse of the October agreement. Decisive steps, Albright suggested, was the only real option. 'Milosevic needed to realise that he faced a real potential for NATO action. If he did not get that message, he would not make any concessions.'<sup>524</sup>

Although the other principals agreed that Milosevic was 'shredding' the October agreement, they were not yet prepared to tie a comprehensive settlement to a threat of

---

<sup>522</sup> See, for example, Noam Chomsky, *September 11* (Australia, Allen and Unwin, 2001), 91.

<sup>523</sup> Jane Perlez, 'Defiant Yugoslavia orders Expulsion of US Diplomat,' *New York Times*, January 19, 1999, A1.

<sup>524</sup> Ibid.

force.<sup>525</sup> Defence Secretary Cohen was reluctant to get involved in yet another Balkan conflict without a clear end in sight. National Security Advisor Samuel Berger was reluctant to make threats that the US may have to follow through on without clear political objectives.<sup>526</sup> The principals opted to stick with a slightly bolstered policy of containment informally referred to as 'Status Quo Plus.' Albright left the meeting complaining 'We're just gerbils running on a wheel.'<sup>527</sup> The discovery of the Racak massacre was the tragedy that Albright both dreaded and needed in order to force a re-evaluation of the administration's policy.

While the total number of deaths seems incomparable, it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that, in terms of impact of American policy, the Racak massacre was Kosovo's 'Srebrenica.' While neither massacre prompted the immediate use of Western force, they both triggered a re-evaluation of policy and allowed entrepreneurs to forge new directions in US policy. A couple of months after the massacre, Barton Gellman concluded that 'Racak transformed the West's Balkan policy as singular events seldom do.'<sup>528</sup>

On January 19, four days after the massacre, Secretary Albright presented a new strategy to the principals. The strategy consisted of an ultimatum to be presented to both Serbians and ethnic Albanians that must be accepted by a certain date. If the deal was accepted, NATO would enforce it with troops on the ground in Kosovo. If Belgrade refused, NATO's phased air campaign would be activated. Daalder and O'Hanlon suggest that

---

<sup>525</sup> Gellman, 'The Path to Crisis.'

<sup>526</sup> Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 70.

<sup>527</sup> Gellman, 'The Path to Crisis.'

<sup>528</sup> Ibid.



none of the principals could come up with a better alternative to Albright's proposal. The next day, Clinton signed off on a memorandum approving Albright's strategy.<sup>529</sup>

Over the next few days, Secretary Albright travelled through Europe negotiating a coherent strategy upon which all NATO members could agree. While not supporting the use of force, Russia also accepted the need to threaten force in order to get a deal with Belgrade. These negotiations culminated in statements from the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, the Contact Group, and finally, on January 30, NATO Secretary General Javier Solana: 'NATO is ready to take whatever measures are necessary in the light of both parties' compliance with international commitments and requirements.'<sup>530</sup> NATO defence ministers approved NATO's second 'activation order' to prepare for war and placed the decision 'to authorise air strikes against targets on FRY territory' in the hands of Solana.<sup>531</sup>

For various reasons, the peace negotiations that took place, first at Rambouillet and then Paris, between ethnic Albanians and Serbs over the next couple of months failed.<sup>532</sup> On March 24, 1999, NATO found itself having to follow through on its threats and launch air strikes against the FRY.

---

<sup>529</sup> Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 72.

<sup>530</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 77.

<sup>531</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 77.

<sup>532</sup> For detailed analyses of these events, see Bellamy, *Kosovo*, 120-155; Lawrence Freedman, 'Victims and Victors: Reflections on the Kosovo War,' *Review of International Studies*, 26: 335-358 (2000), pp. 347-350; IICK, *The Kosovo Report*, 67-83; and Judah, *Kosovo*, 197-226. For her personal recollections and reflections on the negotiations, see Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 397-407. For an engaging account of Richard Holbrooke's final negotiations with Milosevic in the days before the bombing began, see Michael Ignatieff's 'Improvising on the Brink,' in his book, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond* (London: Vintage, 2000).

*Why did Clinton go to war?*

The motivations for the intervention in Kosovo and the strength of the commitment to the norm of humanitarian intervention are not easy to determine. We can begin by examining the justifications of the major players but must then also consider their concurrent anticipations about the likely risks and costs of the war and their willingness to accept the actual risks and costs that they eventually faced.

On March 23, one day before ‘Operation Allied Force’ began, President Clinton outlined his justifications for going to war. While including humanitarian reasons and describing the brutality of Milosevic’s regime, Clinton emphasised America’s strategic interests in a stable Europe and a credible NATO alliance:

There is a humanitarian reason why I believe we need to take a stand there. There is a practical reason – if we don’t do it now, we’ll have to do it later, more people will die, and it will cost more money. And there is a long-term, strategic reason for the United States – our children need a stable, free Europe...And we ought to consider what would happen if we and our allies were to stand aside and let innocent people be massacred at NATO’s doorstep. That would discredit NATO because we didn’t keep our word...This is a conflict with no natural boundaries. If it continues, it could spread to Albania...Then it could put massive numbers of refugees in Macedonia...Believe me, it could draw in even Greece and Turkey.

So, apart from the humanitarian issue and apart from our interests in Kosovo, this thing has no natural boundaries.<sup>533</sup>

The following evening, Clinton summarised these reasons for a national television audience:

We act to protect thousands of innocent people in Kosovo from a mounting military offensive. We act to prevent a wider war; to diffuse a powder keg at the heart of Europe that has exploded twice before in this century with catastrophic results. And we act to stand united with our allies for peace. By acting now we are upholding our values, protecting our interests and advancing the cause of peace.<sup>534</sup>

The convergence of humanitarian considerations and national interests was also emphasised by British Prime Minister Tony Blair. In his oft cited speech to the Economic Club of Chicago, Blair suggested that ‘our actions are guided by a more subtle blend of mutual self-interest and moral purpose in defending the values we cherish. In the end, values and interests merge. If we can establish and spread the values of liberty, the rule of law, human rights and an open society then that is in our national interests too.’<sup>535</sup>

---

<sup>533</sup> Bill Clinton, ‘Excerpts from Remarks by President Clinton,’ March 23, 1999, in Auerswald and Auerswald, *The Kosovo Conflict*, 695-700.

<sup>534</sup> Bill Clinton, ‘Remarks by President Clinton,’ March 24, 1999, in Auerswald and Auerswald, *The Kosovo Conflict*, 729-30. For an earlier articulation of America’s interests in intervening see Madeleine Albright’s speech at the US institute of Peace, Washington DC, ‘Excerpts from Remarks by Secretary of State Albright,’ February 4, 1999, in *ibid.*, 498-503.

<sup>535</sup> Tony Blair, ‘Doctrine of the International Community,’ speech by the British Prime Minister to the Economic Club of Chicago, Hilton Hotel, Chicago, April 22. 1999, [www.fco.gov.uk/news/speechtext.asp?2316](http://www.fco.gov.uk/news/speechtext.asp?2316).

There is little reason to doubt the truth of the justifications given by Clinton and Blair for intervention. There is, however, reason to doubt the extent of their commitment to the humanitarian principles which they identified. This goes to the heart of our study. While he was eager to label it a ‘humanitarian war,’ Clinton’s anticipations about and strategies during the war prevent us from concluding that the intervention provides evidence of unswerving compliance with the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention.

### *A Quick War?*

One factor that prevents us from taking the decision to bomb as evidence of a strong norm of intervention is the evidence which suggests that the Clinton administration believed that Milosevic would quickly capitulate. It does seem that the Clinton administration had good reason to be genuinely confused about the likely duration of the war. The reports coming out of intelligence agencies in early 1999 about how Milosevic would respond to NATO threats of use of military force were both vague and contradictory. One interagency report in January concluded that ‘Milosevic doesn’t want a war he can’t win. After enough of a defence to sustain his honour and assuage his backers he will quickly sue for peace.’ Another report later that month contradicted this suggestion and contended that ‘He may assume he can absorb a limited attack and the allies will not support a long campaign.’ A report completed in February stated ‘He

doesn't believe NATO is going to bomb.' Another suggested 'Milosevic will seek to give just enough to avoid NATO bombing.'<sup>536</sup>

When Operation Allied Force began on March 24, NATO had only 350 aircraft in the region. This was 60 less than it had in October 1998 and only one-third of the number ultimately required to win the war.<sup>537</sup> British harrier pilots were told at the outset of the campaign that it would last only three days.<sup>538</sup>

As the bombing began, an intelligence report was released suggesting that Milosevic 'would interrupt the offensive and sign the peace plan if he suffers or expects to suffer substantial damage to his armed forces and national level infrastructure from a bombing campaign.'<sup>539</sup> That night, Secretary Albright stated on national television 'I don't see this as a long-term operation. I think that this is something...that is achievable within a relatively short period of time.'<sup>540</sup> Only two days later, analysts had changed their minds: 'Air attacks will not suffice to shake Milosevic's confidence.'<sup>541</sup>

The evidence indicates that Milosevic did not believe that NATO was sufficiently united to sustain military attacks if he did not quickly sue for peace. Alex Bellamy suggests that, 'standing at the cusp of creating a new norm in international relations,' a number of

---

<sup>536</sup> Sciolino and Bronner, 'How a President, Distracted by Scandal, Entered Balkan War.'

<sup>537</sup> Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 103.

<sup>538</sup> Bellamy, *Kosovo*, 161.

<sup>539</sup> Sciolino and Bronner, 'How a President, Distracted by Scandal, Entered Balkan War.'

<sup>540</sup> Quoted in Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 91. For an assessment of the reasons why Washington believed the war would be over quickly, see pp. 91-96. See also Judah, *Kosovo*, 228-9.

<sup>541</sup> Sciolino and Bronner, 'How a President, Distracted by Scandal, Entered Balkan War.'

members were reticent about intervention.<sup>542</sup> Milosevic was well aware of this reticence and it was the belief that NATO unity would not last that dissuaded him from capitulation.

Realising that the war would not end as quickly as they had hoped, NATO was forced to expand an already morally problematic campaign of high-altitude bombing. The problematic means by which the war was conducted also impacts on the conclusions that we are able to draw from Operation Allied Force about the emerging commitment to humanitarian norms.

### *Means of War*

From the escalation of violence in 1998, NATO leaders had excluded the possibility of using ground forces to invade Kosovo. As a senior US official said, ‘We walked up to the ground force option many times and quickly walked back every time.’<sup>543</sup> On the evening of March 24, President Clinton assured the nation, ‘I do not intend to put our troops in Kosovo to fight a war.’<sup>544</sup>

Clinton’s remarks seemed to inform Milosevic that, if he could withstand air strikes, he would prevail. However, Clinton’s audience was not limited to the Serb leader. National

---

<sup>542</sup> Bellamy, *Kosovo*, 153-4.

<sup>543</sup> Quoted in Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 96.

<sup>544</sup> Bill Clinton, ‘Remarks by President Clinton,’ March 24, 1999, in Auerswald and Auerswald, *The Kosovo Conflict*, 732.

Security Advisor Samuel Berger, who wrote that passage for Clinton, maintains that ‘we would not have won the war without this sentence.’<sup>545</sup> Berger contends that ruling out ground troops was essential in order to keep a fragile alliance consensus and maintain congressional and public support.<sup>546</sup>

For 78 days, NATO instead relied on a policy of high altitude bombing to coerce Milosevic into surrendering. If the objective was to avoid the risks and costs of committing ground troops, then Operation Allied Force succeeded. Indeed, over more than eleven weeks of air-strikes, NATO did not suffer a single combat fatality.<sup>547</sup> An additional reason for the reliance on air-power is what Adam Roberts calls ‘a questionable reading of the history of the Bosnian War.’<sup>548</sup> There was a widely shared illusion that NATO’s bombing campaign against Serb forces in Bosnia that began in late August, 1995, forced Milosevic’s hand at Dayton and that a similar display of force would again convince him to back down over Kosovo.<sup>549</sup> However, while NATO air-strikes in the Bosnian War were significant, they followed a period of Serb military reversals at the hands of both Croat and newly armed Bosnian Muslim forces.

The effectiveness of air-strikes in Kosovo must be questioned. ‘Ethnic cleansing’ had reappeared in Kosovo. In the period between February 1998 and March 1999, around 1,000 civilians were killed in Kosovo and more than 400,000 were driven from their

---

<sup>545</sup> Quoted in Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 97.

<sup>546</sup> Ibid. See also Samuel Berger interview, *Frontline* Website:

[www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/military](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/military); and Bellamy, *Kosovo*, 159.

<sup>547</sup> Only two allied planes were shot down during the campaign. The only casualties were two US Army pilots who died in a training accident in Albania. Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 4.

<sup>548</sup> Adam Roberts, ‘NATO’s “Humanitarian War” over Kosovo,’ *Survival*, 41/3: 102-123 (1999), p. 110.

<sup>549</sup> Ibid., 111. Madeleine Albright, however, maintains that airpower alone can and did make a decisive difference in Bosnia. Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 192.

homes.<sup>550</sup> Through the course of NATO's 78 day campaign of air strikes, beginning on March 24, around 10,000 people were killed, the 'vast majority' of whom were ethnic Albanians killed by FRY forces.<sup>551</sup> Approximately 863,000 civilians sought refuge outside of Kosovo during this period and a further 590,000 were displaced. These figures suggest that over 90 percent of the ethnic Albanian population were displaced from their homes during NATO's 'Operation Allied Force.'<sup>552</sup> The Independent International Commission on Kosovo also reports widespread rape and torture during this time.<sup>553</sup>

With statistics such as these, it is not surprising that some scholars blame NATO's bombing campaign for the massive expulsion of Kosovars from their homes.<sup>554</sup> However, the evidence suggests that 'Operation Horseshoe,' the Serbian operation involving a horseshoe shaped sweep of Kosovo by the army and paramilitary groups which drove the vast majority of the Kosovar Albanian population out of their homes, was planned in the autumn of 1998 and was already underway before NATO air-strikes began. One intelligence reckoning dated the beginning of Operation Horseshoe at March 18, six days prior to the start of bombing.<sup>555</sup>

---

<sup>550</sup> The report by the IICK estimates that 'more that 400,000 people were driven from their homes...about half of these were internally displaced.' IICK, *The Kosovo Report*, 2. The International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty cites UNHCR estimates prior to the bombing of 410,000 internally displaced with a further 90,000 across the border into Albania. International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), *Supplementary Volume: Background Research* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001), 113.

<sup>551</sup> IICK, *The Kosovo Report*, 2.

<sup>552</sup> Ibid., 90.

<sup>553</sup> Ibid., 90-2.

<sup>554</sup> See, for example, Michael Mandelbaum, 'A Perfect Failure: NATO's War Against Yugoslavia,' *Foreign Affairs*, 78/5: 2-8 (1999), pp. 3-4, Robert M. Hayden, 'Humanitarian Hypocrisy,' *East European Constitutional Review*, 8/3: 91-96 (1999), and Robert Skidelsky's comments to Michael Ignatieff in 'The War of Words: A Dialogue on Intervention,' in Ignatieff, *Virtual War*.

