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Southern Sudan - the Four Theses

by Thomas Talley

On January 9th, 2011, in accordance with the terms of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed between the Government of the Republic of Sudan and the secessionist Sudan People's Liberation Army/ Sudan People's Liberation Movement, the citizens of southern Sudan are to vote in a referendum to determine the future status of Southern Sudan: either union with the rest of Sudan or independence. The issue is not the outcome - most observers acknowledge the vote will be overwhelmingly in favor of independence. What is at issue is whether or not the outcome will be respected: will Sudan experience a fair and amicable divorce, or will there be war. Given that the last war left around two million dead and four million displaced, and that a new round of fighting is also likely to impact most of the nine countries bordering Sudan, this is hardly an academic debate.

This paper is not about the likelihood of war in Southern Sudan – it is about the likelihood of *U.S. involvement* in a war in Southern Sudan. As with many other interested observers, I have been following the development of Southern Sudan's upcoming referendum with great interest, and increasingly, with a degree of alarm. I believe that current discussions and analysis of the situation in Southern Sudan are missing three key elements:

1. A full appreciation of why the Government of Sudan has no choice but to fight – and, most disturbing, why they assess that they will 'win.' I intend to show that the Government of Sudan has good reason to believe that it will win *simply by fighting* – for them, victory is not defined by what happens on the battlefield (win or lose). It is the height of the obvious to suggest that we should understand the Government of Sudan's perspective. And yet, this is precisely what appears to be missing, given that the U.S. Government's approach to date has focused almost solely on providing incentives – essentially, the U.S. has been trying to buy the Government of Sudan's cooperation for an amicable divorce.

Bottom line: for the Government of Sudan, it is NOT (all) about the oil revenue!

2. The Southern Sudanese appear to be misreading the nature of U.S. commitment. The Southern Sudanese are expected to vote for independence in their upcoming referendum – based upon a belief that the U.S. is committed to their *cause*. This is not entirely correct: the U.S. commitment is to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, an agreement which we helped broker. U.S. commitment is better understood as a commitment to a *process*, less so to a specific, pre-determined *outcome*, and much less than to a *cause*. This distinction explains the length that the U.S. will go to support the *process*, and the limits it will impose upon itself in pursuing any particular *outcome*. The U.S. may believe that a specific outcome is likely, and even that it *should* occur, but our commitment to the process precludes us from manipulating the results. Here is a thought worth considering: since the U.S. strategy is focused on *process*, but not on achieving a specific, desired *outcome*, then it isn't really a *strategy*.

Bottom line: advocates of the *cause* are about to get really disappointed!

3. The flurry of activity related to supporting the *process* has blinded many Americans to the reality that there is a lack of strategic analysis guiding U.S. involvement. What is missing are the more critical analyses, such as an effort to extrapolate the likely outcome of U.S. intervention, to analyze the costs associated with that intervention, and to assess the risks to our national interests – and there are many. U.S. involvement has been driven almost entirely by an advocacy community that is insisting that the U.S. *do something*. In response, the U.S. helped broker a peace process which we are now committed to ensuring runs its course. The problem is what happens when you combine the need to *do something* with a focus on *process*, vice *outcome*. This leads to trying to find the ‘biggest bang for the cheapest buck.’ In and of itself, this is not a bad thing; but if that is all you are seen as willing to commit, it suggests a rather shallow commitment.

Bottom line: half-hearted half-measures are likely to embolden the Government of Sudan, impoverish the Government of Southern Sudan, and result in significant and far-reaching costs to U.S. geo-strategic interests throughout Africa.

This paper will examine each of the three elements in greater detail. In doing so, I will argue the following four theses:

I. There will be a war in Sudan – in early 2011.

II. The U.S. will be involved.

III. Southern Sudan – the side the U.S. is supporting - will NOT win.

IV. The costs to U.S. geo-strategic interests throughout Africa will be high, profound, and far-reaching

These four theses should awaken a sense of urgency and immediacy: the U.S. Government has reached a critical decision point. In effect, the President of the United States has been led to the proverbial cliff’s edge. Advocates for U.S. intervention in the coming conflict are clamoring for him to “jump, jump, jump.” But, to continue to analogy, now that the President is standing at the edge and can see the depth and breadth of the chasm, caution and common sense weigh in, and he experiences that creeping realization that things aren’t as easy and straight-forward as he has been led to believe. And so he begins to ask “is this really a good idea,” and “are there any other viable options?” I can only hope that this paper helps answer either question.

Before I discuss the courses of action, I think it is helpful to keep the following thoughts in mind. The ability to exercise an option (also referred to in this paper as a *course of action*) is defined by two characteristics – leverage and time. Leverage is best understood as the ability to employ the elements of national power – be it diplomatic, informational, military, or economic. Time is best understood as *timing* the employment of said elements of national power. What is so often forgotten in discussions about options, or course of action, is that *the enemy has a vote*. One’s ability to exercise an option does not preclude an opponent from exercising their own option – but it can limit the range of available options, and mitigate the effects of whichever course of action the enemy chooses.

In the case of a likely future conflict in Southern Sudan, the U.S. holds considerable leverage – much more so than any other external actor. However, there is only a little amount of time remaining for the U.S. to actually use that leverage. Specifically, that leverage permits the

U.S. to make a decision to pursue one of three courses of action (COA). These three courses of action are:

COA 1. Insist that Sudan allow the referendum to occur, and demand that the results of the referendum be honored. This course of action is the official U.S. policy. It is precisely because this is the official U.S. policy that I believe each of the four aforementioned theses will play out in turn. I believe that *continuing with this course of action is less a decision than an example of indecision* – it reflects a willingness to step aside and let bureaucratic inertia continue until it pulls you off the cliff.

But knowing that COA 1 is the official U.S. policy should not preclude us from recognizing that there are other options. The remaining two options are:

COA 2. Demand the process renders a predetermined outcome of confederation (i.e., nominal unity, but greater autonomy for southern Sudan). This COA promises to avoid war; but that is a false promise – it will simply delay war a little longer. **War will come because there are important actors on both sides of the conflict who want, and need, a war.** When the war does come, the U.S. leverage will be significantly weakened, but its stake will be increased. The leverage will be lost because the U.S. will have sacrificed its credibility as a guarantor of a political process it helped broker, and the stake will have increased because the U.S. will be seen as having walked away from its commitments. At best, this course of action offers the illusion that the U.S. can continue to avoid being dragged into a war in Sudan.

COA 3. Opt for a ‘Game-changer;’ change the rules, play by a different game. This is the only COA that offers a chance to:

- a) develop, articulate, resource, and execute a strategy that focuses on achieving a desired *outcome*, rather than simply adhering to a *process*;
- b) determine the timing, tempo, and nature of any armed conflict, and
- c) be in a position to set the conditions that will allow U.S. to establish a fair and just peace, post bellum.

This paper intends to be *predictive* – by discussing the three elements that I believe to be missing from the current discussions and analysis, I intend to show where the official U.S. policy (COA 1) is leading us. Accordingly, this paper will not elaborate further on the other two courses of action. Stated another way, this paper will discuss what *will be*, whereas the other courses of action offer insight into what *could be*, or even what *should be*. Those discussions are conversations for a different audience.

Understanding the Nature of the Conflict

Any strategic discussion about the conflict in Southern Sudan is obliged to begin by acknowledging the complexity of the situation – the long history; the multitude of key actors and their often unsavory deeds; the real injustices and the imagined slights that pass unabated from one generation to the next; the emotional, physical, and psychological scars that will never heal; the power and resonance of the fabricated myths; the regional implications and the global dimensions of the struggle. Each of these are worthy of further study. But they are not germane to the likelihood of U.S. involvement in a war in Southern Sudan. It is best to get past the

perfunctory genuflection to complexity quickly, so as to focus on the three questions most relevant to the United States:

1. Where do you start from - in order to understand the U.S. role in the conflict?
2. What does the mental map of the conflict look like?
3. How is the United States perceived by the main actors?

