

Politics with a Conscience?:
Assessing the Role of Norm Entrenchment in Humanitarian (Non-)Intervention

by

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Abstract

This thesis deals with constructivist and English School accounts of humanitarian intervention. Literature from both of these schools contends that a “norm of humanitarian intervention” has emerged, whereby states should intervene to end massive human rights violations within other states. Accordingly, this thesis concerns itself with “norm entrenchment,” the extent to which a norm has become sufficiently ingrained as to affect behavior. Specifically, this thesis examines the role played by norm entrenchment in bringing about US intervention and non-intervention in Somalia (1992-1993), Rwanda (1994), and Kosovo (1999). By assessing norm entrenchment at the individual, domestic, and international organization levels, this thesis concludes that norm entrenchment played little or no role in bringing about US intervention in Somalia and Kosovo, and non-intervention in Rwanda. Instead, these cases demonstrate that international organizations’ credibility and maintenance enter into decisions to intervene or not to intervene in humanitarian crises.

Résumé

Cette thèse traite des théories relatives à la question des interventions humanitaires formulées par les constructivistes et par les représentants de l'Ecole Anglaise. La littérature des deux Ecoles affirme qu'une «norme relative aux interventions humanitaires» a émergé, selon laquelle les Etats devraient intervenir, afin de faire cesser les violations massives de droits de l'homme se déroulant à l'intérieur d'autres Etats. En conséquence, cette thèse traite «de l'établissement des normes», à savoir dans quelle mesure une norme est suffisamment enracinée pour affecter le comportement. Cette thèse examine en particulier le rôle joué par l'établissement de cette norme dans les interventions et les non-interventions des Etats-Unis en Somalie (1992-1993), au Rwanda (1994), et au Kosovo (1999). Par l'évaluation du processus de l'établissement d'une norme aux niveaux individuel, domestique, et à celui des organisations internationales, cette thèse conclut que l'établissement de cette norme n'a joué qu'un rôle insignifiant, voir inexistant dans l'intervention des Etats-Unis en Somalie et au Kosovo et leur non-intervention au Rwanda. Mais ces cas démontrent également que la crédibilité et la viabilité des organisations internationales sont des facteurs qui jouent un rôle dans la décision d'intervenir ou non dans les crises humanitaires.

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I. Introduction

The concept of humanitarian intervention can be traced back to medieval theorists like St. Thomas Aquinas and international legal theorists such as Vitoria and Grotius. According to these thinkers, a prince's right to rule his people could be breached if human well-being was severely compromised due to natural disasters or the prince's own depravity. Under these circumstances, foreign princes had a right – or, rather, an obligation – to intervene in order to alleviate human suffering, by force if need be. As the notion of state sovereignty came increasingly to dominate international law after 1648, humanitarian intervention fell out of favor. But in the post-Cold War order, the concept appears to have emerged once again, so much so that some have declared that “sovereignty is no longer sacrosanct.”¹

Still, scholarly works on humanitarian intervention – steadily multiplying since the end of the Cold War – have largely shied away from tackling the causal factors that have induced specific cases of humanitarian intervention. Instead, most studies have tended to examine ethical and legal dimensions, expounding on whether the “right to intervene” is legitimate in moral or judicial terms. Other writings, of a more policy-oriented character, have studied the relative success or failure of different interventions, putting forth recommendations to ensure successful future endeavors.

Therein lies the anticipated contribution to the field of works such as the present study.

The central concern of this paper is not ethical or legal legitimization, nor is it concerned

¹ Jarat Chopra and Thomas G. Weiss qtd. in Mohammed Ayoob, “Humanitarian Intervention and State Sovereignty,” *International Journal of Human Rights* 6, no. 1 (2002): 84.

with policy prescriptions for more effective interventions. Instead, this study seeks to probe *why* states intervene in humanitarian crises. In short, the research question is: what factors shape a state's decision to intervene in a humanitarian crisis?

What theoretical literature there is on the causal factors behind humanitarian intervention has come mainly from constructivism and the English School, although these writings have yet to be formulated as a coherent issue-specific research program. This literature contends that a "norm of humanitarian intervention" has emerged, whereby states should intervene to end massive human rights violations within other states. But to what extent has that norm actually guided state decisions to intervene in humanitarian crises?

This proposed study concerns itself with "norm entrenchment," the extent to which a norm has become sufficiently ingrained as to affect behavior. If the norm of humanitarian intervention is sufficiently entrenched, then it should shape decisions to intervene. This study, then, will examine the role played by norm entrenchment in bringing about US intervention and nonintervention in Somalia (1992-1993), Rwanda (1994), and Kosovo (1999).

II. Theoretical Review

The term "humanitarian intervention" can be defined as *an activity undertaken by one or more states (or an international organization), whereby military force is coercively*

*deployed into a territory beyond their jurisdiction, for the purpose of preventing or ending human-made suffering faced by foreign nationals.*²

This definition encompasses several important qualifications. First of all, the intervention may be unilateral or multilateral in that the intervener may be either a single state, or a group of states or international body. Secondly, humanitarian intervention is limited to cases in which coercive force is employed. This condition, therefore, excludes humanitarian relief efforts, such as those exclusively involving supplies of food or medicine, as well as peacekeeping missions. Third, interventions to protect a state's own nationals abroad from oppression are excluded. Fourth, humanitarian intervention is restricted to actions targeting human-made abuse rather than the alleviation of suffering resulting from natural disasters.³

Still, the most problematic aspect of any definition of humanitarian intervention lies outside the four aforementioned criteria. It is easy to stipulate that for an action to meet the requirements for a humanitarian intervention, its primary motive must be

² Derived from a range of definitions by Andrew Mason and Nick Wheeler, "Realist Objections to Humanitarian Intervention," in *The Ethical Dimensions of Global Change*, ed. Barry Holden (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1996), 95; Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2003), 53; Jennifer M. Welsh, "Introduction," in *Humanitarian Intervention and International Relations*, ed. Jennifer M. Welsh (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 3.; R. J. Vincent qtd. in Nicholas J. Wheeler, "Humanitarian Intervention and World Politics," in *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, ed. John Baylis and Steve Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 394.

³ For further elaboration on, and justification for, these criteria, consult Mason and Wheeler, "Realist Objections," 95; Oded Löwenheim, "Do Ourselves Credit and Render a Lasting Service to Mankind: British Moral Prestige, Humanitarian Intervention, and the Barbary Pirates," *International Studies Quarterly* 47 (2003): 23-24; Finnemore, *Purpose of Intervention*, 53-54.

humanitarian in nature.⁴ It is much more difficult, however, to ascertain purpose or intent accurately when one is dealing with the actions of states. Simply put, states often say what they do not mean, and just as often act contrary to their pronouncements.

One option, set forth by Bruce Jones, is to broaden the definition of humanitarian intervention, beyond ordinary usage, to involve humanitarian outcomes – whether or not the primary motive was humanitarian.⁵ However, the question of motivation has itself been central to theoretical examinations of humanitarian intervention. Accordingly, this study will stipulate that humanitarian interventions are limited to those military actions in which an explicit *humanitarian rationale* is claimed by the interveners as justification. Whether this rationale is rhetorical or genuine is the central point of contention between rival theoretical explanations of humanitarian intervention.

The single paradigm in which there has been significant theorizing on humanitarian intervention is constructivism. This is not altogether surprising. For realism, so-called “humanitarian intervention” is little more than traditional military intervention in the pursuit of national self-interests. If anything is new, it is that a new “script” (humanitarianism) is being used to legitimize this age-old pursuit. For domestic-level explanations of state behavior, humanitarian intervention is also *business-as-usual*: domestic pressures and opportunities driving foreign policy. In contrast, constructivism

⁴ For instance, Bhikhu Parekh identifies humanitarian intervention as “an act wholly or primarily guided by the sentiment of humanity, compassion, or fellow-feeling, and [that] is in that sense disinterested.” Wheeler, “Humanitarian Intervention,” 394.

⁵ Ibid., 400.

postulates that international relations have *changed*: considerations related to moral legitimacy have given rise to a new and evolving norm of humanitarian intervention.

In depicting humanitarian intervention as an emergent norm, constructivists have placed it at the center of a fundamental incompatibility between Westphalian sovereignty on the one hand and international human rights on the other.⁶ If states possess supreme sovereign authority, then they may behave as they might within their territories – and this includes violating human rights of their citizens at will.⁷ In this conception, the principle of non-intervention preserves state sovereignty.⁸ If, however, individual rights are to take precedence, then the international community may (and should) hold states responsible for the treatment of their citizens; and when push comes to shove, the international community may (and should) intervene forcibly on the side of the citizen, even if such humanitarian actions contravene the state's sovereignty. Some authors have suggested that the notion of sovereignty itself has evolved, from “sovereignty as authority” denoting exclusive control over territory, to “sovereignty as responsibility” to protect citizens' human rights.⁹

Constructivist theories stress that actors' compliance with norms stems from an acceptance of those norms as legitimate. Actors accept norms as setting the terms by

⁶ A norm is defined as the generally-accepted standard or dominant practice within a particular context. Neta C. Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics: Ethics, Decolonization, and Humanitarian Intervention* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 86.

⁷ Henry Shue reflects upon this thesis, advanced by Friedrich Kratochwil, at great length in Henry Shue, “Limiting Sovereignty,” in *Humanitarian Intervention and International Relations*, ed. Jennifer M. Welsh (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 12.

⁸ Ibid., 14.

⁹ Ibid.

which behavior should be justified and evaluated.¹⁰ Thus, in Alexander Wendt's "legitimacy" model of norm compliance, a norm reconstitutes the identity and interests of the states; actors comply with norms because they accept their legitimacy, rather than because they find compliance best suited to their interests. This model represents genuine internalization, whereby norms become institutionalized in international society.¹¹ In view of that, constructivism accords primacy to the normative context because "[i]t shapes the rights and duties states believe they have toward one another, and it shapes the goals they value, the means they believe are effective and legitimate to obtain these goals, and the political costs and benefits attached to different choices."¹²

Constructivism contends that realist accounts do not provide a good explanation of humanitarian intervention, because, in many cases, interventions have occurred in areas in which the interveners have had only negligible geostrategic interests.¹³ At any rate, and apart from precise motivations, the recourse to humanitarian discourse as legitimization for intervention is in itself important, because it is reflective of the normative context in which states are operating. When actors use humanitarian norms to rationalize their interventions, they are trying to link their actions to shared standards of acceptable behavior.¹⁴

¹⁰ Nicholas J. Wheeler, "The Humanitarian Responsibilities of Sovereignty: Explaining the Development of a New Norm of Military Intervention for Humanitarian Purposes in International Society," in *Humanitarian Intervention and International Relations*, ed. Jennifer M. Welsh (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 31.

¹¹ Löwenheim, "Do Ourselves Credit," 28.

¹² Finnemore, *Purpose of Intervention*, 53.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹⁴ Martha Finnemore, "Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention," in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 159.

It is worth noting that the concept of humanitarian intervention is not a recent invention. In fact, a doctrine of humanitarian intervention was predominant, as far back as the nineteenth century, in Europe's policies towards the Ottoman Empire. Much like today, so-called humanitarian intervention occurred when a government's exercise of its "sovereign rights" violated the human rights of its citizens through "excesses of injustice and cruelty," thereby warranting intervention by one or more other states in the former's internal affairs.¹⁵ In subsequent years, and during the Cold War, the instrument of humanitarian intervention went into dormancy.

The post-Cold War resurgence of the notion, however, seems to have corresponded to a substantial qualitative shift in humanitarian intervention in two respects. Firstly, humanitarian intervention in the 1990s was no longer restricted to the protection of white Christian populations as it had been during the nineteenth century; instead, most of the protected populations in the 1990s were non-white and non-Christian.¹⁶ In that sense, the concept of humanitarian intervention has become more universal in scope. Second, post-Cold War humanitarian intervention is projected as an undertaking by a state or a coalition of states on behalf of the "international community."¹⁷

The constructivist account maintains that, particularly over the course of the 1990s, a norm of humanitarian intervention has emerged, which accords states the right and the

¹⁵ Hans Köchler, *Humanitarian Intervention in the Context of Modern Power Politics: Is the Revival of the Doctrine of The "Just War" Compatible with the International Rule of Law?* (Vienna: International Progress Organization, 2001), 2-3. Detailed case studies of these historical instances can be found in Finnemore, "Constructing Norms," 58-66; Finnemore, *Purpose of Intervention*.

¹⁶ Finnemore, *Purpose of Intervention*, 53.

¹⁷ Ayoob, "Humanitarian Intervention and State Sovereignty," 83-84.

responsibility to intervene militarily in the domestic affairs of another state to protect the latter's civilians. Still, constructivist scholars have not attempted to substantiate their claims by tying norm emergence to a series of empirical events. For this type of account, we must turn to the English School.

Research within the English School has, as in constructivism, tended to treat social structure as a causal variable.¹⁸ Within this tradition, scholars have posited an “international society” of states, which governs membership in that society as well as how members behave. According to Martha Finnemore, these scholars may disagree about the “thickness” and content of international society, but they are united by their interest in “how social structure – the shared moral and philosophical environment in which states exist – shapes and tempers state preferences and actions.”¹⁹

Most relevant to humanitarian intervention is the work of the “solidarist” wing of the English school, which views international society as bound together by universal values and standards. It is this wing of the English school that has examined human rights and humanitarian intervention most extensively.²⁰ One of the most important works in this strain is Nicholas Wheeler's *Saving Strangers*.²¹

¹⁸ This similarity is described by Martha Finnemore, who defines social structure as “[s]ocially constructed rules, principles, norms of behavior, and shared beliefs [which] provide states, individuals, and other actors with understandings of what is important or valuable and what are effective and/or legitimate means of obtaining those valued goods.” Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996), 15.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

²⁰ Of course, solidarist scholarship often has both empirical and normative dimensions. In other words, it studies what kinds of norms are emerging as well as what kinds of norms *should be* emerging. For the purposes of this study, only the empirical arguments of solidarism will be considered.

²¹ Nicholas J. Wheeler, *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

According to Wheeler, the humanitarian intervention norm is closely linked to Security Council authorization of intervention, which in turn reflects an institutionalization of the international normative fabric.²² This interpretation highlights a new willingness by the Council to categorize humanitarian crises as threats to “international peace and security,” which legitimizes Chapter VII military enforcement action under the UN Charter.

Wheeler points out that in 1971, the Council classified massive human rights abuses within Pakistan as falling within its internal affairs. On 5 April 1991, the Council’s Resolution 688 reversed this precedent by “condemn[ing] the repression of the Iraqi civilian population in many parts of Iraq . . . the consequences of which threaten[ed] international peace and security in the region.”²³ Furthermore, ensuing military intervention was explicitly justified with recourse to humanitarian values, which lends credence to Quentin Skinner’s argument that actors attempt to frame their behavior as consistent with existent legitimatizing principles. Wheeler is careful to point out, however, that though Resolution 688 can be considered a watershed, the humanitarian intervention norm was still in its infancy.²⁴

The next event in this normative evolution was the humanitarian intervention in Somalia. This event was important because Council debate was focused on humanitarian considerations, rather than other interests as in the Iraqi case. Moreover, the Council’s

²² Jennifer M. Welsh, “Taking Consequences Seriously: Objections to Humanitarian Intervention,” in *Humanitarian Intervention and International Relations*, ed. Jennifer M. Welsh (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 184-185.

²³ First operative clause of Resolution 688, qtd. in Wheeler, “Humanitarian Responsibilities,” 33.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 33-34.

resolution contained explicit Chapter VII language to authorize intervention. These precedents were later reinforced by the interventions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Haiti. Even the 1994 Rwandan genocide, which the UN failed to stop – with catastrophic consequences, fits into this narrative of normative evolution. Even though the Security Council failed to intervene, this was not due to objections related to the principles of sovereignty or non-intervention. Over time, then, states have participated in (or acquiesced to) humanitarian intervention due to the “shaming power of humanitarian norms.” What matters most, in this narrative, is that humanitarian values have become “a *sine qua non* of legitimate statehood” within international society.²⁵

But Wheeler is careful to set out a caveat: the primacy of humanitarian motivations need not be a threshold condition.²⁶ Andrew Mason and Wheeler also stipulate that humanitarian reasons need be only one of the mixed motives for intervening.²⁷ In other words, these authors argue that the moral imperative need only be one of the multiple overlapping, and mutually-reinforcing causes that lead to humanitarian intervention. As such, the humanitarian impulse and, say, strategic considerations are not mutually exclusive.

Solidarist scholarship offers a number of mechanisms whereby the humanitarian intervention norm may exercise its influence. On the one hand, there is always the possibility that state leaders adopted this new norm because they sincerely believed in

²⁵ Ibid., 34-36, 39.

²⁶ ———, *Saving Strangers*, 38.

²⁷ Mason and Wheeler, “Realist Objections,” 95.

it.²⁸ According to this line of reasoning, the end of the Cold War settled the struggle between Western-style liberalism and Soviet-style communism, in favor of the former. In searching for a strategy for dealing with the post-Cold War humanitarian crises that abounded afterward, Western leaders found that humanitarianism was the most harmonious with the liberal democratic values to which they ascribed.²⁹

Another potential factor may have been instantaneous media reporting of humanitarian crises. By proffering vivid and direct reporting of humanitarian tragedies, the mass media may serve to mobilize local populations to pressure their nations into humanitarian intervention.³⁰ Thus, domestic publics may compel states to act as “norm entrepreneurs.” Once new ideas and growing moral awareness of Western citizens acquired “social power” – the ability to alter the cost-benefit calculations of decision makers – they could shape policy.³¹

Finally, international organizations may themselves shape normative context, particularly in situations where states tend to act multilaterally through such organizations. This claim is exemplified by Wheeler’s narrative of the Security Council’s role in norm emergence. At any rate, solidarists acknowledge that any event is likely to have complex and multi-layered causes. As such, there is no need to choose a single cause for emergent

²⁸ Wheeler, “Humanitarian Responsibilities,” 40.

²⁹ Adam Roberts, “Humanitarian Principles in International Politics in the 1990s,” in *Reflections on Humanitarian Action: Principles, Ethics, and Contradictions*, ed. Humanitarian Studies Unit (London: Pluto Press, 2001), 27.

³⁰ Ibid., 288; Barry M. Blechman, “Emerging from the Intervention Dilemma,” in *Managing Global Chaos: Source of and Responses to International Conflict* (Washington, D.C.: US Institute of Peace, 1996).

³¹ The concept of “social power” has been chiefly advanced by Daniel Philpott, who defines it as “the ability of believers in ideas to alter the costs and benefits facing those that are in a position to promote or hinder the policies that the ideas demand.” Wheeler, “Humanitarian Responsibilities,” 39.

norms of humanitarian intervention; the norm may manifest itself through any or all of these mechanisms.³²

III. Research Question and Methodology

What both constructivist and English School theorists are contending is that a norm of humanitarian intervention has emerged. This norm is the principle that *states should intervene to end massive human rights violations within other states*. When a norm is fully internalized or entrenched, its prescription becomes the generally-accepted standard or practice.

