

U.N. policy makes Somalia a hell on Earth

by Joseph Brewda

Beginning on June 12, a United Nations task force led by special U.S. units began bombing ammunition stores and a radio station of "warlord" Gen. Mohammed Farah Aideed in Mogadishu, Somalia. The following day, U.N. troops fired into a crowd of demonstrators protesting the assault, killing at least 20, including several children. By June 17, Italian U.N. forces had occupied Aideed's headquarters, from which he had apparently managed to escape at the last moment, and intense military action was under way to apprehend him.

Somalia was occupied by some 35,000 U.S. troops in December 1992, nominally in order to restore order and supply food to the civil war- and drought-ravaged land. In May, the U.N. formally began peacekeeping operations to replace the U.S. troops. The latest military assault has shut down all relief operations; a dramatic near-term decline in protein intake and health is now expected.

In their first official comments on the assault, U.N. Undersecretary General Kofi Annan reported on June 12 that the U.N. was determined to "restore security in Mogadishu." General Aideed, it is claimed, was responsible for the ambush and death of 22 Pakistani U.N. soldiers the week before—a claim he has denied. Aideed's radio station was putting out anti-U.N. propaganda, it was also said, and the U.N. was considering arresting him. Annan said he hoped that the action would "send a message worldwide" that the "United Nations is not going to take this lying down and that criminal elements can no longer hide." The U.N. envoy to Somalia, retired U.S. Adm. Jonathan Howe, later added that "the goal of this operation is to disarm the city of Mogadishu."

President Bill Clinton put out much the same line that day. "Last night's actions were essential to send a clear message to armed gangs," he intoned, and claimed that it was

intended "to strengthen the effectiveness of U.N. peacekeeping in Somalia and around the world." "The world thanks them and all other U.N. forces in Somalia for their service, for striking a blow against lawlessness and killing," he added. The British and French governments, meanwhile, remained unusually quiet, although the press in both countries applauded the bombings as a necessary, if belated action. On June 15, the London *Financial Times* opined that the reason for the situation is that "American troops were not ordered to disarm Somalia's lawless militias" earlier.

But while such pronouncements were being made, much of the world was contrasting the action with the unwillingness of any of the world's military powers to "send a clear message to the armed gangs" of Serbia who are continuing to kill, maim, and rape Bosnians in the worst instance of genocide since World War II. Part of the reason for that differing approach, of course, is that Britain and France, both permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, are sponsors of the Serbian regime, as is Russia. Indeed, it was then-U.S. Secretary of State James Baker who gave Serbia the go-ahead for its invasion of Croatia in the fall of 1991. During his 1990 election campaign, Clinton had called for breaking with President George Bush's policy, and for lifting the arms embargo against Bosnia, and as recently as this past March, he threatened to bomb Serbia. He has since capitulated to Anglo-French demands that nothing be done to stop their geopolitical ally.

War against the South

Although all the thinking behind the assault on the Somali population is not yet clear, it is obvious that at least one included purpose is to signal that the North-South war begun by the U.N. war on Iraq is continuing. Moreover, the savage contrast between Somalia and Bosnia is intended to drive the

Islamic world in particular into suicidal responses, which will be used to justify the extermination of non-white populations throughout the world.

As with the U.N. war against Iraq, the new actions against Somalia are intended to establish a number of legal and political precedents for future imperial use.

● *The right to intervene.* One precedent sought for is simply to give the U.N. Security Council the right to intervene militarily in formally sovereign states based on the pretext of human rights violations or whatever else they might chose. "Will Somalia mission enshrine 'U.N. right to interfere?'" was how the British government's semi-official press agency Reuters put it back in December 1992, when the intervention first started. "The U.S.-led mission to Somalia could prove a milestone in establishing the international community's 'right to interfere' in conflicts around the globe," it stated.