The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement - The Starting Point for Understanding the U.S. Role

Even before Sudan first gained its independence, in 1956, a separatist insurgency has existed in Southern Sudan. The root causes of this struggle – economic marginalization and political disenfranchisement – have never been adequately resolved. Twice this insurgency has boiled over into all-out civil war. The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was the result of an international effort aimed at ending the period of conflict known as the Second Sudanese Civil War, a conflict which lasted from 1983 – 2005. The CPA was signed between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M). Given that the root causes were the same, this conflict was really just a continuation of the First Sudanese Civil War (1955 – 1973). However, unlike the first iteration, the Second Sudanese Civil War featured considerable regional support for the opposing belligerents. In effect, the Second Sudanese Civil War was as much an interstate war by proxy as it was an intrastate conflict.

The CPA provided for a level of autonomy for Southern Sudan (with a regional capital in Juba), and established the framework for a government of national unity (located in the country's capital, Khartoum). The CPA succeeded in all these respects. But like so many other well-intentioned efforts, the CPA carried the seeds of its own destruction – a 'poison pill.' In this case, the 'poison pill' is a key provision of the CPA that sets a date for Southern Sudan to hold a referendum on its future status – full union within Sudan, albeit with considerable autonomy, or independence. According to the terms of the CPA, the referendum was set to be held six years to the day following the signing of the CPA. Since the CPA was signed on January 9th, 2005; the referendum is set for January 9th, 2011.

And why is the CPA so important to understanding the United States' role? Because it is the 'tie that binds' the U.S. to whatever happens next (in Sudan)! The U.S. played a considerable role in helping broker the CPA – in the eyes of the world, the U.S. *owns* the peace process.

What is critically important for us to understand is that *what the CPA meant to the United States in 2004 is significantly different than what it means to the United States in 2010*. In 2004, the United States used its leverage to force two otherwise intractable foes to come to the peace table. The resulting peace agreement allowed the Bush administration to claim a victory – it stopped a war without having to use military force! But we fail to see that our success was less about our *leverage* and more about our *timing*. Exhausted and facing continual stalemate, the belligerents saw the CPA as a way out of an un-winnable situation – a way out that provided the time and space to establish new, more favorable conditions.

As an aside, we should appreciate that the CPA is a great example of conflict resolution via incremental steps: stop fighting now, start by working together on the small things, and then,

later, tackle (together) the big issues. Unfortunately, incremental approaches rarely work. The inability to actually achieve a lasting solution usually fractures the parties that were party to the agreement, more extremist groups emerge, the stakes continue to raise, and the tensions continue to build. Which is where we are now, vis-à-vis Southern Sudan.

In a glaring case of only seeing what you want to see, many observers choose to see the CPA as a means to build the trust and forge the ties that would help usher in an era of peace and unity, whereas the belligerents saw it as an opportunity to 'kick the can down the road.' As everyone knows, if '*defer a decision*' is presented as a viable option, it will almost always be the choice that is selected. That the Government of Sudan and the SPLA saw the CPA in this light has become all-too apparent. In 2004, the U.S. could claim the CPA as a foreign policy achievement because it stopped a war. In 2010, the U.S. is rightfully concerned that the (referenda promised by the) CPA will be the *casus belli* for a renewal of that same war; only one which may pull in the United States.

The Mental Map of the Conflict

In recent years, the Government of Sudan has fought insurgencies based in the south, east, and west; and is contending with significant social unrest in the north. Between 2004 and 2006, the Government of Sudan has signed three separate peace agreements – with the insurgency movements in the South, East, and West; the CPA being only one of the three.¹ The CPA was the first (9 Jan 2005). Almost immediately afterwards, the Government of Sudan focused on resolving the conflicts in the East and the West. The Darfur Peace Agreement was signed on May 5th, 2006, and the Eastern States Peace Agreement was signed on June 19th, 2006. While it appears that the Government of Sudan is dedicated to peace, one could also draw the conclusion that the Government of Sudan has been 'clearing its plate' in preparation for the 'big one.' After all, it is amazing how the prospect of losing one-third of your country – and 80% of your oil wealth² – focuses one's attention!

It is this very fact – that the Government of Sudan has had to wage campaigns against multiple, distinct insurgencies – that highlights how the conventional wisdom about the conflict in Sudan is wrong; it is not about North versus South! A more accurate mental map of the conflict would think of Sudan as a corrupt, oppressive center at war with its periphery in each cardinal direction. But even then, the mental map is incomplete. This is because none of the insurgencies have ever been monolithic – each were formed by different ethnic groups who often have little common cause save to fight against the central government. The only saving grace, if

¹ Signing of the CPA, on January 9th, 2005, marked the commencement of implementation activities for eight other agreements, or protocols, that were previously agreed upon. These include: *The Machakos Protocol* (or Chapter I), signed in Machakos, Kenya on 20 July 2002, which was an agreement on broad principles of government and governance. *The Protocol on Power Sharing* (or Chapter II), signed in Naivasha, Kenya on 26 May 2004. *The Agreement on Wealth Sharing* (or Chapter III), signed in Naivasha, Kenya on 7 January 2004. *The Protocol on the Resolution of the Conflict in Abyei Area* (or Chapter IV), signed in Naivasha, Kenya on 26 May 2004. *The Protocol on the Resolution of the Conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States* (or Chapter V), signed in Naivasha, Kenya on 26 May 2004. *The Agreement on Security Arrangements* (or Chapter VI), signed in Naivasha, Kenya on 25 September 2003. *The Permanent Ceasefire and Security Arrangements Implementation Modalities and Appendices* (or Annexure I), signed in Naivasha, Kenya on 30 October 2004. *The Implementation Modalities and Global Implementation Matrix and Appendices* (or Annexure II), signed in Naivasha, Kenya on 31 December 2004. Source: Wikipedia. Accessed 28 Sep 2010, at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comprehensive_Peace_Agreement.

² By practically all reporting, 80-82% of Sudan's proven oil reserves are in the South.

you are trying to figure out how to keep Sudan intact, is that while each of the four groups along the periphery are pulling away from the center, none are pulling towards one of the other neighboring states.

The Incredible, Shrinking Perception of the U.S.

I have already discussed how the CPA meant something different to the U.S. in 2004 than it does in 2010. In the same vein, we need to keep foremost in our minds that the world of 2011 looked a great deal different in 2004 – when the CPA was negotiated³ – than it does in 2010.

Most importantly, the apparent strength of the U.S., and its perceived ability to intervene forcefully in foreign affairs, is considerably less in 2010 than in 2005. The two most obvious examples of a relative decline in U.S. fortunes are the recession that struck in 2008, and the fact that the U.S. is still engaged in two land wars in Southwest Asia.

But the perception of the decline of the U.S. position in the world is perhaps more telling when one considers two other trends. The first is the 'Rise of China.' The generally-accepted perception is that China's rise is occurring at the expense of the United States. This perception holds fast despite the fact that U.S. economic and political policies have encouraged and facilitated China's rise. The second is the perceived reversal of the 'freedom agenda' throughout the world in the past five years. Consider the case of the 'color revolutions:' the Rose Revolution (Georgia, 2003) was followed in short order by the Orange Revolution (Ukraine, 2004), then the Tulip Revolution (Kyrgyzstan), the Cedar Revolution (Lebanon), and even a so-called Blue Revolution (a women's suffrage movement in Kuwait), all in 2005. Several commentators even tried to refer to the Iraqi legislative election in 2005 as the Purple Revolution, referring to the ink-stained fingers of the voters, but the term did not catch on. Subsequent political upheaval in Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, and the Ukraine, the West's restrained reaction to the Russia-Georgia War of 2008, and the current lack of a government in Iraq would certainly cause one to wonder if the euphoria was perhaps a bit premature, and that there is 'less there than meets the eye.'

Why is this important? Because people make decisions based on their perceptions, and a situation can only be understood within the broader context. In the minds of decision-makers in Khartoum, the U.S. and its foreign policy agenda seemed to be 'on the roll' in 2004, so it made sense to agree to U.S. demands – and the U.S. was demanding participation in the peace agreements. By 2010, the U.S. seems far less threatening – in no small part because the U.S. seems far less likely to engage in foreign adventures. It is precisely this mix of history and perception that explains where we are today.