<sup>555</sup> Cited in Gellman, 'The Path to Crisis.' Richard Caplan quotes British Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, before the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee stating, 'The (Yugoslav) spring offensive was planned; we knew it was coming; we knew it would be accompanied by ethnic cleansing and I am quite



While NATO is not to blame for the expulsion of Kosovars from their homes, it does hold some responsibility for failing to prevent it. Clinton had been advised by senior military figures that ‘a bombing campaign would provoke a killing spree’ and that ‘air power alone could not prevent or halt this ethnic cleansing.’<sup>556</sup> The numbers of ethnic Albanians driven from their homes during the campaign is witness to the ineffectiveness of the air campaign. Michael Walzer notes the reality that ‘soldiers with guns, going from house to house in a mountain village, can’t be stopped by smart bombs. They can only be stopped by soldiers with guns.’<sup>557</sup>

It seems fair to say that, while the air-strikes did not cause the ethnic cleansing, they gave Serbs the opportunity to accelerate it. Among the reasons that have been suggested for the acceleration of ethnic cleansing are: a desire to make it appear as though refugees were driven from their homes by the bombing; a fear that a ceasefire would be called thus depriving Milosevic of an opportunity to complete his objectives; a desire to take the opportunity to trouble NATO peacekeepers on standby in Macedonia with a refugee crisis; and the fact that the operation was made more feasible by the removal of unarmed monitors upon the commencement of bombing.<sup>558</sup>

---

sure, if I were here in front of this Committee and we were doing nothing, (you) would be the first to criticise us.’ Richard Caplan, ‘Humanitarian Intervention: Which Way Forward?’ *Ethics and International Affairs*, 14: 23-38 (2000), p. 27.

<sup>556</sup> Bellamy, *Kosovo*, 165.

<sup>557</sup> Michael Walzer, ‘Kosovo,’ *Dissent*, 46/3: 5-7 (1999), p. 5.

<sup>558</sup> Freedman, ‘Victims and Victors,’ 352; and IICK, *The Kosovo Report*, 88-9.

The morality of the bombing campaign must also been questioned. The reluctance to accept casualties on NATO's side prompted a practice of bombing from 15,000 feet in order to be safe from Serb anti-aircraft fire. The refusal to commit ground troops and the emphasis on high-altitude lower-accuracy bombing resulted in more civilian deaths than were perhaps necessary. Accidents included the bombing of a refugee convoy in Kosovo, a passenger train crossing a bridge in Serbia and the Chinese embassy. In the face of Milosevic's ongoing defiance, NATO decided to expand its range of targets rather than resort to ground troops. Strikes were increasingly directed at 'dual-purpose' targets in Belgrade – targets that had both military and civilian purposes. On May 24, NATO forces took out the Yugoslav power grid. Belgrade's command and control structure was disrupted and any remaining civilian support for the regime began to decline. However, as Michael Ignatieff notes, 'the most effective strike of the war was also the most problematic.'<sup>559</sup> Hitting the power grid meant taking away the power supply to hospitals, water pumps, and other essential civilian infrastructure. In total, some 500 civilian deaths are documented as a result of NATO's air campaign. 6,000 civilians were wounded.<sup>560</sup>

A number of very thoughtful scholars have been able to explain why such use of force is so morally problematic. Paul W. Kahn clearly elucidates that 'our uneasiness about a policy of riskless intervention in Kosovo arises out of an incompatibility between the morality of the ends, which are universal, and the morality of the means, which seem to privilege a particular community.'<sup>561</sup> In other words, the war was fought in the name of

---

<sup>559</sup> Ignatieff, *Virtual War*, 107-8.

<sup>560</sup> IICK, *Kosovo Report*, 5; and Judah, *Kosovo*, 264.

<sup>561</sup> Quoted in Jean Bethke Elshtain, 'International Justice as Equal Regard and the Use of Force,' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 17/2: 63-75 (2003), p. 71.

human rights; a concept which assumes that all life is of equal value. The means employed, however, presume that the lives of NATO forces matter more than the lives of the ethnic Albanians they were intervening to save or the lives of the Serbian civilians whose government they were fighting. Ignatieff is also helpful on this point when he notes the hypocrisy in being willing to kill in the name of values but not to die.<sup>562</sup>

NATO's reluctance to accept the risks of allied casualties that would accompany the deployment of ground troops or air strikes from lower altitudes demonstrates the lack of depth in its commitment to humanitarian norms. While willing to comply with the norm of intervention, the alliance was unwilling to accept the risks and costs that would ordinarily accompany the use of force where more material interests were at stake.

### *To Win a War*

The night the bombing started, Clinton had told the nation, 'I do not intend to put our troops in Kosovo to fight a war.' For the most part, that remained the position of the administration for several weeks. On April 9, Vice President Gore put it bluntly: 'That option is not under consideration.'<sup>563</sup> As the days went by, however, the basic moral character of the air war and its effectiveness in ending the humanitarian crisis looked increasingly doubtful. Members of Congress, former officials and scholars began to press

---

<sup>562</sup> Ignatieff, *Virtual War*, 150-1. See also Henry Shue, 'Bombing to Rescue?: NATO's 1999 Bombing of Serbia,' in Deen K. Chatterjee and Don E. Scheid (eds.), *Ethics and Foreign Intervention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and two excellent articles by Michael Walzer, 'Kosovo'; and 'The Argument about Humanitarian Intervention,' *Dissent*, 49/1: 29-37 (2002).

<sup>563</sup> Quoted in Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 130.

for the deployment of ground forces. The ground option was even reportedly favoured by some members of the Clinton administration. Only four days into the war, Air Force Chief of Staff General Michael Ryan was quoted as saying ‘I don’t know if we can do it without ground troops.’<sup>564</sup> Public opinion polls showed that a majority of Americans favoured the deployment of troops even if it resulted in casualties – but only as a last resort.<sup>565</sup>

The turning point in the war came at NATO’s fiftieth anniversary summit held in Washington on April 23-25. While the US, France, Germany, Italy and others continued to argue against the idea of ground troops, two important decisions were taken that informed Milosevic that he would not be able to break NATO’s unity. Firstly, General Wesley Clark, NATO’s Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, was given greater authority to expand the target list and increase the number of attacks on Belgrade. Secondly, and more importantly, an overall strategic campaign plan was put into practice that saw Russia placed at the heart of the diplomatic effort.<sup>566</sup> The Yeltsin government, seeing NATO’s resolve, apparently realised that its interests lay not in opposing the war but in trying to help Milosevic get the best deal that he could. Yeltsin called Clinton on the last day of the summit ‘intent on finding a way to end the war rapidly and on making sure that Russia would play a key role in bringing that about.’<sup>567</sup> As Alex Bellamy declares, ‘Victory was now inevitable.’<sup>568</sup>

---

<sup>564</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 132.

<sup>565</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

<sup>566</sup> Bellamy, *Kosovo*, 178-9.

<sup>567</sup> Quoted in Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 140.

<sup>568</sup> Bellamy, *Kosovo*, 179.

The Clinton administration began to move steadily towards embracing the option of ground troops in a manner that Milosevic could not fail to notice. On May 18, the President stated that NATO ‘will not take any option off the table.’<sup>569</sup> The military pressure on Milosevic increased on May 27 when British defence minister George Robertson committed 50,000 troops for land invasion of Kosovo at a meeting of NATO defence ministers. While the US remained uncommitted, American participation was now more likely as the pledge of Britain and other European powers meant that it now would only have to contribute around 100,000 troops – significantly less than it had previously feared. That same day, Russian envoy Victor Chernomyrdin informed Milosevic of NATO’s likely invasion plans.<sup>570</sup> Samuel Berger recalls that by early June, Clinton ‘had made a decision that he was not going to lose and that he was prepared to go for a ground invasion.’<sup>571</sup>

In the end, NATO did not have to invade Kosovo. The details of the Serb withdrawal from Kosovo and the deployment of forces to implement the peace were outlined in an agreement signed by the Yugoslav military and NATO military representatives on June 9. The following day, Javier Solana declared the end of the bombing campaign. NATO’s campaign brought the ethnic cleansing of ethnic Albanians to an end. It was less successful in preventing subsequent reprisals by ethnic Albanians against Serbians living in Kosovo.<sup>572</sup> Nevertheless, Solana was right to point out in late 1999 that ‘the situation

---

<sup>569</sup> Quoted in Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 156.

<sup>570</sup> Ibid., 160.

<sup>571</sup> Quoted in ibid., 160.

<sup>572</sup> See David Rohde, ‘Kosovo Seething,’ *Foreign Affairs*, 79/3: 65-79 (2000).

in Kosovo today is better than it was before the alliance intervened and continues to improve.’<sup>573</sup>

### *‘Madeleine’s War’*

Much has been made of President Clinton’s preoccupation with the Lewinsky scandal at the time of NATO’s intervention in Kosovo. The implication for our study is that NATO’s intervention in Kosovo may represent an aberration rather than a logical step in an emergent pattern of intervention. Of particular importance is the observation made by a number of writers at the time of the war that the distraction of impeachment proceedings prevented Clinton from attending the crucial meeting of his principal advisors on January 19 where the decision was made to support Madeleine Albright’s strategy.<sup>574</sup> While it was true that Clinton did have other matters on his mind – on that day Clinton’s lawyers were beginning their arguments on the Senate floor against his removal from office and that evening Clinton was to deliver his State of the Union address<sup>575</sup> – it was not unusual for Clinton to not attend a meeting of his principals. Moreover, Albright recalls that it was Clinton who emphasised after the meeting that those negotiating with Milosevic had to make it clear that NATO was prepared to use force.<sup>576</sup>

---

<sup>573</sup> Quoted in Bellamy, *Kosovo*, 203.

<sup>574</sup> See, for example, Sciolino and Bronner, ‘How a President, Distracted by Scandal, Entered Balkan War’; and Ben Macintyre, ‘President “Took No Part in War Plan” – Balkans war – Britain and America,’ *The Times (London)*, April 19, 1999, 12.

<sup>575</sup> Sciolino and Bronner, ‘How a President, Distracted by Scandal, Entered Balkan War.’

<sup>576</sup> Madeleine Albright interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kosovo](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kosovo)

More generally, there is little reason to believe that the Lewinsky scandal led to a war that was an aberration or that the descent to war would have been significantly different had the President not been distracted. In the previous six years of his presidency, Clinton had demonstrated that he did not go to war unless he had to and this war was no different. By February 12, more than a month before Operation Allied Force would begin, the President was acquitted by the Senate and those close to him recall that he took the crisis very seriously at least from this point onwards if not before. Madeleine Albright recalls receiving a call from a President who was unable to sleep at around 12:30am on the morning of March 25, as the bombs began to fall on Belgrade. Reassuring his Secretary of State, and most likely himself, Clinton said:

We're doing the right thing here. We've got a long way to go. This is not going to be over quickly and we're all in this. I feel we've explored every option, that we're doing the right thing.<sup>577</sup>

An argument could be made that NATO had already backed itself into a corner while Clinton was distracted with the Lewinsky scandal. Once NATO had threatened to use force in the winter months of 1998/9, Clinton was compelled to preserve the credibility of the alliance in March by following through on these threats. However, this contradicts the criticism most commonly levelled at the 'distracted President.' The criticism more often heard is not that he should not have put himself in a position where he had to go to war

---

<sup>577</sup> Quoted in Sciolino and Bronner, 'How a President, Distracted by Scandal, Entered Balkan War.' See also Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 407.

but that he did not act earlier and more decisively.<sup>578</sup> While the Lewinsky scandal certainly distracted Clinton's attention away from the Kosovo crisis for several months, it seems unreasonable to suggest that it had a significant impact on the decision to intervene.

Rather than an aberration, NATO's intervention in Kosovo represented an important step in the logical progression of American foreign policy. It represented the clearest case yet of compliance with the emerging prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention.

While Clinton was the Commander in Chief, it was his Secretary of State whose determination to stop Milosevic was the significant force internalising the norm of humanitarian intervention into American foreign policy – so much so that the war has been called 'Madeleine's War.' Just as Tony Lake had done during the Bosnian war – with the assistance of Albright and Vice President Al Gore – Albright acted as norm entrepreneur forging a new direction for US foreign policy.<sup>579</sup> The Secretary was born in Czechoslovakia and while her immediate family had fled the Nazi invasion, many in her extended family had died in Hitler's death camps. Munich was her mindset and she was not about to allow the appeasement of another European dictator.<sup>580</sup> One confidante of Albright contended that she was convinced that the intervention in Kosovo was 'simply the most important thing we have done in the world.'<sup>581</sup> Her commitment to an emergent norm of intervention is summed up by a statement in the first few weeks of the war: 'I

---

<sup>578</sup> Sciolino and Bronner, 'How a President, Distracted by Scandal, Entered Balkan War.'

<sup>579</sup> For Albright's personal recollections of her role see Albright, *Madam Secretary*; and Madeleine Albright interview, *Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kosovo](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kosovo)

<sup>580</sup> DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 144.

<sup>581</sup> Gellman, 'The Path to Crisis.'



think we have shown that this kind of thing cannot stand, that you cannot in 1999 have this kind of barbaric ethnic cleansing...It is ultimately better that the democracies stand up against this kind of evil.’<sup>582</sup> As a norm entrepreneur, Albright was able to successfully transfer her personal commitment to the norm of intervention into a clearly articulated American foreign policy decision.<sup>583</sup> The conviction amongst administration officials that they were doing the right thing and their determination to end the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo is perhaps best expressed in the words of Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott mid-way through the war. Asked how he would be able to find success in a war that ‘brought the refugee catastrophe that it tried to avert,’ he replied: ‘Very simple. They’re going home. They’re going back to a Kosovo that is safe and secure and self-governing. That’s our answer.’<sup>584</sup>

### *To Comply with a Norm*

Although the decision to intervene in Kosovo was driven by Madeleine Albright’s principled concern for human rights, we must not be too quick to conclude that this represents a pure and unproblematic case of compliance with the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention. We have examined two key factors limiting the extent to which we can attribute the intervention to the causal impact of a strong norm. Firstly,

---

<sup>582</sup> Ibid.

