

Beyond Black Hawk Down: Revisiting U.S. Intervention in Somalia Over a Quarter Century Later

by Chaveso Cook, Joseph McWilliams and Ivan Ivashchenko

October of 2021 marked the 28-year anniversary of the famed Battle of Mogadishu and U.S. intervention in Somalia during Operations Restore Hope and Gothic Serpent. Coinciding with the anniversary was a ceremony where almost 60 special operations troops involved in the battle had their awards upgraded to Silver Stars, the third highest combat award, with four others upgraded to the Distinguished Service Cross. On the heels of closing out the Afghan war, America's so-called "Longest War," U.S. intervention in Somalia can seem so far away. The forces involved originally intended to deploy to Somalia for a non-hazardous, non-violent mission in support of the United Nations (UN), but it certainly became something more.

At the beginning of the mission there was hope surrounding saving lives and replacing a corrupt system of food distribution. The undertaking, therefore, seemed simple. As part of a strategy to quell the civil war and famine that was ravaging the country, there was a need at first to disarm the civilian population. When the focus grew to include the arrest of lieutenants and soldiers of the Somali warlord Mohamed Farrah Aideed, the mission became increasingly thornier and

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special operations-centric in nature. Interagency cooperation became critical. As the deployment wore on underlying feudal politics, the likes of which involved clans that had been pitted against one another for a millennium, resulted in the U.S. Army's largest firefight at that point since Vietnam. After the actions of October 3, 1993, the White House made the decision that "political factors rendered any option other than prompt withdrawal unattainable."¹

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Historian Niall Ferguson places Somalia (as well as Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sudan, Russia and Mexico) in what he termed as the *axis of upheaval*.² These states are plagued by a perfect storm of historical disaster and tumult: ethnic competition, economic difficulties, and empire collapse. The purpose here is to revisit the intervention in Somalia and shed light on the mission by presenting a new analysis of why the U.S. sent troops to Somalia as part of the UN peacekeeping operation. To comprehensively do so, a look at the historical background of Somalia is important, as is delving into UN intervention prior to the advent of American forces. Then, from an international relations perspective, two specific political theories, namely Hegemonic Stability Theory and Ethnic Nationalism Theory, will best explain the root causes for U.S. intervention.

Historical Context

Somalia became an independent nation in 1960, but this was short-lived as "just nine years later a military coup installed Mohammed Siad Barre as president."³ Barre's presidential policies "included jailing, torturing and summarily executing anyone who did not like his radical socialist ideas."⁴ In 1977 Barre invaded Ogaden, a disputed region of Ethiopia populated largely

by ethnic Somalis. At the same time, Barre broke ties with the U.S.S.R. in an attempt to establish his own dominion on the Horn of Africa and, in doing so, obtained military equipment from the U.S., the United Kingdom, and France.⁵ Conflict abounded because of Barre's policies, causing armed resistance movements to fight against Barre's troops for decades.

A full-scale guerrilla war began in 1988. The conflicts "built to a crescendo in July 1989 in the city of Mogadishu, when Barre's death squads slaughtered 450 Muslims demonstrating against the arrest of their leaders."⁶ Barre moved with his staff into the mountains and hid, knowing his days were numbered. After his downfall, the factional fighting to determine who would control the country began with an intense fervor. Somalia also had seen many years of famine that coincided with an ongoing struggle amongst factions and clans, as many other African nations had in the past. With its population brimming on the carrying capacity of the land, hunger and starvation again became key issues. Clan and sub-clan warfare quickly spread across Somalia. Further complicating these matters was the fact that weapons were "readily available to all factions, with weapons worth \$9 billion coming from the U.S.S.R. between 1975 and 1989, and another \$4 billion in arms coming from eighteen countries, including the U.S. and Libya, between 1985 and 1989."⁷

At the onset of the UN's intervention in Somalia there were some successes. UN-sponsored meetings brought in humanitarian aid, set up an arms embargo, and negotiated a ceasefire.⁸ The UN first sent about fifty unarmed observers to Somalia. Civic leaders, clan elders, women's groups, and other factions met for negotiations through UN facilitation. It has even been estimated that 100,000 Somali lives were saved as a result of this outside assistance.⁹ For all intents and purposes, progress was being made. Eventually, however, the interagency effort began crumbling as observers, non-

governmental organization (NGOs), and workers could not safeguard food and other humanitarian aid, so a 500-man Pakistani peace-keeping battalion was brought in. A Civilian-Military Operations Center was also established, allowing for further coordination across NGOs, the Red Cross, local entities, and the UN.