The First Thesis: Why there will be war in Sudan - in early 2011

The Road to War

On January 9th, 2011, in accordance with the CPA, Southern Sudan is scheduled to hold a referendum on whether to remain an autonomous part of Sudan, or to declare its independence. All reporting agrees that the vote will be overwhelming in favor of independence. But the outcome is less important than the legitimacy of the vote. Since the signing of the CPA in 2005,

³ As noted in previous footnote, six of eight protocols were signed in 2004.

the Government of Sudan has successfully employed stall tactics,⁴ to such a degree that *it is now doubtful if a legitimate referendum could even be held, let alone by January 9th, 2011*. In December 2009, with only a year until the referendum date, the Government of National Unity in Khartoum passed the law setting the terms for the referendum. Consider these three points:

1) A Referendum Electoral Commission would be established and charged with administering the referendum. This Commission was not even agreed upon until June, 2010 –less than six months before the election.

2) By law, all Sudanese refugee communities have to be afforded the opportunity to vote – this would include the Sudanese refugee community in the United States; and the voting rolls were to be set ninety days out – October 9th, 2010. *In effect, time doesn't run out on January 9th, 2011 - it runs out three months sooner!*

3) The outcome will be determined by 50% plus 1, *provided* that greater than sixty percent (60%) of registered voters actually vote. This caveat has led to the unlikely effect of Southern Sudanese leaders encouraging their citizens not to register if they believe it is likely they will not vote!

The finer points of the law are actually less important. There are two principal obstacles to holding a referendum. *First*, the voting rolls have not been established. *Secondly*, border demarcation has not occurred. What does this mean? In simplest terms, no one knows who is eligible to vote, and, should the vote be for independence, there are no agreed-upon boundaries for the new state.

Given the delaying tactics employed to date, the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS), is convinced that the Government of Sudan will neither graciously accept the results nor will it enter into serious negotiations aimed at implementing a peaceful separation (this statement should not come as a surprise to anyone). Lacking a real partner in moving the peace process forward, the GOSS will not wait for the problems to be resolved in a mutually-agreed upon manner. On 9 January 2011, the GoSS will engineer its own vote, and should be expected to issue a unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) in the days shortly thereafter.

The Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS), will take this action under the impression that the U.S. will immediately recognize their independence and will offer full support – politically, economically, militarily – to their *cause*. The GoSS will reach this conclusion given the very public and official nature of the U.S. Government commitment to the CPA, and given the considerable level of existing U.S. Government support to building the government and civil society of southern Sudan.

So far, the situation appears rather straight-forward. Promised a referendum, the people of Southern Sudan will engineer a vote and act on its outcome. So where does the fighting figure in? It'll happen in the middle, in the region known as Abyei. The Abyei region suffers from three misfortunes:

- 1) It lies right in the middle of northern and southern Sudan.
- 2) It possesses the majority of Sudan's proven oil reserves.
- 3) The CPA didn't do Abyei any favors.⁵

⁴ Source: Sudan Tribune online article: 'NCP's strategies to derail the referenda,' by Zechariah Manyok Biar, `3 Sep 2010. Accessed at www.sudantribune.com, accessed on 13 Sep 2010

⁵ The CPA addressed Abyei in Chapter IV: The Resolution of the Abyei Conflict, signed at Naivasha, Kenya, 26 May 2004.

This last misfortune is most profound. The CPA defines the region "...as the area of the nine Ngok Dinka chiefdoms that were transferred to Kordofan in 1905."⁶ But its legal residents include both the Ngok Dinka and the nomadic Arab Misseriya tribes who retain the right to graze cattle and move across Abyei. The Ngok Dinka are culturally linked to the south, while the Misseriya are linked to the north. The equal status of both groups is further reinforced by the revenue sharing protocols which give each group 2% of the net oil revenues. The citizens of Abyei were given equal status in the North and the South, and allowed local self-rule. But the real tragedy is that the citizens of Abyei are to vote in their own referendum, also to be held on January 9th, 2011 – either to retain their special administrative status in the north, or join the southern state of Bahr el Ghazal. On the surface, it sounds great: Abyei is the lovely prize, courted by two suitors. In reality, Abyei is torn between two minds, unable to make a clear decision, and is therefore all the more likely to be ravaged by both.

The Government of Sudan will act decisively; Arab Misseriya have been flowing into the region, and the Government's conventional military forces are deploying near the border – understand that this is already happening.⁷ We can expect the Government of Sudan to engineer a crisis – cries of alarm that the rights of the Misseriya to vote are being impeded will be answered by the conventional military forces entering Abyei. These forces will seize control of the oilfields in the Abyei region ('to protect them from terrorists') – with the intent of establishing 'facts on the ground' prior to a later border demarcation.

The presence of Sudanese armed forces in Abyei will exacerbate the existing social and ethnic tensions in Abyei, and will trigger open conflict between northern and southern Sudanese. We should expect this action by the Government of Sudan to occur near the end of December – neatly timed to occur *prior to the referendum*, and *during the holiday season*, when the U.S. won't be paying too much attention.

We should not expect the armed forces of the Government of Sudan to proceed beyond Abyei. They will neither march on Juba, the capital of Southern Sudan, nor attempt to occupy additional territory. As the borders have not been demarcated, the Government of Sudan will be able to legitimately claim that they are simply protecting their sovereign territory. To do so would be both unnecessary and foolhardy; by limiting their advance to the oilfields, and not beyond, they inflict a crippling blow on the South – without actually having to deploy forces into Southern Sudan.

A second-order effect would be the flow of refugees into Southern Sudan, delivering a further blow to an already weak economy. There could actually be two distinct population sources of refugees flowing southward. The first would be the Ngok Dinka people who live in Abyei; they would be fleeing the fighting. The second group could be the Southern Sudanese who are already living in the North; in their case, they could be driven southward by a spiteful Government of Sudan. Their case – how and why they came to live in the North, bears further study.

From 1983 to 1991, the SPLA benefited from secure safe areas in Ethiopia. Mengistu Haile Mariam, the Ethiopian dictator, offered this support as a counterweight to Sudan's support

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Source: Online article, 'Sudan's North-South Border Areas tense, Militarized, ICG Says, by Alan Boswell and Maram Mazen, accessed at: <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2010-09-02/sudan-s-north-south-border-areas-tense-militarized-icg-says.html>; accessed on 1 Oct 2010.

for the Eritrean and Tigrean separatists he was fighting. However, when Mengistu and his military junta were overthrown, the victors promptly drove the SPLA out of Ethiopia. The SPLA, trained to live off the land, did exactly that. Unfortunately, their predatory tactics were directed towards the population of southern Sudan. This was bad. What happened next was much, much worse. Soon after being driven back into southern Sudan, the SPLA split into ethnic factions – principally between the Dinka and the Nuer.⁸ Rooted in ancient ethnic rivalries, the fighting was fierce and merciless. Thousands died from the fighting, and many more died from starvation and disease. The Government of Sudan saw an opportunity and made common cause with the Nuer, all too happy to encourage the Dinka and Nuer to kill themselves off. By some accounts, over a million Southerners fled north, to Khartoum, to escape the fighting between the Nuer and the Dinka. To appreciate the scale of that mass movement, understand that one million refugees is greater than one out of every eight Southern Sudanese. Three thoughts should spring to mind:

- 1) According to the terms of the CPA, these Southerners living in the ‘North’ have the right to vote in the referendum. That in itself is problematic, if not unlikely. And if they were afforded the opportunity to vote, should we really presuppose that they are inclined to vote *for* secession, since they fled *from* the fighting between the SPLA factions?
- 2) An equally great concern is that these refugees might be forcibly repatriated – driven southward – should the South vote to secede.
- 3) What does it say about the security and stability in Southern Sudan, let alone the legitimacy of the Government of Southern Sudan, when over a million people have already ‘voted with their feet’ – and never returned home?

