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THE PROBLEM OF FAILED OR FAILING STATES in our current international system is like the uninvited guest at a party: the overwhelming impulse is to ignore it, to treat it as insignificant, and to hope it will go away. The horrifying image on global television in October 1993 of the corpses of American soldiers being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu led directly to the withdrawal of American forces from Somalia.[1] It also strengthened convictions within the American military that it should stay out of Bosnia and that it had been right to resist from the beginning intervention into a sure "quagmire."[2] For all the later lamentation about not sending bombers over Vukovar or Dubrovnik in Croatia in 1991 and not intervening in Bosnia in 1992, or the consequences of not intervening in Rwanda in 1994, those who made the decisions still believe they were correct. Similarly, planning for the defense budget pays little attention to funding and preparation for such operations, still labeled dismissively as "humanitarian intervention," "military operations other than war," and "political-military operations."

While many civilian defense officials and military leaders prefer to focus their efforts on force-versus-force combat, few would challenge the thesis that the phenomenon of failed states has become a serious source of global instability and conflict, or even that it accounts for an increasing proportion of the threats to international order. Nonetheless, few—even among the wider group of policy makers and analysts—will extend that thesis very far. It has become a kind of

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conventional wisdom, without much consensus on why the problem exists or what to do about it. The very fact that we have such a concept—"the failed state"—and use it with ease shows how different the new international era is from that before the fall of the Berlin Wall; the lack of agreement on policy, within both civilian and military leaderships, shows how far we have yet to go to accommodate those differences. There has been no better illustration than the dichotomy between the views of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Charles C. Krulak, shared by the Assistant Commandant, General Richard I. Neal, who give these threats star billing, and those of other senior military officers who warn us "not to connect the dots of Rwanda, Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti into the twenty-first century."[3]

The reason for these contradictions is that the phenomenon of failed states challenges a key operating assumption of the current international order. That order is organized around what is called the Westphalian state system, in which the basic elements are autonomous states, actors whose behavior is governed by the norm of *sovereignty*—nonintervention in each other's internal affairs. Failed states represent a collapse of sovereign capacity. Today's international order is also characterized, however, by increasing globalization, which is said to erode sovereignty, making states less important. Yet the consequences of their failure reveal clearly how crucial states remain. Globalization requires states that function—governments capable of giving *sovereign* guarantees, exercising *sovereign* power and responsibility, and controlling their *sovereign* borders.[4]

In addition, the end of the Cold War was said to make the contest over the domestic order of individual countries—we used to ask, is it a "pro-Soviet" or "pro-Western" regime?—less relevant to the exercise of global power, whether by the United States as the sole remaining superpower or by other major powers of the global economy. Instead, national interest and geostrategic criteria of international significance have reasserted themselves. A large number of states whose internal orders and very existences were shaped by Cold War rivalry and superpower competition have lost strategic significance and superpower patronage since 1989–1991. But the withdrawal of interest and resources from countries as different as Somalia, Liberia, Yugoslavia, and Afghanistan was the primary cause—at the least the triggering catalyst—of their collapses. There is a powerful association between internal disintegration, fragmentation, massive civil violence, and the rise of warlordism, on the one hand, and states' lack of strategic significance for major powers and the uncontrolled proliferation of conventional arms since the end of the Cold War, on the other.

At the same time, a new ideology—reminiscent of a colonialist discourse—has emerged that talks of a resurgence of tribalism and unresolved historical (even prehistorical) conflicts and hatreds, as if to remove any sense of external obligation in these conflicts. Failed states are said to be the result of ethnic conflict as opposed to the "old" ideological conflict and thus *clearly* of internal

genesis—having nothing to do with international change and everything to do with cultural particularities about which outsiders can do little.[5]

These paradoxes arise from the way we currently organize the international system and the foreign policy and defense establishments that operate in it. Although reorientation to challenges of the future is a global task, the challenge is greatest for the United States, as the sole superpower in an international system still organized around the power of a hegemon to manage a world organized around *national* interests.

No future challenge demonstrates this problem more clearly than that of failed states and the polarized debate over whether to intervene militarily in such situations. A threat to global order in general, and in particular (through global communications) to the thin moral fabric that underlies order at any level, failed and failing states pose a general danger but not (with the partial exception of an associated outflow of refugees) the kind of specific threat to other nations that appears to be necessary before they will act. The issue poses the classic problem of collective action: how does it occur?