<sup>583</sup> For a brief examination of the embedding and internalizing of the norm of humanitarian intervention in the year leading up to Operation Allied Force, see Bryony Fox and David Hudson, ‘Social Constructivism Applied: Kosovo and its Implications for the Global Order in the New Millennium,’ *The Electronic Review of World Politics*, <http://www.kent.ac.uk/politics/research/erwp/Koso.htm>

<sup>584</sup> Gellman, ‘The Path to Crisis.’

while they are reluctant to admit it, it does seem that senior members of the Clinton administration did believe that Milosevic would capitulate sooner than he did. The belief that the war would be over quickly may have led decision makers to enter into a war with risks and costs that they were not prepared to accept. Nevertheless, the NATO alliance held strong and prevailed in its 'humanitarian war.' Secondly, and, more importantly, the supposed commitment to the norm of intervention is undermined by the reluctance to commit ground forces and the decision to emphasise high-altitude bombing that inevitably led to greater numbers of civilian casualties. In her excellent analysis of the interplay of various norms during the intervention, Coral Bell suggests that, while the war was originally driven by the 'minority rights norm' – essentially the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention – its conduct was based on a (sometimes incompatible) norm of force protection.<sup>585</sup> Michael Ignatieff sums up the consequences of this normative complexity very well: 'It was the kind of war fought by peoples who have known fifty years of peace; the kind of war a nation fights when it wants to, not when it must; when values rather than survival are on the line; when commitment is intense but also shallow.'<sup>586</sup>

The pluralist-solidarist debate which is a feature of the English school of international relations is tangential to the focus of this dissertation but has much to say on the present discussion. At the risk of over-simplification, pluralists maintain that the rules of international society such as those of state sovereignty and non-intervention 'provide for

---

<sup>585</sup> Coral Bell, 'Force, Diplomacy and Norms,' in Albrecht Schnabel and Ramesh Thakur (eds.), *Kosovo and the Challenge of Humanitarian Intervention: Selective Indignation, Collective Action and International Citizenship* (Tokyo: UN University, 2000), 451.

<sup>586</sup> Ignatieff, *Virtual War*, 4.

an international order among states sharing different conceptions of justice.’<sup>587</sup> Solidarists, on the other hand, argue that agreement on universalised values such as human rights and the responsibility of states to preserve these rights does exist. The extent to which solidarist values of human rights are internalised by states such as the US directly impacts on the costs that they are willing to bear to pursue those values. Or, to use the constructivist language that has been adopted in this dissertation, the degree to which the prescriptive norm of intervention becomes a constituted facet of the identity and interest of states such as the US directly impacts on the risks that they are willing to accept to comply with this norm.

Robert Jackson, a pluralist, implies that the intervention in Kosovo did not demonstrate a strong prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention when he argues that solidarism was ‘clearly subordinate to pluralism’ in this case.<sup>588</sup> While the intervention demonstrated a humanitarian concern on the part of NATO powers, they were unwilling to risk the lives of their soldiers to defend human rights. For Jackson, NATO’s intervention shows that ‘humanitarianism can be pursued within a pluralist framework of international society at least up to a point.’ He argues that it would be a mistake to suggest that humanitarianism has sidestepped that framework and that solidarism has pre-empted pluralism in this case.<sup>589</sup> While I would agree with solidarists such as Nicholas Wheeler who argue that pluralists tend to downplay the emergence of solidarist values of humanitarian

---

<sup>587</sup> Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 11.

<sup>588</sup> Robert Jackson, *The Global Covenant: Human Conduct in a World of States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 289.

<sup>589</sup> Ibid.

intervention in international society in the 1990s,<sup>590</sup> Jackson's observation here is valuable. The costs that the US was willing to bear to pursue solidarist values of intervention in Kosovo indicate the degree to which these values had been internalised and constituted as a perceived national interest. However, we need to consider further the implications of the unwillingness to risk the lives of soldiers.

Chapter two briefly discussed the fact that recent American history, including the two Gulf Wars, reveals a willingness to accept casualties where vital interests are perceived to be at stake. Coral Bell asserts that self-interest is traditionally 'strong enough to relegate any normative preoccupations among decision makers to a very distant second place.'<sup>591</sup> These relegated normative considerations include not only humanitarian norms but norms of force protection. While American casualties are never popular, the ever rising toll on American lives that the 2003 invasion of Iraq has produced demonstrates that norms of force protection take second place to the pursuit of vital material interests. The unwillingness to risk soldiers' lives in the Kosovar intervention suggests that vital self-interests were not perceived to be sufficiently at risk. Indeed this is the conclusion reached by many who saw the intervention as 'norm driven' or 'value driven' rather than 'interest driven.'<sup>592</sup> While the stability of Europe and the credibility of NATO were certainly at stake, many have argued that this material interest was offset by the temporary damage done to 'great power relations' with Russia and China as well as many

---

<sup>590</sup> See especially Nicholas Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, as well as his earlier article, 'Pluralist or Solidarist Conceptions of Humanitarian Intervention: Bull and Vincent on Humanitarian Intervention,' *Millennium Journal of International Studies*, 21/2: 463-487 (1992).

<sup>591</sup> Bell, 'Force Diplomacy and Norms,' 456.

<sup>592</sup> Those who have reached this conclusion include critics of the intervention – Mandelbaum, 'A Perfect Failure' – as well as its supporters – Wheeler, *Saving Strangers* – and those who have simply analysed its meaning for international relations – Bell, 'Force, Diplomacy and Norms.'

third world countries.<sup>593</sup> Yet, while America's vital interests may not have warranted intervention, Clinton still went to war. It would perhaps seem reasonable, therefore, to draw the following conclusion: the very fact that the Clinton administration was willing to go to war in the Balkans, where its strategic interests were perceived to be insufficient to make American casualties acceptable, betrays an emerging commitment to humanitarian values, however shallow. As we have found, this inference is supported by the available evidence of the decision making process and, in particular, the role of Secretary Albright as norm entrepreneur within the Clinton administration.

While the reluctance of allied forces to accept casualties limits the conclusions we can draw from the Kosovar intervention, the significance of the case for our study should not be overlooked. For all its faults it does seem reasonable to conclude that the fortunate convergence of humanitarian concern with an interest in preserving the stability of Europe and the credibility of NATO produced an intervention that complied with the prescriptive humanitarian norm in a manner not seen previously. The causal strength and the internalisation of this norm in 1999 appeared to have increased since the Rwandan genocide where the Clinton administration paid little if any political cost for violation of the norm and since the war in Bosnia where both Bush and Clinton were able to eschew the risks and costs of meaningful engagement for three and a half years with negligible political loss.

---

<sup>593</sup> See, for example, Bell, 'Force, Diplomacy and Norms'; and Mandelbaum, 'A Perfect Failure.' Compare these with Daalder and O'Hanlon who argue that the impact of the intervention on US relations with Russia and China has been exaggerated; while Kosovo was bad for these great power relations, it was hardly a turning point. They argue that both Russia and China have more important things to worry about and more important matters to discuss with the US and its allies. Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 13-14.

### ***Conclusion: The Convergence of Norms and Interests***

To conclude this chapter, I wish to briefly mention a phenomenon which will be discussed in more detail in the concluding chapter but about which much more needs to be said in the future. This phenomenon relates to the evolving interplay of norms and interests. While many have noted the primacy of norms and values in the decision to intervene in Kosovo, it is clear that the intervention did not occur in a vacuum of self-interest. There were significant material interests at stake for the West if the violence in Kosovo were to spread. However, the available evidence regarding the discussions and arguments behind the decision to intervene in response to Serb atrocities committed in Kosovo and, to a lesser extent, Serb atrocities committed in Bosnia four years earlier, does seem to suggest that the importance of norms should not always be seen as subordinate to interests. The emerging phenomenon that is of significance here is that, in an increasingly globalised world, we can perhaps expect to see increasing convergence of humanitarian norms with material self-interest. There is increasing acceptance that values and interests should be seen as intertwined.<sup>594</sup> Indeed, this is the way that norms develop strength – they become constitutive of the identity and interests of the actors. But in the case of humanitarian intervention, perhaps more so than, say, norms regarding the use of land mines or the treatment of prisoners, globalisation sees this entanglement of norms and interests emerge not only because of the strength of normative or ideational argument but through an emerging understanding of the very tangible and material self interest that powerful states have in stopping grave violations of human rights in other states. The NATO alliance realised that, in a deeply integrated Europe at least, ‘injustice and

---

<sup>594</sup> See Tony Blair, ‘Doctrine of the International Community.’

brutality in one place will invariably affect places separated by increasingly permeable borders.’<sup>595</sup> In a globalising world, powerful states such as the United States had come to see by 1999 that it was at times in their national interest to prevent humanitarian crises from developing in areas that may not have been of vital strategic importance. The introduction chapter noted that grave violations of human rights that are ignored breed regional instability, refugee crises, terrorism, arms smuggling, drug trafficking and other undesirable spawn. While the long-term costs of genocide in Africa were perceived to be acceptable to the United States ten years ago – and may still be today – the Clinton administration discovered that genocide on Europe’s doorstep could not be contained but had to be confronted, first in Bosnia and then in Kosovo. By 1999, the identity and interests of the United States had begun, ever so gradually, to be re-constituted in correlation with and causally by the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention. While the reluctance to accept casualties belies the depth of its commitment, the Clinton administration did conceive that it was in America’s national interest to intervene to prevent grave violations of human rights. The concluding chapter will explore these ideas further and draw some tentative conclusions for a post-September 11 world.

---

<sup>595</sup> Bellamy, *Kosovo*, 214.

## CONCLUSION

---

The Clinton administration has been accused of pursuing values over interests. Some scholars have charged that the national interest of the United States – understood in an egoist sense – took a backseat to humanitarianism in the 1990s.<sup>596</sup> Our case studies show such an assertion to be an exaggeration. Rather than a simple desire to pursue values over interests, we find ambivalence regarding the role of the United States in a post-cold war world. The absence of a clear conception of the national interest contributed to a focus on short-term domestic and international pressures. In the words of one American diplomat, ‘the urgent (was) always crowding out the important.’<sup>597</sup>

Nevertheless, from the ideational retreat that followed the deaths of American Rangers in Mogadishu, the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention had emerged by 1999 to be an ideational phenomenon with some degree of explanatory power for understanding the foreign policy decisions of the United States. While the strength of the norm of force protection meant that the Kosovar campaign was fought with morally problematic means,

---

<sup>596</sup> See, for example, Michael Mandelbaum, ‘Foreign Policy as Social Work,’ *Foreign Affairs*, 75/1: 16-32 (1996); Michael Mandelbaum, ‘A Perfect Failure: NATO’s War Against Yugoslavia,’ *Foreign Affairs*, 78/5: 2-8 (1999); and Harvey Sicherman, ‘The Revival of Geopolitics,’ *Intercollegiate Review*, 37/2: 17 (2002).

<sup>597</sup> Quoted in Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond* (London: Vintage, 2000), 65-6. For other literature supporting this view, see Christopher Coker, ‘The United States and the Ethics of Post Modern War,’ in Karen E. Smith and Margot Light (eds.), *Ethics and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Adam Garfinkle, ‘Strategy and Preventive Diplomacy: United States Foreign Policy and Humanitarian Intervention,’ *Orbis*, 45/4: 503-508 (2001); Joseph S. Nye jr., ‘Redefining the National Interest,’ *Foreign Affairs*, 78/4: 22-35 (1999); and Condoleeza Rice, ‘Promoting the National Interest,’ *Foreign Affairs*, 79/1: 45-62 (2000).



it must be recognized that ethnic cleansing there was brought to an end as a result of a fortunate convergence of humanitarian norms and self-interest.

Nicholas Wheeler, an English school scholar with constructivist leanings, argues that ‘national interests are not given but constructed’ and points to the particular construction of British interests by the Blair government with regard to Kosovo. He suggests that interests were constructed to reflect the government’s ‘vision of Britain as a social-democratic state committed to defending, by force if necessary, internationally agreed human rights norms.’<sup>598</sup> This construction of interests is also evident in the policies pushed by Madeleine Albright in the US and ultimately internalised into American policy towards Kosovo.

In the euphoria of victory in Kosovo, President Clinton proclaimed ‘Whether you live in Africa, or Central Europe, or any other place, if somebody comes after innocent civilians and tries to kill them en masse because of their race, their ethnic background or their religion, and it is within our power to stop it, we will stop it.’<sup>599</sup> However, we should not be too quick to conclude that the Kosovar intervention represents the institutionalisation of the prescriptive norm of intervention.

---

<sup>598</sup> Nicholas J. Wheeler, *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 267.

<sup>599</sup> Quoted by Jerry Fowler in ‘Round Table on Genocide Prevention: Genocide Prevention, Morality, and the National Interest,’ *Journal of Human Rights*, 1/4: 429-467 (2002), p. 429.

NATO's response to the plight of ethnic Albanians can be compared to the concurrent apathy from the international community towards the crisis in Sierra Leone in 1999.<sup>600</sup> A number of scholars have commented on the apparent double standards employed in choosing to intervene in Kosovo at a time when a greater number of people were dying as a result of violence in Sierra Leone.<sup>601</sup> The simple fact is that greater political will existed for an intervention in Kosovo than for Sierra Leone. While the humanitarian need in both crises was great, the United States had a clearer and more easily articulated self-interest in responding to the suffering in Kosovo. Some have argued that the Kosovar intervention was a war fought for normative concerns rather than interests.<sup>602</sup> However, understanding the interplay of these normative concerns with self-interest is crucial if we are to understand why Kosovo but not Sierra Leone. In 1999, Adam Roberts suggested that the intervention in Kosovo would 'contribute to a trend towards seeing certain humanitarian and legal norms inescapably bound up with conceptions of national interest.'<sup>603</sup> While this may be true, the inevitable importance of material and strategic

---

<sup>600</sup> Another example of selectivity in intervention about which surprisingly little has been written is the divergent approaches by Western forces to Operation Provide Comfort and Operation Southern Watch in Iraq after the Gulf War of 1991. Public pressure led US and British forces to rescue Kurds in northern Iraq from the brutal repression of Saddam Hussein's forces. However, the lack of media exposure coupled with geo-political desires to appease Arab states with potentially agitated Shia minorities meant that a similar approach was not taken in the south. Here, a no-fly zone was established but this did not put a stop to Iraqi forces on the ground shelling Shiites and Marsh Arabs. See Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 139-171.

<sup>601</sup> See, for example, Mandelbaum, 'A Perfect Failure,' 6; and David Reiff, 'Kosovo's Humanitarian Circus,' *World Policy Journal*, 17/3: 25-32 (2000), p. 27. For a discussion of the crisis in Sierra Leone, see Ryan Lizza, 'Where Angels Fear to Tread: Sierra Leone, the last Clinton betrayal,' *The New Republic*, 223/4: 22-27 (2000); Victor A. B. Davies, 'Sierra Leone: Irony Tragedy,' *Journal of African Economies*, 9/3: 349-369 (2000); and William Reno, 'The Failure of Peacekeeping in Sierra Leone,' *Current History*, 100/646: 219-225. Two contrasting articles on the morality of selective intervention are Chris Brown, 'Selective Humanitarianism: In Defense of Inconsistency,' in Deen K. Chatterjee and Don E. Scheid (eds.), *Ethics and Foreign Intervention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and Lea Brilmayer, 'What's the Matter with Selective intervention?' *Arizona Law Review*, 37: 955-970 (1995).

<sup>602</sup> Lawrence Freedman, 'Victims and Victors: Reflections on the Kosovo War,' *Review of International Studies*, 26: 335-358 (2000).