Are we unaware that these people represent the best possible defense for the Government of Sudan against charges that it is oppressing the Southerners? After all, if that were true, why haven’t these refugees returned home already? The open fighting between the Dinka and the Nuer ended in 1994, but the social, political, and economic tensions between the two peoples are very real, and are apt to boil up at the most inopportune moment.⁹ In Africa, as with much of the rest of the world, the end of one war is often less a resolution of a conflict than the starting point for the next one.

Why Sudan will Fight - it has no choice, and will win even if it loses

This is the area of critical analysis I believe to be most lacking in the current discussions: we fail to understand that loss of the South poses three separate, existential threats to the regime in Khartoum. Understanding the nature of these threats explains why the recent U.S. overtures to Sudan were rebuffed outright, and why Sudan will go to war (by seizing Abyei and the oilfields).^{10,11} The importance of understanding the nature of these three threats cannot be

⁸ Peterson, Scott. *Me Against My Brother: At War in Somalia, Sudan, and Rwanda, Edition 1*. Read Chapter Twelve, ‘The False Messiah,’ for a heartbreaking account of this Dinka-Nuer civil war in the early 1990s.

⁹ On Monday, 13 Sep 2010, The Sudan Tribune, an online news source on Sudan that is based in France, published an ‘*Open letter to President Kiir from Ruweng/Panaruu Community on marginalization.*’ The seventeen-page letter was from the Dinka minority in a Nuer-majority state – complaining of a litany abuses suffered at the hands of the Nuer majority and, by extension, the SPLM/A; abuses that include injustice, political exclusion, economic marginalization, and no government support for local claims about border demarcation (i.e., what lands should be kept within the south.’)

¹⁰ Source: Voice of America article, ‘*US Offers Sudan New Incentives For Peace Deals,*’ unaccredited article, with information provided by AP and Reuters. 14 Sep 2010. Article accessed at <http://blogs.voanews.com/breaking-news/2010/09/14/US-offers-sudan-new-incentives-for-peace-deals/>, accessed 14 Sep 2010

understated, particularly because all current international efforts at preventing conflict continue to be fixated on a single issue – revenue sharing (of the oil wealth). This fixation on the oil wealth has prevented us from understanding the nature of the regime, and why it will fight!

Existential Threat #1. It isn't about the money - it's about the monopoly

Everyone intuitively understands that the Government of Sudan is able to control practically every facet of civil life due to its complete control over the oil revenue. But the issue isn't the money – it's the monopoly. This monopoly allows the state to be seen as the provider of the population's demands – and it provides the means to suppress dissent. The Government of Sudan views this as a zero-sum game. If their degree of control lessens, relative to those they've been suppressing – even if they were to gain more revenue due to the lifting of sanctions – then the survival of the regime is at stake. This cannot be overstated: *for autocratic regimes, focused on retaining control over their population, there is no such thing as a win-win situation; if anyone else gains, then by default, they lose.*

Those who point to the elaborate revenue sharing protocols in the CPA¹² as evidence that the Government of Sudan is not exercising a monopoly are either unaware of what is going on, or are being deliberately misleading. In truth, there is a significant lack of transparency in the process. It is one thing to say that the Government of Southern Sudan is entitled to 42% of the oil revenue – but if the Government of Sudan is not forthcoming in accurately reporting how much oil is being sold, then how does anyone know if they are getting their fair share? The obvious answer is that they don't. By one account, the Government of Southern Sudan has been underpaid by as much as \$700 million since the CPA was signed.¹³

Existential Threat #2. It's not just about the south...it's about the whole country

The Government of Sudan is dominated by a self-defined group known as Nile River Valley Arabs. Ethnically, they are Nubians, ancestors of the great Nubian civilizations of the past. But they have become Arab-ized to the point that they see themselves as Arabs. In the Arabic-Islamic culture, if your father is an Arab, then you are considered to be an Arab, regardless of how you look.^{14,15} Equally important, Arabic culture is extremely racist; in the Arab worldview, because Mohammed was an Arab, and the Koran was recited in Arabic, Arabs consider themselves to be better than others. Accordingly, the Nile River Valley Arabs

¹¹ Source: Article, 'Sudan rejects US referendum incentives,' Yahoo News, 15 Sep 2010. Article accessed at: <http://news.yahoo.com>, accessed on 15 Sep 2010

¹² The greatest problem regarding discussion about Sudan's oil wealth has been the lack of transparency – the Government of Southern Sudan really had no idea how much oil is being, or has been, pumped out, and how much that oil was selling for. Keep in mind that the CPA already established a revenue sharing formula for Sudan's oil wealth. Regarding oil that is pumped out of Abyei, the Government of Sudan gets 50%, the Government of Southern Sudan gets 42%, and the remaining eight percent is divided equally between the two state governments of Bahr el Ghazal and Western Kordofan, and the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya peoples. Source: Chapter IV, The resolution of the Abyei Conflict, Comprehensive Peace Agreement, signed at Naivasha, Kenya, 26 May 2004. Revenue sharing formula is addressed in sections 1.2.3 and again in section 3.1

¹³ Online Article: "Global Witness stands by findings on Sudanese oil data," Accessed on 20 Sep 2010, at: http://www.globalwitness.org/media_library_detail.php/1040/en/global_witness_stands_by_findings_on_sudanese_oil_

¹⁴ Source: Transcript of interview with Sudanese scholar Albaquir Mukhtar on the conflict in Sudan, Thursday, December 8, 2005. U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum Speaker Series. Interview accessed online at: <http://www.USHMM.org/genocide/analysis/details.php?content=2005-12-08>; accessed on: 22 Sep 2010.

¹⁵ The same belief system also holds that, if the father is a Muslim, then the children are, too. U.S. President Barack Obama frequently encounters this bias.

constructed a belief system that justifies their right to rule: They believe that their fathers are Arabs, and the mothers are African; in this manner, they explain away their appearance and genetic features.

Chauvinism is one thing, deliberate policies of marginalization and oppression are quite another.

Loss of Southern Sudan would serve as an example and motivation to other resistance/separatist movements throughout the country – in the West, in the East, and in the North. But, by fighting against the separatist movement in Southern Sudan, particularly if the GoSS is backed by the U.S. and other powers, the Government of Sudan is able to send a clear, ominous message to the rest of the country: “we are willing to fight the world – and since you don’t have international support like Southern Sudan, think how much worse it’ll be for you if you cross us.” In fact, in a perverse logic, fighting the U.S. gives Sudan even greater credibility: “we’re so tough that only the U.S. can take us on.”

Existential Threat #3. It’s not about self-determination...it’s about Islamic ideology

This last threat is perhaps the most important, because it speaks to the internal threat to the regime. Loss of the South, and Abyei in particular, would threaten the government's sense of identity – as the legitimate government of a sovereign *Islamic* country. Ceding the south to a Christian/animist population would be seen as accepting a limit on the *Dar al-Islam*¹⁶ – the House of Islam. In effect, it would be like saying "we accept that Islam extends this far, and no farther." The regime would immediately be castigated for the greatest act of perfidy – a betrayal of Islam. This action would immediately de-legitimize the government – throughout the entirety of the Islamic world – even in the eyes of moderates. It would certainly antagonize and radicalize the fundamentalist population of Sudan who would then pose an immediate, internal threat to the regime. A thought to consider: everybody loves the underdog; so choosing to fight a fight where defeat is a foregone conclusion isn’t always a poor choice. When you fight for a religious belief and lose, you are a martyr. *And the only thing that people love more than underdogs are martyrs!*

The critical point is that the Government of Sudan believes that it will win, provided it fights. Even if their forces lose on the battlefield, and Abyei joins the South to form a new country, the Government of Sudan will still be able to claim a victory – the resulting peace negotiations will only serve to reinforce their monopoly as their legitimate right, they will continue to retain control over the rest of the country, and the Government's claim of religious legitimacy will be greatly enhanced for having valiantly defended the *Dar al-Islam*. Since the Government of Sudan has no choice but to fight, and it assesses that it will emerge stronger, regardless of whether or not it retains the South, **there will be war.**

How Perceptions of the likelihood of U.S. intervention impact the Road to War

The most disturbing piece of analysis I offer is my conclusion that *both governments will assess the likelihood of US armed intervention, and they will arrive at completely different conclusions!* This is important because militarily, Southern Sudan is no match for Sudan – this

¹⁶Dar el-Islam is the concept within Islam that teaches that all territory once conquered in Allah's name must be ultimately restored to the House of Islam. The rest of the pagan world yet to be exposed, or to submit to Islam is called Dar el-Harb; or lands outside the conquered House of Islam.

assessment is universally shared. The only variable that allows Southern Sudan to even have a chance in military conflict with the government of Sudan is the degree of external support that Southern Sudan can draw upon.¹⁷ The Government of Sudan will act under the assumption that the likelihood of armed US intervention on the scale necessary to reverse conditions (in Abyei) is low, while the Government of Southern Sudan will act under the assumption that the likelihood of armed US intervention is high.