This study is concerned with whether norm entrenchment in this area has occurred to a degree sufficient to affect state behavior. Specifically, the research question is: What role did norm entrenchment play in bringing about intervention in humanitarian crises? The solidarist English School literature on humanitarian intervention hints at how this question can be answered. As shown above, this literature has suggested mechanisms through which the humanitarian intervention norm may affect behavior.

First of all, some theorists have claimed that state leaders genuinely believe in the humanitarian intervention norm, and adopt it accordingly. In this scenario, norm entrenchment occurs at the level of the individual. When faced with a humanitarian crisis, state leaders who have fully internalized the humanitarian intervention norm will take the decision to intervene.

³² Roberts, "Humanitarian Principles," 29.

Secondly, various authors have argued that domestic pressures – at the domestic level of analysis – may be responsible for the phenomenon of humanitarian intervention.

Although the literature has tended to argue in support of what is generally known as the “CNN Effect” (media effects on public opinion, which in turn influences policy), the domestic pressures notion can be disaggregated into three separate mechanisms. In other words, domestic pressures for intervention can be manifested as extensive media coverage of a humanitarian crisis, domestic public opinion that strongly favors intervention, and/or strong congressional pressure in favor of intervention. Leaders who have not internalized the humanitarian intervention norm themselves, can – in response to such domestic pressures – be driven to intervene.

Third, some authors (Wheeler in particular) have emphasized the role played by international organizations in making humanitarian intervention not just acceptable practice, but an obligating commitment. This argument can also capture situations in which an international organization exercises strong pressure on (potentially reluctant) states to intervene in humanitarian crises.

This study will explore each of these three mechanisms for indications of norm entrenchment. However, this study will conclude that the intervention decision was not caused by entrenchment of a “norm of humanitarian intervention.” Instead, in the case considered, the decision to intervene was taken in order to uphold an international organization, in the belief that nonintervention would have impinged upon that

organization's credibility. In other words, the intervention was undertaken because it was perceived as necessary for the maintenance of an international organization.

An international organization is at risk when its continued operation or functioning along established lines is in danger. In these situations, states may act to maintain that organization because they value the functions it performs; that institution "matters" to them because they stand to gain from its continued operation. It is likely that the "value" of an international institution to a state (in terms of that institution's usefulness) will fluctuate over time. It makes sense that a state's interest in maintaining that institution will fluctuate accordingly. If and when an institution is sufficiently valuable to a state, that state should be willing to expend resources to protect it from threats.

Alternatively, it may be that the duty to preserve the organization has become internalized over time, through social processes of constitutive interaction (as in a constructivist interpretation). This argument would follow similar lines. The "duty to preserve" will not remain constant over time; the norm of institutional maintenance (for that specific organization) is likely to be stronger or weaker at some times than at others. If and when the "duty to preserve" is sufficiently entrenched, states should be willing to expend resources to protect that institution from threats.

According to the first interpretation, states will act to safeguard institutions when they regard those institutions as both valuable *and* at risk.³³ For the second interpretation, states will protect institutions when those institutions are endangered *and* a “duty to preserve” those institutions is sufficiently entrenched.

Of course, the situations that may threaten any given institution are countless, as are the possibilities for state action to uphold that institution. In this study, we are interested in a specific threat to international organizations (loss of credibility due to a humanitarian crisis) and a specific state action undertaken to counter that threat (state intervention in that humanitarian crisis). This study will not be able to determine which of the two logics (value or a duty to preserve) caused state intervention. It only expects to find that an institutional maintenance imperative (which may fit either narrative) drove decisions to intervene.

To examine this set of hypotheses, the cases that have been selected are US intervention and nonintervention in Somalia (1992-1993), Rwanda (1994), and Kosovo (1999). All of these cases occurred in the post-Cold War era and so suitable for probing the theoretical account of humanitarian intervention outlined above. But these cases each make for interesting study for a number of other reasons.

Operation Restore Hope in Somalia was, arguably, the first modern case of military intervention for avowedly humanitarian reasons. In addition, its authorization under

³³ Needless to say, states will not act to defend an imperiled institution that they deem worthless. Likewise, states will see no need to protect an institution that they consider valuable, when that institution does not seem jeopardized.

Chapter VII of the UN Charter marks the introduction of the notion of “peace enforcement.” Finally, this operation has been used is often used as evidence by constructivist writings on humanitarian intervention, arguing that the US had no strategic interest in Somalia and so must have been motivated by a sincere humanitarianism. Rwanda, of course, is the most visible case of nonintervention in light of the scale of atrocities and prior intelligence thereof. Coming on the heels of Somalia, the response to the Rwandan genocide makes for a valuable comparison.

Operation Allied Force in Kosovo took place at the end of 1990s, and so provides a fair test of the constructivist account of norm evolution throughout the decade. If norm evolution is (largely) a cumulative process, then later cases should evidence more normative impetus for action than earlier ones. Operation Allied Force is also a particularly interesting case of humanitarian intervention because it is often described as the first “humanitarian war:” the first time a major bombing campaign was launched against a sovereign country to bring an end to crimes against humanity. It was also the first time force was used to implement Security Council resolutions without specific authorization from that body.

For each of these cases, only the US role will be examined. Of course, the operations in Somalia and Kosovo were formally multilateral. However, in both, US leadership was crucial in providing the impetus for the intervention. Also, in both cases, the US undertook the largest part of the military effort. For the sake of comparison, nonintervention in Rwanda will also be examined from the perspective of the US. The

three cases span two US administrations (Somalia during the Bush administration, and Rwanda and Kosovo during the Clinton administration) and two continents.

In an attempt to locate evidence of norm entrenchment, evidence will be gathered from both primary and secondary sources. These include public statements, memoirs, and published accounts of events. Of course, given the possibilities for insincere rhetoric and rationalization, private documents (especially dealing with private conversations or communications) will be given more weight than public speeches and documents.

For norm entrenchment at the individual level, it is important to take account of the fact that the decision making unit is not unitary, and may involve competing actors. As such, it is necessary to establish which specific decision makers mattered for the intervention decision in question. Insofar as an individual (or group of individuals) drove the policy process, and insofar as that individual (or group) were driven by humanitarian concerns, then there is evidence of norm entrenchment. If this is so, then we should expect those decision makers to make consistent references to humanitarian values as a reason for intervention.

At the domestic level, proxies for degree of norm entrenchment are necessary. For instance, an increase in the frequency and duration of coverage in both print and television media prior to the intervention would suggest media pressure. Opinion polls prior to the intervention would provide clues as to public opinion regarding intervention. To gauge congressional pressure, votes and public statements would be needed.

Importantly though, the extent to which these domestic pressures drove the decision to intervene must be ascertained through evidence that the president and key advisers were concerned about, or explicitly responding to, these pressures.

Finally, top international organization officials can call for intervention through public statements and official documents or private or informal channels. Resolutions or other documents issued by organizational bodies can also be used to infer the presence of pressure. Once again, the extent to which an international organization shaped the intervention decision must be determined through evidence that the president and key advisers were concerned about, or explicitly responding to, this pressure from the international organization.

IV. Case Study: The US and Operation Restore Hope

Overview of Events

UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar called the situation in Somalia “the most serious humanitarian crisis of our day” as early as January 1991.³⁴ When the “coalition” that had toppled President Mohammed Siad Barre disintegrated in inter- and intra-clan warfare, the Somali state collapsed. In two months, casualties had reached 20,000, and there were 250,000 displaced persons.³⁵ An ongoing drought, combined with disruptions in the production of food, medicine, and other basic goods, created a massive famine. At the same time, humanitarian relief organizations found themselves operating in an

³⁴ qtd. in Thomas George Weiss and Cindy Collins, *Humanitarian Challenges and Intervention*, ed. George Lopez, 2nd ed., *Dilemmas in World Politics* (Boulder, C.O.: Westview Press, 2000), 83.

³⁵ Brian W. Greene, “State Identity, Foreign Policy, and Systemic Norm Diffusion: Towards Humanitarian Intervention” (PhD Dissertation, McGill University, 2003), 57.

increasingly insecure environment, and it was estimated that around 80 percent of food deliveries were being looted by armed gangs.³⁶

Nevertheless, little international action followed Pérez de Cuéllar's pronouncement. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) advised against UN operational involvement in Somalia. Since there was no sovereign government to request help in Somalia, the OAU argued, intervention could not be justified under the UN Charter. When Boutros Boutros-Ghali was installed as the new Secretary-General on January 1, 1992, however, one of his first acts was to receive the report of Under-Secretary General for Political Affairs, James Jonah, who had just returned from a fact-finding mission in Somalia.³⁷ The new Secretary-General's subsequent lobbying efforts galvanized the international community.

But by the time the Security Council passed its first resolution on Somalia, in the beginning of 1992, the situation had deteriorated tremendously.³⁸ Around 300,000 Somalis had died of hunger. An estimated 70 percent of the country's livestock had perished, and over 3,000 people were starving to death daily. Nearly 500,000 Somalis had sought refuge in camps in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti.³⁹ In response, Security

³⁶ Jon W. Western, *Selling Intervention and War: The Presidency, the Media, and the American Public* (Baltimore, M.D.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 139.

³⁷ James L. Woods, "U.S. Government Decisionmaking Processes During Humanitarian Operations in Somalia," in *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention*, ed. Walter S. Clarke and Jeffrey Ira Herbst (Boulder, C.O.: Westview Press, 1997), 152.

³⁸ Worth noting is that, in order to placate concerns about violations of sovereignty, the Somali chargé d'affaires in New York (who effectively represented no one) was persuaded to pen a letter to UN authorities requesting international assistance for his country. Stephen A. Garrett, *Doing Good and Doing Well: An Examination of Humanitarian Intervention* (Westport, C.T.: Praeger, 1999), 55.

³⁹ Mohamed Sahnoun, *Somalia: The Missed Opportunities* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1994), 15-16.

Council Resolution 733 called for an arms embargo, requested increased humanitarian aid, and urged conflicting parties to agree to a ceasefire.⁴⁰ Once a ceasefire had been brokered, a technical mission was created less than two months later to explore the possibility of sending a UN force into the country.

One month later, Security Council Resolution 751 established the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM).⁴¹ The Resolution stipulated that fifty observers be deployed immediately to monitor the ceasefire (to be followed, in principle, by 500 peacekeepers), and the Algerian diplomat Mohamed Sahnoun was appointed the Secretary-General's Special Representative to Somalia. However, by the time the unarmed observers arrived in late July, the situation had deteriorated further. Despite the approval of a substantive airlift operation by the Security Council in late July, the humanitarian crisis continued to worsen.⁴²

In August 1992, US President George H. W. Bush committed US forces to support UNOSOM through an emergency food airlift into Somalia. Andrew Natsios, Assistant Administrator of the US Agency for International Development (AID) was designated the president's special coordinator for Somalia relief.⁴³ Operating from Mombassa, Kenya, Operation Provide Relief used US military transport aircraft to deliver more than 28,000 metric tons of relief supplies in some 2,500 missions up until its termination in mid-

⁴⁰ United Nations Security Council, "Resolution 733," (23 January 1992).

⁴¹ ———, "Resolution 751," (24 April 1992).

⁴² ———, "Resolution 767," (27 July 1992).

⁴³ Woods, "U.S. Government Decisionmaking," 155.

December.⁴⁴ The US also offered to airlift the 500 Pakistani peacekeepers who had been authorized by Security Council Resolution 751 into Somalia. After these finally arrived in mid-September, the US placed ships carrying 2,500 Marines in the Indian Ocean, in a bid to guarantee the safety of this Pakistani Battalion (PakBat), who found themselves virtually confined to Mogadishu airport.⁴⁵

In late November of 1992, Bush notified the UN that he was willing to send up to 30,000 soldiers to assist in the delivery of humanitarian assistance in southern Somalia. This US-led Unified Task Force (UNITAF) was formally authorized by Resolution 794, in which the Security Council invoked Chapter VII of the UN Charter to authorize the use of “all necessary means to establish as soon as possible a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia.”⁴⁶

On December 4, the president announced his decision to the nation. His address is worth quoting at length:

“Every American has seen the shocking images from Somalia . . . The people of Somalia, especially the children of Somalia, need our help. We must help them live. We must give them hope. America must act . . . I want to emphasize that I understand the United States cannot right the world’s wrongs. But we also know that some crises in the world cannot be resolved

⁴⁴ David D. Laitin, “Somalia: Intervention in Internal Conflict,” in *Military Intervention: Cases in Context for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. William J. Lahneman (Lanham, M.D.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 31-32.

⁴⁵ Kenneth John Menkhaus and Louis L. Ortmayer, *Key Decisions in the Somalia Intervention*, Pew Case Studies in International Affairs: Case 464 (Washington, D.C.: Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, 1995), 5.

⁴⁶ United Nations Security Council, “Resolution 794,” (3 December 1992).

without American involvement . . . Let me be very clear: Our mission is humanitarian . . . To the people of Somalia I promise this: . . . We come to your country for one reason only, to enable the starving to be fed . . . [T]o every sailor, soldier, airman, and marine who is involved in this mission, let me say, you're doing God's work. We will not fail."⁴⁷

The operation, dubbed "Operation Restore Hope," was launched immediately, with US Marines landing in Somalia on December 9. The multinational coalition ultimately included 28,000 US troops, and 10,000 more from twenty other countries.⁴⁸

The Moral Imperative?

Operation Restore Hope is most often advanced as the prime example of the "CNN Effect" – the influence of extensive television coverage on public opinion, and thereby, on policymaking. Although there was widespread suffering in southern Sudan and elsewhere in 1992, the Bush administration was forced to act specifically in Somalia because that was where the TV cameras were, or so goes the argument.⁴⁹ Television images of starving children and armed bandits prompted public demands that Bush "do something." Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Colin Powell alludes to this dynamic when he notes that "The world had a dozen other running sores that fall, but

⁴⁷ "Address to the Nation on the Situation in Somalia December 4, 1992," Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George H. W. Bush 1992-1993, United States, Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, <http://www.gpo.gov/nara/pubpaps/srchpaps.html>

⁴⁸ Robert C. DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians: U.S. Interventions from Northern Iraq to Kosovo* (Baltimore, M.D.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 46.

⁴⁹ Warren P. Strobel, "The CNN Effect: Myth or Reality," in *The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: Insights and Evidence*, ed. Eugene R. Wittkopf and James M. McCormick (Lanham, M.D.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), 88.

television hovered over Somalia.”⁵⁰ In fact, the media campaign may have been led by US AID agencies. Says Natsios, “I deliberately used the news media as a medium for educating policymakers in Washington and Europe.”⁵¹ According to former White House Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater, pressure from the media was so great in November that Bush confided: “I just can’t live with this for two months” (that is, until January 1993, the end of his term in office).⁵²

That this pressure motivated Bush to act is questionable, however. An examination of the patterns of television reporting raises challenges to the conventional dictum “CNN got us into Somalia, and CNN got us out.” Before the airlift decision, there were very few television reports on Somalia, but the decision itself sparked a burst of reporting, though only for a relatively short period.⁵³ This near-cyclical pattern was repeated with the decision to intervene militarily in Somalia.⁵⁴ It was after Bush’s December 4 address that prominent columnists in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* responded with cheers of “Let’s do it” and “Let it be Somalia!”⁵⁵ As such, it appears that most media coverage followed, rather than triggered, policy decisions and political debates relating to Somalia. One illustrative example of the government leading the media (rather than the

⁵⁰ Colin L. Powell and Joseph E. Persico, *My American Journey*, Large Print ed. (New York: Random House, 1995), 859.

⁵¹ qtd. in Strobel, “CNN Effect,” 88-89.

⁵² qtd. in Peter Viggo Jakobsen, “National Interest, Humanitarianism or CNN: What Triggers UN Peace Enforcement after the Cold War?,” *Journal of Peace Research* 33, no. 2 (1996): 209.

⁵³ The three major US networks (ABC, CBS, and NBC) had mentioned Somalia only fifteen times since 1991. Nearly half of those reports displayed only fleeting glimpses of the Somali crisis. Warren P. Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy: The News Media's Influence on Peace Operations* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 132.

⁵⁴ Even the widely-accepted account of television-induced public pressure forcing the March 1994 US withdrawal from Somalia might itself be exaggerated – by September, President Bill Clinton had been already making plans to withdraw US troops. Strobel, “CNN Effect,” 91.

⁵⁵ qtd. in Alex de Waal, “Dangerous Precedents? Famine Relief in Somalia 1991-93,” in *War and Hunger: Rethinking International Responses to Complex Emergencies*, ed. Joanna Macrae and Anthony B. Zwi (London: Zed Books, 1994), 153-154.

other way around) occurred on December 9: the Navy SEALs and Marines who landed on the beach off Mogadishu toting rifles and wearing camouflage greasepaint just after midnight were temporarily blinded by the glare of TV lights, in what *Le Monde* described as the “most media saturated (*mediatisé*) landing in military history.”⁵⁶ At a pre-landing news briefing in Mogadishu, US Marine Brigadier-General Libutti had tipped off reporters: “I recommend all of you go down to the beach if you want a good show tonight.”⁵⁷

Nor was there strong and organized public pressure on the administration. On November 17, eleven relief groups had drafted a joint letter to the Bush administration advocating an expansion of the UN force and mandate. InterAction, a coalition of 160 US-based relief groups, had also written to Bush requesting that the US provide security for UN relief operations.⁵⁸ US action had been urged by other interest groups and the Somali community in the US. But there were no public campaigns or rallies calling for intervention at a level comparable to the anti-apartheid movement of the 1980s, for instance.⁵⁹ Instead, the initiative seemed to come from within the administration. For instance, after Bush’s December 4 address, sources from within the military moved to reassure the public that this intervention “would not be terribly hard” to carry out.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ qtd. in David N. Gibbs, “Realpolitik and Humanitarian Intervention: The Case of Somalia,” *International Politics* 37, no. 1 (2000): 45. Though criticized for compromising troop security, the media presence was pleasing to Powell: “I wanted the Somalis to see nasty, ugly-looking people coming ashore so they’d decide ‘We’d better sit down and talk with Brother Oakley.’” Powell was referring to Robert Oakley, Special Presidential Envoy for Somalia. qtd. in John G. Sommer, *Hope Restored? Humanitarian Aid in Somalia 1990-1994* (Washington, D.C.: Refugee Policy Group, 1994), 33.

⁵⁷ qtd. in Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy*, 93.

⁵⁸ Don Oberdorfer, “The Path to Intervention,” *Washington Post*, December 6 1992; Western, *Selling Intervention*, 170.

⁵⁹ Menkhaus and Ortmyer, *Key Decisions*, 5.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 8.