Thus, calls for American intervention, in the role of global guardian, are more frequent than should be necessary, because calls for "someone" to "do something" generally fall on deaf ears. American refusals undermine its global authority far more than the specific instances would seem to warrant, for they reveal that the most powerful nation is indifferent. The system seems to lack the leader it requires. And, while knowledge is available that would support a change, it is ignored; explanations for failed states are by now quite developed, but policy makers appear to consider them largely irrelevant. The threat to international stability and the likelihood that this problem will continue or worsen in the future, if current explanations are correct, ought to create a booming concern for prevention. In fact, however, the substantial early warning and local knowledge now available do not lead to early action. Understanding this disconnect, between our current thinking and where we need to be to address the problem posed by state failure, is the essential first step to policy change.

Identifying the Problem Correctly

The problem of failed states is not the failed states themselves but our lack of preparation for them. To borrow a saying from the old comic strip *Pogo*, "The enemy is us." This lack of preparation can be seen in three "disproportions." The first is between the threat posed by failed states and our perceived interest in the problem. As a result, secondly, there is a disproportion between the resources we commit and are willing to spend on these threats and the response that is needed. Third, there is a sharp disparity between the characteristics of the

threat, the conflict, the context, and the combatants, on the one hand, and what we are prepared—and are preparing—to deal with, on the other.

Disproportion 1: *threat versus perceived interests.* Many dispute the claim that the problem of failed states is increasing. They contend that levels of civil violence and internal conflict have been steady for decades. Others question only the idea that failed states represent an increasing proportion of conflicts seeming to require international response; they point out that the conflicts in Northern Ireland, Cyprus, or between Israel and the Palestinians present no greater external threat than they ever have. But this confuses civil conflict with state failure (although a collapse of governance is likely to provoke civil conflict). Moreover, the focus on the conflict, or failed state, itself prevents us from understanding *why* failed states are a problem. The problem lies in the change in the international environment: the ability of states to govern is much more important to the operation of a globalized order, but we imagine it matters less. Consequently, the danger to international stability is rising even as our interest is declining.

The end of the nuclear stalemate and superpower competition has lifted the restraining mechanisms that kept general equilibrium during the Cold War, but it has left nothing to take their place. At the same time, increasing globalization, interdependence, and transnationalism make international order and stability, and even our national well-being and way of life, increasingly dependent on the capacity of governments to function and of rulers to exercise sovereignty effectively and responsibly. The needs of nonstate actors, such as businesses and banks, as well as the affairs of state and the interests of citizens, depend upon the ability of states to give sovereign guarantees, provide conditions for trade and foreign investment, control borders, prevent proliferation, keep populations sufficiently satisfied to remain at home, and provide such protection of human rights and welfare that humanitarian crises or human rights violations do not provoke citizens in powerful states to demand intervention.

The end of bipolar competition has also reduced dramatically the motivation to use aid and trade as political instruments to obtain allies and keep them in power. One consequence has been that superpower or major-power patrons have withdrawn the foreign financial and military support on which some governments had come to rely for their power and capacity to govern. Dependent more on foreign resources than on a domestic tax base, and more on skills in obtaining foreign resources than on those of winning allegiance at home, controlling factional fights, and generating and collecting tax revenues, such regimes collapse rapidly when external resources disappear. Verbal support has replaced the funds, arms, and bases of legitimacy that had been used to neutralize or coopt other contenders for power, buy domestic support, and distribute the minimal welfare necessary to social equity and to the peaceful resolution of conflicts

provoked by inequalities. One need mention only the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Somalia, Liberia, and Zaire/Congo.[6]

There has been a radical shift in international resource allocation, from buying friends in an ideological and strategic contest to conditioning domestic reform in return for credits in a globalizing economy. But this reform process is guided by an economic neoliberalism that is intentionally reducing the authority and resources of states through policies of liberalization, privatization, budgetary cuts and devolution, and overall fiscal conservatism. The consequences, however, have included increasing regional inequalities and grievances, social polarization and abandonment, and a power vacuum that opens the door to movements for regional autonomy or secession, to alternative elites who aspire to total power through ethnic and nationalist appeals, and to vicious cycles of public protests, police repression by weak governments, communal violence, and local insurgencies. In some cases, the predatory character of rulers who were once protected by Cold War patrons comes home to roost; in others, the delicate balance of social comity and welfare is disturbed, and the speed and thoroughness demanded of reform allows no time to work out new political accommodations. To the countries cited above, one might add Rwanda, Algeria, those of western Africa, and possibly many countries in Asia in the wake of their recent financial crises.