<sup>603</sup> Adam Roberts, 'NATO's "Humanitarian War" over Kosovo,' *Survival*, 41/3: 102-123 (1999), p. 120.

self-interest in the construction of the national interest should not be forgotten. No case demonstrates this more clearly than Rwanda.

In the ten years since the genocide in Rwanda ended, a number of senior members of the Clinton administration have acknowledged their failure to respond to genocide. In 1997, Madeleine Albright acknowledged that the crisis was mishandled. Albright suggested that ‘we, the international community, should have been more active in the early stages of the atrocities...and called them what they were: genocide.’<sup>604</sup> In 1998, former National Security Advisor Anthony Lake acknowledged, ‘By definition, when a human catastrophe like that takes place, the whole community, including the United States as a leader in it, has failed.’<sup>605</sup> That same year, President Clinton visited Rwanda. On the tarmac in Kigali he claimed that his administration was unaware of the extremity of the situation at the time. He did acknowledge, however, that he was too slow to respond to genocide:

All over the world there were people like me sitting in offices, day after day after day, who did not fully appreciate the depth and speed with which you were being engulfed by this unimaginable terror. The international community, together with nations in Africa, must bear its share of responsibility for this tragedy, as well.

We did not act quickly enough after the killing began...We did not immediately

---

<sup>604</sup> ‘Albright Embarks on Africa Tour; She Acknowledges U.S., Allies Mishandled Rwanda Crisis,’ *Washington Post*, December 10, 1997, A28. See also Madeleine Albright, *Madam Secretary: A Memoir* (London: Macmillan, 2003), 147.

<sup>605</sup> ‘Clinton in Africa: The Blood Bath: Critics Say US Ignored CIA Warnings of Genocide in Rwanda,’ *New York Times*, March 26, 1998, 12.

call these crimes by their rightful name, genocide. Never again must we be shy in the face of the evidence.<sup>606</sup>

Immediately upon concluding his statement, Clinton flew out of Rwanda to Uganda. There he held a press conference. The American media's interest in central African affairs had not changed since 1994. The first question was about Monica Lewinsky.<sup>607</sup>

We would be misguided to conclude from the statements of Albright, Lake and Clinton that inaction in the face of genocide in Rwanda was a once off exception in the face of a strong emergent prescriptive norm of action; it was not simply the product of circumstances which conspired to prevent action where it otherwise would have occurred. It is impossible to know if the Clinton administration would act differently if it were given a second chance. However, statements by Presidential candidates George W. Bush and Al Gore in the 2000 campaign give us little ground for hope. Candidates Bush and Gore were happy to preference the norm of force protection over the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention in front of a national television audience. Reflecting upon Rwanda, Bush declared that the Clinton administration was right not to send US troops to stop the killing. Gore also suggested that the US was right not to have 'put our troops in to try to separate the parties.'<sup>608</sup>

---

<sup>606</sup> Linda Melvern, *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide* (London: Zed Books, 2000), 230. In his recent autobiography, Clinton admitted that 'The failure to stop Rwanda's tragedies became one of the greatest regrets of my presidency.' Bill Clinton, *My Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), 593.

<sup>607</sup> 'Complicity in Genocide,' *Guardian*, August 28, 2001, accessed from Guardian web archives.

<sup>608</sup> 'The Lesson of Rwanda,' *Washington Post*, October 13, 2000, A38.

Further, in the 2000 presidential campaign, both candidates demonstrated an ability to frame a situation in a way that made norm violation socially acceptable – even after the fact when the truth of the situation was readily available. Bush and Gore perpetuated some of the myths about the Rwandan genocide that the Clinton administration had first promoted. Bush suggested that, in the future, there should be early warning systems in places where genocide might occur, thereby disregarding the early warning systems that worked both clearly and effectively in Rwanda but which were ignored. While Gore recognised that ‘we would have saved more lives if we had acted earlier’ he also implied that the solution to the crisis was to ‘separate the parties’,<sup>609</sup> thereby promoting the lie that the genocide was a civil war rather than primarily a case of armed units systematically slaughtering civilians.

Ten years after the Rwandan genocide Major-General Dallaire maintains that Western attitudes towards intervention in the Great Lakes Region of Africa have not changed:

I still believe that if an organisation decided to wipe out the 320 mountain gorillas there would still be more of a reaction by the international community to curtail or stop that than there would be still today in attempting to protect thousands of human beings being slaughtered in the same country.<sup>610</sup>

---

<sup>609</sup> Ibid.

<sup>610</sup> Quoted in ‘UN Chief’s Rwanda Genocide Regret,’ *BBC News*, published March 26, 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/world/africa/3573229.stm>.

Madeleine Albright also finds herself wondering whether the world would respond to future Rwandas: ‘If the alarm does sound again, will the lessons of Rwanda loom largest in the minds of our leaders – or those of Somalia?’<sup>611</sup>

### *Humanitarian Intervention as an Imperfect Positive Duty*

The question may be asked, therefore, ‘what hope is there for humanitarian intervention?’ In considering this question, it can be helpful to think of the norm as an accepted and expected duty.<sup>612</sup> The very nature of the duty inherent in the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention mitigates its potential strength. The prescriptive norm of intervention is an *imperfect duty* rather than a *perfect* duty; it is a duty of beneficence that does not belong to any particular agent. As such, intervention is *supererogatory* – something which is good to do but not wrong not to do. In the preface to the third edition of his classic text, *Just and Unjust Wars*, Michael Walzer outlines the implications of this fact:

The general problem is that intervention, even when it is justified, even when it is necessary to prevent terrible crimes, even when it poses no threat to regional or global stability, is an imperfect duty – a duty that doesn’t belong to any particular agent. Somebody ought to intervene but no specific state in the society of states is morally bound to do so...The massacres go on, and every country that is able

---

<sup>611</sup> Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 155.

<sup>612</sup> Note that this should not imply the inherent morality of the norm but simply refers to societal expectations.

to stop them decides that it has more urgent tasks and conflicting priorities; the likely costs of intervention are too high.<sup>613</sup>

A compounding mitigation of the potential strength of the prescriptive norm of intervention is that, as an imperfect duty, it is logically also a *positive duty* rather than a *negative duty*; violation requires omission rather than action. To violate the norm prohibiting slavery requires an active program of slavery. To violate the norm prescribing humanitarian intervention simply requires a failure to act. Some believe that positive and negative duties carry unequal moral obligations. With regard to humanitarian intervention, the argument goes that, while our failure to act leads to many deaths, we did not intend those deaths and, hence, they are not our moral responsibility. The strength of this moral argument is outside the scope of this dissertation.<sup>614</sup> Nevertheless, the nature of the duty does impact on the capacity of international society to enforce it. While there are a number of tools at the disposal of international society for compelling compliance with a negative duty, many of these tools are not available with regard to positive duties. While it is conceivable, for example, that international society could resort to sanctions or even the use of military force if a state refuses to end a program of slavery, apartheid, or nuclear weapons proliferation it is unimaginable that coercive tools could be used to punish a state's failure to intervene to end human rights atrocities committed by other

---

<sup>613</sup> Michael Walzer [1977], *Just and Unjust Wars*, third edition (New York: Basic Books, 2000), xiii. See also Michael Walzer, 'The Argument about Humanitarian Intervention,' *Dissent*, 49/1: 29-37 (2002), pp. 31-32; J. L. Holzgrefe, 'The Humanitarian Intervention Debate,' in J. L. Holzgrefe and Robert O. Keohane (eds.), *Humanitarian Intervention: Ethical, Legal, and Political Dilemmas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 26-7; and Terry Nardin, 'The Moral Basis of Humanitarian Intervention,' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 16/1: 57-70 (2002), pp. 68-9.

<sup>614</sup> Two valuable articles on the topic are Ernst Tugendhat, 'The Moral Dilemma in the Rescue of Refugees,' *Social Research*, 62/1: 129-142 (1995); and David Fisher, 'The Ethics of Intervention,' *Survival*, 36/1: 51-59 (1994), pp. 56-7.

people in another state. It is much more difficult to compel certain actions by states than to restrict certain actions. Norms are typically more successful as tools of dissuasion than persuasion; restriction rather than prescription. Moreover, this task appears even more impossible when we consider Tony Blair's valid assertion that 'If we wanted to right every wrong that we see in the modern world then we would do little else than intervene in the affairs of other countries.'<sup>615</sup> While an obligation to harm nobody is plausible, 'there can be no obligation to help everybody since "ought implies can."'<sup>616</sup>

From the perspective of the individual state, therefore, the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention can only ever be an imperfect positive duty. It is a duty which does not belong to any particular agent, it cannot be performed in all instances, and compliance cannot be compelled. A stronger norm of intervention, therefore, must rely on the dissemination, internalisation and institutionalisation of shared beliefs regarding the value of humanitarian action. If these beliefs are increasingly accepted, if it becomes increasingly understood that intervention is an appropriate response grave violations of human rights, national interests will be re-constituted in favour of intervention.

There is, however, another hope for humanitarian intervention – a hope that sidesteps the limitations of intervention as a duty. This hope is that the national interests of states will be reconstituted by an enlightened understanding of their longer-term self-interests.

---

<sup>615</sup> Tony Blair, 'Doctrine of the International Community,' speech by the British Prime Minister to the Economic Club of Chicago, Hilton Hotel, Chicago, April 22, 1999, [www.fco.gov.uk/news/speechtext.asp?2316](http://www.fco.gov.uk/news/speechtext.asp?2316).

<sup>616</sup> Tugendhat, 'The Moral Dilemma in the Rescue of Refugees,' 129.



### *Self-Interest Reconsidered*

Many scholars have encouraged decision makers to recognise that the convergence of perceived material and strategic interests with humanitarian norms that we saw eventually emerge in the Balkans in the previous chapter was not a one off event but a pervasive phenomenon which demands a more enlightened construction of the national interest.<sup>617</sup> For years, academics have been documenting the impact of refugee flows, drug trafficking, arms smuggling, terrorism, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction on the material and strategic interests of the United States. Further, many scholars claim that these phenomena are undesirable spawn of state sponsored violence and of state failure and the grave violations of human rights that so often attend such failure.

Myron Weiner, for example, has provided statistics suggesting that post-cold war conflicts typically led to larger flows of refugees than conflicts in earlier years.<sup>618</sup> A primary reason for this is that modern conflicts often have ‘neighbourhood effects’ in which ‘whole regions become unlivable and thus produce more refugees.’<sup>619</sup> Some of the bad neighbourhoods that Weiner identifies have featured in our case studies – the

---

<sup>617</sup> Among the numerous excellent works arguing for an incorporation of humanitarian concerns into the national interest for pragmatic reasons yet sympathetic to the demands of competing interests, see Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Just War Against Terror: The Burden of American Power in a Violent World* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 166-73; Stanley Hoffman, ‘The Politics and Ethics of Military Intervention,’ *Survival*, 37/4: 29-51 (1995-6); Joseph S. Nye jr., *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World’s Only Superpower Can’t Go It Alone* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 147-53; and Jeffrey Record, ‘A Note on Interests, Values, and the Use of Force,’ *Parameters*, 31/1: 15-21 (2001).

<sup>618</sup> Myron Weiner, ‘Bad Neighbors, Bad Neighborhoods,’ *International Security*, 21/1: 5-42 (1996).

<sup>619</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

Balkans and the Great Lakes region of Africa.<sup>620</sup> Other neighbourhoods mentioned – Western Africa (including Sierra Leone and Liberia) and the Horn of Africa (including Sudan) – have subsequently erupted once again into violence and created formidable refugee problems.

Alan Dowty and Gil Loescher have also established links between abuses of human rights, displacement of civilian populations, and regional and international (dis)order and (in)security.<sup>621</sup> From a purely economic point of view, they argue that much of the 1.4 billion dollars spent on humanitarian relief in the nine months immediately following the Rwandan genocide might have been saved had ten or twenty million dollars been spent providing transport and equipment for African peacekeepers that were authorised to respond to the suffering under UNAMIR II.<sup>622</sup>

No events in recent history have provoked a greater reassessment within the academy of the self-interests of states than the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Scholars have appealed to a perceived convergence of the objectives of the subsequent ‘war on terror’ with the objectives of humanitarian action. The attacks of September 11, the argument goes, display the tragic ramifications of allowing states such as Afghanistan to fail and

---

<sup>620</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>621</sup> Alan Dowty and Gil Loescher, ‘Refugee Flows as Grounds for International Action,’ *International Security*, 21/1: 43-71 (1996).

<sup>622</sup> Dowty and Loescher, ‘Refugee Flows as Grounds for International Action,’ 44. This assertion is supported by Helen Fein, ‘The Three P’s of Genocide Prevention: With Application to a Genocide Foretold – Rwanda,’ in Neal Riemer (ed.), *Protection Against Genocide: Mission Impossible?* (London: Praeger, 2000), 59. For other works on the security concerns that refugee flows can create, see Carola Weil, ‘The Protection-Neutrality Dilemma in Humanitarian Emergencies: Why the Need for Military Intervention?’ *International Migration Review*, 35/1: 79-116 (2001); and Claude Bruderlein, ‘People’s Security as a New Measure of Global Security,’ *International Review of the Red Cross*, 83/842: 353-366 (2001).

become a breeding ground for terrorism.<sup>623</sup> Scholars have also focused on the connection between the ‘responsibility to protect’ victims of human rights abuse and the ‘duty to prevent’ proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;<sup>624</sup> and on the relationship between the expansion of liberal democracy and the expansion of the so-called democratic peace.<sup>625</sup>

For other scholars, September 11 prompted a renewed focus on the humanitarian crises of the 1990s and an observation that the self-interest of the United States would have been better served by quicker and more meaningful responses to the sufferings of victims of human rights violations and state failure.<sup>626</sup> Slobodan Milosevic’s struggle for a Greater Serbia began in Croatia and Slovenia but spread to Bosnia and Kosovo before it was ended by NATO. While the US hesitated to act in the Balkans, not only was European stability and the credibility of NATO threatened for most of the decade, Bosnia was used as a training base for terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda.<sup>627</sup> Al Qaeda was also ‘involved’ in the downing of Black Hawk helicopters in Mogadishu on October 3, 1993,<sup>628</sup> and Somalia remains a harbour for terrorists to this day.<sup>629</sup> Al Qaeda’s attempts to launder

---

<sup>623</sup> See, for example, Michael Ignatieff, *Empire Lite: Nation-Building in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan* (London: Vintage, 2003); and Michael Hirsch, ‘Bush and the World,’ *Foreign Affairs*, 81/5: 18-44 (2002).

<sup>624</sup> Lee Feinstein and Anne-Marie Slaughter, ‘A Duty to Prevent,’ *Foreign Affairs*, 83/1: 136-150 (2004).

<sup>625</sup> Excellent earlier works include John M. Owen, ‘How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace,’ *International Security*, 19/2: 87-125 (1994); and Michael W. Doyle, ‘Liberalism and World Politics,’ *American Political Science Review*, 80/4: 1151-1169 (1986). *International Politics* journal recently devoted an entire issue to this important topic: ‘The Dynamics of the Democratic Peace,’ 41:4 (2004).