Congressional pressure to act, conveyed through visits to Somalia, resolutions, hearings, letters, and consultations is thought to have pressured Bush into intervening as well. Calls for action came from several quarters. By November, Senator Paul Simon (D-IL) and Representative John Lewis (D-GA) had recently returned from trips to Somalia and were calling for more security. Senator Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-KS), who belonged to Bush's own Republican Party, had proposed the use of US ground troops to secure supply lines several months earlier.⁶¹ The Congressional Black Caucus was particularly vocal, suggesting that racial issues might account for US reluctance to intervene in Somalia. In October, Representative Lewis, a member of the Caucus, introduced a resolution advocating a US role in a potential humanitarian intervention.⁶² Thus, Bush was reportedly under enormous congressional pressure to act. In a December letter reporting the deployment of Operation Restore Hope to Congress, the president specifically stated that he had taken congressional views into account in making his decision.⁶³

However, it is unlikely that congressional pressures were as strong a factor in the decision as the above account above implies. At the time of the decision, Congress was in recess. Moreover, although key members had pushed for an intervention, it is not clear that such an undertaking had broad-based support within Congress. It might even be that

⁶¹ Oberdorfer, "Path to Intervention."; Harry Johnston and Ted Dagne, "Congress and the Somalia Crisis," in *Learning from Somalia : The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention*, ed. Walter S. Clarke and Jeffrey Ira Herbst (Boulder, C.O.: Westview Press, 1997), 195.

⁶² Menkhaus and Ortmyer, *Key Decisions*, 3; Johnston and Dagne, "Congress and the Somalia Crisis," 195.

⁶³ "Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Situation in Somalia December 10, 1992," Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George H. W. Bush 1992-1993, United States, Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, <http://www.gpo.gov/nara/pubpaps/srchpaps.html>

the president's decision caught Congress by surprise, since even those who had called for a US role did not propose or expect a full-scale intervention. After the decision was announced, many members were cautious about intervention, and some even expressed serious reservations, anxious that Operation Restore Hope would set a precedent for expensive deployments elsewhere, diverting funds away from the protection of vital national security interests.⁶⁴

Some observers have argued that the UN (and specifically, Boutros-Ghali's lobbying) may have pushed the US decision to intervene. Throughout 1992, Boutros-Ghali had continued to lobby for an increased international response. In July 1992, he faulted the Security Council, for "fighting a rich man's war in Yugoslavia while not lifting a finger to save Somalia from disintegration."⁶⁵ For his part, Sahnoun speculated: "Why can't we have the UN airlift operations the way they do in Sarajevo to avoid kids dying?"⁶⁶

That US intervention occurred due to UN pressure, however, appears unlikely. In fact, the Secretary-General had signified that he did not want US troops. In November, Boutros-Ghali had explored with Frank Wisner, Undersecretary of State for International Security Affairs, the possibility of enlarging the peacekeeping operation – the US would provide logistical support to troops contributed by other countries. In this meeting, the

⁶⁴ Many of these concerns were voiced at the House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing on the Somalia deployment, on December 17. Johnston and Dagne, "Congress and the Somalia Crisis," 196.

⁶⁵ qtd. in John L. Hirsch and Robert B. Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995), 37.

⁶⁶ qtd. in Greene, "State Identity, Foreign Policy, and Systemic Norm Diffusion", 58.

Secretary-General “indicated that he did not want US forces, which he thought were unavailable in any case.”⁶⁷

Nor is it clear that Bush would have been likely to bow down to UN demands – particularly when the US had been able to block Security Council action earlier in the crisis. In fact, Cape Verde’s original draft Resolution 733 was opposed by the US, who insisted that it be watered down.⁶⁸ Throughout the first half of 1992, the official position of the US government was that the problem in Somalia was not one of security (i.e., that would require redress through forceful UN or US action), but rather one of food.⁶⁹ Although UN officials may have unwittingly been responsible for deteriorations in the Somali situation, it is highly doubtful that the UN purposefully undermined conciliation efforts in order to spur US action.⁷⁰

It is also important to recall that by November 1992, Bush was a lame-duck president. On 3 November 1992, he was defeated at the polls by Arkansas governor William J. Clinton. During his election campaign, Bush had authorized Operation Provide Relief, possibly to appease the electorate.⁷¹ However, having managed to resist the pressures to

⁶⁷ Hirsch and Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope*, 41.

⁶⁸ In response, the president of the Security Council could not help asking: “Is Africa worth only a few crumbs of bread?” Woods, “U.S. Government Decisionmaking,” 152; Sommer, *Hope Restored?*, 20.

⁶⁹ This recollection was later reported by Herman Cohen, then Assistant Secretary of State for Africa. Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy*, 135.

⁷⁰ For example, it is reported that Boutros-Ghali had, in his previous capacity as Egyptian foreign minister, worked closely with Barre, and was therefore spurned by Mohammed Farah Aideed. Boutros-Ghali did not help matters when he allowed a Russian plane with UN markings to deliver shipments to Ali Mahdi Mohammed. The circumstances surrounding the October 1992 resignation of Sahnoun and the “provocative” policies of his successor Ismat Kitani bear witness to similar mishaps. Laitin, “Somalia,” 36, 40; de Waal, “Dangerous Precedents?,” 154.

⁷¹ Ostensibly, this occurred very shortly before the Republican National Convention; and when Bush was trailing behind Clinton in the polls by a wide margin. Greene, “State Identity, Foreign Policy, and Systemic Norm Diffusion”, 181.

intervene militarily from the media, NGOs, the ethnic Somali community in the US, Congress, the UN, and even Clinton thus far, there was no reason for the president to succumb now that he had lost his bid for reelection.

Instead, a presidential moral imperative has been advanced as the most obvious explanation. At the time, Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger explained the intervention thus: “This is a tragedy of massive proportions . . . and, underline this, one that we could do something about. We had to act.” He added, “There was no one in the Bush administration who thought of this as anything other than fundamentally a humanitarian mission . . .”⁷² According to this version of events, Somalia was a terrible humanitarian tragedy, and US officials accordingly felt a moral imperative to act.⁷³ According to a senior Defense official, Bush’s decision had not been surprising because: “he would not want to leave office with 50,000 people starving that he could have saved.”⁷⁴

Indeed, as Vice-President, Bush had exhibited a particular interest in Africa, making eighteen trips to the continent. In a December 1992 meeting with Philip Johnston, president of CARE-US and Coordinator for Humanitarian Assistance for UNOSOM, Bush recalled a 1980s visit he and first lady Barbara had made to a CARE feeding center in the Sudan. Natsios remembers him saying: “Barbara and I will never forget all those children who were dying.” Bush reportedly continued, “If the US can make a difference

⁷² qtd. in Menkhaus and Ortmayer, *Key Decisions*, 8; Laitin, “Somalia,” 38-39.

⁷³ Oberdorfer, “Path to Intervention.”

⁷⁴ qtd. in Ibid.

in saving lives, we should do it . . . No one should have to die at Christmastime . . . It's not more complicated than that.”⁷⁵

The president had reportedly been deeply moved by a late June cable from Smith Hempstone, US ambassador to Kenya. Entitled “A Day in Hell,” this communication detailed the appalling conditions the ambassador had seen in a Somali refugee camp on the Kenyan border. According to Natsios, Bush wrote in the margin: “This is very, very upsetting. I want more information.”⁷⁶ Not long thereafter, Bush was also reportedly stirred by a front page article in the July 19 *New York Times*, in which International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) officials estimated that one-third of the Somali population was at immediate risk due to the famine. According to White House aides, Bush “was very upset by these reports and he wanted something done.”⁷⁷

In July 1992, Eagleburger informed State Department staff that the president expected a “forward-leaning” policy on Somalia. This reportedly prompted the State Department to issue a public statement supporting the introduction of armed UN security personnel in Somalia. This was the first pro-security statement made by the US on Somalia since the crisis began.⁷⁸ In the coming months, Bush would establish a full-time Somalia Working Group within the State Department, with Ambassador Brandon Grove as director and

⁷⁵ qtd. in Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy*, 141; Sommer, *Hope Restored?*, 31.

⁷⁶ qtd. in Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy*, 132.

⁷⁷ qtd. in Menkhaus and Ortmayer, *Key Decisions*, 3.

⁷⁸ Hirsch and Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope*, 38.

Ambassador David Shinn as deputy director. Retired ambassador Robert Oakley would be appointed Special Presidential Envoy for Somalia.⁷⁹

There are anecdotes relating to other administration officials being moved by humanitarian concerns as well. For instance, Admiral David Jeremiah, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is said to have fervently opposed any military intervention option up until he went on an airlift into the Somali famine zone. After witnessing the effects of the famine firsthand, he is said to have become much more amenable to a military solution.⁸⁰ On November 12, Assistant Secretary of State Robert L. Gallucci appealed (both orally and through a written report) to Eagleburger that the US head a UN coalition to rescue Somalia, under Security Council Chapter VII authorization to use “all necessary means” including military force.⁸¹

It appears that a necessary idea fueling this alleged humanitarian motive was the belief that the UN was incapable of relieving the Somali humanitarian crisis, and that only the US could solve the problem. This is evident in Bush’s “Address to the Nation” announcing his decision to launch a full-scale intervention, in which he claimed that “Only the United States has the global reach to place a large security force on the ground in such a distant place quickly and efficiently and thus save thousands of innocents from death.”⁸² In his final speeches before leaving office, Bush also emphasized that his guiding principle during Somalia was that “It is our responsibility, it is our opportunity to

⁷⁹ Oakley replaced the previous special envoy, Ambassador Pete de Vos. Woods, “U.S. Government Decisionmaking,” 158.

⁸⁰ Menkhaus and Ortmyer, *Key Decisions*, 6.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² “Address to the Nation on the Situation in Somalia December 4, 1992.”

lead. There is no one else;” if need be, the US would take unilateral action because “Sometimes a great power has to act alone.”⁸³

Similarly, Powell recounts that he “was not eager to get [the US] involved in a Somalian [*sic*] civil war, but we were apparently the only nation that could end the suffering.”⁸⁴

Other officials, including Commander-in-Chief of Central Command (CENTCOM) General Joseph Hoar, also concurred that the unique capabilities of the US military, along with its equipment and training, allow the US to perform functions that no other country could carry out.⁸⁵

Apart from these anecdotal indications, there are several arguments that are made in support of the moral imperative hypothesis. First of all, Bush, in his speeches, constantly emphasized the emotional, humanitarian motive for action in lieu of appealing to the necessity of protecting fundamental national interests or upholding of international law. In one of his later speeches, he explicitly argued that “the relative importance of an interest is not a guide” when deciding whether to use force.⁸⁶ In fact, the argument goes, there were no US national interests at stake in Somalia. As Powell explains in his autobiography, “In none of these recent foreign crises [Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, and Sierra Leone] have we had a vital interest such as we had after Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait and the resulting threat to Saudi Arabia and the free flow of oil.

⁸³ qtd. in Shannon Peterson, “Stories and Past Lessons: Understanding U.S. Decisions of Armed Humanitarian Intervention and Nonintervention in the Post-Cold War Era” (PhD Dissertation, Ohio State University, 2003), 70.

⁸⁴ Powell and Persico, *My American Journey*, 860.

⁸⁵ Peterson, “Stories and Past Lessons”, 56.

⁸⁶ qtd. in *Ibid.*, 70.

These later crises do not affect any of our treaty obligations or our survival as a nation.”⁸⁷

At the time, even the *Economist* observed that there could be no ulterior motive behind Operation Restore Hope because “no outside power stands to gain any conceivable advantage.”⁸⁸ Powell even seems to imply that this willingness to participate in humanitarian missions, to help when no one else can, is part of a US identity.⁸⁹

Moreover, the strategy and conduct of the intervention are argued to be consistent with a humanitarian motive, rather than material interest. The stated goal of Operation Restore Hope was to secure the delivery of food relief to southern Sudan – and that is exactly what it did. There was no attempt to seize natural resources, to further the interests of US corporations, to conquer Somalia, to erect a puppet government, to establish an extended military presence, or to shape regional politics.⁹⁰ Instead, there was an apparent haste to hand over the mission to the UN and UNOSOM II (which replaced UNITAF on 4 May 1993).⁹¹

There are several counterarguments that can be made against these claims, however.

First of all, humanitarian motivations do not sit well with the fact that there was a lengthy delay in response from the time de Cuéllar called Somalia’s plight “the most serious humanitarian crisis of our day” in January 1991. In July of 1992, the ICRC had repeated

⁸⁷ Powell and Persico, *My American Journey*, 921.

⁸⁸ qtd. in Greene, “State Identity, Foreign Policy, and Systemic Norm Diffusion”, 71.

⁸⁹ Powell and Persico, *My American Journey*, 921. For an argument that the US pattern of indifference followed by massive intervention is a reflection of an antagonism between two identities: isolationist and internationalist, see Greene, “State Identity, Foreign Policy, and Systemic Norm Diffusion”, 12.

⁹⁰ qtd. in DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 54.

⁹¹ In accordance with a Chapter VII Resolution, UNOSOM II was to “assume responsibility for the consolidation, expansion, and maintenance of a secure environment throughout Somalia.” United Nations Security Council, “Resolution 814,” (26 March 1993).

its six-months old estimates that 95 percent of the Somali population was malnourished and 70 percent were in imminent danger of starving to death. Clearly, then, the humanitarian tragedy had become untenable long before Bush's decision.⁹² As mentioned above, the US had even blocked efforts at intervention in the Security Council initially. The US's first pro-security statement was the one made by the State Department in July 1992.⁹³

Second, the decision to intervene in Somalia is also surprising in light of the fact that the Bush administration had been loath to intervene in other humanitarian crisis zones, such as Afghanistan, Angola, Chad, Liberia, southern Sudan, Mozambique, and Sri Lanka . By the late spring of 1992, all of Europe was concerned about the former Yugoslavia, and US action was being urged by former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and former US Secretary of State George Schultz. Despite fears that the conflict might pose a threat to European stability, the Bush administration's stance was that American power could not solve this crisis at reasonable cost. Europe would have to resolve this crisis itself.⁹⁴

Similarly, when Saddam Hussein launched massacres against thousands of Shiites and Kurds, the US did not move for several weeks, despite this being a country and a region in which it has a clear national interest. Even then, its response was limited to a ban on

⁹² Western, *Selling Intervention*, 135.

⁹³ Hirsch and Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope*, 38.

⁹⁴ Western, *Selling Intervention*, 152; Alberto R. Coll, *The Problems of Doing Good: Somalia as a Case Study in Humanitarian Intervention*, Carnegie Council Case Study Series on Ethics and International Affairs: #18 (New York: Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs, 1997), 3.

Iraqi military aircraft ban in southern Iraq, and the establishment of a protected zone in northwestern Iraq.⁹⁵

Finally, there are a number of statements from administration officials that reflect a lack of concern with the humanitarian crisis in Somalia. According to National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft and National Security Council (NSC) deputy press secretary Walter Kansteinger, Bush had been “personally moved” by Hempstone’s cable, but his interest was limited in exploring options through which the US could assist the UN in dealing with Somalia. Scowcroft recalls that Somalia was seen as “another collapsed state with no effective government and no US interests. This was clearly an issue for the United Nations, not for us.”⁹⁶ Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs John Bolton is reported to have said “Let’s try not to right every wrong in the world.”⁹⁷

Strong UN Peace Enforcement for the post-Cold War World Order

Thus, the intervention decision does not appear to have been pushed by pressure from the media, public opinion, Congress, or the UN. At the same time, as shown above, a humanitarian impulse account is also questionable. Instead, there is evidence that the intervention decision was pushed by US interest in a strong UN peace enforcement capability; US intervention in Somalia would serve a long-term goal of improving the credibility of UN peacekeeping. The argument is that, whereas Somalia was not in and of itself important to US national interests, the general phenomenon of state collapse and

⁹⁵ Coll, *Problems of Doing Good*, 3.

⁹⁶ qtd. in Western, *Selling Intervention*, 152.

⁹⁷ qtd. in Sommer, *Hope Restored?*, 19-20.

ethnic warfare did threaten US interests. In that respect, an intervention in Somalia would build up the UN's peace enforcement capacity – a long-term interest for the US in the post-Cold War order.⁹⁸ In the words of Wisner, “The more effective an international peacekeeping capability becomes, the more conflicts can be prevented or contained, and the fewer reasons there will be for Americans to fight abroad.”⁹⁹

In mid-November, a widely-circulated cable from the US diplomatic mission to the UN stressed the importance of increasing the credibility of UN peacekeeping.¹⁰⁰ This communication argued that the US had a strong interest in improving UN credibility in peacekeeping and strengthening its peace enforcement capacities. As such, it was crucial that the UN's first peace enforcement operation – a veritable litmus test – succeed, in order to set a clear precedent.¹⁰¹ When Security Council Resolution 794 was unanimously adopted, US representative to the UN, Edward J. Perkins described it as “an important step in developing a strategy for dealing with disorder and conflicts of the post-Cold War period. The post-Cold War world is likely to hold other Somalias in store for us.”¹⁰²

These statements reflect a growing consensus in the Department of State (and in some branches of the Department of Defense), that a UN peace enforcement with the “teeth” to handle regional interests would serve US interests in global stability.¹⁰³ This stance had

⁹⁸ Menkhaus and Ortmayer, *Key Decisions*, 8, 5.

⁹⁹ In a testimony before the Senate Committee on Armed Services qtd. in *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁰⁰ Somalia was not mentioned by name in the cable, however. *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² qtd. in Peterson, “Stories and Past Lessons”, 69.

¹⁰³ Menkhaus and Ortmayer, *Key Decisions*, 6.

also been signaled by the president's address to the UN General Assembly in September, in which he announced that the US military would espouse an active role in peacekeeping in the new world order.¹⁰⁴

There was an additional dimension to this interest, namely demonstrating UN peacekeeping credibility to skeptical Muslim countries. Intervention in Somalia would demonstrate that the UN (via the US) was not only active in warring against Muslim countries (à la Iraq), but was willing to assist them in times of need as well. Scowcroft relates that Boutros-Ghali had informed Bush that there was dissatisfaction amongst Muslim states, who viewed the UN as failing to protect their coreligionists in both Bosnia and Somalia.¹⁰⁵ Senior officials at the White House and State Department have reported that their views were influenced by the fact that Somalia was a Muslim country.¹⁰⁶ Admiral Jonathan Howe, the Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs who would later become the special representative of the UN Secretary-General in Somalia during UNOSOM II, described the US intervention as “a good signal to the Muslim world.”¹⁰⁷

But under this explanation Bush could have intervened in either Somalia or Bosnia. Why then Somalia and not Bosnia? In fact, Bosnia had been receiving far more domestic and international attention, and may have been more important geostrategically for the US.

¹⁰⁴ “Address to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City September 21, 1992,” Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George H. W. Bush 1992-1993, United States, Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, <http://www.gpo.gov/nara/pubpaps/srchpaps.html>

¹⁰⁵ Oberdorfer, “Path to Intervention.”

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ qtd. in Peterson, “Stories and Past Lessons”, 68.