Thus, while some of the causes of state failure may be only transient—withdrawal symptoms of a change in patterns of international resource allocation—others are related to the new order of things and thus foreshadow more occasions for concern. Because the global decline in aid and the changed terms for external resources have been accompanied by an inclination to view foreign state failure as solely a domestic problem, in which outsiders cannot help, and by a disinclination to act early with the aim of prevention, the neglect is reinforced, and one can predict that its frequency will rise.

Disproportion 2: *resource commitments versus need.* What seems to matter about failed states are the consequences: mass violence and atrocities transmitted instantaneously and worldwide on television screens; reports by nongovernmental organizations of famine, starvation, and gross violations of human rights; refugees flooding onto the shores of rich countries or threatening to destabilize surrounding poor ones. It is these external consequences that attract our attention, not the domestic turmoil in failing states alone. They begin to affect us directly only as violations of our moral conscience, refutations of international law and conventions, rejections of the social order needed for trade and investment, or risks to the stability of countries that fall within our strategic purview.

Thus we begin to contemplate action only when a state has already failed and internal violence cannot be managed. That is, we consider intervention in a context wherein (1) there plainly is no sovereign authority, or a contest is raging

over who is sovereign, and (2) the state's legitimate monopoly over the use of force and its ability to enforce its authority and laws are gone, challenged by or abandoned to rival armies, paramilitaries, criminal networks, bandits, or armed street gangs. Social chaos reigns, and dramatic suffering ensues.

Hence we respond in humanitarian rather than political terms, treating the matter as an emergency to be ended quickly, not a political collapse to be reversed, let alone prevented—as a problem to be contained, not solved. Our lack of perceived strategic interest reinforces the inclination to think in terms of disaster relief and of the rules governing such relief—yielding to public pressure to provide charity and save lives protected by international norms, such as humanitarian law, that legitimate intervention.

The disinclination to intervene early thus extends into the intervention itself (when there is one), as a reluctance to violate norms of sovereignty or to exercise political authority. This caution often means further delay, because the obligatory request to intervene, addressed to nominal rulers who do not want to undermine their own authority further by acknowledging their need for assistance, is often rejected, perhaps several times. If intervention finally occurs, it is structured as much as possible in terms of *consent*, so as to reduce the risk of casualties, ensure ease of access, and identify legal responsibility for costs and damages. Even when the Security Council invokes Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter,* thereby affirming that the interests of global security must override sovereignty, intervening powers seek minimal intrusion, doing their best to work with persons they recognize as sovereign authorities and to operate under rules developed for peacekeeping operations.

In contrast to peacekeeping operations or disaster relief, however, the immediate cause of the crisis requiring intervention is a contest among rival factions in which none is likely to prevail. Rules of intervention aimed at protecting sovereignty have the opposite effect, making the interveners participants in that political contest but without the resources, mandate, or intention to influence the outcome. Its peacekeeping rules inappropriate, the intervention tends to resort to improvisation and experimentation. Because such interventions come late in the process of a state's disintegration, they occur only after local factors that might have allowed outsiders to leave after a brief intervention no longer exist. Even when the mission is disaster relief—the short-term provision of food and shelter—or when the mission can be performed by nongovernmental organizations, soldiers are needed, because the failed state can no longer provide security, control the proliferation of weapons, or limit people ready to use them for their own ends.

* From Chapter VII, Article 42: the "Security Council . . . may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security."

The problems of a nonfunctioning state, for both citizens and interveners, are first and foremost the absence of physical security and the collapse of law and order. In the absence of a standing United Nations force or of rapid-reaction forces available to regional organizations, the need for soldiers and their logistics and communications sends the crisis directly to the doors of the very states—the major powers, and above all the United States—who had earlier declined to act on the grounds that troops should be sent only for a vital national interest.