The Second Thesis will explain why the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) believes the U.S. will intervene on their behalf; and they are right. The Third Thesis will explain why the Government of Sudan believes U.S. armed intervention is both unlikely in the near term, and irrelevant in the mid- to long-term; and they are right, too.

The Second Thesis: Why the U.S. will be involved

Let's be clear, the U.S. is already involved - the U.S. is deeply committed to building a civil society and governance capability in Southern Sudan. This thesis will explain why the U.S. will be a party to the conflict. This is *NOT* an argument *for* U.S. involvement in the conflict – it is an explanation *for why* continued U.S. involvement is assured.

Four Critical Elements necessary for US Involvement

US involvement in foreign conflicts is never a straight-forward affair. Textbook concepts about vital national interests and ‘red-lines’ brief well; but, history is littered with instances of significant exceptions to every ‘rule;’ nowhere is this more accurate than in what are known as wars of choice. Accordingly, it is worth looking beyond simplistic formulas to what really drives the US to war. In the end, it all comes down to a strong, persistent advocacy, and an opportunity. I argue that there are four critical elements necessary to assure US involvement. I will explain each element, and then illustrate how it is currently at play, agitating for a continuation of and an increase in U.S. involvement in Southern Sudan. The four critical elements are:

1. An argument *for* intervention,
2. An argument *against* non-intervention,
3. An advocacy group - to make the arguments for intervention and against non-intervention, and
4. Enough time, in terms of the US presidential cycle, to intervene.

Arguments for intervention must proceed along two parallel, mutually reinforcing, tracks:

- a. There must be a rational justification, Usually expressed in terms of U.S. national interests and previous commitments (i.e., *sunk costs*), and
- b. the conflict has to be *personalized*.

Americans don't fight for cold logical reasons; they have to be *swayed* or have their wrath aroused. The Sinking of the Maine, the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, and the terrorist attacks on 9/11 aroused the wrath of the American people. U.S. intervention in Somalia, Bosnia, and

¹⁷ From 1983 to 1991, Ethiopia was the chief sponsor for the SPLA, providing secure safe areas. Under Ethiopian tutelage, the SPLA grew into a 110,000 man force. By 1994, Uganda had assumed the leading role of sponsor for the SPLA, covertly serving as a conduit for arms and supplies. Source: *Me Against My Brother*, page 203.

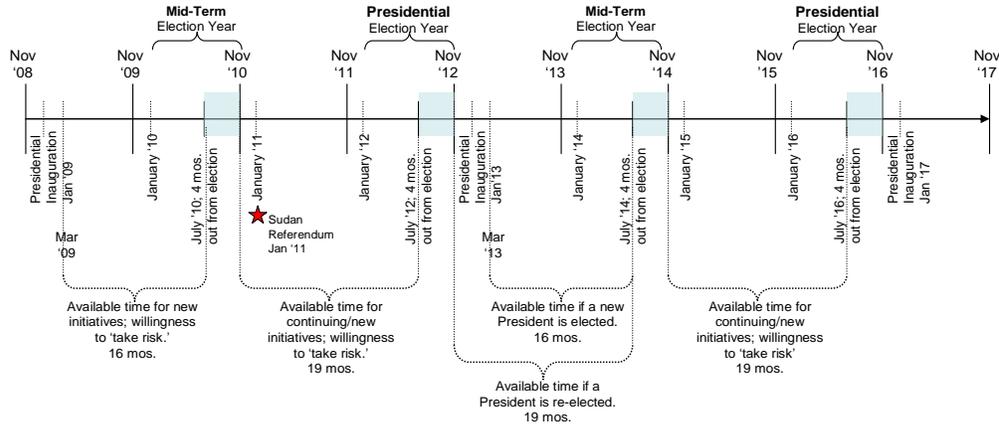
Iraq are all instances when Americans were *swayed* to support intervention. In each case, the American people were swayed because the cause was *personalized* - Americans intervened because of appeals to our values - our sense of justice, our sense of moral courage (doing what is right, simply because it is the right thing to do), and our sense of insecurity, as was the case in Iraq.

Arguments *against* non-intervention are those that characterize non-intervention as a rejection of American values. This is done principally by *ad hominem* attacks – attacking the character of anyone who argues against intervention. More broadly, these arguments equate a willingness to avoid intervention as evidence of cowardice and moral shortcoming – a willingness to tolerate evil, and a willingness to accept limitations on America’s ability to be a meaningful force for good in the world.

The third element, the critical role of the advocates, cannot be understated. They must be vocal, persistent, and must shape and refine their arguments in order to appeal to a broad cross-section of the American political spectrum. Their arguments *for* and *against* are particularly effective when they are able to reduce the enemy leader or enemy leadership to a caricature of evil – thereby de-legitimizing their rule and, by extension, legitimizing intervention. Likewise, it is critically important that they focus less on the rational arguments and more on the irrational – they must make Americans feel a personal stake in the necessity of the conflict and its desired outcome.

The fourth element – Time – refers to the concept of a *Washington clock*. Most readers tend to dismiss this expression as a cliché. In fact, the concept refers to a very real set of political realities that must be understood by all engaged American citizens. This concept explains the willingness of a Presidential administration to undertake new initiatives, or to continue with risky ones – and it is well-understood by foreign observers of American behavior (which, basically means the rest of the world). The *Washington clock* isn't a clock at all – it's a calendar. But perhaps the most disturbing concept of the *Washington clock* is that it is so much better understood by non-Americans than it is by Americans. Here is the *Washington clock*:

The Washington clock



All Presidential terms are bracketed by periods in which little to no risky activity is undertaken – the time it takes at the beginning of a new administration to ‘gain traction’ – never less than two months after Inauguration – and never within four months of a Presidential or mid-term elections. The initial period at the beginning of an administration is consumed by the need to gain Senate confirmation for key Cabinet heads and other top federal government positions. The back side of the bracket begins in July of an election year – 4 months out from an election, a ‘lock-down’ mentality takes hold. No new initiatives are launched, and everything centers around a single-minded effort at producing ‘successes’ and in crafting and executing a media campaign to ensure that that storyline/narrative takes hold amongst voters.

It is within these brackets that significant political activity occurs – there is little to no likelihood of gaining political support outside of these timeframes – and just as little likelihood of gaining support for new initiatives that run too close to the right margins of these timeframes. And what is true for domestic politics is even more so for foreign policy. But the greatest burden is for military operations conducted in support of that foreign policy: military operations have to be not simply established but well-underway, *and* shown to be successful within these timeframes.

The Four Critical Elements – driving US Involvement in Southern Sudan

Critical Element #1. The Arguments for Intervention.