Public debates over the violence in Somalia and Bosnia were gaining momentum simultaneously. In the spring and summer of 1992, around 300,000 civilians had become isolated when Serbian forces encircled the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo. Commentaries, editorials, and news reports in the media all urged that the US intervene militarily in order to relieve the humanitarian crisis in Bosnia.¹⁰⁸

According to a number of scholars, the US chose Somalia simply because it was not Bosnia. Powell had declared Somalia more “doable” than Bosnia. On the one hand, Somalia’s ragtag militiamen were viewed as less formidable than their counterparts in Bosnia. Moreover, the US military was particularly comfortable with working in Somali desert conditions, after their successful experience in the Iraqi desert. Finally, in Somalia, neither the meager UN peacekeeping force nor any other country would be able to dictate terms to the US, allowing it to conduct the operation in accordance with its own preferences.¹⁰⁹ Thus, Eagleburger explains that the US chose to intervene in Somalia and not in Bosnia “because we knew the costs weren’t so great and there were some potential benefits.”¹¹⁰ Because Somalia was doable, it represented the ideal opportunity to establish a foreign policy precedent “on the cheap.”¹¹¹

Not all prognoses were positive, of course. Shortly before the operation was launched, the State Department received a well-known cable from Hempstone opposing the intervention. “If you liked Beirut,” opined Hempstone, “you’ll love Mogadishu.” He

¹⁰⁸ Western, *Selling Intervention*, 136.

¹⁰⁹ John Drysdale, *Whatever Happened to Somalia?*, New ed. (London: HAAN, 2001), 86; Greene, “State Identity, Foreign Policy, and Systemic Norm Diffusion”, 189-190.

¹¹⁰ qtd. in Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy*, 138.

¹¹¹ Menkhaus and Ortmyer, *Key Decisions*, 8.

went on to describe Somalia as “a tar baby” that the US would be unable to hand over to someone else. The effect of the US intervention would be to “keep tens of thousands of Somali kids from starving to death in 1993 who, in all probability, will starve to death in 1994.”¹¹² Insofar as the administration was concerned, however, “doability,” can be viewed as a permissive factor that enabled intervention in Somalia, rather than in Bosnia.

Why did the Bush administration wait until November 1992 to decide to intervene in Somalia? Arguably, the fact that Bush had become a lame-duck president allowed him to give greater weight to the UN’s long-term credibility.¹¹³ After all, it was two weeks after he was defeated at the polls by Clinton that Bush requested his staff to draft possible policy choices on Somalia.¹¹⁴ During his time in office, Bush had been severely criticized for devoting too much time to international affairs at the expense of domestic problems, and so was unlikely to contemplate another foreign adventure – particularly not during an ongoing reelection campaign. As a lame-duck president, however, Bush had become immune to political carrots and sticks.¹¹⁵ He could now put greater emphasis on the national interest and less emphasis on his own political career.

In addition, when Clinton prevailed in the election, both Bush and Powell believed that his new administration would promote an intervention into Bosnia. They decided that, if the US were going to intervene to bolster the UN’s peacekeeping credentials, it should be

¹¹² qtd. in Oberdorfer, “Path to Intervention.” Elsewhere, George F. Kennan wrote in his diary that the operation would turn out to be “a dreadful error of American foreign policy.” qtd. in Coll, *Problems of Doing Good*, 6.

¹¹³ DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 60.

¹¹⁴ Menkhaus and Ortmayer, *Key Decisions*, 6.

¹¹⁵ qtd. in Greene, “State Identity, Foreign Policy, and Systemic Norm Diffusion”, 181; DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 60.

in Somalia, not Bosnia. Once again, compared to Bosnia, Somalia was the easier of the two missions.¹¹⁶ This may have been the reason why Bush did not simply “pass the buck” to Clinton to act on the US’s interest in long-term global stability. A dramatic Christmas-season intervention into Somalia would also allow Bush to exit office on a high note.¹¹⁷

The decision-making process is also consistent with an interest in UN peacekeeping capacity. The NSC Deputies Committee met four times in late November to prepare policy options for Bush.¹¹⁸ Ultimately, three options were sent to president without a recommendation.¹¹⁹ In the memo sent to the president, the first option was to provide US airpower and seapower as backup support for a reinforced UN force.¹²⁰ The second option, dubbed the “ball-peen” by Joint Chiefs of Staff planners, was to involve a limited US military intervention – an injection of 5,000 ground troops as a quick, temporary measure to break the famine by securing ports in Mogadishu and providing food convoy

¹¹⁶ Western, *Selling Intervention*, 137.

¹¹⁷ DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 148.

¹¹⁸ The Deputies Committee is composed of senior staff immediately below cabinet-level. It is considered the key mechanism for interagency discussion and coordination of foreign policy issues. The policy options and recommendations it prepares are raised for consideration at “Principals” Committee meetings – involving the president and his highest NSC staff. At this time, the Deputies Committee was headed by Howe. Interagency discussions had been ongoing throughout the fall of 1992 (and perhaps earlier), but it was these four meetings (one each day from November 20 to 24) that were convened specifically in response to Bush’s request. Although Deputies Committee meetings are usually secret, news that they were to be convened had been leaked. As a result, the meetings were subject to unprecedented public scrutiny. News of the upcoming meetings had been revealed in a *New York Times* op-ed piece and on the “MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour,” on November 19. Oberdorfer, “Path to Intervention.”

¹¹⁹ Hirsch and Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope*, 42-43.

¹²⁰ A UN Security Council Resolution passed in late August had mandated the expansion of the UN peacekeeping force from 500 to 3,500. United Nations Security Council, “Resolution 775,” (28 August 1992). The resolution had yet to be implemented at this point, however.

protection into famine-stricken southern Somalia, as a prelude to the introduction of an expanded UN force.¹²¹

In contrast to the ball-peen approach, the third and final option was designated the “sledgehammer” option. This alternative was the most dramatic: a full-scale intervention, with troops from the US and a number of allies, under UN auspices. The US would commit an entire division of about 15,000, comprising both combat troops and logistics support personnel. A force of that size would be able to secure the main lines of communication throughout Mogadishu and most of southern Somalia. Moreover, a full-scale intervention would not require delicate negotiations with warlords; if relations soured or if forcible disarmament was deemed necessary, the US force would have “decisive advantage.”¹²² As with the ball-peen option, however, this intervention was expected to be phased out and handed over to a UN force quickly. This third approach was expected to be effective and rapid, bringing about substantial improvements in a matter of weeks. Planners felt that such a solution could be launched only by the US, whether alone or leading a coalition (as in Desert Storm, not so far in the past). Nevertheless, this option required US troops to be heavily involved, and the US to assume overall responsibility.¹²³

Bush met with his senior NSC advisors on November 25, the day before Thanksgiving, and was presented with the three policy options. This critical meeting reportedly lasted

¹²¹ A “ball-peen” is the hammer used by an artisan for delicate metalwork. This option was nicknamed thus due to the finesse required to keep relations with local militias calm; given the small size of the US force, cooperation with Somali warlords would be essential. Menkhaus and Ortmayer, *Key Decisions*, 7.

¹²² This expression was coined by Powell. Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

less than an hour, after which Bush opted for option three, full-scale intervention. Powell's recollection of the meeting, as recounted in his memoirs, is that after having laid out the CENTCOM concept for Bush, the President replied: "I like it. We'll do it."¹²⁴ Immediately following the meeting, Hoar – who would be executing the mission – insisted that a full-scale intervention required two divisions, not one. The Bush administration approved the doubling of the contingent. The final decision became the sledgehammer option "times two."¹²⁵ One administration official later observed that a full-scale intervention was "The Desert Storm way of handling Somalia." Powell response was "We . . . wanted to put in a large enough force so that we could dominate the entire country and not just find ourselves trapped in a part or a single city."¹²⁶ The massive number of troops would be necessary to maintain an overwhelming military advantage in any potential combat situation, even though engagement in hostilities was not foreseen.

The administration then proceeded to secure UN "approval" for the plan. On Thanksgiving Day, Eagleburger went to New York to secure Boutros-Ghali's agreement to a plan with three non-negotiable conditions. First, the mission was to be authorized by a Chapter VII Security Council Resolution.¹²⁷ Second, all US troops would remain under US command. And third, the force was to be sizeable enough to enable it to cope with all possible contingencies. In short, the US saw its mission as "peacemaking" rather than

¹²⁴ qtd. in Powell and Persico, *My American Journey*, 860. CENTCOM had been working to develop a mission statement and a concept of operations, even before the formal decision was made. Hirsch and Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope*, 42-43.

¹²⁵ Menkhaus and Ortmyer, *Key Decisions*, 8.

¹²⁶ qtd. in Greene, "State Identity, Foreign Policy, and Systemic Norm Diffusion", 182.

¹²⁷ The "all necessary means" language had also been employed in Resolution 678 authorizing the 1991 Gulf War.

“peacekeeping” in the traditional sense of the term. Powell insisted, “We are not just going to ride shotgun, waiting for people to shoot at us and then shoot back.”¹²⁸

According to Walter Clarke, the former deputy chief of mission for the US embassy in Somalia, the resultant Security Council Resolution was drafted at the Pentagon.¹²⁹

Alternative Explanations

Some commentators have contended that the Somalia intervention was actually undertaken to be the “poison pill” that Clinton would choke on – that the risks of a potential quagmire would be passed on to him. This is unlikely. Several reports confirm that Bush wanted the intervention completed before the inauguration of Clinton (although he had been cautioned that this was doubtful). Moreover, if Operation Restore Hope was intended as a poison pill, the mission could have been made more encompassing and open-ended, instead of distancing it from the thorny issue of disarmament for instance.¹³⁰ Bush has said that, had he been continuing in office, he would have felt more free to take the decision – he would not have had to worry about turning an incomplete operation over to his successor.¹³¹ When Bush took the decision to intervene on November 25, he reportedly insisted that the operation be brief, stating “We’ll do it, and try to be out by January 19 [the day before president-elect Clinton would assume office], I don’t want to stick Clinton with an ongoing mission.”¹³²

¹²⁸ qtd. in Greene, “State Identity, Foreign Policy, and Systemic Norm Diffusion”, 182.

¹²⁹ Although there were minor modifications during Security Council deliberations, the final version was designed to satisfy the concerns of CENTCOM. Clarke also makes a similar claim regarding Security Council Resolution 814. DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 48.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 57-58.

¹³¹ Sommer, *Hope Restored?*, 42. Although there have been reports that Bush secured Clinton’s approval of the intervention beforehand, Bush later denied that he had agreed on a withdrawal date with Clinton. Sommer, *Hope Restored?*, 32.

¹³² qtd. in Powell and Persico, *My American Journey*, 860.

Ultimately, then, the intervention decision does not appear to have been pushed by norm entrenchment at the domestic, international organization, or individual levels. Media coverage of the humanitarian crisis in Somalia tended to follow, rather than trigger, political decisions. There was no strong and organized public pressure, nor broad-based congressional support, for intervention. The UN, for its part, did not demand US troops for action in Somalia. And humanitarian motivations at the individual level do not jive with the lengthy delay in response to the crisis.

Instead, there is evidence that the intervention decision was pushed by US interest in a strong UN peace enforcement capability, a long-term goal for the post-Cold War order. And Bush, as a lame-duck president, could place greater weight on this long-term national interest. In addition, intervention in Somalia would demonstrate UN peacekeeping credibility to skeptical Muslim countries. For these purposes, Somalia represented a more “doable” alternative to Bosnia. Hence, for Operation Restore Hope, an international organization maintenance motive makes for a more plausible explanation than norm entrenchment.

V. Case Study: The US and Operation Allied Force

Overview of Events

Kosovo burst onto the international scene in late February and early March of 1998, when large-scale Serb military offensives against the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)

killed more than 80 Kosovar Albanians in the Drenica region.¹³³ The six-nation Contact Group (Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, and the US) was quick to condemn the use of force, calling for a cessation of hostilities, the return of refugees, and unimpeded access for humanitarian organizations. For its part, the UN Security Council placed an arms embargo on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) through resolution 1160, passed on March 31. This resolution called for a solution that ensured greater autonomy for Kosovo while upholding the FRY's territorial integrity.

The fighting continued into June, prompting NATO defense ministers to begin discussing a range of military options for dealing with the situation in Kosovo. In mid-month, the Alliance agreed to mount Operation Determined Falcon – a series of air exercises over Albania and Macedonia – as a show of force. Still, in July, FRY security forces launched a major offensive, and the violence continued throughout that summer.

On September 23, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1199 under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, affirming “that the deterioration of the situation in Kosovo constitutes a threat to peace and security in the region.” If the Contact Group's demands were not implemented, the Council would “consider further action and additional measures to maintain and restore peace and stability in the region.”¹³⁴ The next day, NATO issued an

¹³³ Unless otherwise indicated, information in this section is drawn from the chronologies in Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's War to Save Kosovo* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 227-234; Larry Minear, Ted van Baarda, and Marc Sommers, *NATO and Humanitarian Action in the Kosovo Crisis*, Occasional Paper of the Watson Institute #36 (Providence, RI: Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies, Brown University, 2000), 151-160.

¹³⁴ United Nations Security Council, “Resolution 1199,” (23 September 1998).

activation warning (ACTWARN), denoting an increased level of military preparedness for both a limited air option and a phased air campaign.

With the beginning of October, US President Bill Clinton issued a “near-ultimatum,” giving Slobodan Milošević, President of the FRY, two weeks to comply with Resolution 1199.¹³⁵ At the same time, US Ambassador Richard Holbrooke was sent to Belgrade to begin a series of extended meetings with Milošević. On October 13, Holbrooke was able to secure an agreement with Milošević, but not before NATO had issued activation orders (ACTORDS), authorizing the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR, General Wesley Clark) to launch limited air strikes and a phased air campaign within four days. The ACTORDS were suspended, but not entirely withdrawn, and the so-called October Accords were later endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 1203.

However, on the fifteenth of January 1999, forty-five Kosovar Albanians were massacred in the town of Raçak. Ambassador William Walker, head of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) described the massacre as “an unspeakable atrocity” that constituted “a crime against humanity,” concluding that he would not “hesitate to accuse the government security forces of responsibility.”¹³⁶ Walker was immediately declared *non grata* by the FRY, and International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) Prosecutor Louise

¹³⁵ Lester H. Brune, *The United States & the Balkan Crisis, 1990-2005: Conflict in Bosnia & Kosovo* (Claremont, C.A.: Regina Books, 2005), 90.

¹³⁶ Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 64. The facts surrounding responsibility for this massacre and the identity of the victims have been widely contested. For an account that casts doubt on Serbian forces' culpability, see Danilo Zolo, *Invoking Humanity: War, Law and Global Order*, trans. Federico Poole and Gordon Poole (London: Continuum, 2002), 40-41. A counterargument is advanced by Alex J. Bellamy, *Kosovo and International Society* (Houndmills, U.K.: Palgrave, 2002), 114-118.

Arbor was refused entry into Kosovo to investigate Raçak. In response, on January 29, the Contact Group announced that it had drafted a framework agreement, with negotiations to be held in Rambouillet, France; NATO, for its part, announced its willingness to use force to compel compliance with the Contact Group's demands.

Two sets of negotiations were held in France: Rambouillet (February 6-23) and Paris (March 15-18). The Paris round ended with the Kosovar Albanians signing the agreement, while the Serbian delegation presented a completely revised proposal and asked for a new round of talks. Contact Group representatives rejected the Serb response, and the meeting was adjourned on March 19.¹³⁷ In the meantime, FRY troops were reported gathering around Kosovo.

After the failure of a final attempt by Holbrooke to reach agreement, NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana authorized the beginning of air operations. Operation Allied Force began the next day, March 24. That night, President Clinton addressed the nation from the Oval Office. He explained that Serbian forces had launched "an attack by tanks and artillery on a largely defenseless people whose leaders already have agreed to peace." Peaceful solutions had been unsuccessful and it was time that the lessons from Bosnia – that "inaction in the face of brutality simply invites more brutality" – be applied in Kosovo.¹³⁸

¹³⁷ Brune, *The United States & the Balkan Crisis*, 94.

¹³⁸ "Address to the Nation on Airstrikes against Serbian Targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) March 24, 1999," Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: William J. Clinton 1999, United States, Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/pubpapers/index.html>.

Clinton argued that “[e]nding this tragedy is a moral imperative,” but it was “also important to America’s national interest.” A “prosperous, secure, undivided, and free” Europe was essential to the US’s own prosperity and security. Moreover, the Balkans were a powder keg that had exploded twice before; if a fire were allowed to burn in this area, “the flames will spread.” The conflict could grow wider, drawing in key allies, and eventually forcing the US to intervene at greater risk and higher cost. NATO’s credibility was also in the balance: “Imagine what would happen if we and our allies instead decided just to look the other way, as these people were massacred on NATO’s doorstep. That would discredit NATO, the cornerstone on which our security has rested for 50 years now.” “By acting now,” the president explained, “we are upholding our values, protecting our interests, and advancing the cause of peace.”¹³⁹

The Moral Imperative?

One congressman alluded to the moral imperative by declaring that the US had a “humanitarian interest in preventing atrocities against civilians.”¹⁴⁰ Accordingly, Operation Allied Force was billed as the first “humanitarian war.” British Prime Minister Tony Blair called it the first “progressive war.” Unlike previous wars fought for national self-interest, according to Blair, this war had been fought to uphold the human right to live free from persecution.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Sen. Max Cleland (D-G.A.), qtd. in Doug Bandow, “NATO’s Hypocritical Humanitarianism,” in *NATO’s Empty Victory: A Postmortem on the Balkan War*, ed. Ted Galen Carpenter (Washington, D.C.: Cato Institute, 2000), 41.

¹⁴¹ qtd. in William Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil: Peacekeepers, Warlords and a World of Endless Conflict* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 359.

Key to this alleged humanitarian motivation was what Alex Bellamy terms “the Bosnia syndrome.”¹⁴² Essentially, the argument is that the US was ashamed by what had transpired in Bosnia and had a genuine desire to avoid a repeat of that bloodshed and displacement. Coming after Rwanda and Bosnia, Kosovo was an opportunity for the US to demonstrate that it was sincere in its desire to prevent humanitarian crises.¹⁴³ Learning the lessons of Bosnia became the administration’s mantra. Clinton recalls in his memoirs that “[t]he killings were all too reminiscent of the early days of Bosnia, which, like Kosovo, bridged the divide between European Muslims and Serb Orthodox Christians . . . I was determined not to allow Kosovo to become another Bosnia. So was [US Secretary of State] Madeleine Albright.”¹⁴⁴

This account is belied, however, by evidence that top US decision makers were initially loath to go to war. In March 1998, when Clark faxed the Pentagon to warn of potential trouble in Kosovo, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Joseph Ralston responded, “Look, Wes, we’ve got a lot on our plates back here . . . We can’t deal with any more problems.”¹⁴⁵ And at least until May 1998, there was little space on Washington’s agenda for an intervention in Kosovo. One political adviser even claims “I hardly remember Kosovo in political discussions.”¹⁴⁶ For one thing, the White House was embroiled in the Monica Lewinsky scandal. Moreover, the Clinton administration was

¹⁴² Bellamy, *Kosovo and International Society*, 69.