Alluding to such objectives, General Aideed denounced the U.N. on June 14 as an "instrument of oppression," and called for an emergency meeting of its Security Council to "review the totalitarian motives of the United Nations and its troops." The U.N., he said, "disregards the dignity of the Somali people and the sovereignty of their country."

● *Establishing U.N. protectorates.* Associated with this right to intervene is a U.N. effort to reimpose outright protectorates on formerly sovereign states. That the Great Powers were intent on restoring protectorates in Africa was already clear back in December 1991, when *Washington Times* columnist Bruce Fein called for their restoration under the pretext of assisting the war-ravaged Horn of Africa. "Who would shed even crocodile tears," he wrote, "if [U.N.] Security Council troops were deployed to quell domestic conflagrations in Ethiopia and Sudan and then rule them according to trusteeship agreements similar to those concluded under the U.N. international trusteeship system?"

A June 15 London *Financial Times* editorial, commenting on the situation in Somalia, made clear that that is the policy. It called for "taking the country under a temporary U.N. trusteeship" to prevent further chaos. The day before, Aideed told Cable News Network that the reason for the action was that the Americans wanted "to put our country in a trusteeship, to administer everything."

● *Establishing a U.N. army.* Yet another objective is to provide a justification for the creation of a U.N. army or rapid deployment force, as had been called for by French President François Mitterrand in his address before the U.N. in January 1992.

As the U.N. action in Somalia was proceeding, the U.N. was being denounced by representatives of the Great Powers—but only for having been ill-prepared for the policing operations. Speaking to the New York Council on Foreign Relations on June 11—one day prior to the bombing—U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Madeleine Albright called for a complete reorganization of U.N. military capabilities. U.N. peacekeeping, she said, was "programmed amateurism" with

a "near absence of contingency planning, a lack of centralized command and control, and lift operations, cobbled together on a wing and prayer." U.N. troops "are hastily recruited, ill-equipped, and often unprepared."

The U.N. action marks the first offensive use of "peacekeeping troops" in its history; other U.N. military actions were not carried out by such troops. Peacekeeping troops are only authorized to use force when attacked. This transformation of the role of these troops, expressly contrary to the U.N. Charter, is part of the project of establishing a U.N. army.

But who destroyed Somalia?

Contrary to the lies peddled in the European press, the destruction of Somalia by famine and civil war is the direct responsibility of the United States, Britain, France, and the U.N., and not any of the "war-lords," including Aideed, who at most are mere pawns.

The destruction of Somalia is the direct result of actions taken in 1990 by western governments to pull the plug on then-Somali President Siad Barre, who had ruled the country for 20 years but who had displeased the northern powers by his repeated efforts to block International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditionalities on his country. His effort to build such needed projects as the Baardheere Dam was harshly condemned. Complaining of "human rights" abuses, the powers cut off all aid in 1989. Under IMF dictate, Somalia was paying 48% of its export earnings to debt service that year; it had devalued its currency by 460%, also under IMF demand. This is a country where, before the war, life expectancy was only 48 years, and infant mortality was among the highest in the world.

By January 1991, the effects of such usurious measures had sufficiently weakened Barre that he was overthrown by the Italian-based United Somali Congress after a bitter fight. Simultaneous with the overthrow, the U.N. picked up and left Somalia, as did all the various human rights and relief agencies.

Although Barre had been ousted, bands of competing military units—all funded out of Italy, Britain, and Washington—continued to wreak devastation. It was obvious that, unlike other coups, these powers did not want any one faction to take over the government, but rather desired continuing chaos. Beginning in the summer of 1991, a bitter clan and sub-clan war broke out between the forces of General Aideed and current nominal Somali President Ali Mahdi Mohammed, as well as between other clans.

Already by December 1991, *EIR* and many other organizations were warning that Somalia faced a famine of huge proportions; but the U.N. and the northern powers did nothing. It is difficult not to conclude that the U.N. and the permanent members of the Security Council deliberately helped to create the catastrophe in order to have a pretext for declaring sovereignty passé.