The *rational* arguments for intervention are usually expressed in terms of US national interests. Consider this paragraph, from the 2010 National Security Strategy:

In Sudan, which has been marred by violent conflict for decades, the United States remains committed to working with the international community to support implementation of outstanding elements of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and ensure that the referendum on the future of Southern Sudan in 2011 happens on time and that its results are respected. In addition, we will continue to engage in the efforts necessary to support peace and stability after the referendum, and continue to work to secure peace, dignity, and accountability in Darfur.¹⁸

Consider for a moment just how profound it is that this paragraph resides in the U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS). If you were unaware that the U.S. played a key role in bringing the warring parties together, this paragraph would strike you as something coming from 'out of the blue.' But the fact is that the U.S. *did* play a critical role in bringing the warring parties to the peace table. This paragraph speaks to a commitment to *follow through* with our previous efforts. What this paragraph does not speak to is what our reaction will be should the referendum not occur, or the results not respected...what is missing is the "Or else" statement. The NSS isn't exactly vague on this subject, though; you just have to know where to look. In the Preface, signed by President Barack Obama, we find these telling lines:

We (the U.S.) will strengthen international norms that protect these rights, and create space and support for those who resist repression. ...And we reject the notion that lasting security and prosperity can be found by turning away from universal rights ... our support for universal rights is both fundamental to American leadership and a source of our strength in the world.

Further on in the Preface we find a clear-eyed appreciation of exactly what the price must be paid in, to stand up for the principles we espouse:

We have also...spilled American blood in foreign lands - not to build an empire, but to shape a world in which more individuals and nations could determine their own destiny, and live with the peace and dignity that they deserve.¹⁹

Rational justifications in terms of previous commitments are not just found in official documents – those messages are also carried by the advocacy group, as we see in this quote:

Regular readers know I was not a fan of President George W. Bush. But one of his signal accomplishments, against all odds, was a 2005 peace agreement that ended the last round of that war (Sudan). That agreement provided for a referendum next January in which southern Sudan can choose secession.²⁰

The *irrational* arguments for intervention are personalized – they appeal to our values – our sense of justice, and our sense of moral courage. It is also noteworthy how chauvinistic these appeals can be: 'Only America has the courage to act, irrespective of the cost, to prevent untold suffering.' This next quote is clearly written in that vein:

Sudan's on-and-off north-south civil war could resume soon. How bad could it be? Well, the last iteration of that war lasted about 20 years and killed some two million people. Mr. Obama's former head of national intelligence, Dennis Blair, warned this

¹⁸ US National Security Strategy, May 2010, The White House, page 48.

¹⁹ Ibid., pages ii - iii.

²⁰ Nicholas D. Kristof, 'Obama's Failure in Sudan,' New York Times Op-Ed, 28 Aug 2010. Accessed 28 Aug 2010 at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/29/opinion/29kristof.html>

year that the place facing the greatest risk of genocide or mass killing is southern Sudan.²¹

Critical Element #2. The Arguments against non-Intervention.

There are plenty of bogus reasons for criticizing Mr. Obama's foreign policy, but this is a legitimate one. And in a place like Sudan, American diplomatic malpractice could lead to hundreds of thousands of deaths.²²

This particular quote neatly captures the idea that a willingness to avoid intervention is akin to cowardice and moral shortcoming – a willingness to tolerate evil, and a willingness to accept limitations on America's ability to be a meaningful force for good in the world. The idea is simple: *shame 'em into action.*

Not surprisingly, the very cruelest of these arguments will be aimed squarely at the President of the United States. Even a rational, deliberate decision to limit U.S. involvement will be interpreted as a sign that the President is weak, indecisive, and lacks the strength of his convictions (as expressed in the National Security Strategy). The President will be taunted by howls of protest that he is forsaking U.S. commitments, and worse of all, by cries that he is letting a too-bit thug like Bashir push him around. And how will that stand against the inevitable comparisons: President Clinton stood against Milosevic, and both President H.W. Bush and George Bush stood against Saddam Hussein?

Critical Element #3. The role of the advocacy community

As I said above, U.S. intervention in a war of choice, if it happens at all, comes down to a strong, persistent advocacy, and an opportunity. Looking for, and possibly even creating that opportunity, and setting the groundwork with their arguments, is the role of the advocacy community. Two of the more visible advocates for U.S. intervention in Sudan are New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof (twice in recent weeks he has written about Sudan), and Susan Rice, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. But the real heart of the advocacy community lies within the non-governmental organization (NGO) community. Two NGOs in particular merit recognition, the International Crisis Group, and the Enough Project.

The International Crisis Group is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization committed to preventing and resolving deadly conflict. Their website claims they are "...now generally recognized as the world's leading independent, non-partisan, source of analysis and advice to (the global community) on the prevention and resolution of deadly conflict." What makes them particularly noteworthy is the multi-dimensional approach they take: a combination of "field-based analysis, sharp-edged policy prescription and high-level advocacy...by a senior management team highly experienced in government and by a highly active Board of Trustees containing many senior statesmen and women used to making things happen."²³

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ From *About Crisis Group* webpage, accessed 22 Sep 2010, at <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/about.aspx>

The Enough Project is an initiative to end genocide and crimes against humanity. Two leaders of the Enough Project who have been particularly outspoken on Sudan are John Prendergast, co-founder, and John Norris, the Executive Director. Both have served in U.S. government positions. During the Clinton administration, John Prendergast was involved in a number of peace processes in Africa while he was Director of African Affairs at the National Security Council and Special Advisor to Susan Rice at the Department of State. John Norris has served in the Department of State, as Director of Communications for the US Deputy Secretary of State, and in the US Agency for International Development, as a speechwriter and field disaster expert. He also served as the Africa Program Executive and Washington Chief of Staff for the International Crisis Group.²⁴

Another noteworthy individual who should be considered part of the advocacy community is Luis Moreno-Ocampo, the first Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. On 14 July 2008, Mr. Ocampo charged Omar al-Bashir, the President of Sudan, with genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Immediately after Mr. Ocampo had delivered the public application for an arrest warrant of President Bashir, he held a press conference. Alex de Waal, a British writer and researcher on African issues, and widely considered one of the foremost authorities on Sudan, attended that press conference. Writing later in a blog, Mr. de Waal, had this criticism of Mr. Ocampo:

In answer to the question of what the world should do next, Moreno Ocampo said that this was the first time the UN Security Council was confronted with an ongoing genocide, and was faced with a choice—would it accept this or act to stop it? It seemed to me that Moreno Ocampo was demanding that the world reverse the policy of negotiating with the Sudan government and instead adopt a strategy of regime change.

For nineteen years, President Bashir has sat on top of a government that has been responsible for incalculable crimes. Hundreds of thousands of Sudanese citizens have died in violence, or been starved or rendered homeless, or have been tortured or otherwise punished. The head of state must bear much responsibility for these countless crimes committed by those who profess their loyalty to him. Two weeks ago, Moreno Ocampo succeeded in accusing Bashir of the crime for which he is not guilty. That is a remarkable feat.²⁵

Perhaps Mr. Ocampo thought he was just being helpful. Criticism of Mr. Ocampo notwithstanding, the fact remains that the charge has certainly ratcheted up the noise level – *and that is a key role of the advocacy group!*

²⁴ From *Enough, the project to end genocide and crimes against humanity*, webpage. Enough is a project of the Center for American Progress, accessed 22 Sep 2010 at: <http://www.enoughproject.org/>

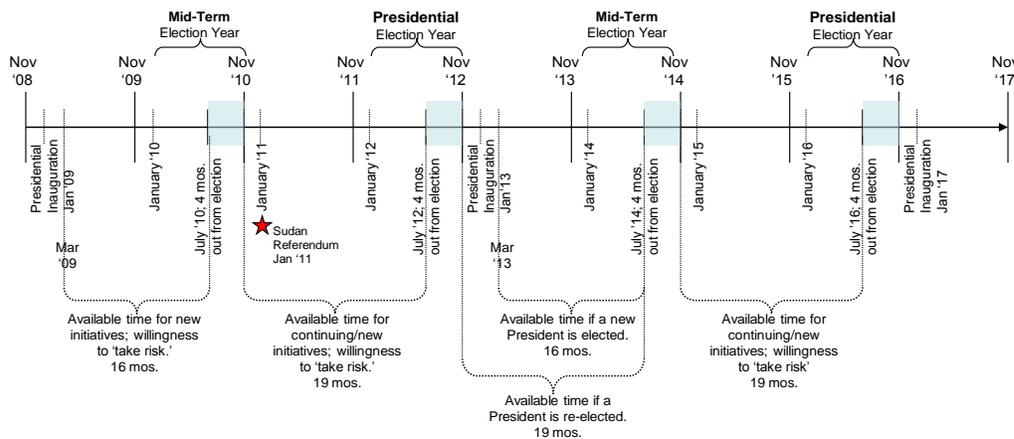
²⁵ Alex de Waal, writing on the Social Science Research Council blog website, with a post titled: 'ICC, Making Sense of Sudan: Moreno Ocampo's Coup de Theatre,' accessed 22 Sep 2010, at: <http://blogs.ssrc.org/sudan/2008/07/29/moreno-ocampos-coup-de-theatre/>

On September 30, 2010, the advocacy group made its most significant headway when Senator John Kerry (D-MA) introduced legislation²⁶ aimed at ensuring U.S. engagement with Sudan extended past the CPA. Not surprisingly, introduction of this bill was met with widespread applause from the advocacy community.