<sup>626</sup> See, for example, Samantha Power, ‘Raising the Cost of Genocide,’ *Dissent*, 49/2: 85-95 (2002).

<sup>627</sup> *Ibid.*, 94. Further, the reconstruction that continues in the Balkans today, Michael Ignatieff observes, is not ‘an exercise in humanitarian social work...The aim is to integrate the Balkan peninsula – eventually – into the architecture of Europe, and, in the meantime, to reduce the flow of its major exports: crime, refugees and drugs.’ Ignatieff, *Empire Lite*, 32.

<sup>628</sup> Statement of Philip Zelikow, ‘Testimony Before the 9/11 Commission,’ *New York Times*, April 14, 2004. Transcription temporarily available at website: [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com), accessed April 14, 2004.

<sup>629</sup> David S. Cloud, ‘US Navy, Allies Patrol Sea off Somalia, in Search of Fleeing Al Qaeda Fighters,’ *Wall Street Journal*, January 4, 2002, A14; and Ignatieff, *Empire Lite*, 5.

money have even been traced to the Great Lakes region of Africa – the scene of the Rwandan genocide and the ongoing violations of human rights in the Congo.<sup>630</sup> Had the US acted more quickly and meaningfully in these areas, the argument goes, these regions would be less accommodating to terrorists today. Nicholas Wheeler summarises the question posed by scholars seeking to draw the war on terrorism and the promotion of human rights together: ‘If what was lacking in the 1990s was a compelling security interest to motivate intervention in situations of humanitarian emergency, then does the threat posed by global terrorism supply the missing ingredient?’<sup>631</sup>

Yet intervention to prevent grave violations of human rights and preserve international stability remains an imperfect duty that does not belong to any particular agent. Michael Walzer insists that the obligation to intervene should fall on the most capable state.<sup>632</sup> In many instances, this state is the United States. Exhortations to morality, however, are insufficient. A more pragmatic argument impresses upon the US the benefits it derives from providing public goods. Joseph Nye suggests that ‘international order is a public good – something everyone can consume without diminishing its availability to others.’<sup>633</sup>

Nye suggests that the United States has the most to gain from international stability and therefore the most compelling reason to ‘take the lead in providing disproportionate

---

<sup>630</sup> Ignatieff, *Empire Lite*, 5.

<sup>631</sup> Nicholas J. Wheeler, ‘Humanitarian Intervention after September 11, 2001,’ in Anthony F. Lang jr. (ed.), *Just Intervention* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2003), 193.

<sup>632</sup> Walzer, ‘The Argument about Humanitarian Intervention,’ 32.

<sup>633</sup> Nye, *The Paradox of American Power*, 142.

resources toward its provision.’<sup>634</sup> The argument that international stability should be conceived as a vital national interest for the United States draws support from theories of hegemonic stability which argue that a hegemon has particular interest in an ordered international system.<sup>635</sup> By providing the public good of international stability, the US enjoys its benefits and US power is legitimated in the eyes of others.<sup>636</sup>

### *Humanitarian Intervention in a Post-September 11 World*

The observations and exhortations of the academy notwithstanding, there is no guarantee that the lesson learnt by US administrations from September 11 will be that an enlightened self-interest demands humanitarian interventions to prevent state sponsored rights violations and state failure. A few months after the attacks on the World Trade Centre, Michael Ignatieff wrote of a fear that human rights would be trumped by a narrow focus on national security.<sup>637</sup> The fear was that a preoccupation with the so called ‘war on terror’ would see the US return to its ways of ‘cozying up to friendly authoritarians’ in order to ensure national security in the short-term, and abandon the humanitarian obligations that it had only just begun to accept.

---

<sup>634</sup> Ibid.

<sup>635</sup> Ken Menkhaus, ‘Complex Emergencies, Humanitarianism, and National Security,’ *National Security Studies Quarterly*, 4/4: 53-61 (1998).

<sup>636</sup> Nye, *The Paradox of American Power*, 143-4.

<sup>637</sup> Michael Ignatieff, ‘Is the Human Rights Era Ending?’ *New York Times*, February 5, 2002, A25.

The administration of George W. Bush is not unaware of the arguments for a more enlightened construction of the national interest.<sup>638</sup> However, to date, it has chosen to prioritise some strategic threats over others. While his war on terror has sometimes been cloaked under the guise of ‘humanitarian intervention,’ the military strategy of President Bush has focused on the security threats posed by particular terrorist groups or states rather than on the need to prevent the humanitarian crises that can spawn such threats. The objectives and conduct of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq demonstrate this military strategy. In justifying these wars, the Bush administration appealed to the humanitarian norms that had emerged in the 1990s. However, these justifications are better understood as an appropriation rather than the institutionalisation of norms of intervention.

In his recent book, *Great Powers and Outlaw States*, Gerry Simpson describes how the justifications articulated for intervention in Kosovo ranged from those of humanitarian necessity to what he labels ‘*liberal anti-pluralism*’ – the practice of making legal distinctions between states on the basis of external behaviour or internal characteristics.<sup>639</sup> Since that intervention, and especially since September 11, Simpson suggests, ‘a further and perhaps deeper idea’ has emerged beyond mere humanitarianism. ‘The defence of the West, variously described as ‘Europe’ or ‘civilisation’ or ‘democracy’ (has) become the animating idea behind the move to this new *legalised*

---

<sup>638</sup> Indeed Bush’s *National Security Strategy* acknowledges, at least in theory, the convergence of humanitarian principles with American self-interest: ‘In Africa, promise and opportunity sit side by side with disease, war, and desperate poverty. This threatens both a core value of the United States – preserving human dignity – and our strategic priority – combating global terror. American interests and American principles, therefore, lead in the same direction.’ *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington DC: White House, December 17, 2002), 10-11.

<sup>639</sup> Gerry Simpson. *Great Powers and Outlaw States: Unequal Sovereigns in the International Legal Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

*hegemony*.’<sup>640</sup> This ‘legalised hegemony’ refers to a tradition of great power prerogative and privilege instituted at the Congress of Vienna in 1815. Simpson groups legalised hegemony and anti-pluralism under the banner of ‘*legalised hierarchy*’ which he suggests has existed in competition with the idea of sovereign equality at least since 1815. Understanding this ‘legalised hierarchy’ helps us understand how the Bush administration has been able to harness the felt obligation to intervene in perceived humanitarian emergencies and employed it for its own ends in, using Christian Reus-Smit’s phrase, a ‘program of hegemonic renewal.’<sup>641</sup> The present administration has appropriated the pressures to engage in humanitarian interventions and used them as justification for its own egoistic program.<sup>642</sup>

It would be very difficult to argue that the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention provides significant explanatory power for the decisions to intervene in either Afghanistan or Iraq. As with the Kosovar intervention, while grave violations of human rights may have been ended in Afghanistan and Iraq, the means of war confirm the shallowness of America’s commitment to humanitarian principles. Much has been written about the negative humanitarian effects of the bombing campaign in Afghanistan.<sup>643</sup> Since the bombing campaign was completed, critics have lamented that

---

<sup>640</sup> Emphasis mine. Ibid., 220.

<sup>641</sup> Christian Reus-Smit, *American Power and World Order* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004).

<sup>642</sup> This understanding of the foreign policy of President Bush is inherently rationalist and gives credence to E. H. Carr’s contention that the supposed norms of international society are simply a reflection of the national interests of the powerful states. E. H. Carr [1939], *The Twenty Years’ Crisis: 1919-1939*, (London: MacMillan Press, 1989).

<sup>643</sup> See, for example, Wheeler, ‘Humanitarian Intervention after September 11,’ 198-202. More sympathetic views are offered by Elshtain, *Just War Against Terror*, 59-70; and Nicholas D. Kristof, ‘A Merciful War,’ *New York Times*, February 1, 2002, A31.

the Bush administration is attempting to rebuild Afghanistan ‘on the cheap.’<sup>644</sup> The story in Iraq is similar as the Bush administration is accused of contributing to excessive civilian deaths,<sup>645</sup> being unwilling to contribute the number of troops necessary to establish stability in a post-war environment,<sup>646</sup> and promoting certain treatment of detainees that violates established humanitarian norms.<sup>647</sup>

It is beyond the scope of this conclusion to deal with these cases in great detail. What can be said is that, even if humanitarian concerns do have some limited causal explanatory power for the decisions to intervene in Afghanistan and Iraq, it was the convergence of these concerns with clear material and strategic short-term interests that led to intervention. In the war on terror, Tom Farer warns, ‘Humanitarian goals might incidentally be advanced in certain circumstances, but they would not be a principal basis for action.’<sup>648</sup> Michael Ignatieff concurs asserting that, ‘In a post-11 September environment, intervention is likely to be targeted at those places that present a security or terrorist challenge, and not at those places where the challenge is merely humanitarian.’<sup>649</sup>

---

<sup>644</sup> Ignatieff, *Empire Lite*, 79. See more generally pages 77-108. See also Hirsch, ‘Bush and the World.’

<sup>645</sup> See for example, Emma Ross, ‘Scientists estimate 100,000 Iraqis May Have Died in War\_Far More than Previous Estimates,’ *Associated Press Newswires*, October 29, 2004, 10:13am.

<sup>646</sup> See, for example, Thom Shanker, ‘The Reach of War: The Military; Panel Warning of Shortage of US Troops,’ *New York Times*, September 24, 2004, 12.

<sup>647</sup> See, for example, Seymour Hersch, ‘The Gray Zone: Annals of National Security,’ *The New Yorker*, May 24, 2004, 038; and, more recently, Andrew Sullivan, ‘Atrocities in Plain Sight,’ *New York Times*, January 13, 2005, 1.

<sup>648</sup> Tom J. Farer, ‘Humanitarian Intervention Before and After 9/11,’ in J. L. Holzgrefe and Robert O. Keohane (eds.), *Humanitarian Intervention: Ethical, Legal, and Political Dilemmas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 84.

<sup>649</sup> Michael Ignatieff, ‘State Failure and Nation-Building,’ in J. L. Holzgrefe and Robert O. Keohane (eds.), *Humanitarian Intervention: Ethical, Legal, and Political Dilemmas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 306. Thomas Weiss suggests that, as a result of the re-direction of US strategic priorities since September 11, ‘the sun of humanitarian intervention has set for now.’ Thomas Weiss, ‘The Sunset of



While September 11, 2001, demonstrated that instability on the other side of the world can lead to or at least make possible undesirable deeds that impact on the heart of America, it must be recognized that not all state sponsored violence and state failure threatens US security interests equally. Grave violations of human rights do not always amount to short-term threats to American self-interest and some impact on longer-term security more than others.<sup>650</sup> As Farer suggests, ‘coincidence is imperfect.’<sup>651</sup>

Moreover, as the United States increasingly uses humanitarian language to justify uses of force that are perceived by the international community as illegitimate, skepticism and hostility to the permissive norm of intervention will increase.<sup>652</sup> As opposition to the permissive norm increases, the felt obligation to comply with the prescriptive norm of intervention will diminish. The international community may preference the norm of non-intervention over what it perceives to be American neo-imperialism and, consequently, the international pressure on the United States to respond to grave violations of human rights will be reduced. A weakening of the permissive norm weakens the prescriptive norm. Not only will felt obligations to intervene be reduced, international opprobrium may increase the costs of intervention. Farer warns that, ‘if, through its conduct of the anti-terrorist war, (the United States) catalysed a hardening of opposition to armed

---

Humanitarian Intervention? The Responsibility to Protect in a Unipolar Era,’ *Security Dialogue*, 35/2: 135-153 (2004), p. 149.

<sup>650</sup> P. H. Liotta, ‘Still Worth Dying For: National Interests and the Nature of Strategy,’ *Naval War College Review*, 56/2: 123-138 (2003).

<sup>651</sup> Farer, ‘Humanitarian Intervention Before and After 9/11,’ 86.

<sup>652</sup> Alex Bellamy, ‘A Responsibility to Protect or a Trojan Horse? The Crisis in Darfur and Humanitarian Intervention after Iraq’ (Forthcoming).

intervention, the political and material costs of intervention would undoubtedly grow.’<sup>653</sup> These increased costs of aggressive unilateralism, he suggests, would limit intervention to only those cases given highest priority in the war on terror. This reality is being played out in the first months of 2005 as the United States, preoccupied with the war on terror and the rebuilding of Iraq, fumbles about in response to what it has itself labelled ‘genocide’ in Sudan.

### *Genocide in Sudan*

After the Holocaust, many were quick to say ‘never again.’ Upon reading a report about the Clinton administration’s failure to respond to the Rwandan genocide, President Bush wrote in the margin, ‘not on my watch.’<sup>654</sup> Yet genocide is occurring again and the US is again failing to stop it.

As the United States today rebuilds Afghanistan and Iraq, it allows genocide to continue in Sudan. In his second inaugural address, George W. Bush spoke of the convergence of America’s self-interest with the belief that the liberty and rights of all humans everywhere should be protected: ‘America’s vital interests and our deepest beliefs are

---

<sup>653</sup> Tom J. Farer, ‘Humanitarian Intervention Before and After 9/11,’ 84. Farer suggests that the material costs would increase because it would be harder to find coalition partners willing to lend troops, funds and infrastructure (p. 84, n. 82).

<sup>654</sup> Nicholas D. Kristof, ‘Facing Down the Killers,’ *New York Times*, December 18, 2004, 19.

now one.’<sup>655</sup> The truth of this statement remains to be seen. At the time of writing, the Bush administration has not intervened to stop grave violations of human rights in the Darfur region of Sudan which are a product of the conflict between African rebels and Government soldiers with their Arab militia allies, the *Jingaweit*. An estimated 10,000 civilians are dying every month through disease and malnutrition in the refugee camps to which they have fled.<sup>656</sup> Recent estimates put the death toll for displaced Sudanese since March, 2004, at between 200,000 and 400,000.<sup>657</sup> A further two million have been displaced from their homes.<sup>658</sup> The prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention is clearly not strong enough to compel the US to use military force to stop atrocities in Darfur which are well documented and understood. In the absence of sufficient material interests, President Bush, like Presidents Clinton and Bush sr. before him, has been able to avoid paying significant political costs for not intervening.<sup>659</sup>

To be fair, the US has made a great deal more noise about the atrocities in Sudan than it did about the Rwandan genocide ten years earlier. While many have rightfully drawn

---

<sup>655</sup> Transcript, ‘Inaugural Address by George W. Bush,’ *New York Times*, January 20, 2005, temporarily available from website: [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com), accessed January 20, 2005.

<sup>656</sup> Warren Hoge, ‘UN Says Death Toll Reaches 70,000,’ *New York Times*, October 16, 2004, 7.

<sup>657</sup> Colum Lynch, ‘Lack of Access Muddies Death Toll in Darfur; Estimates Vary Widely as Sudan Stalls UN Effort for Regional Mortality Study,’ *Washington Post*, February 8, 2005, A20; and Nicholas D. Kristof, ‘Why Should We Shield the Killers,’ *New York Times*, February 2, 2005, 21.