¹⁴³ Kosovo Independent International Commission on, *The Kosovo Report: Conflict, International Response, Lessons Learned* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 159-160.

¹⁴⁴ Bill Clinton, *My Life* (New York: Knopf, 2004), 849.

¹⁴⁵ Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Future of Combat* (New York: Public Affairs, 2001), 109.

¹⁴⁶ qtd. in Elaine Sciolino and Ethan Bronner, “How a President, Distracted by Scandal, Entered Balkan War,” *New York Times*, April 18 1999.

still recovering from its previous round of threatening force – in Iraq.¹⁴⁷ Even by the summer of 1998, when Alexander “Sandy” Vershbow, US Ambassador to NATO, wrote a memo pushing for a Dayton-style solution for Kosovo (with US troops as part of an international peacekeeping force), he found no takers in the White House.¹⁴⁸ Indeed, as late as December 1998, US Major General Dennis Reimer, the Army Chief of Staff, responded to a warning from Clark that there may be an impending war situation in Kosovo with: “But we don’t want to fight there.”¹⁴⁹

The fallback position of some accounts supportive of the moral imperative argument, is that Albright was the real force behind the military effort, dubbed “Madeleine’s War” by *Time* magazine.¹⁵⁰ The Secretary of State was supposedly motivated by principled humanitarian concerns herself, and the argument can be made that insofar as she drove US policy, then it was those selfsame humanitarian concerns that motivated the US response.¹⁵¹

Proponents of this argument make much of Albright’s background; at age two, she had been whisked out of her native Czechoslovakia to escape the Nazi occupation.¹⁵² In one of the earlier Contact Group meetings, when other participants proposed softening the

¹⁴⁷ Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 283, n. 223.

¹⁴⁸ John F. Harris, *The Survivor: Bill Clinton in the White House* (New York: Random House, 2005), 362.

¹⁴⁹ Clark, *Waging Modern War*, 165.

¹⁵⁰ Walter Isaacson, “Madeleine’s War,” *Time*, May 17 1999.

¹⁵¹ DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 144.

¹⁵² Harris, *The Survivor*, 365.

language used to threaten Milošević, she reportedly snapped “Where do think we are, Munich?”¹⁵³

A strong proponent for air strikes throughout the Bosnian war, Albright began a conscious effort to “lead through rhetoric” on Kosovo since March 1998. This campaign was aimed not only at NATO allies and US public opinion, but also her own government.¹⁵⁴ Now that she was Secretary of State, Albright explains in her memoirs, she was determined not to allow a repeat of the carnage at Bosnia.¹⁵⁵ In the midst of the war, Clinton would publicly thank her for redeeming the lessons of her life by advocating action in the Balkans.¹⁵⁶

Although Albright did become, more so than Clinton, the public face of the intervention in Kosovo, there is evidence that casts doubt on her role in galvanizing support. First of all, she was not Clinton’s most important aide during the crisis. The top foreign policy advisers called themselves the “ABC Club.” Albright, (National Security Adviser Samuel “Sandy”) Berger, and (Secretary of Defense William) Cohen.¹⁵⁷ Of these three, Berger had less publicity than Albright, but much more influence.¹⁵⁸ And Berger was in favor of a far more cautious strategy in Kosovo, concerned (along with Cohen) that Albright was

¹⁵³ Madeleine Albright and William Woodward, *Madam Secretary* (New York, N.Y.: Miramax Books, 2003), 382.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 383.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 381, 388.

¹⁵⁶ “Remarks to the Community at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany May 5, 1999,” Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: William J. Clinton 1999, United States, Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/pubpapers/index.html>.

¹⁵⁷ These advisers reportedly called themselves the “ABC Club.” Albright, (National Security Adviser Samuel “Sandy”) Berger, and (Secretary of Defense William) Cohen. Harris, *The Survivor*, 367.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 365.

damaging US credibility by promising more than the US was willing to deliver.¹⁵⁹ In April 1998, Berger snapped “[t]he way you people at the State Department talk about bombing, you sound like lunatics.”¹⁶⁰

Albright herself alludes to this in her explanation for why it took her so long to succeed: “This is a process which is consensual, incremental, [and] takes a while.”¹⁶¹ But, according to one aide, when Albright put forth her plan for force (which Berger had previously rejected in mid-May) on January 19, she “was pushing on an open door.”¹⁶² What had caused the principals to change their minds? To answer that question, other causal mechanisms (besides the humanitarian decision maker) need to be examined – beginning with the role of the media.

It appears that extensive media coverage followed, rather than preceded, the decision to bomb.¹⁶³ Kimberly Bissell shows that in over a year before the intervention (March 2, 1998 to March 23, 1999), there were 359 Kosovo-related stories aired on network news programs. Less than one story per day clearly does not qualify as massive media coverage. By way of comparison, once the airstrikes began, television networks aired

¹⁵⁹ Barton Gellman, “The Path to Crisis: How the U.S. And Its Allies Went to War,” *Washington Post*, April 18 1999. Clinton himself reportedly disliked Albright’s sententiousness, and viewed her as a grandstander. On one occasion, Clinton even vented to an adviser, “Madeleine will screw me every time.” Harris, *The Survivor*, 365.

¹⁶⁰ qtd. in Albright and Woodward, *Madam Secretary*, 383.

¹⁶¹ qtd. in Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 294, n. 218.

¹⁶² Gellman, “The Path to Crisis.”

¹⁶³ qtd. in Piers Robinson, “Global Television and Conflict Resolution: Defining the Limits of the CNN Effect,” in *Media and Conflict: Framing Issues, Making Policy, Sharing Opinions*, ed. Eytan Gilboa (Ardsley, N.Y.: Transnational Publishers, 2002), 187-188.

over 972 stories in under two months.¹⁶⁴ The limited pre-war media coverage may have been due to problems with access to Kosovo. The single exception to this trend was the Raçak massacre, which made front-page news in the US.¹⁶⁵ Still, Vershbow notes “I don’t think it [the media] made a big difference.”¹⁶⁶

It is still worthwhile to examine the public opinion mechanism nonetheless, given that the public may have had other sources of information besides print and television media.¹⁶⁷

On March 25, 1999, 64 percent of respondents to a Gallup/CNN/*USA Today* poll agreed that the US had a “moral obligation to help keep peace in Kosovo.”¹⁶⁸ Prior to the airstrikes, however, there is no evidence of strong and organized public pressure.

Moreover, there is no evidence in internal documents or decision makers’ memoirs that the Clinton Administration was responding to public pressure. Perhaps most revealing is that Clinton, in his Address to the Nation on March 24, 1999, spoke with a large map of Serbia on his desk as a visual aid. He sought to explain to the US public where Kosovo was and why it was important that the US intervene there.¹⁶⁹ Therefore, it might be safe to conclude that public opinion was unlikely to have triggered the decision to intervene.

There is evidence that some members of the US Congress were strong advocates of intervention in Kosovo, for instance New York Representative Eliot Engel (D-NY), who

¹⁶⁴ Kimberly L. Bissell, “The Crisis in Kosovo: Photographic News of the Conflict and Public Opinion,” in *Media and Conflict: Framing Issues, Making Policy, Sharing Opinions*, ed. Eytan Gilboa (Ardsley, N.Y.: Transnational Publishers, 2002), 312.

¹⁶⁵ Bandow, “NATO’s Hypocritical Humanitarianism,” 38.

¹⁶⁶ Robinson, “Global Television and Conflict Resolution,” 187-188.

¹⁶⁷ In fact, the Kosovo crisis has been labeled the first “Internet War,” due to the abundant real-time information available on web sites. Weiss and Collins, *Humanitarian Challenges*, 93-94.

¹⁶⁸ Damian P. Carr, *Military Intervention During the Clinton Administration: A Critical Comparison, USAWC Strategy Research Project* (Carlisle Barracks, P.A.: U.S. Army War College, 2003), 24.

¹⁶⁹ Harris, *The Survivor*, 363.

headed the Albanian Issues Caucus. The Albanian-American Civic League had also worked to enlist the help of former Senators Bob Dole (R-KS) and Larry Pressler (R-SD) in lobbying Congress.¹⁷⁰

Still, as the Republican-controlled Senate debated the US role in NATO's bombing campaign, there were dissenting voices, notably Republican Senators Don Nickles (R-OK) and Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX).¹⁷¹ Senate Democrats also had little appetite for military involvement in Kosovo. Senator Joseph R. Biden (D-DE), who favored action, noted that several colleagues approached him at a party caucus on October 6, 1998, and said "Don't count me in, Joe."¹⁷²

Overall, congressional attitudes towards the war were divided. On March 23, the Senate authorized air strikes against Serbia in a close 58 to 41 vote, with many supporters saying the support came only after a personal appeal from Clinton.¹⁷³ During the war, the House failed to support the air strikes, voting 213 to 213.¹⁷⁴ According to one commentator, Operation Allied Force was unique to US history (at least since Roosevelt's time) in that in neither house of Congress was there any pro-war political leadership before the war was launched.¹⁷⁵ Thus, congressional pressure is highly unlikely to have driven the

¹⁷⁰ Danielle S. Sremac, *War of Words: Washington Tackles the Yugoslav Conflict* (Westport, C.T.: Praeger, 1999), 7, 216-217.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 230.

¹⁷² Sciolino and Bronner, "How a President, Distracted by Scandal, Entered Balkan War."

¹⁷³ Danielle Sremac argues that even this tepid support was due to the fact that Senators were remarkably misinformed about Kosovo, unaware that it was in fact part of Serbia. Sremac, *War of Words*, 230.

¹⁷⁴ Carr, *Military Intervention During the Clinton Administration*, 24.

¹⁷⁵ This argument was made by the BBC's Alistair Cook in his "Letter from America," on April 18, 1999. Peter Gowan, "The Euro-Atlantic Origins of NATO's Attack on Yugoslavia," in *Masters of the Universe?: NATO's Balkan Crusade*, ed. Tariq Ali (London: Verso, 2000), 4.

decision to intervene; instead, it seems that the Clinton administration faced difficulties in mustering enough congressional support for the airstrikes.

What about pressure from international organizations? For Operation Allied Force, the two relevant international organizations were NATO and the UN. The first of these is relatively easy to dismiss, as most sources portray a US engaged in rallying reluctant NATO allies to war. Initially, the UK, France, Germany, and Italy were unwilling to use force without a plan for a comprehensive settlement.¹⁷⁶ For the ACTORDS to be issued in October, substantial time was spent convincing the German and Italian governments.¹⁷⁷

The case with the UN is more complicated: NATO argued that it was acting to uphold UN Security Council Resolution 1199, with which the FRY had failed to comply.¹⁷⁸ Indeed, in a January 28 statement to the North Atlantic Council, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan had described the situation in Kosovo, aiming his words at “particularly those with the capacity to act” and pointing to the “need to use force, when all other measures have failed.”¹⁷⁹

At the same time, however, the Security Council had not passed a resolution explicitly authorizing NATO’s airstrikes. Certainly, on March 24, 1999, Annan acknowledged that

¹⁷⁶ Gellman, “The Path to Crisis.”

¹⁷⁷ Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 47-48.

¹⁷⁸ Peter A. Huchthausen, *America’s Splendid Little Wars: A Short History of U.S. Military Engagements from the Fall of Saigon to Baghdad* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 215.

¹⁷⁹ qtd. in Marc Weller, *The Crisis in Kosovo, 1989-1999 : From the Dissolution of Yugoslavia to Rambouillet and the Outbreak of Hostilities, International Documents and Analysis, Vol. 1* (Cambridge, U.K.: Documents & Analysis Publishing Ltd, 1999), 393.

“there are times when the use of force may be legitimate in the pursuit of peace.” But he still stressed that the Council “should be involved in any decision to resort to the use of force.”¹⁸⁰ In the final analysis, there is little evidence to indicate that the UN was exercising pressure on US decision makers or that US decision makers were responding to any such pressure.

As the preceding discussion shows, this case study lends little support to the norm entrenchment explanation derived from constructivist and English School literature. Decision makers’ humanitarianism, media effects, public opinion, congressional pressure, and pressure from international organizations all fail to account for the decision to intervene in Kosovo. Clearly, then, the answer lies elsewhere.

Cheap Bluffs and the Credibility Trap

The evidence points to a process whereby initially easy bluffs forced subsequent NATO action as the organization’s credibility increasingly came under threat. Kosovo was surrounded by NATO members and partners, and threats were a cheap way to assuage their fears and safeguard stability. Ultimately, the US thought Milošević would not call their bluff, and faced with intransigence decision makers upped their threatening rhetoric to compel compliance. Eventually, however, NATO would have lost credibility if it had not acted on its repeated threats. In short, following through to preserve credibility became itself a matter of vital interest: NATO’s future as a deterring power was in the balance.

¹⁸⁰ qtd. in Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil*, 366.

Of Bosnia, Secretary of State James Baker, III, had said “We don’t have a dog in that fight.” But decision makers in Washington believed Kosovo was different. With ethnic Albanians living in three nearby countries, a conflict within the FRY (and the associated refugee flows) threatened to escalate to a wider war. Macedonia’s population was a potentially explosive mix of Orthodox Slavs and a large Albanian minority, and Albania was already fragile.¹⁸¹ A conflict in these two threatened to draw in Bulgaria (with historic claims to Macedonia), Turkey (who had a defense agreement with Albania), and potentially Greece.¹⁸² In short, there was a belief, reiterated by Albright, that “there is no natural boundary to violence in Southern Europe.”¹⁸³ Both she and Clinton would raise the specter of falling dominoes.¹⁸⁴

These concerns also made Kosovo different from other places in the world that were in worse circumstances at the time (e.g., Afghanistan, the Congo, Eritrea/Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, and Sudan).¹⁸⁵ In arguing that it made sense for NATO to intervene in Kosovo but not Rwanda, *Washington Post* columnist Richard Cohen observed: [N]either is Rwanda in Europe. There – and not Africa – is where the United States has twice fought in this century.”¹⁸⁶ Similarly, when asked why the US administration chose to intervene in Kosovo while avoiding other internal struggles in Europe (e.g., Turkey) and elsewhere, Holbrooke replied, “For two reasons: one, because in Kosovo you have attacks against

¹⁸¹ Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 9.

¹⁸² Tim Judah, *Kosovo: War and Revenge* (New Haven, C.T.: Yale University Press, 2000), 234.

¹⁸³ “Remarks by Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright at U.S. Institute of Peace February 4, 1999,” United States Institute of Peace, http://www.usip.org/events/pre2002/albright_020499.html.

¹⁸⁴ Jeffrey Record, *Making War, Thinking History: Munich, Vietnam, and Presidential Uses of Force from Korea to Kosovo* (Annapolis, M.D.: Naval Institute Press, 2002), 120.

¹⁸⁵ Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil*, 358-359.

¹⁸⁶ Bandow, “NATO’s Hypocritical Humanitarianism,” 43.

civilians, and two, because of the implications with regard to Albania and Macedonia.”¹⁸⁷

By this time, the US had a substantial investment in Bosnia that it wanted to protect as well.¹⁸⁸

For these reasons, in his last days in office in late 1992, President Bush instructed Baker’s successor Eagleburger to send a classified cable to Belgrade. The US Ambassador was to read it personally to Milošević, without elaboration. It read: “In the event of conflict in Kosovo caused by Serbian action, the US will be prepared to employ military force against Serbians in Kosovo and in Serbia proper.”¹⁸⁹ This so-called “Christmas ultimatum” was reaffirmed twice in Clinton’s first year in office, in February and July 1993.¹⁹⁰ In early 1998, NATO professed a “legitimate interest” in the events in Kosovo, “*inter alia* because of their impact on the stability of the whole region which is of concern to the Alliance.”¹⁹¹ The major objectives first set out by the North Atlantic Council on May 28, 1998, were to help achieve a peaceful resolution of the crisis, and to promote stability in neighboring countries (especially Albania and Macedonia).¹⁹²

Still, the argument can be made (and has been made by, amongst others, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger), that even if conflict in Kosovo jeopardized the entire Balkan

¹⁸⁷ qtd. in Sremac, *War of Words*, 219.

¹⁸⁸ According to Vershbow, qtd. in Robinson, “Global Television and Conflict Resolution,” 187-188.

¹⁸⁹ qtd. in Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 9.

¹⁹⁰ Gellman, “The Path to Crisis.”

¹⁹¹ Weller, *The Crisis in Kosovo*, 272.

¹⁹² “NATO’s Role in Relation to the Conflict in Kosovo June 15 1999,” NATO’s Role in Kosovo, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, <http://www.nato.int/kosovo/history.htm>.

peninsula there was no threat to America's security or vital interests.¹⁹³ Moreover, an intervention in Europe would anger both Russia and China – possibly pushing the two into a friendly bilateral relationship.¹⁹⁴ The key motivating force behind the intervention lay not in a concern for Balkan stability, but elsewhere: the post-Cold War credibility of NATO, the guarantor of peace in Europe.

The timing of the Kosovo crisis had been particularly inopportune. Not only had NATO been attempting to piece for itself a new post-Cold War *raison d'être* with its “new strategic concept” and enlargement efforts, but NATO's fiftieth anniversary was coming up in April 1999.¹⁹⁵ Kosovo thus became a crucial test of the Alliance's continuing relevance. Even Albright was concerned that if the anniversary coincided with a humanitarian disaster in the Balkans, “we would look like fools proclaiming that alliance's readiness for the twenty-first century when we were unable to cope with a conflict that began in the fourteenth.”¹⁹⁶ Clark opines, “For the United States, there would have been worldwide repercussions on United States credibility and the significance of American commitments.”¹⁹⁷

US decision makers assumed that Milošević had learned his lesson after the last round of fighting in Bosnia. Clark recalls that Milošević turned to him before the Dayton signing ceremony and said, “you must be pleased that NATO won this war.” Clark replied that

¹⁹³ qtd. in Charles A. Kupchan, “Kosovo and the Future of U.S. Engagement in Europe: Continued Hegemony or Impending Retrenchment?,” in *Alliance Politics, Kosovo, and NATO's War: Allied Force or Forced Allies?*, ed. Pierre Martin and Mark R. Brawley (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 77.

¹⁹⁴ Ted Galen Carpenter, “Damage to Relations with Russia and China,” in *NATO's Empty Victory: A Postmortem on the Balkan War*, ed. Ted Galen Carpenter (Washington, D.C.: Cato Institute, 2000), 77, 86.

¹⁹⁵ Clark, *Waging Modern War*, 422.

¹⁹⁶ Albright and Woodward, *Madam Secretary*, 391.

¹⁹⁷ Clark, *Waging Modern War*, xxiv-xxv.