There were many additional negative actions that complicated what became the story on the ground, however. While the UN tried to command and control from New York, relying on local authorities to approve troop movements, Mogadishu and other locales were tumultuous bastions of anarchy. Additionally, retired Admiral Jonathan Howe, appointed Deputy National Security Advisor to President Bush in 1992, was said to largely mishandle his authority as the UN envoy to Somalia.¹⁰ Therefore, the UN effectively became unwieldy and less organized than is ideal to “respond effectively to the swiftly changing, highly volatile situations created by ethnic and regional conflicts” like that which was occurring in Somalia.¹¹ Tragically, twenty-four Pakistani troops were gunned down in June 1993. The passing of Resolution 837 shortly thereafter “had consequences that drew the U.S. directly into Somalia’s civil war.”¹² Despite some initial success, these critical points, among many others, are undoubtedly what brought the U.S. military fully into the mission with ground troops.

The U.S. began operating in Somalia as part of the UN humanitarian mission in 1992. The UN mandate was “to take appropriate action to establish throughout Somalia a secure environment for humanitarian assistance.”¹³ The two main factions were divided by their allegiances; one group supported Ali Mahdi Mohammed and the other supported General Mohammed Farah Aideed. The factions, in their fighting over territory and power, seized control of the humanitarian aid, taking command of food shipments and supplies to the population. At that point it was estimated that 300,000 Somalis

had died from starvation and another four and a half million people were threatened by severe malnutrition.¹⁴ The danger of this mission to UN troops, particularly U.S. service members, was shown later in an After-Action Report by the 10th Mountain Division:

Somalia was a nation divided and torn apart by a civil war. Bandits ruled the major lines of communications. All supply lines were blocked by roadblocks to extort ‘tolls,’ and ambushes were a way of life. Twenty-four hours a day [U.S.] soldiers lived with the threat of being shot at, having a hand grenade thrown at them or receiving indirect-fire attacks.¹⁵

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Somalia became a war zone, utterly disrupting the stability of the region. The neighboring countries, Kenya and Ethiopia, began feeling the effects prior to the UN intervention. Individuals fleeing Somalia ended up in these two countries who were already poverty stricken. The U.S., at the head of the UN intervention forces, invested its time (20 months), effort (24,000 U.S. Armed Forces), and resources (\$240 million in assistance through food and equipment) into the Somali area of operations to build stability.¹⁶ As shown, a host of factors caused both the Somali crisis and the UN involvement.

Theoretical Frameworks

To understand both UN and U.S. involvement in Operation Restore Hope, it is prudent to use the aforementioned historical perspective to inform our theoretical analysis. As theory drives analysis, U.S. involvement in Somalia will be analyzed henceforth through the lenses of Hegemonic Stability Theory (HST) and Ethnic Nationalism Theory (ENT). Two theories are chosen for this analysis because one shows

an external view of Somalia at the international level, and one will show a view of Somalia from the internal level.

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To start, an examination at the strategic level is important. At the strategic level, HST is the lens of choice as it states that a powerful hegemon will facilitate international stability by providing goods necessary to functioning in a non-functioning environment.¹⁷ Hegemons create and finance international organizations to spread their ideals and values throughout the international system and to solidify their grasp on power. Only hegemons can afford to create international organizations because only they can finance them.¹⁸ At the time the U.S. was recognized as a global hegemon, emerging victorious out of the Cold War.

There are a few assumptions associated with this theory. There must be a liberal economic ideology. The focus will be on absolute gains for the individual state (in this case the U.S.).¹⁹ There is a corresponding creation of free riding states balance within the hegemonic system. Free riding states are those that thrive off the much more arduous work of the other states without putting in as much as they take out (in this case Somalia).²⁰ The beneficiary and benefactor relationship are lucrative for both. Not only do the smaller states thrive, but the hegemon is able to maintain the status quo which in turn enables it to retain the dominant status.²¹

A complementary analysis can be shown through ENT, which looks at the sub-systemic variables that play into a nation's actions and inner workings.²² As Kaufman, Parker, and