This bill spurs the developing momentum in the legislative and executive branches of the U.S. government to prevent a return to war between North and South Sudan and an end to the war in Darfur,” said Enough Project Co-founder John Prendergast.²⁷

Critical Element #4. Enough time, in terms of the US presidential cycle, to intervene.

The Washington clock



All accounts of the signing of the CPA note how the referendum was set for six years after the CPA was signed. So there is no justification for jumping to the conclusion that the

²⁶ This bill, titled The Sudan Peace and Stability Act, calls for "certain types of US aid for security forces and civil aviation in Southern Sudan but requires progress on good governance and accountability in return." Source: SENATUS webpage, accessed on 30 Sep 2010, at: <http://senatus.wordpress.com/2010/09/30/kerry-offers-sudan-peace-and-stability-act/>

²⁷ Seventeen anti-genocide and human rights organizations joined to praise the introduction of this legislation. Source: Article titled, *Rights Groups Laud Senate Architects of Legislation to Promote Peace and Stability in Sudan*, Accessed on 4 October 2010, at: <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article36259>. The problem with this article is that it suggests that all seventeen groups are somehow of comparable political importance. One of the seventeen signatories was the group known as: *Genocide No More/Save Darfur, Redding, CA*. Curious, I did a little research and uncovered that Redding is the county seat of Shasta County, California. According to the city webpage, in 2007, Redding had a civilian labor force of 87,000, and an unemployment rate of 7% (higher than either the state or U.S. rate). Given the economic crisis in California in the years since this data was collected, one wonders just how representative this group is of the real concerns of the citizens of Shasta County. Source: <http://www.ci.redding.ca.us/demographics.html>; Accessed 5 October 2010.

referendum date was set so as to maximize the available time on the *Washington clock*. Regardless, the fact remains that the expected outcomes following the referendum – a unilateral declaration of independence, an armed incursion into the southern oilfields by the Government of Sudan – will all occur in that nicely bracketed area that provides ample time for the U.S. to seriously consider armed intervention as a viable option.

There are two key points to take away from all this: first, we shouldn't be surprised at the steadily increasing drumbeat for intervention – for the advocacy community is the group most attuned to the sense that time, and opportunity, is fleeting past. Secondly, should their cries for intervention be answered, and the U.S. military directed to intervene – and I fully expect that they will be, given the official policy positions and the effectiveness of the advocacy community – then the *Washington clock* provides the key timeline: any U.S. military engagement must show success by July 2012! *Anyone who understands that the enemy also has a vote should shudder at the implication of this thought.*

The Nature of U.S. Military Assistance and Intervention

All this discussion about U.S. military intervention begs the question: what would that intervention look like? The answer to this question is the great 'known unknown.' For ease of understanding, I would like to offer the following three-tier taxonomy of U.S. military assistance. These tiers are categorized by activity, and correspondingly, by the level of direct participation by U.S. military personnel. Each tier is cumulative, meaning the activities of Tier 1 will also (most likely) be found in Tier 2, and Tier 3 will encompass both Tier 1 and Tier 2 activities. They are:

Tier 1. 'Train and Equip.' This type of activity is funded by the U.S. Department of State, and is the most common. It includes a wide range of a programs, such as IMET, FMS, FMF, and ACOTA. At most, it may involve only a handful of U.S. military personnel. Quite often, it doesn't involve any military personnel, relying upon contractors instead. This type of activity is usually done in peacetime, although it does occur during wartime as well. One notable case occurred in 1995, when MPRI sent 15 advisors into Croatia under a 'Train and equip' contract. This option allowed the U.S. to get around the provisions of the 1991 UN embargo, which prevented the U.S. from providing support to the Croats and Bosnian Muslims.

Tier 2. 'Advise and Assist.' This level of military engagement is defined by small groups of U.S. military personnel working hand-in-hand with local forces. An example was the U.S. Special Forces involvement in Central America, during the civil war in El Salvador (1908-1992). U.S. Special Forces helped train the Salvadorean military in their fight against the FMLN insurgency. worked closely with.

Tier 3. 'Direct participation in Full-Spectrum Operations.' In this tier, the 'gloves are off,' and the U.S. is fully committed. The U.S. is building the local military at the same time as it is fighting alongside it. Think of the current operations of the U.S. Army and the U.S. Marine Corps in Iraq and Afghanistan and you understand this tier.

The Third Thesis: Why Southern Sudan – the side the U.S. is supporting – will not win

Different Standards of Victory

This Third Thesis is predicated on a very simple rationale: each side has a different standard of victory. The Government of Sudan can achieve theirs on their own, while the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) will not be able to achieve theirs without substantial U.S. military assistance. Unfortunately for the GoSS, the U.S. has a different standard of victory – one that it will be able to achieve without having to provide the level of military assistance that the GoSS requires. It is critical to understand each perspective:

- As the First Thesis showed, the Government of Sudan recognizes that their monopoly of power, their control over the remainder of the country, and their religious legitimacy are all dependent upon *being seen as* fighting. If they fight, the most likely outcome is a negotiated settlement that will only reinforce their power, authority, and religious legitimacy. And since negotiated settlements tend to settle on the easiest half-measure, Abyei is likely to remain a part of Sudan, albeit with its special administrative status intact.
- For the Government of Southern Sudan, success is dependent upon independence **and** incorporation of Abyei. For that, they'll need the United States. Alone, the GoSS is incapable of wresting territory – the Abyei oilfields – back from the Government of Sudan. An independent Southern Sudan, bereft of the Abyei oilfields, would be an economic basket-case; it'll be a poorer version of the Central African Republic.
- As the Second Thesis showed, the U.S. is under considerable pressure to follow through on its commitment to the CPA. The political and financial costs associated with helping Southern Sudan through the referendum and an eventual declaration of independence are no mean pittance, but they have obviously been deemed a manageable burden. Even then, the U.S. will be midwife to a failed state – not exactly a foreign policy triumph. But helping Southern Sudan fight a conflict in Abyei is an undertaking of considerably greater cost and complexity – greater by several orders of magnitude.

As this Third Thesis will show, I believe that the U.S. is both unable, and unwilling, to shoulder the political, financial, and military costs required to help Southern Sudan fight for Abyei. In the face of considerable domestic and international opposition, and accepting the conclusion that it has no vital national interests involved, the U.S. will look for the 'biggest bang for the cheapest buck.' And even those who will concede that these half-measures are the least bad option will agree that it'll be an embarrassing show of tepidity.

Considerations Limiting U.S. Military Involvement

The single biggest reason why the U.S. involvement will be so tepid is that so many people are against U.S. military involvement, for very good reason. Here is the litany of reasons why:

1. The economic recession remains the paramount U.S. concern - everything the U.S. government does will be held to a single measure of success: does it improve, or weaken, our

economic condition? In case you had any doubt, military intervention in Southern Sudan won't help the U.S. economy.