Milošević had lost the war to the Croats and the Muslims. The response was, “No. It was your NATO, your bombs and missiles, your high technology that defeated us . . . We Serbs never had a chance against you.”¹⁹⁸ Based on this expectation, Washington thought threats would deter Milošević.

Nevertheless, in September, Solana told NATO defense ministers that Serbs were mocking the alliance; one Serb diplomat had even gone so far as to joke that “a village a day keeps NATO away.”¹⁹⁹ After Clinton issued his “near-ultimatum,” Holbrooke still complained to Albright: “This guy [Milošević] is not taking us seriously.”²⁰⁰ Holbrooke convinced a late-night session of the North Atlantic Council to approve the ACTORDS, but only by reassuring participants that the pressure would force Milošević to sign the October Accords.²⁰¹ The plan worked, and one month later, the National Intelligence Agreement would cite this agreement as evidence that Milošević was “susceptible to outside pressure . . . as long as he remains the undisputed leader in Belgrade.”²⁰²

But the Račak massacre placed the US and NATO in a serious credibility dilemma. The Clinton administration decided that Albright would launch negotiations at Rambouillet, but the negotiations would be carried out with a powerful stick. The principal demands would be decided in advance by the Contact Group, and the basic principles would be

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 68.

¹⁹⁹ qtd. in Gellman, “The Path to Crisis.”

²⁰⁰ qtd. in Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 47-48.

²⁰¹ Andrew L. Stigler, “Kosovo,” in *Case Studies in Policy Making & Process*, ed. Shawn W. Burns (Newport, RI: National Security Decision Making Department, Naval War College, 2005), 132.

²⁰² Gellman, “The Path to Crisis.”

nonnegotiable.²⁰³ In her speech before the beginning of the talks, Albright warned that Milošević's refusal to accept the peace talks would result in air strikes.²⁰⁴

US decision makers expected Rambouillet to succeed, because the alternatives made it inconceivable that either side would refuse the deal. Indeed, US sources said they believed that both sides would negotiate to the very last minute, but would ultimately sign the agreement.²⁰⁵ An interagency intelligence report coordinated by the CIA the previous month had concluded that "Milošević doesn't want a war he can't win."²⁰⁶ A February 6 scenario expected him to "seek to give just enough to avoid NATO bombing."²⁰⁷

In the end, however, the Serbian delegation refused to sign. Up until then, NATO capitals had all assumed that the threats against the FRY would not actually have to be carried out, gambling that Milošević would back down.²⁰⁸ In a last-ditch effort to persuade Milošević to change his mind, Holrooke asked him "Look, are you absolutely clear in your own mind what will happen when I get up and walk out of this palace that we are now sitting in?" Milošević's reply was: "You're going to bomb us."²⁰⁹

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ At the same time, if the Kosovar Albanians obstructed negotiations then NATO would not bail them out. "Remarks by Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright at U.S. Institute of Peace February 4, 1999."

²⁰⁵ Judah, *Kosovo: War and Revenge*, 197.

²⁰⁶ Sciolino and Bronner, "How a President, Distracted by Scandal, Entered Balkan War."

²⁰⁷ Gellman, "The Path to Crisis."

²⁰⁸ Adam Roberts, "NATO's 'Humanitarian War' over Kosovo," in *NATO and Humanitarian Action in the Kosovo Crisis*, ed. Larry Minear, Ted van Baarda, and Marc Sommers, *Occasional Paper of the Watson Institute #36* (Providence, RI: Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies, Brown University, 2000), 132.

²⁰⁹ Sciolino and Bronner, "How a President, Distracted by Scandal, Entered Balkan War."

The centrality of the credibility motive to decision making is made clear in Clark's memoirs. In a one-on-one briefing with Albright on March 6, Clark told her the Serbs were certain to attack the civilian population if airstrikes were launched. When asked whether he still thought the administration should go ahead with the attack, he replied "Yes, we have to. We put NATO's credibility on the line. We have to follow through . . . There's no real alternative now." Albright agreed.²¹⁰

The concern with credibility explains the US's inflexibility on Rambouillet. The nonnegotiable agreement presented at Rambouillet included a clause that stipulated a NATO (not UN) military force to implement a peace agreement.²¹¹ According to the *New York Times*, just before the bombing, when the Serbian parliament rejected the presence of NATO troops, it also supported the idea of UN troops. The peace agreement that ended the bombing, in fact, provided for UN (not NATO) supervision of the peacekeeping force.²¹² As such, the Independent International Commission on Kosovo points out that the leadership of the implementation force was "an obvious negotiating opening that might have broken the impasse of the final days of Rambouillet."²¹³ However, the Commission continues, "the reliance on threat diplomacy was at odds with any wavering on the part of NATO. In other words, a threat to use force so as to achieve an outcome that is non-negotiable, i.e. NATO peacekeeping force in Kosovo, is inconsistent with any indication that some alternative compromise is possible.

²¹⁰ Clark, *Waging Modern War*, 171.

²¹¹ Brune, *The United States & the Balkan Crisis*, 92-93.

²¹² Marjorie Cohn, "The Myth of Humanitarian Intervention in Kosovo," in *Lessons of Kosovo: The Dangers of Humanitarian Intervention*, ed. Aleksandar Jokic (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2003), 129.

²¹³ Independent International Commission on, *The Kosovo Report*, 156.

Negotiations in the sense of actual bargaining would seem inconsistent and costly to the credibility of NATO as a political actor.”²¹⁴

Credibility concerns also account for the US’s willingness to act without express Security Council approval. In her memoirs, Albright describes her reaction to the British decision to circulate a draft Council resolution authorizing the use of force. She reasoned that *even if the resolution passed*, a precedent would have been set that permanent members Russia and China had to approve (and therefore could conceivably veto) NATO action.²¹⁵ A precedent like that could only constrain NATO and further damage its continued relevance. She moved to persuade the British that circulating a draft resolution was not a wise plan.

Finally, in the minds of US decision makers, the airstrikes themselves may have been intended only as a stronger show of force. Drawing the lessons from Bosnia, leaders expected Milošević to cave in after only a few days of bombing; once he realized NATO was serious, the reasoning was, he would attempt to cut his losses.²¹⁶ Some decision makers even thought that Milošević needed some small NATO attack before he could concede, in order to quell his domestic allies and enemies.²¹⁷ At any rate, several NATO countries expected an almost immediate bombing pause to enable the Serbs to return to

²¹⁴ Ibid., 157-158.

²¹⁵ Albright and Woodward, *Madam Secretary*, 384.

²¹⁶ This argument was made by Adam Roberts, based on extensive interviews with NATO policymakers. Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 268.

²¹⁷ Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil*, 367.

the negotiating table.²¹⁸ But the US's expectations were thwarted once again when Milošević failed to yield; the bombing would last for some 77 days.

Alternative Explanations

Of course, by arguing in favor of a “credibility” account, this study does not purport that the US intervention in Kosovo was monocausal – state behavior rarely is. Rather, the argument being made is that credibility concerns represented the primary motivating factor behind intervention.

Still, several potential counterarguments can be advanced to refute this version of events. Some authors have indeed claimed that the US deliberately exacerbated the Kosovo conflict,²¹⁹ or else seized the opportunity to justify airstrikes.²²⁰ In doing so, these accounts argue, the US sought one (or some combination) of three objectives. First, the US may have been wary of the emergence of a European security arrangement that would undermine its own hegemony. This fear was mounting along with advances in European integration. The Kosovo crisis, and NATO intervention, would demonstrate to Europe that US protection remained indispensable.²²¹

²¹⁸ Clark, *Waging Modern War*, 177.

²¹⁹ By supporting the KLA diplomatically and otherwise, while marginalizing the democratically-elected moderate Ibrahim Rugova. Zolo, *Invoking Humanity*, 25-27.

²²⁰ By exaggerating the abuses and complicity of Serbian militias and Belgrade government, and then setting the Rambouillet bar higher than Milošević could accept. Bandow, “NATO's Hypocritical Humanitarianism,” 34; Cohn, “The Myth of Humanitarian Intervention in Kosovo,” 122.

²²¹ Zolo, *Invoking Humanity*, 42-45; Anne Deighton, “The European Union and NATO's War over Kosovo: Towards the Glass Ceiling?,” in *Alliance Politics, Kosovo, and NATO's War : Allied Force or Forced Allies?*, ed. Pierre Martin and Mark R. Brawley (New York Palgrave, 2000), 27, 63.

The second goal revolves around Kosovo's geostrategic location. The FRY (and especially Kosovo) is rich in oil and mineral deposits.²²² Moreover, establishing a foothold in the Balkans would allow the US to control crucial oil routes connecting the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus to the Mediterranean, the Balkans, and Southern Europe.²²³ US military bases in the Balkans would also serve as a useful counterweight to Russian influence.²²⁴ Third, airstrikes on Kosovo might have been motivated by a straightforward diversionary logic. Clinton's personal record had been undergoing intense scrutiny, and Kosovo made for an auspicious escape mechanism.²²⁵

These alternative explanations suffer from a serious weakness, however. Whereas NATO's credibility was cited as a key concern by decision makers in their private deliberations, none of these three other objectives figures even in informal conversations. Moreover, as shown above, there is evidence that US decision makers (far from actively pursuing intervention in order to secure tangible gains) were initially reluctant to get involved in Kosovo. Although there may have been strategic gains reaped by virtue of Operation Allied Force, there is no evidence that these strategic gains motivated US action in the first instance. In other words, the mere fact that Kosovo is rich in minerals, say, is insufficient for an inference that mineral wealth motivated the US decision to intervene.

²²² The Trepca mining complex in particular has been referred to as "Serbia's Kuwait." Cohn, "The Myth of Humanitarian Intervention in Kosovo," 127-128; Zolo, *Invoking Humanity*.

²²³ Cohn, "The Myth of Humanitarian Intervention in Kosovo," 45-46.

²²⁴ Carr, *Military Intervention During the Clinton Administration*, 121-122.

²²⁵ Ibid., 24.

Conversely, as the previous section demonstrates, there is strong evidence to support a credibility-motivated impetus for intervention. Norm entrenchment at the individual level is belied by evidence that top US decision makers were initially loath to go to war. As in Somalia, media coverage followed, rather than preceded, the decision to bomb; there is little evidence of strong and organized public opinion; and congressional attitudes were divided. Pressure from NATO and the UN was weak, and to little affect.

A more compelling explanation for the intervention decision is that, because Kosovo was surrounded by NATO members and partners, and because the crisis coincided with the Alliance's fiftieth anniversary, it became a test of the organization's continued relevance. The US initially thought that threats would be a cheap way to safeguard stability. Eventually, however, NATO would have lost credibility had it not acted on its repeated threats. Thus, in the case of Operation Allied Force, the decision to intervene seems to have been taken in order to uphold an international organization, rather than due to entrenchment of a "norm of humanitarian intervention."

VI. Case Study: The US and Non-intervention in Rwanda

Overview of Events

The Arusha Accords, which had ended a three-year civil war between the government of Rwanda and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in August 1993, were faring poorly by early 1994.²²⁶ The Security Council had authorized the formation of the United Nations

²²⁶ Unless otherwise indicated, information in this section is drawn from the description of events in John A. Ausink, *Watershed in Rwanda: The Evolution of President Clinton's Humanitarian Policy*, Pew Case Studies in International Affairs: Case 374 (Washington, D.C.: Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, 1997), 3. and the chronologies in: Michael N. Barnett,

Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), led by Canadian Major-General Roméo Dallaire, to help implement the Accords.²²⁷ Still, the Broad-based Transitional Government (BBTG) had not been established on schedule. In the midst of the deteriorating situation, on January 11, Dallaire cabled the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) describing an informant's account of a plot to exterminate Tutsis, and kill a number of Belgian peacekeepers to guarantee their withdrawal from Rwanda. Dallaire stated his intention to raid an alleged arms cache amassed for this purpose. He was instructed, instead, to inform Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana of this plot.²²⁸

Then, in the evening of April 6, 1994, the plane carrying Habyarimana and Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira from Dar-es-Salam, Tanzania to the Rwandan capital, Kigali, was hit by a missile as it was about to land. Both presidents, who were returning from the signing of a power-sharing implementation agreement, were killed.

Within forty-five minutes, members of Habyarimana's Presidential Guard, Rwandan presidential army forces, and Interhamwe militia groups had established barricades in Kigali, killing Tutsis who attempted to pass. Moderate members of the power-sharing

Eyewitness to a Genocide: The United Nations and Rwanda (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2002), 185-186; "Report of the Independent Inquiry into the Actions of the United Nations During the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda," (United Nations, 1999), <http://www.un.org/News/dh/latest/rwanda.htm>; Tor Sellström and Lennart Wohlgemuth, "Study 1: Historical Perspective: Some Explanatory Factors," in *The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience*, ed. David Millwood (Copenhagen: Steering Committee of the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, 1996), 50-53, 78-79.

²²⁷ United Nations Security Council, "Resolution 872," (5 October 1993).

²²⁸ It is generally not reported that Dallaire himself expressed doubt about the validity of this information, stating "Force Commander does have certain reservations on the suddenness of the change of heart of the informant ... Possibility of a trap not fully excluded, as this may be a set-up." Alan J. Kuperman, *The Limits of Humanitarian Intervention: Genocide in Rwanda* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), 88.

government were killed. Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana, along with the ten Belgian members of UNAMIR assigned to protect her, was killed on April 7. The popular Rwandan Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) began calling for a “final war” to “exterminate the [Tutsi] cockroaches,” broadcasting lists of people to be killed along with their locations. Generalized massacres of Tutsis (and dissenting Hutus) soon spread beyond Kigali.

In response, an RPF battalion stationed in Kigali (in accordance with the Accords) broke out of its headquarters on April 7, and the next day, RPF troops in northern Rwanda began advancing southward. At the same time, former Speaker of Parliament, Théodore Sindikubwabo announced the formation of an interim government with himself as president. Relief officials estimate that as many as 20,000 people were killed in the first five days in Kigali alone. By April 19, Human Rights Watch was calling on the Security Council to use the term “genocide.”²²⁹

Meanwhile, Belgium officially announced the withdrawal of its forces from Rwanda, lobbying Council members to withdraw UNAMIR as a whole. Despite repeated calls from Dallaire for reinforcements to enable the protection of civilians, the Security Council decided to reduce UNAMIR from 2,500 to 270 personnel.²³⁰

²²⁹ Samantha Power, *“A Problem from Hell”: America and the Age of Genocide* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2003), 357. Dallaire would not begin to use the term “genocide” in communications until some point after April 24. Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2005), 333. The term “genocide” had not been used by the Security Council until June 8. United Nations Security Council, “Resolution 925,” (8 June 1994). But the Security Council would wait until July 1 to ask that a commission of experts be established to examine the possibility of genocide. United Nations Security Council, “Resolution 935,” (1 July 1994).

²³⁰ United Nations Security Council, “Resolution 912,” (21 April 1994).

But by the end of April, at least 100,000 had been killed, and an estimated 250,000 refugees were streaming across the border to Tanzania. The Pope had referred to genocide on April 27, and, UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali declared a “real genocide” on ABC’s *Nightline* on May 4.²³¹

In an about face, on May 17, the Security Council approved the deployment of 5,500 peacekeepers to Rwanda under UNAMIR II, authorized to protect civilians and facilitate humanitarian relief.²³² Over a month later, with deployment stalled, the Security Council approved a plan (dubbed Opération Turquoise) to dispatch 2,500 French troops as an interim peacekeeping force.²³³

In mid-July, as the RPF advance continued, approximately 10,000-12,000 refugees per hour crossed the Zairian border and entered the town of Goma, bringing about a severe humanitarian crisis. The RPF unilaterally declared a ceasefire on July 18, naming Pasteur Bizimungu as President with Faustin Twagiramungu as Prime Minister. Shortly thereafter, the US launched a humanitarian relief effort, Operation Support Hope.

In all, at least 500,000 were killed and thousands maimed or raped. Refugees numbered around two million, with another million internally displaced. Four years later, in March 1998, President Clinton addressed genocide survivors in Kigali: “The international community, together with nations in Africa, must bear its share of responsibility for this

²³¹ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, “Introduction,” in *The United Nations and Rwanda, 1993-1996, The United Nations Blue Books Series, Volume X* (New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, 1996), 51.

²³² United Nations Security Council, “Resolution 918,” (17 May 1994).

²³³ ———, “Resolution 929,” (22 June 1994). UNAMIR II would arrive to take over from Opération Turquoise after both the civil war and the genocide had ended.

tragedy . . . We did not act quickly enough after the killing began . . . We did not immediately call these crimes by their rightful name: genocide.”²³⁴

Humanitarian Concerns?

A “non-case” such as Rwanda cannot disprove claims of a humanitarian intervention norm because even instances of non-intervention do not refute such a norm’s existence. Constructivist and English School theorists, after all, do not claim that the norm-sanctioned calculus will triumph every time; even in the presence of norm entrenchment, there may be countervailing forces that impede norm-based behavior. According to these authors, it is natural that the norm of humanitarian intervention compete with other interests, so that intervention may be hindered by a simple reluctance to accept costs.²³⁵

Constructivist and English School theorists insist that the fact that the intervention option was not dismissed in Rwanda due to sovereignty concerns is significant in and of itself. Western governments were, after all, more than willing to authorize intervention by other states (as occurred eventually with Opération Turquoise).²³⁶ But this fact is not enough to substantiate claims for a norm of humanitarian intervention. Accordingly, this section will examine whether there is evidence of norm entrenchment at the individual, domestic, and international organization levels.

²³⁴ “Remarks to Genocide Survivors in Kigali, Rwanda March 25, 1998,” United States, Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/pubpapers/index.html>.

²³⁵ Finnemore, *Purpose of Intervention*, 79; Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 241.

²³⁶ Finnemore, *Purpose of Intervention*, 79; Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 241.

Beginning with the individual level, in his March 1998 visit to Rwanda, Clinton professed “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 the speed with which you were being engulfed by this unimaginable terror.”²³⁷ Confusion and ignorance would be cited frequently by US officials as explanations for the US’s inaction. Consequently, before examining the causes of US nonintervention and obstruction, it is first necessary to determine when the US recognized the extent of the humanitarian crisis in Rwanda.

Three factors initially made the situation in Rwanda difficult to diagnose. First of all, US officials may have initially had difficulty distinguishing between the two-sided civil war and the a one-sided genocide perpetrated in Rwanda. Secondly, sources of proprietary intelligence on Rwanda were not available: the US maintained only a single human intelligence asset in central Africa (a defense attaché in Cameroon), and the evacuation of embassy personnel impeded intelligence gathering.²³⁸ Finally, the Rwandan government waged a campaign of disinformation, exaggerating RPF abuses through RTLM.²³⁹

The reports of violence that did come through tended to be minimized by the State Department’s Bureau of African Affairs.²⁴⁰ There was a certain “blindness bred by familiarity.”²⁴¹ The State Department’s political-military adviser for the region,

²³⁷ “Remarks to Genocide Survivors in Kigali.”