<sup>658</sup> Rodrigue Ngowi, ‘Sudan Rebel Leaders Ratify Peace Deal,’ *Associated Press Newswires*, January 25, 2005, 9:15am.

<sup>659</sup> The nature of the United States’ interests in Darfur is complex. The US certainly has an interest in preventing instability in Sudan as it would serve the interests of Al Qaeda affiliates who are known to operate within the state. However, the most significant source of instability within the state is the protracted civil war between the Sudanese government and southern rebels. One reason why the Bush administration has been willing to allow genocide in Darfur to go unpunished has been to avoid damaging the talks with the Sudanese government aimed at ending the civil war. The effects of the peace treaty signed in January, 2005, between the Sudanese government and southern rebels on American interests in taking a more determined stance over Darfur remain to be seen.

parallels between the two tragedies,<sup>660</sup> the first and second administrations of George W. Bush, particularly first Secretary of State Colin Powell, have taken some significant diplomatic steps to end the suffering which the Clinton administration refused to take in Rwanda. Most notably, in September, 2004, Secretary Powell acknowledged the occurrence of genocide.

In a statement to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Powell concluded ‘that genocide has been committed in Darfur and that the Government of Sudan and the Jingaweit bear responsibility – and that genocide may still be occurring.’<sup>661</sup> This was the first time such a determination had been applied by a United States government to a current crisis. We know that such a determination had been refused during the Bosnian and Rwandan genocides as it may have committed the Clinton administration to ‘do something.’ It has been a contention of the present study that, in the face of inaction, a refusal to label atrocities as ‘genocide’ indicates at the very least the existence of a weak prescriptive norm of intervention as decision makers clearly feel that a finding of ‘genocide’ increases the obligation to respond. In his statement, Secretary Powell emphasised that no such obligations ought to arise from such a finding:

Mr Chairman, some seem to have been waiting for this determination of genocide to take action. In fact, however, no new action is dictated by this determination. We have been doing everything we can to get the Sudanese

---

<sup>660</sup> Samantha Power, ‘Remember Rwanda, But Take Action in Sudan,’ *New York Times*, April 6, 2004, 23; and Kofi Annan’s speech launching ‘Action Plan to Prevent Genocide,’ April 7, 2004, UN document SG/SM/9197 AFR/893.

<sup>661</sup> Colin Powell, ‘The Crisis in Darfur,’ Testimony Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington DC, September 9, 2004.

government to act responsibly. So let us not be too preoccupied with this designation. These people are in desperate need and we must help them. Call it civil war; call it ethnic cleansing; call it genocide; call it “none of the above.” The reality is the same. There are people in Darfur who desperately need the help of the international community.<sup>662</sup>

In one statement, the Bush administration became the first US administration to acknowledge the occurrence of genocide in a current crisis while doing more than any other administration before it to deny the obligations of the United States to respond to genocide. The determination of genocide may put pressure on European states to support the US in multilateral efforts to stop atrocities which could be authorised by the UN in the future. In the meantime, however, the US seems unwilling bear the political and material costs of leading a coalition of willing forces into Darfur as it did in Iraq.

Later that same September, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1564 requesting an inquiry into whether the violence in Darfur constitutes genocide. This was first time that the Genocide Convention had been formally invoked by the Council. The language of the resolution, however, remained timid. For example, the Council warned that it ‘*shall consider* taking additional measures’ if the Sudanese government failed to ease restrictions on and cooperate with aid workers.<sup>663</sup> The United States Ambassador to the UN, John C. Danforth, told the Security Council that the US had adjusted the language to

---

<sup>662</sup> Ibid.

<sup>663</sup> Emphasis in original. UN document S/RES/1564, September 18, 2004.

reflect the feeling that Sudan had met some of its commitments.<sup>664</sup> Yet one month later it was still not safe for African Sudanese refugees to return home and the United Nations health agency reported that they were continuing to die at the rate of 10,000 per month.<sup>665</sup> Some African peacekeepers have been sent to the region but, in the absence of a more strongly armed international force, a number of aid workers have been killed and a number of aid groups have begun to pull out. A commander of African Union forces in Darfur at the end of 2004 described the situation as 'a time bomb which could explode at any moment.'<sup>666</sup>

International, domestic and congressional pressure compelled a response from President Clinton with regard to the Bosnian war in 1995. A groundswell of public support for humanitarian action in Darfur may prompt a meaningful response from the present administration but such pressure does not seem likely so long as President Bush keeps his public focused on a narrowly conceived war on terror. The media, human rights groups and Congress did place some pressure on the Bush administration to recognise that genocide was occurring in Darfur.<sup>667</sup> However, since Secretary Powell acknowledged the occurrence of genocide and President Bush repeated the charge of genocide two weeks later to the UN General Assembly, these pressures have abated somewhat. It would seem that the term 'genocide' has been thought of as a trigger to action. Consequently, acknowledgement of its occurrence may have been seen as an end in itself rather than a crucial but early step towards a meaningful response to the suffering of the Sudanese.

---

<sup>664</sup> Warren Hoge, 'Authority is Approved for Sanctions Against Sudan,' *New York Times*, September 19, 2004, 12.

<sup>665</sup> Hoge, 'UN Says Death Toll Reaches 70,000.'

<sup>666</sup> Kristof, 'Facing Down the Killers.'

<sup>667</sup> Scott Straus, 'Darfur and the Genocide Debate,' *Foreign Affairs*, 84/1: 123-133 (2005).

In late January, 2005, the UN report requested by Resolution 1564 was released concluding that the Government of Sudan had ‘not pursued a policy of genocide.’<sup>668</sup> However, it also emphasised that ‘International offences such as the crimes against humanity and war crimes that have been committed in Darfur may be no less serious and heinous than genocide.’<sup>669</sup> Even before the release of this report, Scott Straus was stressing that the energy spent fighting over whether to label the atrocities ‘genocide’ was misplaced.<sup>670</sup> The more important question concerns ‘how to craft an effective response to mass violence against civilians in Sudan.’<sup>671</sup>

The 1990s showed us that human rights groups, the so called ‘CNN effect,’ and the international community can have some influence over foreign policy decision making when leaders are ambivalent about the direction in which America should head. However, where national interests are clearly defined, as they are under the Bush administration, these pressures are perhaps less influential. For example, ABC broadcast journalist, Peter Jennings, suggests that strong leadership will over-rule television every time.<sup>672</sup> Consider, for example, the strong domestic support in the US for the invasion of Iraq – at least at the beginning – which was supported with a clearly articulated national interest but which occurred in the face of disputed evidence of WMDs, doubts regarding

---

<sup>668</sup> *Report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur to the United Nations Secretary-General*, Geneva, January 25, 2005, 4.

<sup>669</sup> Ibid.

<sup>670</sup> Straus, ‘Darfur and the Genocide Debate.’

<sup>671</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>672</sup> Quoted in Freedman, ‘Victims and Victors,’ 339, n. 12.

the connections of Iraq with Al Qaeda, and international condemnation of the American use of force without UN Security Council authorisation.

The simple reality is that strategic interests in Iraq trump atrocities in Sudan. It seems that, with the distractions of the war on terror and the rebuilding of Iraq, even a determination of genocide, which, as a contracting party, the United States has undertaken to ‘prevent and punish,’ is insufficient to compel the United States to comply with the prescriptive norm of intervention in the absence of vital strategic interests.

It took the attacks of September 11 for America to realize the threat that state failure in Afghanistan posed to its self-interests. Michael Ignatieff suggests that ‘the US spent the 1990s conceiving Afghanistan to be a humanitarian or human rights disaster zone, and failing to notice that it was rapidly becoming a national security nightmare, a training ground for terror.’<sup>673</sup> Before the tragic events of September 11, scholars were already articulating abundant reasons why it was in the self-interest of the US to create sustainable peace in Afghanistan. These reasons included the interest in ending drug trafficking, arms dealing and goods smuggling. The criminalized economy in Afghanistan weakened states and legal economies in the region.<sup>674</sup> These arguments were insufficient to prompt intervention before September 11. Similar arguments with regard to the Sudanese genocide – refugee flows and the flood of arms into the country destabilises the region and US security is threatened as lawless regions can become harbours for terrorists – have, at the time of writing, not prompted a reconstruction of the

---

<sup>673</sup> Ignatieff, ‘State Failure and Nation-Building,’ 318.

<sup>674</sup> See, for example, Barnett R. Rubin, ‘The Political Economy of War and Peace in Afghanistan,’ *World Development*, 28/10: 1789-1803 (2000).



national interest in favour of intervention. Short-term self-interests may have once again trumped humanitarian norms.

### *Conclusion*

This dissertation has endeavoured to investigate the nature and strength of a norm and its interplay with the self-interests of states but has shied away from normative judgement. The explanatory power of a norm prescribing humanitarian intervention has been examined but at no stage have the normative goals of the investigation been explicitly stated or defended. This is characteristic of much constructivist research. Nevertheless, while morally neutral investigations do make valuable contributions to the study of international relations, there is also a place for systematic reflection on what constitutes ethical conduct in the world, and how this might be realized.<sup>675</sup> The discussion in this dissertation and the investigations of scholars into the decision making processes of US administrations have illuminated how domestic, international and transnational actors shape and mobilise humanitarian norms and the conditions under which this can occur. The very nature of the duty inherent in the prescriptive norm of humanitarian intervention mitigates its potential strength. The norm can only ever be an imperfect positive duty. As such, compliance cannot be compelled. We have observed, however, that compliance and normative change can be encouraged by various forces. A question posed by Christian

---

<sup>675</sup> Christian Reus-Smit contends that it is in this area that constructivists have most to learn from the English school. Christian Reus-Smit. 'Imagining Society: Constructivism and the English School,' *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 4/3: 487-509 (2002), p. 501. The following discussion was prompted by questions that Reus-Smit raises on page 502.

Reus-Smit that might ‘fruitfully guide further inquiry’ asks how the existing mechanisms and avenues of normative change might ‘be exploited to enhance human justice while cultivating global peace and security?’<sup>676</sup>

We have found that the existing mechanisms and avenues of normative change include pressure from international society, the media, human rights groups and Congress. Further, norm entrepreneurs can actively forge new directions in foreign policy by championing humanitarian principles. These are some of the devices that can be exploited in the future to encourage and enable meaningful responses to grave violations of human rights. These are the mechanisms and avenues through which the dissemination, internalisation and institutionalisation of shared beliefs regarding the value of humanitarian action can be promoted. If these beliefs are increasingly accepted, if it becomes increasingly understood that intervention is an appropriate response to grave violations of human rights, national interests will be re-constituted in favour of intervention.

While the system of self-help among states is not necessarily an inevitable consequence of anarchy, it is the system that states have constituted in relationship with each other in a way that is self-perpetuating and not particularly malleable to change.<sup>677</sup> Nevertheless, Alexander Wendt argues that transformation of state identities and interests is possible and can be driven by self-conscious efforts; it does not rely on unintended

---

<sup>676</sup> Reus-Smit, ‘Imagining Society,’ 502.

<sup>677</sup> Alexander Wendt, ‘Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics,’ *International Organisation*, 46/2: 391-425 (1992), pp. 410-12.

consequences.<sup>678</sup> However, such transformation is a slow process as our case studies reveal; it only takes place incrementally. Wendt also suggests that transformation of state interests, in this sense, relies on a relatively stable context of international order.<sup>679</sup> If there were any doubts that the stable international order that allowed for the emergence of humanitarian norms in the 1990s was only temporary if not illusory, the events of September 11, 2001, and the nature of America's response, put them to rest. The limitless opportunities perceived at the beginning of the post-cold war era have given way to the struggle against terrorism and WMD proliferation of the post-September 11 era. Nevertheless, while present conditions may be unfavourable for a reconstitution of the national interest that neglects egoistic concerns, there remains another hope for humanitarian action.

This other hope for humanitarian action lies in an enlightened confluence of humanitarian norms and longer-term self-interest. Even Henry Kissinger, the quintessential realist, has conceded that 'there is a level of violence and atrocities so offensive to the American and democratic conscience as to override considerations of the national interest.'<sup>680</sup> Yet humanitarian action need not rely on such concessions. Humanitarian norms should not necessarily have to trump self-interest in the constitution of the national interest. The hope is that national interests may be reconstituted by recognition of the threats that emanate from allowing strong states to violate the rights of their citizens and weak states to fail. This recognition may lead to interventions which aim to prevent or halt such

---

<sup>678</sup> Ibid., 418-22.

<sup>679</sup> Ibid., 418.

<sup>680</sup> Quoted by Jerry Fowler in 'Round Table on Genocide Prevention: Genocide Prevention, Morality, and the National Interest,' 430.

violations and failures. Tom Farer suggests that an inadvertent accomplishment of September 11 may have been to ‘stiffen humanitarianism with the iron of national security.’<sup>681</sup> There is no reason to expect generosity from Western leaders but perhaps their eyes can be opened to the necessity. Just as the Corinthians urged the Athenians to consider a combination of both societal norms and longer-term self interest around two and a half thousand years ago, whatever their selfish motives,<sup>682</sup> so can we urge the powerful states of today.

An aim of this dissertation has been to provide, in the words of Stanley Hoffman’s generous description of Hedley Bull, a balance of ‘skepticism and hope,’<sup>683</sup> and it is with both skepticism and hope that we must conclude. In 1994, the world stood by as 800,000 Rwandans were slaughtered. Ten years later, the world has another opportunity to respond to crimes against humanity.

On the tenth anniversary of the beginning of the Rwandan genocide, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan released an ‘Action Plan to Prevent Genocide.’ He appealed to the international community to respond to the violence in Darfur:

But let us not wait until the worst has happened, or is already happening. Let us not wait until the only alternatives to military action are futile hand-wringing or callous indifference. Let us, Mr Chairman, be serious about preventing genocide.

---

<sup>681</sup> Farer, ‘Humanitarian Intervention Before and After 9/11,’ 88.

<sup>682</sup> Thucydides [460-400 BC], *History of the Peloponnesian War*, translated by Rex Warner (London: Penguin, 1972), 1:31-55. For more on this episode, see the Introduction of the present dissertation.