Disproportion 3: *characteristics of failed states versus current preparation.* There is a great disparity between the characteristics of failed states and what potential interveners are organized and prepared (or even preparing) to do. As noted, states, diplomats, international organizations, and militaries need counterparts to deal with—people who are organized as they are, as sovereign powers, with authority and capacity to implement agreements made, operating within a law-bound state apparatus. We look for them by habit, by bureaucratic and statutory rules, and by the wish to preserve consent and minimize the need for coercion. Without such accountable counterparts, intervention risks becoming occupation, assistance gives way to domination, and relief becomes nation building.

The disparity between threat and interest thus translates into a serious operational problem. The counterparts we seek are scarce or nonexistent, while the reluctance to be interventionists remains. The implementation of the Dayton Accords in Bosnia in 1996 and 1997 is an excellent example. The struggle in the first two years focused on getting the parties to "cooperate" on the basis of the agreements they had signed; U.S. officials accused them of "lack of political will" when they did otherwise. Many local politicians had no intention of implementing those parts of the accords with which they did not agree (Bosnian Serb leaders had not even been permitted to sign the accords and thus felt freer to ignore provisions they contested). The longer local politicians delayed in meeting deadlines, the more willing the outsiders managing the implementation became to take on the authority they had originally refused—to dictate, even to impose as legislation, emergency measures to get the process moving. In some cases this was necessary because the state structures and staff needed simply did not exist.

Whether in Bosnia, Somalia, or elsewhere, instead of a hierarchy and some degree of organized command and control, participants find armed men acting for local interests, or for personal vengeance or gain, only partially under the control of people claiming to be leaders, and often shifting alliances for tactical reasons. Those who claim authority may not be able to exercise it, and they may not want to make that inability obvious by attempting to implement commitments they have made. Most problematic for the interveners is that "warlords"— persons whose power derives from the gun—may be seeking to

work with outsiders only in order to legitimate their fragile power—to gain external recognition as the source of domestic authority and as leverage with supporters and against rivals.

This condition is not "tribalism," which as a system of power, according to Max Weber's classic analysis of authority types, is actually based on military organization and success in battle. Truly "tribal" warlords would be easier to deal with than the wide variety of informal, fragile, competitive, and personal relations that in fact abound. Tribal warlords earn leadership, within an elaborate normative code of honor and social obligation, through the test of battle or by inheritance; they do not seek it as a conduit to international resources, or earn loyalty in a nationalistic reaction to international condemnation. The contrast with the conditions of state collapse can even be viewed in those elements that remain of a disintegrating army that still retains its professional identity and codes of behavior, and that can be reconstituted into a professional army if intervention comes quickly.

Too often, in contrast, instead of the hierarchy and earned personal loyalty characteristic of tribal authority, the vacuum of legal authority is filled by claimants to some patch of territory or cache of arms. These figures seek popular allegiance on the basis of the fear and insecurity generated by the absence of reliable authorities, or by appealing to informal bonds of obligation and solidarity in society that are more analogous to kinship groupings. In Somalia, a northern insurgency led to breakdown along regional lines and revival of the reciprocal obligations of segmentary lineages. In the Balkans, after the original breakaway from Yugoslavia of Slovenia and Croatia, competition for territorially based power forced people to choose loyalties and dependence according to individual ethno-national identities. In the Great Lakes region of eastern Africa, conflict on the Zairian-Rwanda border allowed a leader to take advantage of ethnic differences and a regional insurgency to challenge and eventually collapse the Zairian autocracy. In Afghanistan, the vacuum of state power was filled by territorial clans identified by linguistic or religious associations.

Such loose bonds between leader and follower, however, are based fundamentally on reciprocity. They require those who claim power to provide services directly, controlling and channeling such resources as they can obtain from outsiders, or to give permission to loot—a mutual understanding that promotes not the clean lines of command demanded by outsiders but criminal gangs, protection rackets, and local defiance. This reciprocity tends to make power even more personalized and nonaccountable and to deepen anarchy, because for any actor to honor formal regulation over resources would give less scrupulous rivals all the more access to them.