²³⁸ One exception was the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), which in preparing for the noncombatant evacuation order (NEO) for US nationals in Rwanda, obtained photo and communications intercepts. However, this intelligence did not find its way to the rest of the national security establishment, perhaps due to information overload or skepticism over DIA’s reporting. For more on this, see Kuperman, *Limits of Humanitarian Intervention*, 32-35.

²³⁹ Sellström and Wohlgemuth, “Study 1,” 52.

²⁴⁰ Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide*, 88.

²⁴¹ Power, *Problem from Hell*, 347.

Lieutenant Colonel Tony Marley, recalls “we had heard allegations of genocide, or warnings of genocide, pertaining back at least to 1992 ... We had heard them cry wolf so many times ...”²⁴²

For all of these reasons, it appears that most US officials realized what was occurring in Rwanda around April 20. James Woods, Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs at the Department of Defense, maintains that “we all knew it ... within 10 to 14 days.”²⁴³ The Pentagon’s then-director for Africa insists that he and other officials became aware of the genocide after nearly two weeks; an NSC official gives the date as April 20 or 22.²⁴⁴ US Ambassador to the UN, Madeleine Albright says she recognized the genocide during the last ten days of April.²⁴⁵

Insofar as they recognized – once they recognized – that a genocide was under way in Rwanda, to what extent was Clinton and key official motivated by humanitarian concerns? Indicative of the American response, prior to the genocide, Woods reports that when he placed Rwanda-Burundi on a list of potential trouble spots, higher authorities in the Pentagon told him “Look, if something happens in Rwanda-Burundi, we don't care ... U.S. national interest is not involved and we can't put all these silly humanitarian issues

²⁴² Tony Marley, interview, *Frontline: The Triumph of Evil*, PBS, January 26, 1999. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil/interviews/marley.html>. Similarly, Marley explains that he discredited Dallaire’s January 11 cable because knew that this was the general’s first mission in Africa, he recalls “I thought that the neophyte meant well, but I questioned whether he knew what he was talking about.” qtd. in Power, *Problem from Hell*.

²⁴³ James Woods, interview, *Frontline: The Triumph of Evil*, PBS, January 26, 1999. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil/interviews/woods.html>.

²⁴⁴ Alan Kuperman argues that these recollections should not be discounted as post hoc rationalizations, because these selfsame officials are critical of the US’s failure to acknowledge genocide once the evidence became unambiguous. Kuperman, *Limits of Humanitarian Intervention*, 36.

²⁴⁵ At that time, she had met with Rwandan human rights activist, Monique Mujawamariya. Albright and Woodward, *Madam Secretary*, 151.

on lists, like important problems like the Middle East, North Korea and so on. Just make it go away.”²⁴⁶

And indeed, once catastrophe struck, the administration’s position was essentially unchanged. Belgian foreign minister Willy Claes recalls bringing up Rwanda with Secretary of State Warren Christopher, and receiving the reply “I have other responsibilities.”²⁴⁷ Similarly, Clinton declared on May 25 that the US had no vital interest in Rwanda, even if American values were “offended by human misery.”²⁴⁸ According to one US official, “nobody senior was paying any attention” to events in Rwanda.²⁴⁹

In fact, no deliberate decision was taken for a policy of inaction, rather the possibility of intervention was never considered. At the time of the genocide, National Security Adviser Tony Lake recalls, “I was obsessed with Haiti and Bosnia during that period, so Rwanda was, in journalist William Shawcross’s words, a ‘sideshow,’ but not even a sideshow – a no-show.”²⁵⁰ He added: “I think it didn’t arise for us because it was almost literally inconceivable that American troops would go to Rwanda. Our sin, I believe, was not the error of commission, or taking a look at this issue and then saying no. It was an

²⁴⁶ Woods, interview, *Frontline*.

²⁴⁷ According to Samantha Power, Christopher was so ill-informed, that in a meeting with top advisers several weeks after the plane crash, he had to consult an atlas to locate Rwanda. Power, *Problem from Hell*, 352.

²⁴⁸ qtd. in Arthur Jay Klinghoffer, *The International Dimension of Genocide in Rwanda* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 97.

²⁴⁹ Power, *Problem from Hell*, 372-373.

²⁵⁰ qtd. in Harris, *The Survivor*, 127.

error of omission – of never considering the issue.”²⁵¹ Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Prudence Bushnell agrees, noting that intervention was essentially “off the table.”²⁵² In fact, Clinton did not convene a single meeting of his senior foreign policy advisers to discuss options on Rwanda.²⁵³ Clearly, then, the evidence at the individual level of analysis belies the existence of norm entrenchment. Not only was a humanitarian motive missing, but intervention was never even considered.

Regarding the role of the media, it is important to note that officials tended to rely on the news media for information, due to a lack of intelligence capabilities. But this coverage was often scant, for reasons including restricted mobility and the eventual withdrawal of reporters. The maximum number of reporters in Rwanda at any point in time was fifteen.²⁵⁴ Even this scanty coverage, however, was often misleading. The *New York Times* attributed the deaths of the Rwandan Prime Minister and the ten Belgian soldiers to mobs or troops on a rampage.²⁵⁵ Violence was depicted as the product of a civil war, which according to CNN stemmed from “the worst tribal hostility in all of Africa, hostility that goes back centuries long before European colonization.”²⁵⁶ When Roger Winter, director of the US Committee for Refugees, wrote an article arguing that the

²⁵¹ Anthony Lake, interview, *Frontline: Ghosts of Rwanda*, PBS, December 15, 2003. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ghosts/interviews/lake.html>.

²⁵² Prudence Bushnell, interview, *Frontline: Ghosts of Rwanda*, PBS, April 1, 2004. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ghosts/interviews/bushnell.html>.

²⁵³ Power, *Problem from Hell*, 335.

²⁵⁴ This figure is often contrasted with the 2,500 reporters covering the elections in South Africa at the time. Howard Adelman and Astri Suhrke, “Study 2: Early Warning and Conflict Management,” in *The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience*, ed. David Millwood (Copenhagen: Steering Committee of the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, 1996), 46.

²⁵⁵ Among the errors committed by the *New York Times* is the retribalization of Prime Minister Uwilingiyimana as a Tutsi. Ibid., 47.

²⁵⁶ CNN’s Gary Streiker qtd. in Power, *Problem from Hell*, 355.

violence was political and organized (in contrast to the commonly-invoked “tribal bloodletting” explanation), his piece was turned down by several American papers.²⁵⁷

Moreover, early estimates of deaths were fairly low, and the focus on Kigali underestimated the scope of violence. On April 18, the *New York Times* reported an estimated 20,000 deaths, an underestimation by about tenfold. And violence was erroneously reported to be on the wane starting April 11; the decline in reports of violence probably due to the evacuation of foreigners. Realization of the genocide came slowly. The *Washington Post*, on April 23, reported that international aid workers were wondering why only 20,000 refugees had crossed the border when the number of Tutsis who had fled their homes was estimated at half a million. They concluded that most of the borders must have been sealed by the Rwandan army.²⁵⁸

This confusion generated little pressure on the US administration to act. That the media exerted little pressure is demonstrated by the fact that, between April 15 and April 22, State Department spokesperson Michael McCurry received only a single question regarding Rwanda at his daily press briefing.²⁵⁹ Even after more accurate reporting surfaced during the last week of April, the press did not demand US intervention. On

²⁵⁷ Adelman and Suhrke, “Study 2,” 47. Initially rejected by the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* amongst others, the piece was eventually published in the *Toronto Globe and Mail* on April 14. Linda Melvern, *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide* (London: Zed Books, 2000), 138.

²⁵⁸ Kuperman, *Limits of Humanitarian Intervention*, 24-30.

²⁵⁹ That single question dealt with the safety of peacekeepers. Albright and Woodward, *Madam Secretary*, 154.

May 3, a *New York Times* editorial noted that a peacekeeping force could not stem the carnage.²⁶⁰

There was also no strong public pressure for the US to intervene. Julia Taft, president of InterAction, the coalition of US-based NGOs, explained that even with the broadcasting of pictures portraying the violence in Rwanda, private relief groups received very few donations.²⁶¹ There was no significant Rwandan diaspora living in the US, and the rest of the public was reluctant to intervene. Both the US Mission to the UN and the White House received few letters or phone calls urging action, and many more pleas to avoid intervention.²⁶²

This phenomenon of the “silent public” is indicated by some advice that Lake gave to Alison Des Forges of Human Rights Watch, and Monique Mujawamariya, a Rwandan human rights activist. When they visited the White House on April 21 and asked Lake how they might alter US policy, he shrugged, “If you want to make this move, you will have to change public opinion . . . You must make more noise.”²⁶³ In turn, silence translated into little pressure on congressional representatives. On April 30, Representative Patricia Schroeder (D-CO) explained that, in her district, there were only “some groups terribly concerned about the gorillas.”²⁶⁴ Representative Alcee Hastings

²⁶⁰ Ausink, *Watershed in Rwanda*, 4. It is worth noting that, the first mention of “genocide” occurred on April 11, in a piece by Jean-Philippe Ceppi in the French *Libération*. Interestingly, the term would largely disappear before resurfacing in news reporting later that month. Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 137.

²⁶¹ Only the pictures of refugees in Zaire, later, were able to mobilize donations. Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy*, 144.

²⁶² Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide*, 140.

²⁶³ qtd. in Power, *Problem from Hell*, 377.

²⁶⁴ She was referring to a research organization, based in Colorado, that studied Rwanda’s gorilla population. qtd. in *Ibid.*, 375.

(D-FL) explained, “Africa seems so far away, and there is no vital interest that my constituency sees.”²⁶⁵

Even more, there was active opposition to intervention from both parties in Congress. On April 10, Republican Senate Leader Bob Dole announced his opposition to US involvement in Rwanda, where the US had no vital national interests at stake.²⁶⁶ His position was reiterated by two democrats, Harry Johnston (D-FL), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and Robert Byrd (D-WV), Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee.²⁶⁷ Even when representatives criticized the administration for avoiding the term “genocide,” they did not demand intervention.²⁶⁸ Only one Congressman, during a May 5 hearing, was willing to put forth the argument that stopping genocide might be in the US’s enlightened self-interest.²⁶⁹

This is not to say that there were not some congressional calls for action. The Congressional Black Caucus made some appeals. Paul Simon, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Africa, and James Jefford (R-VT), a member of the subcommittee, sent a note to the White House, urging that the Security Council authorize troop deployment.²⁷⁰ But these isolated calls were too few to counterbalance the overwhelming mood on Capitol Hill.

²⁶⁵ qtd. in Ibid., 376.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 352.

²⁶⁷ Carol McQueen, *Humanitarian Intervention and Safety Zones: Iraq, Bosnia and Rwanda*, ed. Oliver Richmond, Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 106.

²⁶⁸ DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 75.

²⁶⁹ Adelman and Suhrke, “Study 2,” 92, fn. 104.

²⁷⁰ Power, *Problem from Hell*, 376; Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 202-203.

At the initial stages of the crisis, the United Nations too seemed to have placed little pressure on the US to act. On April 20, Boutros-Ghali placed three options in front of the Security Council: reinforcement of UNAMIR, scaling down the force, or complete withdrawal.²⁷¹ The way in which these options were framed seemed to leave only the middle option (the first option would require several thousand personnel and a Chapter VII mandate; the third would allow the situation to degenerate further).²⁷² But Boutros-Ghali claims he tried to convince member states to act. He would later relate private meetings with Albright, in which her response to his calls for action was “Come on, Boutros, relax ... Don’t put us in a difficult position ... the mood is not for intervention, you will obtain nothing ... we will not move.”²⁷³ There are no other indications of the Secretary-General urging action though. As such, it appears that the UN did not exercise significant pressure on the US.

Thus, rather than finding itself under pressure, the US was fairly successful at obstruction within the Security Council, seeking the removal of UNAMIR and then stalling the reinforcement process. After the Belgian peacekeepers were killed, the US position in the Security Council progressively favored total withdrawal. By April 15, Christopher sent a cable to Albright instructing her to demand full withdrawal; even taking into

²⁷¹ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *Unvanquished: A U.S.-U.N. Saga* (New York: Random House, 1999), 133.

²⁷² Adelman and Suhrke, “Study 2,” 44.

²⁷³ Boutros-Ghali relates a similar situation with the British Ambassador to the UN, David Hannay. qtd. in Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 228.

account “humanitarian reasons,” there was “insufficient justification” to retain that mission.²⁷⁴

Albright describes an angry phone call she placed to Lake’s top aides, asking for more flexible instructions, and reporting that the American position was being viewed as obstructionist.²⁷⁵ She, indeed, received more flexibility, which allowed the Security Council to unanimously adopted the second option. The “small, skeletal” operation would “show the will of the international community” Albright explained.²⁷⁶

Later in April, as the extent of the violence in Rwanda became clear, members of the Security Council began speaking more forcefully. But when Czech Ambassador to the UN Karel Kovanda criticized the council’s response to what he stressed was a genocide an informal meeting on April 28, American and British diplomats warned him not to use such inflammatory language outside the council.²⁷⁷

On May 11, the US said it had “serious reservations” about establishing a peace enforcement mission.²⁷⁸ US representatives argued that the plan on the table called for peacekeepers to be on the ground within two weeks, which was hopelessly unrealistic. More importantly, the plan was hasty and would place peacekeepers in harm’s way. Instead of securing Kigali through airlifting a brigade into it, and then fanning out to create safe havens around the country, the US suggested creating a protective zone along

²⁷⁴ qtd. in Power, *Problem from Hell*, 367.

²⁷⁵ Albright and Woodward, *Madam Secretary*, 150.

²⁷⁶ qtd. in Boutros-Ghali, *Unvanquished: A U.S.-U.N. Saga*, 133.

²⁷⁷ Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 179.

²⁷⁸ qtd. in Boutros-Ghali, *Unvanquished: A U.S.-U.N. Saga*, 135.

the borders of Tanzania and Zaire. This “outside-in” strategy, had a different goal from Dallaire’s “inside-out” approach, but the US argued that the plan’s very modesty was what made it viable.²⁷⁹

The compromise, enshrined in Resolution 918, was the introduction of an interim force of 850 Ghanians, with the deployment of the remaining troops contingent on receiving guarantees, including the cooperation of the parties to the conflict, progress towards a ceasefire, and the availability of resources for the mission.²⁸⁰ Consultations on May 13 focused on these amendments presented by the US. Then, just as the resolution seemed in sight, the US delegation announced it had no instructions for the vote, forcing a postponement until May 16.²⁸¹ On May 17, Albright told the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, “Sending a UN force into the maelstrom of Rwanda without a sound plan of operations would be folly.”²⁸² She added, “we wanted to be confident that when we do turn to the UN, the UN will be able to do the job.”²⁸³ In an interview on the *McNeil/Lehrer NewsHour* on May 19, Albright said that the US position pushed other countries, and the Secretary-General, to ask “tough” questions about peacekeeping missions, while a phased operation sent “a strong signal that the international community cared and was determined to do something.”²⁸⁴ The implementing resolution (925) would not be passed until June 8.

²⁷⁹ Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide*, 141.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 142.

²⁸¹ Alison Des Forges, “*Leave None to Tell the Story*”: *Genocide in Rwanda* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999), 644.

²⁸² Boutros-Ghali, *Unvanquished: A U.S.-U.N. Saga*, 136.

²⁸³ Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide*, 139.

²⁸⁴ Ausink, *Watershed in Rwanda*, 7.

The most notorious example of US obstructionism is the Armored Personnel Carriers (APC) saga. The initial deployment of a Ghanaian battalion under UNAMIR II was contingent on receiving APCs, of which the US agreed to lease fifty for US\$4 million. But paperwork and bureaucratic procedures regarding the type of vehicles (wheeled or tracked), repainting them (white), and finding a training partner slowed down the process. It took a full week and an extra US\$6 million to transport the vehicles from a US base in Germany to Entebbe, Uganda. When they were finally unloaded on June 30, the APCs remained on the tarmac under UN guard for over a month, because there were no trucks large enough to transport them to Rwanda. At any rate, they had no heavy machine guns or radios. By the time they reached Rwanda, the civil war had ended.²⁸⁵

Another organization which was involved in the Rwandan response was the OAU, though the pressure it was able to exert on the US was minimal. On April 14, the Central Organ of appealed to the Security Council to ensure that UNAMIR stayed in place.²⁸⁶ On April 21, the Secretary-General of the OAU, Salim Ahmed Salim, wrote to Boutros-Ghali, expressing his concern that the Security Council was considering withdrawal of UNAMIR. Responding to some of the comments that had been made, the former said “It is true that the conflict in Rwanda is essentially an African problem but it is equally true that it has security and humanitarian implications which are clearly of universal

²⁸⁵ Not only did the US already owe the UN more than one billion dollars in back dues at this time, but it was later discovered that a commercial contractor could have transported the APCs at a much lower cost. Adelman and Suhrke, “Study 2,” 53; Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 196.

²⁸⁶ “Document 46: Letter from the Executive Secretary of the Organization of African Unity to the President of the Security Council Transmitting a Letter from the OAU Secretary-General and a Statement by the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, 14 April 1994,” in *The United Nations and Rwanda, 1993-1996*, The United Nations Blue Books Series, Volume X (New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, 1996), 261.

concern.”²⁸⁷ After Resolution 912 was passed, Salim referred to a double standard, where the UN was unwilling to act in Africa, but was capable of acting in Europe.²⁸⁸ In the beginning of May, when the US and Britain emphasized that future efforts in Rwanda must be spearheaded by African countries, Salim replied that efforts must be made under UN auspices; Africa should not be an exception to the practice in other parts of the world.²⁸⁹ Still, the OAU had very little leverage on US action.

There is little evidence, then, of norm entrenchment at the individual, domestic, or international organization levels. Interestingly, the shadow of Somalia may have been responsible for the mechanisms identified by constructivists and English School theorists working against, rather than for, a norm of humanitarian intervention.

The significance of the role of Somalia is demonstrated by the turnaround that occurred in the Clinton Administration’s peacekeeping policy from early 1993 to 1994. The Clinton administration had initially seen great potential in the UN’s peace operations. Signing a Presidential Review Directive (PRD) in February 1993, Clinton mandated a review of US policy toward multilateral peacekeeping operations. The draft Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) which was approved on July 19, 1993, supported the enhanced use of multilateral operations and committed the US to their support. However, events in Somalia would force the Clinton administration to reassess its stance.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁷ “Document 50: Letter Dated 21 April 1994 from the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Expressing Concern over the Possible Withdrawal of Unamir from Rwanda,” in *The United Nations and Rwanda, 1993-1996*, The United Nations Blue Books Series, Volume X (New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, 1996), 266.

²⁸⁸ Klinghoffer, *International Dimension*, 49.

²⁸⁹ Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 192.

²⁹⁰ Ausink, *Watershed in Rwanda*, 4.