<sup>683</sup> Quoted in Michael J. Smith and Linda B. Miller, ‘Reflections on an Ideal Influence,’ in Michael J. Smith and Linda B. Smith (eds.), *Ideas and Ideals: Essays on Politics in Honor of Stanley Hoffman* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 59

Only so can we honour the victims whom we remember today. Only so can we save those who might be victims tomorrow.<sup>684</sup>

---

<sup>684</sup> UN document, SG/SM/9197 AFR/893. April 7, 2004.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

- Albright, Madeleine, *Madam Secretary: A Memoir* (London: Macmillan, 2003).
- Auerswald, Philip E. and Auerswald, David P. (eds.), *The Kosovo Conflict: A Diplomatic History through Documents* (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 2000).
- Auger, Vincent A., 'The Evolution of International Norms: Sovereignty and Intervention in the United Nations,' paper presented to the 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April 3-6, 2003.
- Barkin, J. Samuel, 'The Evolution of the Constitution of Sovereignty and the Emergence of Human Rights Norms,' *Journal of International Studies*, 27/2: 229-252, (1998).
- Barkin, J. Samuel and Cronin, Bruce, 'The State and the Nation: Changing Norms and the Rules of Sovereignty in International Relations,' *International Organisation*, 48/1: 107-30 (1994).
- Barnett, Michael N., 'The United Nations and Global Security: The Norm is Mightier than the Sword,' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 9: 37-54 (1995).
- 'The UN Security Council, Indifference, and Genocide in Rwanda,' *Cultural Anthropology*, 12/4: 551-578 (1997).
- Bazyler, Michael J., 'Reexamining the Doctrine of Humanitarian Intervention in Light of the Atrocities in Kampuchea and Ethiopia,' *Stanford Journal of International Law*, 23: 547-619 (1987).
- Beard, Charles A. [1934], *The Idea of National Interest* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1966).

Bell, Coral, 'Force, Diplomacy and Norms,' in Albrecht Schnabel and Ramesh Thakur (eds.), *Kosovo and the Challenge of Humanitarian Intervention: Selective Indignation, Collective Action and International Citizenship* (Tokyo: UN University, 2000).

Bellamy, Alex, *Kosovo and International Society* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

- 'Humanitarian Intervention and the Three Traditions,' *Global Society*, 17/1: 3-20 (2003).
- 'Power Rules and Argument: New Approaches to Humanitarian Intervention,' *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 57/3: 499-512 (2003).
- 'A Responsibility to Protect or a Trojan Horse? The Crisis in Darfur and Humanitarian Intervention after Iraq' (Forthcoming).

Benjamin, Barry M., 'Unilateral Humanitarian Intervention: Legalising the Use of Force to Prevent Human Rights Atrocities,' *Fordham International Law Journal*, 16: 120-158 (1992).

Betts, Richard K., 'The Delusion of Impartial Intervention,' *Foreign Affairs*, 73/6: 20-33 (1994).

- 'The Lesser Evil: The Best Way Out of the Balkans,' *The National Interest*, 64: 53-65 (2001).

Bjorkdahl, Annika, 'Norms in International Relations: Some Conceptual and Methodological Reflections,' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 15/1: 9-23 (2002).

Brilmayer, Lea, 'What's the Matter with Selective intervention?' *Arizona Law Review*, 37: 955-970 (1995).

- Brown, Chris, 'Selective Humanitarianism: In Defense of Inconsistency,' in Deen K. Chatterjee and Don E. Scheid (eds.), *Ethics and Foreign Intervention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
- Bruderlein, Claude, 'People's Security as a New Measure of Global Security,' *International Review of the Red Cross*, 83/842: 353-366 (2001).
- Bull, Hedley, 'The Grotian Conception of International Society,' in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds.), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1966).
- *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).
- Burg, Steven L. and Shoup, Paul S., *The War in Bosnia Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2000).
- Burkhalter, Holly J., 'The Question of Genocide: The Clinton Administration and Rwanda,' *World Policy Journal*, 11/4: 44-55 (1994).
- Caplan, Richard, 'Humanitarian Intervention: Which Way Forward?' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 14: 23-38 (2000).
- Carr, E. H. [1939], *The Twenty Years' Crisis: 1919-1939* (London: MacMillan Press, 1989).
- Checkel, Jeffrey T., 'International Norms and Domestic Politics: Bridging the Rationalist-Constructivist Divide,' *European Journal of International Relations*, 3/4: 473-495 (1997).
- 'The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory,' *World Politics*, 50/2: 324-348 (1998).



- 'Norms, Institutions, and National Identity in Contemporary Europe,' *International Studies Quarterly*, 43/1: 83-114 (1999).
- 'Why Comply? Social Norms Learning and European Identity Change,' *International Organisation*, 55/3: 553-88 (2001).

Chesterman, Simon, *Just War or Just Peace? Humanitarian Intervention and International Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Chomsky, Noam, *September 11* (Australia: Allen and Unwin, 2001).

Chopra, Jarat and Weiss, Thomas G., 'Sovereignty is No Longer Sacrosanct: Codifying Humanitarian Intervention,' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 6: 95-117 (1992).

Clarke, Walter and Herbst, Jeffrey, 'Somalia and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention,' *Foreign Affairs*, 75/2: 70-85 (1996).

- *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997).

Clinton, W. David, *The Two Faces of National Interest* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994).

Clinton, Bill, *My Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004).

Coker, Christopher, 'The United States and the Ethics of Post Modern War,' in Karen E. Smith and Margot Light (eds.), *Ethics and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Conversino, Mark J., 'Sawdust Superpower: Perceptions of U.S. Casualty Tolerance in the Post-Gulf War Era,' *Strategic Review*, 25/1: 15-23 (1997).

Crawford, Neta, 'Decolonisation as an International Norm: The Evolution of Practices, Arguments and Beliefs,' in Laura Reed and Carl Kaysen (eds.), *Emerging Norms*

*of Justified Intervention* (Cambridge MA: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1993).

- *Argument and Change in World Politics: Ethics, Decolonisation and Humanitarian Intervention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Daalder, Ivo H., 'Knowing When to Say No: The Development of US Policy for Peacekeeping,' in William Durch (ed.), *UN Peacekeeping, American Policy, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1996).

- *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America's Bosnia Policy* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000).

Daalder, Ivo H. and O'Hanlon, Michael E., *Winning Ugly: NATO's War to Save Kosovo* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000).

Davies, Victor A. B., 'Sierra Leone: Ironic Tragedy,' *Journal of African Economies*, 9/3: 349-369 (2000).

De Almeida, Joao Marques, 'Review Article: Pluralists, Solidarists and the Issues of Diversity, Justice and Humanitarianism in World Politics,' *International Journal of Human Rights*, 7/2: 144-163 (2003).

Deng, Francis, 'Universal Morality,' in Kenneth M. Jensen and Elizabeth P. Faulkner (eds.), *Morality and Foreign Policy: Realpolitik Revisited*, (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 1991).

DiPrizio, Robert C., *Armed Humanitarians: US Interventions from Northern Iraq to Kosovo* (London: John Hopkins University Press, 2002).

Dowty, Alan and Loescher, Gil, 'Refugee Flows as Grounds for International Action,' *International Security*, 21/1: 43-71 (1996).

- Doyle, Michael W., 'Liberalism and World Politics,' *American Political Science Review*, 80/4: 1151-1169 (1986).
- Dunne, Timothy, 'The Social Construction of International Society,' *European Journal of International Relations*, 1/3: 367-389 (1995).
- Durch, William, 'Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and "State Building" in Somalia,' in William Durch (ed.), *UN Peacekeeping, American Policy, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1996).
- Durch, William J. and Schear, James A., 'Faultlines: UN Operations in the Former Yugoslavia,' in William Durch (ed.), *UN Peacekeeping, American Policy, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1996).
- Elshtain, Jean Bethke, 'International Justice as Equal Regard and the Use of Force,' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 17/2: 63-75 (2003).
- *Just War Against Terror: The Burden of American Power in a Violent World* (New York: Basic Books, 2003).
- Falk, Richard, 'Intervention Revisited: Hard Choices and Tragic Dilemmas,' *The Nation* (December 20, 1993), p. 755-764.
- Farer, Tom J., 'Humanitarian Intervention Before and After 9/11,' in J. L. Holzgrefe and Robert O. Keohane (eds.), *Humanitarian Intervention: Ethical, Legal, and Political Dilemmas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
- Farrell, Theo, 'Constructivist Security Studies: Portrait of a Research Program,' *International Studies Review*, 4/1: 49-72 (2002).
- Feil, Scott R., *Preventing Genocide: A Report to the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict* (New York: Carnegie Corporation, 1998).

Fein, Helen, 'The Three P's of Genocide Prevention: With Application to a Genocide Foretold – Rwanda,' in Neal Riemer (ed.), *Protection Against Genocide: Mission Impossible?* (London: Praeger, 2000).

Feinstein, Lee and Slaughter, Anne-Marie, 'A Duty to Prevent,' *Foreign Affairs*, 83/1: 136-150 (2004).

Ferroggiaro, William (ed.), 'The US and the Genocide in Rwanda 1994: Evidence of Inaction,' *The National Security Archive*, August 20, 2001, [www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/index.html](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/index.html)

Finnemore, Martha, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

- 'Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention,' in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia Press, 1996).
- 'Paradoxes in Humanitarian Intervention,' paper presented to the Symposium on Norms and Ethics of Humanitarian Intervention at the Centre for Global Peace and Conflict Studies, University of California, April 14, 2000, revised September 2000.
- *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force* (London: Cornell University Press, 2003).

Finnemore, Martha and Sikkink, Kathryn, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,' *International Organisation*, 52/4: 887-917 (1998).

- 'Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics,' *Annual Review of Political Science*, 4: 391-416 (2001).

Fisher, David, 'The Ethics of Intervention,' *Survival*, 36/1: 51-59 (1994).

Fox, Bryony and Hudson, David, 'Social Constructivism Applied: Kosovo and its Implications for the Global Order in the New Millennium,' *The Electronic Review of World Politics*, <http://www.kent.ac.uk/politics/research/erwp/Koso.htm>

Franck, Thomas M. and Rodley, Nigel S., 'After Bangladesh: The Law of Humanitarian Intervention by Military Force,' *American Journal of International Law*, 67: 275-305 (1973).

Frederking, Brian, 'Constructing Collective Security in Kosovo,' [http://www.class.uidaho.edu/martin\\_archives/Kosovo.htm](http://www.class.uidaho.edu/martin_archives/Kosovo.htm)

Freedman, Lawrence, 'Victims and Victors: Reflections on the Kosovo War,' *Review of International Studies*, 26: 335-358 (2000).

*Frontline* Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ambush](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ambush) to accompany the documentary: 'Ambush in Mogadishu.'

- Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil) to accompany the documentary: 'The Triumph of Evil.'
- Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/military](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/military) to accompany the documentary: 'Give War a Chance.'
- Website: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kosovo](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kosovo) to accompany the documentary: 'War in Europe.'

- Fukuyama, Francis, 'The Ambiguity of "National Interest,"' in Stephen Sestanovich (ed.), *Rethinking Russia's National Interests* (Washington DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1994).
- Garfinkle, Adam, 'Strategy and Preventive Diplomacy: United States Foreign Policy and Humanitarian Intervention,' *Orbis*, 45/4: 503-508 (2001).
- Garrett, Stephen A., *Doing Good and Doing Well: An Examination of Humanitarian Intervention* (London: Praeger, 1999).
- Gibbs, David N., 'Realpolitik and Humanitarian Intervention: The Case of Somalia,' *International Politics*, 37: 41-55 (2000).
- Goertz, Gary and Diehl, Paul F., 'Towards a Theory of International Norms: Some Conceptual and Measurement Issues,' *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 36: 634-664 (1992).
- 'International Norms and Power Politics,' in Frank W. Wayman. and Paul Diehl (eds.), *Reconstructing Realpolitik* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).
- Good, Robert C., 'The National Interest and Political Realism: Niebuhr's "Debate" with Morgenthau and Kennan,' *Journal of Politics*, 22/4: 597-619 (1960).
- Gourevitch, Philip, *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families* (London: Picador, 2000).
- Gow, James, *Triumph of the Lack of Will: International Diplomacy and the Yugoslav War* (London: Hurst and Company, 1997).
- Hamburg, David A., *No More Killing Fields: Preventing Deadly Conflict* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002).

- Hayden, Robert M., 'Humanitarian Hypocrisy,' *East European Constitutional Review*, 8/3: 91-96 (1999).
- Henkin, Louis, 'Kosovo and the Law of "Humanitarian Intervention,"' *The American Journal of International Law*, 93/4: 824-828 (1999).
- Herrmann, Richard K. and Shannon, Vaughn P., 'Defending International Norms: The Role of Obligation, Material Interest, and Perception in Decision Making,' *International Organization*, 55/3: 621-654 (2001).
- Hirsch, John L. and Oakley, Robert B., *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995).
- Hirsch, Michael, 'Bush and the World,' *Foreign Affairs*, 81/5: 18-44 (2002).
- Hobson, John M., *The State and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- Hoffman, Stanley, 'The Politics and Ethics of Military Intervention,' *Survival*, 37/4: 29-51 (1995-6).
- *The Ethics and Politics of Humanitarian Intervention* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996).
  - *World Disorders: Troubled Peace in the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998).
- Holzgrefe, J. L., 'The Humanitarian Intervention Debate,' in J. L. Holzgrefe and Robert O. Keohane (eds.), *Humanitarian Intervention: Ethical, Legal, and Political Dilemmas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

- Hopf, Ted, 'The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory,' *International Security*, 23: 171-200 (1998).
- Huntington, Samuel P., 'The Erosion of American National Interests,' *Foreign Affairs*, 76/5: 28-49 (1997).
- Ignatieff, Michael, *The Warrior's Honor: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience* (London: Vintage, 1998).
- *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond* (London: Vintage, 2000).
  - *Empire Lite: Nation-Building in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan* (London: Vintage, 2003).
  - 'State Failure and Nation-Building,' in J. L. Holzgrefe and Robert O. Keohane (eds.), *Humanitarian Intervention: Ethical, Legal, and Political Dilemmas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
- Independent International Commission on Kosovo, *The Kosovo Report* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), *Supplementary Volume: Background Research* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001).
- International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), *The Responsibility to Protect* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001).
- Jackson, Robert, *The Global Covenant: Human Conduct in a World of States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).



- Jentleson, Bruce W., 'The Pretty Prudent Public: Post-Vietnam American Opinion on the Use of Military Force,' *International Studies Quarterly*, 36: 49-74 (1992)
- Jentleson, Bruce W. and Britton, Rebecca L., 'Still Pretty Prudent: Post-Cold War American Public Opinion on the Use of Military Force,' *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 42: 395-417 (1998).
- Jepperson, Ronald L., Wendt, Alexander and Katzenstein, Peter J., 'Norms, Identity and Culture in National Security,' in Peter J. Katzenstein. (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia Press, 1996).
- Johnston, Harry and Dagne, Ted, 'Congress and the Somalia Crisis,' in Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst (eds.), *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997).
- Judah, Tim, *Kosovo: War and Revenge* (London: Yale University Press, 2000).
- Kaplan, Robert, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History* (New York: St Martin's, 1993).
- Katzenstein, Peter J. (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. (New York: Columbia Press, 1996).
- 'Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security,' in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia Press, 1996).
- Kaufmann, Chaim, 'See No Evil,' *Foreign Affairs*, 81/4: 142-149 (2002).