A resort to groupings and older forms of solidarity—in what outsiders call ethnic conflict—also reflects a prior breakdown, or increasing marginalization, of legal norms and of industrial or service-oriented class structures. These

societies are not premodern, as analysts who cite historical hatreds would have it, but the result of rapid urbanization, growing urban unemployment, and a collapse of the middle class under austerity policies aimed at reducing high foreign debt, trade deficits, and inflation—policies that force people to cope through informal and household sectors outside the formal economy. Family-based and local networks of support and loyalty, evoked often through emotive cultural symbols, religious identities, and proselytizing by churches that provide charity, become substitutes for formal welfare and employment. But these identities can become sources of exclusion and conflict when the distribution of resources is at stake; if violence results, the distinctions between soldiers and civilians, and between the battlefield and home front, on which international conventions and norms are based, no longer exist. Intervening forces find themselves immersed in warfare against the population, using attrition tactics, not the soldier-on-soldier battles they know how to assess.

Moreover, it is easy to see such ethnic, religious, linguistic, or clan differences as causes of a conflict when in fact they are only results (and for quite some time a reversible result) of the collapse of formal structures of governance and economic activity. When groups seek outside assistance, as some eventually do, on the basis of those shared loyalties—ethno-national identity, religion, cultural values, memberships in the same "civilization"—tensions and competition can be made much worse. Outsiders, convinced that the violence is being caused by ethnic hatred, begin to treat such differences and presumed hatreds as essences rather than as contingencies produced by alterable conditions. This is especially the case if interveners organize in terms of "enemies" and "victims" and thus take sides; by doing so they harden lines of conflict rather than reinforce instances of cooperation and the capacity for it.

The loss of a state's monopoly on authority to legislate, tax, enforce, and restrict the right to bear arms creates a situation of relative balance in resources, especially arms, and in access to finances for war. Examples are regional control over trade routes and customs posts, as can be seen in Bosnia, and over mineral resources, as in Angola today. (The Angolan case shows that where there are such resources, lucrative financial offers are likely to appear from international businesses who have no scruples about dealing with warlords and who do not condition their payments on certain behavior and reforms, as do the United States and international organizations.) Contrary to the stabilizing effects of balance-of-power interstate relations, the most likely result of this anarchic balance of resources (particularly military ones) domestically is unending war of attrition.[7] The equilibrium result—a negative equilibrium, in economists' terms—is "stable anarchy," in which "all resources would be spent in fighting rather than production." There may be temporary cessations of fighting, but only as battlefield stalemates; internal actors cannot on their own end the fight.

This relative balance also creates layer upon layer of security dilemmas. A spiraling dynamic of mutual fear continues to feed such wars once they begin.[8] To understand the disintegration of Yugoslavia or the Bosnian war, for example, one must recognize that once the federal state lost its authority, each group pressed for its own national rights and claimed to be at risk of exploitation and even extirpation by other groups in the same dissolving state; it became critical that each group was a numerical minority and perceived itself as acting only in defensive ways. Interventions that attempt to remain impartial, delivering food and shelter to all civilians but not intervening politically to stop the spiraling dynamic, thus are likely to perpetuate these perceptions and the stalemate; those that do intervene politically, taking one side but not going to war in support of that side (and thereby resolving the battlefield situation) also perpetuate the conflict, by demonstrating to the other sides that they are indeed endangered and that they cannot safely disarm, psychologically or physically.

Finally, the search for sovereign actors in interventions prevents interveners from taking the fact of "regional security complexes" into account.[9] Three sets of cases illustrate this: Rwanda, Burundi, and Zaire/Congo; Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia; and the former Yugoslavia, where events in Slovenia led directly to Croatia, then to Bosnia, and with new developments now likely in Yugoslavia, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Albania. The domestic conflicts can be exacerbated by neighboring states with transborder minorities they feel compelled to support (as in the military and political involvement of Croatia and Serbia in Bosnia-Herzegovina), or that obstruct the restoration of central governmental capacity because they perceive it as a potential threat to their own sovereignty (as has Pakistan with respect to Afghanistan). The warfare, refugees, and cross-border flows of arms and armies that result from state failure can destabilize an entire region (recall the effect of Rwanda on Burundi, Zaire/Congo, and much of central Africa). Conversely, efforts to restore peace and stability in one state can be hindered by neighboring instability. Intervention in internal conflicts cannot ignore the fact that failing states are likely to be surrounded by insecure or even other failing states, and that power shifts in one state reverberate rapidly in the others. Thus the construction of one stable political order requires a regional strategy.