Field state, "the sub-systemic lens suggests that international relations is best understood as the consequence of choice."²³ The actors amongst the states can create a level of cooperation, disjunctiveness, and can sway the beliefs and actions of the people in a myriad of ways. These beliefs, especially nationalism, "affect their choice in the international system."²⁴ Particularly, the ethnic component of this theory comes about when the nationalistic upheaval focuses individuals in on their particular background, clan, or group. Ethnic nationalism, as defined by Brown, is loyalty to an ethnic group through color, language, religion, region, or tribe.²⁵

Within ENT there are three subordinate theories; conflictual modernization, primordialism, and constructivism.²⁶ Conflictual modernizationists argue that increased competition due to modern economic developments cause greater ethnic strife and violence.²⁷ Unlike conflictual modernists, primordialists focus on an individual's self worth and ethnic or national association, regardless of economic status or political affiliations.²⁸ Lastly, constructivists believe conflict arises from arbitrary creation of ethnic identities.²⁹

Along with the key concepts of these theories are the four areas of underlying causes for internal conflict; structural factors, economic/social factors, cultural/perceptual factors, and political factors, which were all very prominent in Somalia.³⁰ Structural factors consist of organizational weakened states, both too similar or too varied ethnic geography, and/or intra-state security concerns. Political factors consist of instances of elite politics, inter-group politics, discriminatory political institutions, or exclusionary national ideologies. Economic social factors come in the form of economic problems, discriminatory economic systems, and varied economic development and modernization. The last, cultural/perceptual factors, consists of problematic group histories and patterns of cultural discrimination.³¹

HST holds that hegemony provides order similar to a central government in the international system, thereby reducing anarchy deterring aggression. As ENT states that international relations is best understood from the consequences of choices, a perspective of ethnocentrism looks at the sub systemic variables that play into a nation's inner workings. Tying HST and ENT together in this case, Somalia's inner workings brewed anarchy and aggression. Interestingly, support needed from the UN (HST) further spurred clan warfare over that very UN assistance (ENT).

Theoretical Analysis

Hegemonic Stability Theory

To start with HST it must be established that the U.S. was indeed a political hegemony in the early 1990s. To do so, a look at the distraught situation in Somalia at the time and a comparison to the U.S. will shed some light. Aideed had gained an overpowering hand and had “stormed into the power vacuum, leading a coalition of thugs called the Somali National Alliance... pillaging [UN] humanitarian aid and selling it off for a profit, while cold-bloodedly murdering any and all who tried to interfere and stop him.”³² Somalia was a war zone; the people were starving, while those in control were overseeing the starvation, the malnourished population was further ravaged at the hands of the clansmen.

The U.S., on the other hand, was coming off a key victory along with coalition forces in the Middle East during Desert Storm. The U.S. had been the leader on the ground, committing more than 500,000 troops in the Persian Gulf War, while the non-U.S. coalition forces equaled roughly 160,000, or 24 percent, of all forces.³³ This action, coupled with the fall of the U.S.S.R. at the end of the 1980s, put America at the forefront of all hegemons.

The U.S. was also experiencing a high upswing economically, having the largest

unified surplus as a percent of GDP in years as the surplus [was] projected to be 2.5 percent of the GDP—the largest surplus as a ratio to the GDP since 1948.³⁴ UN intervention was the only way that the Somali people would have a viable chance at getting food. In turn, placing the U.S. at the head of the UN multinational force placed the focus on bringing order to the city of Mogadishu and the surrounding country of Somalia. The U.S.'s ability to deliver a public good as the leader of the UN's intervention force following Resolution 837 further highlights its hegemonic status within the parameters of HST theory.³⁵

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Made famous in the movie *Black Hawk Down* and the book by the same name by author Mark Bowden, the U.S. went to Somalia in July 1992 as part of Operation Restore Hope to reinstate international stability. After the UN presence in Somalia led to little disarmament and a myriad of attacks on the UN and its delegates, “the U.S. [became] the primary actor in the humanitarian and peace enforcement mission undertaken by the UN in Somalia.”³⁶ By September 1992 “it [became] clear that conditions were rapidly deteriorating in Somalia and that security for the relief convoys had become critical, requiring a larger force than had originally been anticipated.”³⁷ The U.S. took up the better part of “an extended manhunt to capture General Aideed for his alleged role in masterminding the June 5th ambush of 24 Pakistani [UN] peacekeepers.”³⁸ The U.S. mix of Task Force Ranger - comprising 10th Mountain Division Infantrymen, 3rd Ranger Battalion Rangers, Special Forces team members, select

Delta operators and Navy SEALs – were the primary force on the ground in Somalia and were in charge of the UN humanitarian/peacekeeping mission.