- Kegley, Charles W. Jr. and Raymond, Gregory A., 'Global Terrorism and Military Preemption: Policy Problems and Normative Perils,' *International Politics*, 41: 37-49 (2004).
- Kegley, Charles W. Jr., Raymond, Gregory A. and Hermann, Margaret G., 'The Rise and Fall of the Non-intervention Norm: Some Correlates and Potential Consequences,' *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs Journal*, 22: 81-97 (1998).
- Keohane, Robert O. and Nye, Joseph S., *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*. (Boston: Little, Brown and Co, 1977).
- Klinghofer, Arthur Jay, *The International Dimension of Genocide in Rwanda* (New York: New York University Press, 1998).
- Klotz, Audie, 'Norms Reconstituting Interests: Global Racial Equality and U.S. Sanctions Against South Africa,' *International Organization*, 49/3: 451-78 (1995).
- Kolb, Robert, 'Note on Humanitarian Intervention,' *International Review of the Red Cross*, 85/849: 119-134 (2003).
- Krasner, Stephen D., *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investments and US Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).
- 'Realism, Imperialism and Democracy: A Response to Gilbert,' *Political Theory*, 20/1: 38-52 (1992).
  - *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).
- Krauthammer, Charles, 'The Short, Unhappy Life of Humanitarian War,' *The National Interest*, Fall: 5-8 (1999).

- Kull, Steven and Destler, I. M., *Misreading the Public: The Myth of a New Isolationism* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1999).
- Kuperman, Alan J., 'Rwanda in Retrospect,' *Foreign Affairs*, 79/1: 94-118 (2000).
- Lang, Anthony F. Jr., 'Global Governance and Genocide in Rwanda,' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 16/1: 143-150 (2002).
- Legro, Jeffrey W., 'Which Norms Matter? Revisiting the "Failure" of Internationalism,' *International Organization*, 51/1: 31-63 (1997).
- Lewis, Ioan and Mayall, James, 'Somalia,' in James Mayall (ed.), *The New Interventionism 1991-1994: United Nations experience in Cambodia, former Yugoslavia and Somalia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- Lieber, Robert J., *Eagle Rules? Foreign Policy and American Primacy in the Twenty-First Century* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2002).
- Lillich, Richard B., 'Forcible Self-Help by States to Protect Human Rights,' *Iowa Law Review*, 53: 325-351 (1967).
- Liotta, P. H., 'Still Worth Dying For: National Interests and the Nature of Strategy,' *Naval War College Review*, 56/2: 122-138 (2003).
- Lizza, Ryan, 'Where Angels Fear to Tread: Sierra Leone, the Last Clinton Betrayal,' *The New Republic*, 223/4: 22-27 (2000).
- McElroy, Robert W., *Morality and American Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).
- McNulty, Mel, 'France's Role in Rwanda and External Military Intervention: A Double Discrediting,' *International Peacekeeping*, 4/3: 24-44 (1997).
- Malcolm, Noel, *Kosovo: A Short History* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1999).

- Mandelbaum, Michael, 'Foreign Policy as Social Work,' *Foreign Affairs*, 75/1: 16-32 (1996).
- 'A Perfect Failure: NATO's War Against Yugoslavia,' *Foreign Affairs*, 78/5: 2-8 (1999).
- March, James G. and Olsen, Johan, 'The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders,' *International Organization*, 52: 943-969 (1998).
- Melvorn, Linda, *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide* (London: Zed Books, 2000).
- *Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide* (London: Verso, 2004).
- Menkhaus, Ken, 'Complex Emergencies, Humanitarianism, and National Security,' *National Security Studies Quarterly*, 4/4: 53-61 (1998).
- Morgenthau, Hans J. [1948], *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, revised by Kenneth W. Thompson, brief edition (Boston: McGraw Hill, 1993).
- *American Foreign Policy: A Critical Examination*, published in USA under the title *Defence of the National Interest: A Critical Examination of American Foreign Policy*. (London: Methuen, 1952).
  - 'Another "Great Debate": The National Interest of the United States,' *The American Political Science Review*, 46/4: 961-988 (1952).
- Morton, Jeffrey S. and Singh, Neil Vijay, 'The International Legal Regime on Genocide,' *Journal of Genocide Research*, 5/1: 47-69 (2003).
- Nardin, Terry, 'The Moral Basis of Humanitarian Intervention,' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 16/1: 57-70 (2002).

- National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington DC: White House, December 17, 2002).
- Natsios, Andrew. 'Illusions of Influence: The CNN Effect in Complex Emergencies,' in Robert I. Rotberg and Thomas G. Weiss (eds.), *From Massacres to Genocide: The Media, Public Policy, and Humanitarian Crises* (Washington DC, The Brookings Institution, 1996).
- Newbury, Catharine, *The Cohesion of Oppression: Clientship and Ethnicity in Rwanda, 1860-1960* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).
- Newman, Edward, 'Human Security and Constructivism,' *International Studies Perspectives*, 2: 239-251 (2001).
- Nincic, Miroslav, 'The National Interest and its Interpretation,' *The Review of Politics*, 61/1: 29-56 (1999).
- Nye, Joseph S. Jr., 'Redefining the National Interest,' *Foreign Affairs*, 78/4: 22-35 (1999).
- Onuf, Nicholas, 'The New Culture of Security Studies,' *Mershon International Studies Review*, 42: 132-134 (1998).
- Owen, John M., 'How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace,' *International Security*, 19/2: 87-125 (1994).
- Paris, Roland, 'Broadening the Study of Peace Operations,' *International Studies Review*, 2/3: 27-44 (2001).
- Powell, Colin, 'US Forces: Challenges Ahead,' *Foreign Affairs*, 72: 32-45 (1992).
- Power, Samantha, *"A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide*. (London: Flamingo, 2002).

- 'Raising the Cost of Genocide,' *Dissent*, 49/2: 85-95 (2002).

Price, Richard, *The Chemical Weapons Taboo* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997).

Prunier, Gerard, *The Rwanda Crisis: 1959-1994* (London: Hurst and Company, 1995).

Ramsbotham, Oliver P., 'Islam, Christianity, and Forcible Intervention,' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 12: 81-102 (1998).

Raymond, Gregory A., 'Problems and Prospects in the Study of International Norms,' *Mershon International Studies Review*, 41: 205-245 (1997).

Record, Jeffrey, 'A Note on Interests, Values, and the Use of Force,' *Parameters*, 31/1: 15-21 (2001).

Reiff, David, 'The Lessons of Bosnia: Morality and Power,' *World Policy Journal*, 12/1: 76-88 (1995).

- 'The Crusaders: Moral Principles, Strategic Interests, and Military Force,' *World Policy Journal*, 17/2: 39-47 (2000).

- 'Kosovo's Humanitarian Circus,' *World Policy Journal*, 17/3: 25-32 (2000).

Reno, William, 'The Failure of Peacekeeping in Sierra Leone,' *Current History*, 100/646: 219-225, (2001).

*Report by Mr B. W. Ndiaye, Special Rapporteur, on his mission to Rwanda from 8-17 April, 1993, E/CN.4/1994/7/Add.1, August 11, 1993.*

*Report of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, S/1999/1257, December 16, 1999.*

*Report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur to the United Nations Secretary-General, Geneva, January 25, 2005.*

- Reus-Smit, Christian, 'Human Rights and the Social Construction of Sovereignty,' *Review of international Studies*, 27: 519-538 (2001).
- 'Imagining Society: Constructivism and the English School,' *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 4/3: 487-509 (2002).
  - *American Power and World Order* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004).
- Rice, Condoleeza, 'Promoting the National Interest,' *Foreign Affairs*, 79/1: 45-62 (2000).
- Rohde, David, 'Kosovo Seething,' *Foreign Affairs*, 79/3: 65-79 (2000).
- Roberts, Adam, 'The Road To Hell: Humanitarian Intervention,' *Current*, 363: 24-28 (1994).
- 'NATO's "Humanitarian War" over Kosovo,' *Survival*, 41/3: 102-123 (1999).
- Rosenau, James N., 'National Interest,' *International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, vol. 11 (New York: Free Press, 1968).
- 'Round Table on Genocide Prevention: Genocide Prevention, Morality, and the National Interest,' *Journal of Human Rights*, 1/4: 429-467 (2002).
- Rubin, Barnett R., 'The Political Economy of War and Peace in Afghanistan,' *World Development*, 28/10: 1789-1803 (2000).
- Schilling, Warner R., 'The Clarification of Ends, or, Which Interest is the National?' *World Politics*, 7: 566-578 (1956).
- Sen, Amartya, 'Human Rights and Asian Values,' 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Morgenthau Memorial Lecture on Ethics and Foreign Policy (Carnegie Council on Ethics and international Affairs, 1997).
- Shannon, Vaughn P., 'Norms Are What States Make of Them: The Political Psychology of Norm Violation,' *International Studies Quarterly*, 44: 293-316 (2000).

- 'Judge and Executioner: The Politics of Responding to Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans' (Forthcoming).

Shattuck, John, *Freedom on Fire: Human Rights Wars and America's Response* (London: Harvard University Press, 2003).

Sherman, Nancy, 'Empathy, Respect and Humanitarian Intervention,' *Ethics and international Affairs*, 12: 103-119 (1998).

Shue, Henry, 'Let Whatever is Smouldering Erupt? Conditional Sovereignty, Reviewable Intervention and Rwanda 1994,' in A. J. Paolini, A. P. Jarvis, and C. Reus-Smit (eds.), *Between Sovereignty and Global Governance*. (London: MacMillan, 1998).

- 'Bombing to Rescue?: NATO's 1999 Bombing of Serbia,' in Deen K. Chatterjee and Don E. Scheid (eds.), *Ethics and Foreign Intervention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Sicherman, Harvey, 'The Revival of Geopolitics,' *Intercollegiate Review*, 37/2: 17 (2002).

Simpson, Gerry, *Great Powers and Outlaw States: Unequal Sovereigns in the International Legal Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

Smith, Michael J., *Realist Thought from Weber to Kissinger* (London: Louisiana State University Press, 1986).

- 'Ethics and Intervention,' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 3: 1-26 (1989).

Smith, Michael J. and Miller, Linda B., 'Reflections on an Ideal Influence,' in Linda B. Smith and Michael J. Smith (eds.), *Ideas and Ideals: Essays on Politics in Honor of Stanley Hoffman* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993).

Sonderman, Fred A., 'The Concept of the National Interest,' *Orbis*, 21/1: 121-139 (1977).



- Srinivas, Vaitla, *Norms and Interests of Humanitarian Interventions*, M.A. Dissertation (The American University, 2002).
- Stevenson, Charles A., 'The Evolving Clinton Doctrine on the Use of Force,' *Armed Forces and Society*, 22/4: 511-535 (1996).
- Straus, Scott, 'Contested Meanings and Conflicting Imperatives: A Conceptual Analysis of Genocide,' *Journal of Genocide Research*, 3/3: 349-375 (2001).
- 'Darfur and the Genocide Debate,' *Foreign Policy*, 84/1: 123-133 (2005).
- Strobel, Warren P., *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy: The News Media's Influence on Peace Operations* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1997).
- Subcommittee on Africa, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 'The Crisis in Rwanda,' May 4, 1994 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1995).
- Subcommittee on Africa, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 'Conflict Resolution in Africa: Recent Developments,' June 8, 1994 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1995).
- Subcommittee on Africa, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 'Crisis in Central Africa,' July 26, 1994 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1994).
- Tanguy, Joelle and Terry, Fiona, 'Humanitarian Responsibility and Committed Action: Response to "Principles, Politics, and Humanitarian Action,"' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 13: 29-34 (1999).
- Terry, Fiona, *Condemned to Repeat? The Paradox of Humanitarian Action* (London: Cornell University Press, 2002).

*The Clinton Administration's Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations*, May 1994 (Presidential Decision Directive 25).

Thompson, Janice E., 'Norms in International Relations: A Conceptual Analysis,' *International Journal of Group Tensions*, 23: 67-83 (1993).

Thucydides [460-400 BC], *History of the Peloponnesian War*, translated by Rex Warner (London: Penguin, 1972).

Tugendhat, Ernst, 'The Moral Dilemma in the Rescue of Refugees,' *Social Research*, 62/1: 129-142 (1995).

Walzer, Michael [1977], *Just and Unjust Wars*, third edition (New York: Basic Books, 2000).

- 'The Politics of Rescue,' *Social Research*, 62/1: 53-66 (1995).
- 'Kosovo,' *Dissent*, 46/3: 5-7 (1999).
- 'Universalism and Jewish Values,' 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Morgenthau Memorial Lecture on Ethics and Foreign Policy (Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs, 2001).
- 'The Argument about Humanitarian Intervention,' *Dissent*, 49/1: 29-37 (2002).

Weil, Carola, 'The Protection-Neutrality Dilemma in Humanitarian Emergencies: Why the Need for Military Intervention?' *International Migration Review*, 35/1: 79-116 (2001).

- *People vs. Borders: Competing International Norms of Protection in Complex Humanitarian Emergencies (Rwanda)*, Ph.D. Dissertation (University of Maryland College Park, 2003).

Weiner, Myron, 'Bad Neighbors, Bad Neighborhoods,' *International Security*, 21/1: 5-42 (1996).

Weiss, Thomas, 'Overcoming the Somalia Syndrome: "Operation Rekindle Hope?"' *Global Governance*, 1: 171-187 (1995).

- 'Principles, Politics, and Humanitarian Action,' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 13: 1-22 (1999).
- 'The Sunset of Humanitarian Intervention? The Responsibility to Protect in a Unipolar Era,' *Security Dialogue*, 35/2: 135-153 (2004).

Welch, David A., 'Can We Think Systematically About Ethics and Statecraft?' *Ethics and International Affairs*, 8: 23-37 (1994).

Wendt, Alexander, 'Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics,' *International Organisation*, 46/2: 391-425 (1992).

Wheeler, Nicholas J., 'Pluralist or Solidarist Conceptions of Humanitarian Intervention: Bull and Vincent on Humanitarian Intervention,' *Millennium Journal of International Studies*, 21/3: 463-487 (1992).

- *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- 'Review Article: Humanitarian Intervention after Kosovo: Emergent Norm, Moral Duty or the Coming Anarchy?' *International Affairs*, 77/1: 113-128 (2001).
- 'Enforcing Human Rights,' in Gene M. Lyons and James Mayall (eds.), *International Human Rights in the Twenty-First Century*, (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003).

- 'Humanitarian Intervention after September 11, 2001,' in Anthony F. Lang jr. (ed.), *Just Intervention* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2003).
- Wight, Martin, *International Theory: The Three Traditions* (London: Leicester University Press, 1991).
- Willum, Bjorn. 'Legitimizing Inaction towards Genocide in Rwanda: A Matter of Misperception?' *International Peacekeeping*. 6/3: 11-30. (1999).
- Wolfers, Arnold, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1962).
- Woods, James L., 'U.S. Government Decisionmaking Processes During Humanitarian Operations in Somalia,' in Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst (eds.), *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997).
- Woodward, Susan L., *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995).
- Zhang, Ruizhuang, *American Foreign Policy Motives*, Ph.D. Dissertation (Berkeley: University of California, 1997).