There are obvious mismatches between all these characteristics and the current training, equipment, and doctrine of the armed forces. Military interventions in such circumstances are not traditional warfare, but they are far more than police actions. The enemies are chaos (meaning a lack of the kind of order we know) and violence—guerrilla warfare, urban violence, small arms, snipers, and terrorism, sometimes involving technologically sophisticated, deadly arsenals, even biological and chemical warfare agents, aircraft, shoulder-launched weapons, and antiaircraft artillery.

External interventions usually seek to protect civilians and aid workers, negotiate cease-fires, and support civilian relief efforts, not to do battle or run a country. Often the best endowed and organized of the agencies in such an effort, the military must nonetheless play a supporting role and accept the inefficiencies, delays, and lack of coordination of the civilian side.

The mandate of soldiers in such conflicts is to be impartial with locals, use minimal force, and give priority to their own protection and at the same time to political relations that will maintain or improve support for their mission at home. They may enter with robust rules of engagement and powerful weapons, but they quickly learn that it is *psychological* robustness that matters, because traditional weapons are not suited to the situation and the home nation demands zero casualties. These rules of intervention, however, risk frustration and accusations of inaction (Madeleine Albright, then the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, once asked General Colin Powell, "What's the point of having this superb military that you're always talking about if we can't use it?") or worse, of immorality in being "impartial."[10] In their effort to end hostilities or to prevent them from resuming, intervening forces talk to any and all factional leaders, risking charges of strengthening villains. Their mission is to do only what a military can do; in fact, however, the primary tasks on the ground are political. Even the criteria for a force's success are highly political, and they are defined by others. The most likely outcome is a stalemate, in which ceasefires last but the political capacity and singular authority necessary to achieve independently sustainable peace are not restored. This means having to stay far longer than intended, which is fraught with dangers of misunderstandings, fatal incidents, charges of (or actual) partiality, the breakdown of resolve, and the appearance of colonialism.

When military forces are sent to help implement a negotiated agreement to end the violence, their mandate is likely to be a vague political compromise. Abhorrence of wars of attrition encourages foreign intervention to stop the killing long before local leaders are ready to concede and reach a genuine agreement. That political reunification of warring factions and local leaders will be possible is not a given, and to move in that direction the military often must do the local work of rebuilding mutual confidence, trust, and command structures. While tactical agreements may make the separation of forces, cantonment of heavy weapons, and initial demobilization relatively simple matters, and while the imbalance of conventional power may strongly favor the intervening military forces, the long-term problem of restoring government is one of internal security. One of the first agencies to collapse in failed states is the police.

Much of the after-action literature on such operations so far emphasizes the crucial role of intelligence and of political savvy. Yet by their very nature such interventions are crisis responses in a locale otherwise considered unimportant. Adequate prior intelligence preparation is unlikely, not because these conflicts

cannot be predicted—they can be—but because of the low priority attached to such states. The skills needed are available only by luck, or only in the reserves, or not at all. Some even argue that the fascination with "revolutions in military affairs" and technologically driven change produces bias against the skills and equipment needed to succeed in these culturally and politically complex conditions.

In contrast to the autonomy, at least at the operational level, of conventional military engagements, these operations require close and clear political direction. Yet these immensely public and politicized operations most often receive political direction that is indecisive, erratic, and contradictory. Political leaders, sending military forces for humanitarian or containment motives, are unprepared for the local political issues in play or the expenditure of resources that is necessary.

To complicate matters even more, the lessons learned from recent operations tie success directly to the flexibility that only delegated leadership on the ground can achieve. A contest between field and capital appears to be an inevitable ingredient, alongside the coordination between military and civilian organizations that still serves as a substitute for combined political and military strategy. The absence of clear political direction at the level of objectives and mission is reinforced by the obligation, for reasons of legitimacy in the post–Cold War environment, to intervene multilaterally. Multinational operations create their own issues of unity of command, interoperability, political direction, and authority—a result in part of the anarchy that also characterizes international relations.