There is no question that the U.S. deployed for a humanitarian mission to Somalia as part of the UN. The question becomes much more interesting when deciding whether or not it was to restore stability in the international arena. Doherty reported that “U.S. forces [had to] forcibly disarm the warring gangs, who made it nearly impossible for relief organizations to operate.”³⁹ The warring gangs had caused instability, but only locally. Despite this fact, any instability in the Horn of Africa, with its proximity to the shipping lanes of the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea which lead to the Suez Canal, as well as diplomatic ties to Kenya and Ethiopia, would force the hand of the U.S., as the hegemon, to stand in to bring about order.

Ethnic Nationalism Theory (ENT) states that if ethnic discrimination was happening in Somalia circa 1993, then ethnic conflict was bound to ensue.

Somalia had no large ties in trade to other countries, was not a major export of any significant goods, and was in the middle of more or less a civil war type conflict festered by its own independence thirty years prior. But, by being a country in a situation that could not help itself, it caused increased regional instability as the refugees and starving peoples either died or boiled over into Kenya and Ethiopia. These countries already had their own starvation problems, and bad would have turned worse if not for U.S. intervention.⁴⁰ The Somali situation also became an increasing interagency and international issue when Aideed began to interfere and control the UN shipments of aid to the people in crisis. Somalians began to believe that the U.S. would restore order, as Randall

notes that reporting at the time stated that “U.S. troops are in Somalia to deliver food, but many Somalis expect them to rebuild a nation.”⁴¹

As the single hegemonic power in the international community, the U.S. deployed its forces to maintain liberal stability in the international system. As noted by Gilpin, a “hegemon must be able and willing to respond quickly to threats to the system.”⁴² The U.S., after Somali attacks on UN workers became commonplace, decided to become the prime defender of humanitarianism and bring back social order to the grief stricken country, which shows the U.S. in hegemonic light. America responded quickly, bringing the forces to bear that would allow a return to both local and international stability.

Ethnic Nationalism Theory

Ethnic Nationalism Theory ENT states that if ethnic discrimination was happening in Somalia circa 1993, then ethnic conflict was bound to ensue. Brown states that “Somalia [had] been riven by clan warfare and a competition for power between and among local warlords.”⁴³ This tearing was between the clashing clansmen, who were of kin but separated themselves through ethnic nationalism. The clansmen were separated by their affiliation with a tribe, or in this particular case, clan. The clansmen were trying to control who was getting the food, and by doing so were practicing discrimination against their own countrymen.⁴⁴ This ethnic discrimination was brewing well before UN forces came to give aid, but once the aid arrived the discrimination turned to an unthinkable level.

Parts of the country were under the control of clan members, while in “the rest of the country, other armed men held sway-warlords jostling for position, bandits trying to make one last haul, bodyguards earning a final payday by betraying the people who had hired them for protection.”⁴⁵ These clansmen had been warring since the fall of Barre and his government. The

warring was over everything, from control of the government, to use of land, to who had weapons and who did not.⁴⁶ The constant war and turmoil in Somalia had been a mark of many African countries. The state was weak, and, as Brown puts it, “if the state is weak or if it is expected to be weak the incentives for groups to make independent military preparations grow.”⁴⁷ The conflict that ravaged the country had all but torn Somalia apart.

Lastly, ENT states that ethnic conflict rises from discrimination. Discrimination continues to be a key issue in Somalia to this day. Somalia, as many African nations, has arbitrary lines for borders drawn during colonial times. These arbitrary lines cut across tribes and groups, causing much of today’s conflict. However, Brown states that “Somalia [was] the most ethnically homogeneous states in Africa.”⁴⁸ This homogeneity did slow the clashing of clansmen, as Somalia was highly broken down into clan regions.⁴⁹ These regions feverishly wanted to control the country after Barre’s fall. After extreme famine caught the eyes of the international community the warring clans sought to control the food and international aid. It was one way that the factions felt they could bring control in their country.

Ethnic conflict withered the country as the different clans started to discriminate based on what clans were aligned with. ENT states that “ethnic groups that [are] oppressed [begin] to assert themselves;” this was the case as the oppressed clans who were discriminated against got into a myriad of conflicts and skirmishes in Somalia in early 1991, 1992, and 1993.⁵⁰ Ethnic discrimination caused ethnic conflict. Moreover, such violence over resources reflects the conflictual modernization sub theory of ENT.