Criticisms of the US role in Somalia had been mounting along with US casualties. But then a raid on a central Mogadishu hotel, on October 3, resulted in the deaths of eighteen US Army Rangers. Images of dead and mutilated US soldiers being dragged through the streets were widely televised. In response, members of Congress demanded immediate withdrawal; they were receiving about 300 calls a day from constituents calling for the same. Four days later, Clinton announced that US forces would leave Somalia by 31 March 1994.²⁹¹ Clinton would reflect: “My experiences in Somalia make me more cautious about having any Americans in a peacekeeping role where there was any ambiguity at all about the range of decisions which could be made by a command other than an American command with direct accountability to the United States here.”²⁹²

Of this time, one US official remembers, “Anytime you mentioned peacekeeping in Africa, the crucifixes and garlic would come up on every door.”²⁹³ And accordingly, the Presidential Decision Directive underwent significant reassessment before it was issued on May 3. PDD-25 outlined a number of conditions that had to be met before the US would vote in favor of or actively participate in UN peace operations. These included: involvement must further US interests; the mission’s scope and duration must be clearly defined; there must be domestic and congressional support for involvement; and there must be an “exit strategy.”²⁹⁴ Coming after Somalia, PDD-25 guaranteed the US, in the

²⁹¹ DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 75.

²⁹² qtd. in Ausink, *Watershed in Rwanda*, 5.

²⁹³ Power, *Problem from Hell*, 340.

²⁹⁴ “Clinton Administration Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations (Presidential Decision Directive 25) May 3, 1994,” Federation of American Scientists, Intelligence Resource Program, <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd25.htm>.

words of Representative David Obey (D-WI), “zero degree of involvement, and zero degree of risk, and zero degree of pain and confusion.”²⁹⁵

As a result of this shift rather than for feeling a humanitarian impulse, policymakers saw in Rwanda a repeat of Somalia. Policymakers drew parallels with Somalia, casting Rwanda as another “failed state,” and thereby concluding that any intervention would have to be massive and costly, but would be unlikely to bring about an improvement.²⁹⁶ The death of the Belgian peacekeepers reinforced feelings of a “Somalia redux,” and fears that the US would be expected to get involved once disaster struck, according to one senior official.²⁹⁷ These tendencies were further reinforced by the fact that the US was simultaneously struggling with situations in Haiti and Bosnia.²⁹⁸

Drawing a direct parallel with Somalia, Albright recalls “I had become both defensive and cautious about UN peacekeeping in general . . . I worried that more of the lightly armed UN peacekeepers might be victimized.”²⁹⁹ Also referring to lessons learned from Somalia during a May 3 news conference, Clinton noted “I think we have learned that . . . the United States in its role as a superpower, cannot be caught in the position of being a policing officer in a conflict.”³⁰⁰ For these reasons, policymakers called for withdrawal of UNAMIR. According to Marley, there was fear that the US would be dragged into the

²⁹⁵ qtd. in ———, *Problem from Hell*, 342.

²⁹⁶ Des Forges, “*Leave None to Tell the Story*”, 624.

²⁹⁷ qtd. in Power, *Problem from Hell*, 366.

²⁹⁸ Shortly after the Somalia tragedy, the USS Harlan County, bringing UN police trainers and technicians to Haiti, was turned back by a mob chanting “Somalia, Somalia.” This marked the beginning of the so-called “Somalia syndrome.” Menkhaus and Ortmayer, *Key Decisions*, 20.

²⁹⁹ Albright and Woodward, *Madam Secretary*, 150.

³⁰⁰ Ausink, *Watershed in Rwanda*, 5-6.

peacekeeping operation.³⁰¹ Later, the US would argue for an “outside-in” approach which would have kept US airlifts safely out of Rwanda. Commenting on the “outside-in” approach, Dallaire noted “My mission was to save Rwandans. Their mission was to put on a show at no risk.”³⁰²

For these reasons, the State Department sent out a directive instructing officials to avoid the term “genocide,” substituting the phrase “acts of genocide” instead.³⁰³ There was a fear that the use of the term might oblige the US to act under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. A May 1 discussion paper, prepared by an official at the Office of the Secretary of Defense, warns: “Be careful. Legal at State was worried about this yesterday – Genocide finding could commit [the US government] to actually ‘do something.’”³⁰⁴ It was only on July 10, that Christopher relented, “If there is any particular magic in calling it genocide, I have no hesitancy in saying that.”³⁰⁵

The experience of Somalia also caused the media, public opinion, and congressional mechanisms to oppose intervention. For instance, on May 18, the *New York Times* warned that intervention into Rwanda without a clear and viable mandate risked a repetition of the Somali debacle.³⁰⁶ The media continued to resurrect the ghost of Somalia and to oppose any kind of peacekeeping mission.³⁰⁷ The public, as

³⁰¹ Marley, interview, *Frontline*.

³⁰² qtd. in Power, *Problem from Hell*, 378.

³⁰³ McQueen, *Humanitarian Intervention and Safety Zones*, 114.

³⁰⁴ qtd. in Power, *Problem from Hell*, 359.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 364.

³⁰⁶ qtd. in Ausink, *Watershed in Rwanda*, 4.

³⁰⁷ McQueen, *Humanitarian Intervention and Safety Zones*, 113.

aforementioned, was largely silent. Officials who consulted op-ed pages of elite journals or looked for popular protest in favor of intervention found few signs that intervention would be supported. To the contrary, officials expected the public to oppose another intervention in Africa.³⁰⁸

In Congress, opposition was also tied explicitly to the memory of Somalia. Senator Byrd stated that US troops should stick to relief and not get involved in security because “we had enough of that in Somalia.”³⁰⁹ The experience in Somalia also made Congress unwilling to finance peacekeeping, whether or not it involved US troops. George Moose recalls that cost was a significant concern, particularly in terms of justifying expenditures to the appropriators and committees in Congress.³¹⁰

Within the UN, even though Boutros-Ghali would later attribute US reluctance to memories of Somalia, there may have been similar dynamics going on within his own organization.³¹¹ In fact, it may have been the case that the UN was initially working against intervention. In the aftermath of Rwanda, the UN Secretariat has been criticized for providing insufficient information to member states.³¹² Within the first week of violence, the UN had received a cable from Jacques-Roger Booh-Booh, the special Representative of the Secretary-General, describing “a very well planned, organized, deliberate, and conducted campaign of terror.”³¹³ But in his April 20 report, the

³⁰⁸ Power, *Problem from Hell*, 373.

³⁰⁹ qtd. in Klinghoffer, *International Dimension*, 96.

³¹⁰ George Moose, interview, *Frontline: Ghosts of Rwanda*, PBS, April 1, 2004. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ghosts/interviews/moose.html>.

³¹¹ Ausink, *Watershed in Rwanda*, 7.

³¹² Adelman and Suhrke, “Study 2,” 90-91, fn. 70.

³¹³ qtd. in *Ibid.*, 42.

Secretary-General did not mention the systematic nature of the violence.³¹⁴ And on an April 29 letter to the Security Council, he attributed the violence to “deep-rooted ethnic hatreds,” and portrayed a state of anarchy with armed mobs and troop rampages.³¹⁵ The delegation of Ghana, which had contributed one of UNAMIR’s two battalions, found that its calls to DPKO were not even returned.³¹⁶

Around mid-April, Nigeria led the non-aligned members of the Security Council in circulating a draft resolution calling for reinforcement of UNAMIR.³¹⁷ At this time, the Secretariat appears not have made the strongest case available for intervention, through for instance, echoing Dallaire’s assurances that reinforcements would serve as an effective show of force.³¹⁸ At the same time, other organs of the UN were largely inactive. The UN Commission on Human Rights did not act until May 25, when a Special Rapporteur was appointed to report on the human rights situation in Rwanda.³¹⁹

Several explanations have been advanced for the Secretariat’s behavior in the context of Rwanda. Foremost amongst these is the idea of bureaucratic caution. Insofar, as they saw Rwanda as a failed state, much like Somalia, UN officials expected any peacekeeping mission to be a failure, and the UN could not afford another failure after Somalia.³²⁰ In fact, the UN Commission of Inquiry on Somalia had concluded that the

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ McQueen, *Humanitarian Intervention and Safety Zones*, 111.

³¹⁶ Adelman and Suhrke, “Study 2,” 90-91, fn. 70.

³¹⁷ In the rush to withdraw the bulk of the force, Nigeria’s draft resolution on strengthening the force was never tabled. Ibid., 43-44.

³¹⁸ Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide*, 173-174.

³¹⁹ Adelman and Suhrke, “Study 2,” 49. The report was issued on June 28, 1994, stating that the massacres formed part of a systematic campaign of genocide. Sellström and Wohlgemuth, “Study 1,” 79.

³²⁰ Adelman and Suhrke, “Study 2,” 43.

UN should not engage in further peace enforcement in internal conflicts.³²¹ By withholding information, the Secretariat was protecting the operation and the organization, it was either Rwanda or the UN.³²² In addition, the Secretariat may have been reluctant to advance proposals that were likely to be rejected by the Security Council anyway.³²³ As one DPKO official put it, “If we had gone to the council at the beginning to ask for reinforcements we would have been laughed out of the chamber.”³²⁴

The effect of Somalia, and the “reversal” of the constructivist and English School mechanisms created a situation where the US, though reluctant to participate in an intervention, was more than willing to participate in a humanitarian relief effort afterwards. A humanitarian relief operation was risk free, and would create the impression of doing good without drawing the wrath of Congress and the public. Insofar as there may have been a “CNN effect,” it occurred with regards to Goma and the other refugee camps, rather than the genocide. Referring to the widely-publicized footage of corpses floating down the Kagera River, a senior US official noted: “None of those provoked or provided the kind of catalyst for a US military intervention ... The [later scenes of refugee] camps were a different matter ...”³²⁵ As Oxfam press officer, John Magrath, observed in his diary: “The South African elections were over and all the crews were diverted to Tanzania – the refugees became the story, not the genocide.”³²⁶

³²¹ Albright and Woodward, *Madam Secretary*, 152.

³²² Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide*, 163.

³²³ Adelman and Suhrke, “Study 2,” 90, fn. 76.

³²⁴ qtd. in Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide*, 165.

³²⁵ qtd. in Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy*, 144.

³²⁶ qtd. in Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, 178.

Indeed, the US administration may have limited itself to a “feeding and watering” operation (as it was referred to at the Pentagon) precisely because of the news media.³²⁷ Knowing that the press would transmit news of US casualties, and fearing a backlash, US officials limited their involvement only to the humanitarian operation.³²⁸ Operation Support Hope was authorized at a cost of \$300-400 million, and 4,000 military personnel as well as a massive airlift. Within three days, American troops were on the ground, a testament to the speed of deployment possible when there is sufficient political will.³²⁹

Avoiding UN Failure

The argument being made in this section is that maintenance is part, though not all, of the explanation. Somalia played a large role in the response to Rwanda by instigating fear of intervention. However, Somalia also put into motion a maintenance-type rationale for non-intervention.

Key to the maintenance motive is that the US appeared to identify its own goals and fears with those of the UN. New Zealand Ambassador to the UN, Colin Keating (who served as president of the Security Council during the genocide) inadvertently points to this when he observes, “[T]he US had a curious identification with the UN. It was almost as if it was so involved with the UN that it could not contemplate the UN doing something it

³²⁷ Steven Livingston and Todd Eachus, “Rwanda: US Policy and Television Coverage,” in *The Path of a Genocide: The Rwanda Crisis from Uganda to Zaire*, ed. Howard Adelman and Astri Suhrke (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1999), 227.

³²⁸ Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy*, 146.

³²⁹ Clinton, *My Life*, 609; “Remarks Announcing Assistance to Rwandan Refugees and an Exchange with Reports July 23, 1994,” United States, Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/pubpapers/index.html>.

did not want to do itself.”³³⁰ Part of the reason for this was the “slippery slope” idea, mentioned above, that even an intervention that did not initially involve the US may drag it in as the mission faces problems. Another, related, issue was the fact that the US was assessed nearly a third of all UN peacekeeping costs.³³¹

But that was not all. The US also seemed to take an interest in the UN trimming down its peacekeeping operations in line with PDD-25. Albright describes how the US had forged Security Council consensus on a more cautious approach to peacekeeping.³³² And indeed, the same day that PDD-25 was released, the Security Council adopted a statement emphasizing the need for guarantees from the parties to the conflict for the safety of UN personnel.”³³³

Part of the reasoning behind this was that the future of UN credibility, and in fact the very future of peacekeeping, could be doomed by becoming involved in another disastrous situation. Not putting the lives of peacekeepers first, warned Albright, “will only further undermine UN credibility and support.”³³⁴ As one senior official put it “the concept of UN peacekeeping could not be sacrificed again.”³³⁵

Moreover, the UN was occasionally useful to the US government, and another failure would make Congress even less agreeable to the option of multilateral operations. This

³³⁰ Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide*, 172.

³³¹ Adelman and Suhrke, “Study 2,” 51.

³³² Albright and Woodward, *Madam Secretary*, 154.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 152.

³³⁴ qtd. in McQueen, *Humanitarian Intervention and Safety Zones*, 117.

³³⁵ qtd. in Power, *Problem from Hell*, 367.

appears to have been the belief of Richard Clarke at the NSC.³³⁶ Clarke counters critiques with “Many say PDD-25 was some evil thing designed to kill peacekeeping, when in fact it was there to save peacekeeping. Peacekeeping was almost dead. There was no support for it in the US government, and the peacekeepers were not effective in the field.”³³⁷ In fact, American officials have recalled thinking that if they placed strict conditions on UN peace operations, Congress might be more forgiving of the UN.³³⁸ The future of the US’s relationship with the UN, and with peacekeeping was in the balance and policymakers reasoned that the UN had more to lose from dead peacekeepers than from allowing the genocide to continue.³³⁹

But when the French suggested Opération Turquoise, the US voted in favor of it, arguing that the Council ought to be flexible enough to accept imperfect solutions. According to Boutros-Ghali, this was because such an operation would not cost the US anything and the entire responsibility would accrue to a single member state.³⁴⁰

Only later would Albright reminisce, “Tragically, the lessons we thought we had just learned in Somalia simply did not apply in Rwanda. Somalia was something close to anarchy. Rwanda was planned mass murder. Somalia counseled caution; Rwanda demanded action.”³⁴¹

³³⁶ Ibid., 364.

³³⁷ qtd. in Ibid., 342.

³³⁸ Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide*, 164.

³³⁹ Power, *Problem from Hell*, 384.

³⁴⁰ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, interview, *Frontline: Ghosts of Rwanda*, PBS, April 1, 2004. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ghosts/interviews/ghali.html>.

³⁴¹ Albright and Woodward, *Madam Secretary*, 154.

To sum up then, there is little evidence of norm entrenchment at the individual, domestic, and international organization levels in the case of Rwanda. In fact, the US experience in Somalia may have been responsible for these mechanisms working against a norm of humanitarian intervention. Insofar as they recognized that a genocide was under way, Clinton and key officials did not appear to be motivated by humanitarian concerns. Media coverage was scant, often misleading, and did not demand US intervention. Strong public pressure for action was lacking. And there was active opposition to intervention from Congress. Meanwhile, both the UN and the OAU had very little leverage on the US.

Still, the argument can be made that international organization maintenance formed part of the explanation for inaction. The very shadow of Somalia put into motion a maintenance-type rationale for non-intervention. US officials argued that involvement in another tragic situation like Somalia would destroy the UN's credibility.

VII. Synthesis and Concluding Remarks

This study has sought to examine constructivist and English School accounts of a "norm of humanitarian intervention." Ultimately, it concludes that norm entrenchment played little or no role in bringing about US intervention in Somalia and Kosovo, and non-intervention in Rwanda. Instead, the decision to intervene was taken in order to uphold an international organization.

Thus, Operation Restore Hope in Somalia is better explained by a concern for the post-Cold War credibility of the UN, rather than norm entrenchment at the individual, domestic, or international organization levels. Similarly, Operation Allied Force in Kosovo is better accounted for by credibility concerns relating to the continued relevance of NATO.

Non-intervention in Rwanda is less straightforward. Once again, there is little evidence of norm entrenchment. Instead, and due to the “shadow of Somalia,” the individual, domestic, and international organization mechanisms worked against, rather than for, a norm of humanitarian intervention. Still, an international organization maintenance motive seemed to form part of the explanation for non-intervention. The perception was that the future of UN credibility could be doomed by involvement in another Somalia-type debacle.

These cases demonstrate that international organizations’ credibility and maintenance enter into decisions to intervene or not to intervene in humanitarian crises. In both Somalia and Kosovo, the US appears to have intervened due to concerns related not to humanitarianism nor to narrowly-construed material interests. Instead, the US acted to preserve an international organization. In Rwanda, the maintenance motive is part, though not the whole, of the explanation for non-intervention. These findings evoke a neoliberal institutionalist perspective.

Still, this study and its findings remain limited. Only two cases of intervention and one case of non-intervention were considered, and in those only the US decision was examined. Accordingly, future studies can investigate whether the findings of this study hold for other cases and other interveners or non-interveners.

Moreover, there are two questions that this study does not address. The first deals with why responding to humanitarian crises became necessary for institutional maintenance in the first place. If an international organizations' credibility hinges upon intervention in humanitarian crises, then perhaps that points to norm entrenchment of a more deep-rooted sort. The second question is whether the use of humanitarian rhetoric by actors at the individual, domestic, and international organization levels, is in and of itself significant. The use of a humanitarian discourse, even if just for rationalization, may point to the legitimating power of the norm of humanitarian intervention. These two questions may be worth exploring in future studies.

Finally, future studies can examine the extent to which recent developments confirm or contradict the findings of this study. For instance, in contrast with the avoidance of the term during Rwanda, US Secretary of State Colin Powell and President George W. Bush both described the violence in Darfur, Sudan as genocide as early as September 2004.³⁴²

³⁴² Glenn Kessler and Colum Lynch, "U.S. Calls Killings in Sudan Genocide," *Washington Post*, September 10, 2004; "President's Statement on Violence in Darfur, Sudan, September 9, 2004," The White House, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/09/20040909-10.html>.

More recently, the 2005 World Summit unanimously adopted the concept of the “responsibility to protect” (R2P).³⁴³ R2P is an obligation for states to protect their own populations – with international community assistance, if needed – from genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. However, if a state is unwilling to protect its own population, then R2P accrues to the international community, which must first employ peaceful measures, and then exercise collective action if these measures prove inadequate. At the time of writing of this study, it is unclear whether R2P represents a significant normative shift in a sense that alters state behavior beyond rhetoric. It remains to be seen whether the ideal expressed in the constructivist and English School accounts of the “norm of humanitarian intervention” may yet find realization in R2P.

³⁴³ United Nations General Assembly, “Resolution 60/1: 2005 World Summit Outcome,” (16 September 2005). The term was put forth a few years earlier by the International Commission on State Sovereignty. Later, it was referenced in a Security Council Resolution. “The Responsibility to Protect: Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty,” (Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 2001), <http://www.iciss.ca/report2-en.asp>; United Nations Security Council, “Resolution 1674,” (28 April 2006).

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