The Challenge to the United States

The effect of these disproportions is particularly acute for the United States. Reluctance to get involved in a preventive mode, including the use of force if necessary, is often a contributing factor to these disasters. The longer one waits as a state fails, the more likely conditions are to deteriorate to the point where military force is required. The United States government emphasizes the need to enhance its capacity for "forward presence" and rapid deployment, but the political considerations necessary to connect that posture and capability to "military operations other than war" are not being addressed. Further, the security problem in a state that has failed tends to entail a long presence. In these scenarios the United States is also emphasizing a greater role for regional powers and organizations, rather than the United Nations, but the United States is the only global power that is a member of most regional organizations. It wants to retreat from global policing, yet most such operations require logistical, communications, and intelligence capabilities that only the United States has.

There is no doubt that the problem of failing and failed states will be a major threat to international security and American leadership in the coming decades.

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

For the armed forces, this prospect appears to leave only two choices: for the military to adapt doctrine, train for these contingencies directly, and be prepared to move early; or for the nation to push harder for prevention. We must understand that the problems presented by failed states can only be stopped by reversing the failure: to seat a sovereign and rebuild state capacity. Once a state has "failed," the United States military may find itself assisting, at public demand but against congressional resistance, in state building as well as providing military governors and occupiers. It will certainly do well to think harder about strategy for such operations, including the integration of military and civilian capacities—an integration that thus far the United States military has resisted. As Barnett Rubin concludes from the case of Afghanistan, "The main lesson is that resolution of conflicts in states that have been failed by the internarional community requires a sustained cooperative effort by that community."[11] Given the demands for warfighting readiness, nearly worldwide operational presence, and force modernization, the United States military should have great interest in whatever economic, social, and political measures can prevent state failures.

Notes

1. A clear analysis can be found in Terrence Lyons and Ahmed I. Samatar, *Somalia: State Collapse, Multilateral Intervention, and Strategies for Political Reconstruction* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1995), pp. 57–60 and passim.

2. Although only a rephrasing of the Weinberger (some would say Nixon) Doctrine, this resistance of the military leadership in 1991–1992 became assoeiated with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell, and was relabeled the Powell Doctrine.

3. Admiral Harold Gehman, address at conference on "The Role of Naval Forces in 21st Century Operations," cosponsored by the International Security Studies Program of The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis of Tufts University, the Office of the Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, and the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Cambridge, Mass., 19–20 November 1997. The views of General Charles C. Krulak were expressed at this same conference. The Assistant Commandant, General Neal, voiced similar views at a January 1997 conference in San Diego; these were adapted as Richard I. Neal [Gen., USMC], "Planning for Tomorrow's Conflicts: A Recipe for Success," *Naval War College Review*, Autumn 1997, pp. 9–16.

4. See Francis M. Deng, Sadikiel Kimaro, Terrence Lyons, Donald Rothchild, and I. William Zartman, *Sovereignty as Responsibility: Conflict Management in Africa* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1996), on this argument that the grant of sovereignty must include responsibility, including to international standards and conventions.

5. The best known are Robert D. Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy," *Atlantic Monthly*, February 1994, pp. 44–76, and his *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), and Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996). But see Chaim Kaufman, "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars," *International Security*, Spring 1996, pp. 136–75, for an even more influential example of this new fad, in which he divides internal conflicts into two categories: Cold War conflicts are ideological, and post–Cold War conflicts are ethnic.

6. The argument for Yugoslavia can be found in Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1995). On Afghanistan, see Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1995), and *The Search for Peace in Afghanistan: From Buffer State to Failed State* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1995). For Somalia, see Lyons and Samatar, and Mohamed Sahnoun, *Somalia: The Missed Opportunities* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace, 1994). The work of Adekeye Adebajo emphasizes this factor for Liberia.

7. David Laitin applies this model from biology and industrial organization to the case of Somalia, in "Somalia: Civil War and International Intervention," forthcoming from the Columbia University Press in a volume edited by Jack Snyder and Robert Jervis on the security dilemma and ending civil wars.

8. See one example in Barry Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," *Survival*, Spring 1993, pp. 27–47.

9. For the concept of a "regional security complex," see Barry Buzan, "Third World Security in Structural and Historical Perspective," in *The Insecurity Dilemma: National Security of Third World States*, ed. Brian L. Job (Boulder, Colo., and London: Lynne Rienner, 1992), pp. 167–90.

10. Cited by Colin Powell in his autobiography, written with Joseph E. Persico, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), p. 576. He adds, "I thought I would have an aneurysm. American GIs were not toy soldiers to be moved around on some sort of global game board."

11. Rubin, p. 145.

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