A Note on Operation Gothic Serpent

Gothic Serpent was a specific segment of Operation Resort Hope that garnered the most attention due to the special operations lore of

the mission as well as Mark Bowden’s book that was made into a Ridley Scott movie of the same name. While it may be controversial, it should be noted that the mission that day was not to capture Aidid - Task Force Ranger’s mission on October 3-4 was focused on capturing several of his lieutenants and they did just that. The military objective set forth for Gothic Serpent was achieved, as 20 members of Aidid’s faction were taken into custody. Bowden himself stated that “in strictly military terms, Mogadishu was a success.”⁵¹

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Without a doubt the loss of life and number of critically wounded in such a short amount of time, alongside an abducted pilot and pictures of U.S. service members being drug through the streets, could not be perceived as any sort of military victory. However, when looked at objectively even with the tactical and political failures overlaid, the objectives of the mission itself were completed under harrowing circumstances. This is ultimately indicative of the resolve, perseverance, and spirit of the special operations community and other U.S. forces on the ground.

Somalia Today and Tomorrow

Present day Somalia carries with it many of the challenges it held prior to U.S. intervention, yet it has found a semblance of stability in several key areas. Whereas violent extremists are rampant, there has been a purposeful shift towards intra-state building in the last two decades. As a recognition of this shift and in efforts to assist as much as possible, the U.S. currently provides over \$100 million in total foreign aid to Somalia.⁵²

Over two decades after intervention the U.S. government officially recognized the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) in its current configuration and has subsequently been supportive of the Somali government's efforts to be inclusive of its federal member states.⁵³ Specifically, the U.S. fully supported the FGS position of constitutionally recognizing Somaliland and Puntland as autonomous member states. Currently there are six Federal Member States within Somalia – Puntland State of Somalia, Jubaland, Galmudug, Southwest State, Hirshabelle, and Somaliland.⁵⁴ Recognizing these areas helps distinguish and legitimize how much of both clan history and current political discourse will always be interwoven.

Furthermore, each state has used a level of cooperation between violent actors and regional elites to control these areas through the rule of law and political order.⁵⁵ These movements towards internal state building began prior to U.S. intervention but have progressed to their current configuration within the last decade or so. The U.S. relationship between all key players involved represents a significant change in the U.S. approach to Somalia since Operation Restore Hope.

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Despite progress in certain areas of governance, violent extremist organizations remain a key threat to Somalia that must be addressed. The specific aftermath of Operation Gothic Serpent had a profound effect on U.S. foreign policy both regionally and on the global stage. Commonly known as *Somalia Syndrome*, it refers to the U.S. approach to international intervention in the immediate aftermath of Gothic Serpent and for the remainder of the

Clinton administration.⁵⁶ Following the U.S. withdrawal from the then stateless country, violent extremists began to consolidate power and take control.⁵⁷ *Al Itihaad Al Islamiya* was especially notorious, becoming a significant threat in the region and claiming responsibility for several attacks in East Africa. The group's dissolution and the dispersion of their leadership led to the eventual formation of *Al-Shabaab* (AS).⁵⁸

At present AS is the leading violent extremist organization in Somalia. AS, meaning “The Youth”, seeks to control territory within Somalia to establish a society based on Shariah law. Since the late 2000s, AS has had close ties to Al Qaeda (AQ), specifically Al Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM, or AQ in North Africa). Although based in Somalia, AS also conducts attacks in neighboring countries; one of their most notable attacks occurred in 2013 at the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya. Whereas clan leaders like Aidid and Ali Mahdi were interested in asserting their clan interests and gaining power, AS, in contrast, promotes extremist anti-Western ideology. AS also has a political arm like what is seen with Hezbollah in Lebanon (though Hezbollah is Shiite based and Iranian backed). As a direct response to AS the FGS, with the assistance of African Union Mission in Somalia and local forces, have continued to make significant progress against AS.⁵⁹ Additionally, U.S. military forces are advising and assisting Somali National Army soldiers while they conduct operations to continue to combat AS. This cooperation is essential in securing the future of FGS and Somalia as a whole.

A major lesson of Operation Restore Hope, and of the Balkan conflicts that followed, is that humanitarian and refugee crises cannot be compartmentalized from their political causes. The international community can assist in two major ways: by separating big-picture concerns over “the war on terror” from Somalia's domestic struggle for national reconciliation by fighting

AS specifically, and by persuading neighboring Ethiopia and Eritrea to refrain from interfering in the conflict. In the end, there are certain circles that present an overall assessment that “countless lives were saved [because of U.S. intervention], and that violence and disorder was lessened to an extent that allowed for the possibility of [future] political reconciliation” as well as many of the current successes listed above.⁶⁰

Lastly, any discussion of Somalia surely includes a broader look at the Horn of Africa and the tasks placed on our U.S. military organizations responsible today, United States Africa Command, Special Operations Command Africa, and Combined-Joint Task Force Horn of Africa based in Camp Lemonier, Djibouti. Furthermore, the Horn of Africa cannot be unlinked from the Arabian Peninsula and the connective ‘twin-like’ nature between Somalia and Yemen. Actions, be it progress, regression, or stagnation, will inevitably have multiplicative effects across both of these countries (and the aforementioned military organizations in the region) for a number of reasons.

First, neither Somalia or Yemen has been left to their own devices in modern history and it has been argued that foreign elements have always attempted to advance their own interests rather than that of Somalis. Second, a continuous air of corruption abounds, which is fueled (and in many ways funded) by an addiction to the amphetamine khat. Third, both governments are dominated by tribal and clan-based structures that preserve history via oral traditions that adhere to toxic narratives about other ethnic groups. Additionally, the rule of law is generally superseded by this tribal or clan social and political order, which leads to a zealous defense of tribal honor even if that means forfeiting their countries’ interests. Fourth, each have their own religious extremist groups and separatist movements who claim self-determination. And finally, both Somalia and Yemen have considerable natural resources

(though they remain two of the poorest nations in the world). Undoubtedly, none of these effects make the future seem bright.

Final Thoughts

Given the debate about the close out of operations in Afghanistan, the actions Russia has taken in Ukraine, and the ever present threat of China in the Indo-Pacific (and beyond), there have been many calls to review U.S. involvement on the global stage. Dire situations, like mass starvation or ethnic conflict that may spillover to genocide, are conditions that are less likely to occur if creating stable and sustainable institutions remains a priority of the U.S., the UN, and ultimately other world leaders. Additionally, any intervention operations anywhere in the world “should not be undertaken without the reasonable expectation of firm political backing, stable field leadership, and accountability in the coordinating organization.”⁶¹ Leaders must commit and have staying power while conducting actions that are also limited in time, scope, and proportionality. In each case, creative, holistic, and preventative measures must become the answer to difficult realities like those seen in Somalia.

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Poole states that “the overall cost came to 32 killed in action, 172 wounded and \$1.3 billion spent through 30 June 1994.”⁶² He further concludes that the overall efforts in Somalia “succeeded as a short-term humanitarian mission but then failed as an attempt at nation-building and as an international venture in peace enforcement.”⁶³ Certainly, the experience of

actions and operations in Somalia will likely continue to cast a long shadow due to the infamous October 3rd Battle of Mogadishu. Witnessing what many assess as imprecision and drift amongst U.S. and UN efforts, the objective in Somalia could be seen in retrospect as a constantly shifting target. However, in hindsight it is also believable that the complexities on the ground among all peoples, uniformed or not, were just a Somalian version of Churchill's famed riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.⁶⁴

Through an analysis of Operations Restore Hope and the background factors involved in Somalia since its independence in 1960, ENT explains most of the problems Somalia faced as a nation. In concert, HST also explains why international intervention was needed. The ethnic conflict, caused by the warring clans discriminating against each other through resource distribution, was the initiator of the international help. The food crisis which led to starvation further heightened the rift along the long existing clan fault lines. As the crisis worsened, ethnic and clan interference in the international supply of aid brought on the necessity for international intervention. In effect, the aspects of ENT paved a path for U.S. intervention in line with HST.

According to political scientist Kenneth Menkhaus, Somalia is "by far the longest-running instance of state collapse in the post-colonial era."⁶⁵ Surely, American and even international policy may not completely change the fate of Somalia. However, aid, regional policy, and, if needed, intervention could "put regional partners, such as Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti, on a path to improved security, substantial counter-terrorist capabilities, and new economic development."⁶⁶ The sacrifices just over a quarter century ago in Somalia were surely heavy, but their efforts continue to lay the foundation for the region's future. **IAJ**

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