2. The US is already involved in two intractable wars, with well over 150,000 combat troops currently deployed. There is no appetite among either the U.S. public or the military for a third major conflict. The administration will be charged with 'taking its eye off the first priority - Afghanistan' - the same charge it leveled so effectively against the Bush administration over the War in Iraq. If the military is tasked with planning an intervention, it will do so, based upon its recent experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan. But the danger is that the advocacy community will accuse the U.S. military of deliberately trying to 'price itself out,' if it turns out that the administration assesses that it cannot muster that level of resources. This will put the administration into the un-winnable position of being at loggerheads with an already hard-pressed military.

3. There is little appetite for U.S. military intervention within the interagency community, the NGO community, or even amongst UN peacekeepers. Amongst the interagency community, the rationale is often driven by resentment: upon its arrival, the U.S. military instantly becomes the major player – this is because it has the preponderance of resources – and so the military's needs and objectives tend to drive the agenda, for better or worse. For the NGOs, the rationale is usually couched in terms of endangering their personal security and preventing them from doing their good work. Among UN peacekeepers, the sense is that the U.S. military operates with far too many force protection restrictions. Granted, the same UN peacekeepers would prefer to have the U.S. military on hand, to be called upon if need be, since there is something to be said for a force that is all-too ready and willing to engage in kinetic operations.

3. Assertions of U.S. interests in Sudan notwithstanding, there is little likelihood the U.S. public will accept that any sub-Saharan African country rises to the level of national interest that justifies armed intervention. Geo-strategists will argue against it. Case in point:

I would suggest that Sudan's fate is, almost entirely, none of America's business. Last of all should U.S. military resources based in Djibouti come into play seeking to determine one outcome or another in Sudan. Just because you think you can do something doesn't mean you should, particularly in the Horn of Africa." - Dan Simpson, former US Ambassador to Somali (1994-1995).²⁸

4. While it is easy to vilify Bashir and the Government of Sudan, the fact remains that the Government of Southern Sudan are no angels, either. Even if we look past the fact that the SPLA has plenty of blood on their hands, given the length and savagery of this conflict, we still have to focus on the current reality. And the current reality is that corruption in Southern Sudan, particularly within the government is stalling economic development.²⁹ Given our

²⁸ Source: Pittsburgh Post-Gazette article, 'Hung up on the Horn of Africa,' by Dan Simpson, 15 Sep 2010. Article accessed at: www.post-gazette.com, on 15 Sep 2010. Mr. Simpson argues that the US should avoid any and all involvement in the Horn of Africa, and argues that, when you look at "...the region strategically, Sudan belongs to the Horn as well."

²⁹ Source: Reuters article, 'Graft and Tiny Private Sector Hamper Sudan Progress,' by Jeremy Clarke, Reuters, 10 Aug 2010. Accessed at: <http://www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/ACRText/ACR-Sudan.html>, accessed on: 15 Aug 2010.

current, similar, experiences in Afghanistan, the argument will be that ‘we should have learned this lesson already.’

5. It is likely that the Democratic Party will suffer big losses in the November election, thereby limiting President Obama's domestic agenda. Foreign policy is generally considered the one area that Presidents can exercise greater latitude. But given the reasons already listed, one should expect that any effort by the administration to push for armed intervention in Africa will open President Obama up to charges that his priorities are not U.S. priorities. One should also expect an ugly element of racism to factor into the debates. The problem is that the racist charges – driven by accusations of an Africa-first focus - will quickly dominate the debate.

6. It is all about the ‘war of the narratives.’ Given the devil his due: the Government of Sudan has effectively set conditions that will cause any referendum to fail to meet the agreed-upon conditions. For anybody who doesn’t support independence, the abuses, flaws, and other voting irregularities that *will* occur will serve as all the justification they need to claim that the results are invalid. The important point isn’t that the vote will be flawed – that is a foregone conclusion. The important point is that, in the ‘war of the narrative,’ the U.S. is pretty much limited to the advocating for the right of self-determination and respecting the rights of the people. The narratives that the U.S. government will have to fight *against* are strong. The Government of Sudan will not just fight on the battlefield - they'll also fight in the media, targeting U.S. and international audiences with messages designed to impede U.S. willingness to intervene, restrain and limit U.S. options, weaken U.S. resolve, cause the casual supporters of independence to doubt the sincerity and validity of their convictions, and to defraud the Government of Southern Sudan of its legitimacy.

Far too often we tend to be dismissive of the themes and messages of our opponents' information operations campaigns. In our haughty contempt we fail to see how powerfully these messages resonate with key audiences. Often, it is only after when we find our options severely limited, our allies doubtful of our motives, and our own populace souring on the effort, critical of our competence, and cynical of the cause, do we come to realize the effectiveness of the adversary's IO campaign. What follows is an effort to *expose* ourselves to the real strength of the IO campaign that the Government of Sudan will level against the U.S.; I offer this exposure, not to weaken, but to *inoculate*. Forewarned is forearmed.

- The first counter-narrative is that the U.S. is involved in neo-colonialism, and its sole interest is the oil. This argument will draw strong parallels between U.S. interest in Southern Sudan today and when the U.S. engineered taking the Isthmus of Panama from Colombia. The most effective counter-narrative will throw our own words back at us. Consider the powerful impact of this recent quote by Secretary of State Clinton: "But the real problem is what happens when the inevitable happens and the referendum is passed and the south declares independence. *What happens to the oil revenues?*"³⁰
- A second counter-narrative will target the GoSS, accusing it of failing to work to make unity with the North attractive, and for violating John Garang’s vision of a

³⁰ SecState Clinton quoted in BBC News article, "Hillary Clinton: South Sudan referendum is 'time bomb,' 9 Sep 2010. Article accessed at <http://www.bbc.co.uk> , accessed on 14 Sep 2010.

‘New Sudan.’ John Garang was the leader of the SPLA, and he signed the CPA on its behalf. Consider this quote as reflective of this type of counter-narrative:

The "...goal of the struggle waged by the South is to achieve a reasonable level of political, social, and economic equality with North Sudan, and not secession as such. Secession is one of the struggles adopted by the protracted struggle to achieve freedom."³¹

- A third counter-narrative will charge that the U.S. is fighting a war against Islam. Recall the concept of the *Dar al-Islam*, the House of Islam. The U.S. will be accused of forcibly taking territory from an Islamic country. How do you think that will play out in the ‘Arab street?’ One can expect that USCENTCOM and the Department of State’s Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs will say, “Fellas, this ain’t helpful.”

7. The U.S. cannot expect much help from the major international organizations – the United Nations, the African Union, and the European Union – either. Since Sudan is a major oil provider to China, one can expect only the most watered-down resolutions from the UN Security Council. Yes, the European Union is very involved in Southern Sudan; but that commitment doesn't automatically extend to Abyei. Looking past the fact that the EU's member countries are basically broke, we should also note that European countries will be alarmed at any event that agitates their own Muslim population, let alone the large Arab countries in North Africa. And besides the fact that the African Union is no fan of ethnic-based independent movements, and we should count on the North African countries not being too keen on U.S. intervention, we should pay particular attention to the 'big three' countries of Africa – South Africa, Egypt, and Nigeria. Each have their own reasons for opposing U.S. military involvement. South Africa, trying to assert a leadership role on the continent, will categorically oppose any direct U.S. military intervention in Africa, period. Nigeria, mindful of the very strong parallels between itself and Sudan (Biafra Republic, anyone?) will oppose U.S. military intervention because of the precedent it sets. And Egypt has one overriding national security interest: ensure the unabated flow of the Nile. The last thing that Egypt wants is an impoverished country upstream whose major economic activity is tapping into the Nile waters to meet its agricultural needs. Egypt's secondary concern is to prevent its more fundamentalist (Islamist) population from being able to accuse the government of not supporting the *Dar al-Islam* **and** for allowing the flow of the Nile River to be put at risk.

Understanding how hard it really would be: A Military Assessment of the Operational Environment

If you liked Beirut, you'll love Mogadishu. - Smith Hempstone, US Ambassador to Kenya, to Frank Wisner, Deputy Secretary of State, August 1992

To paraphrase Mr. Hempstone: "If you liked Iraq or Afghanistan, you'll love Sudan."

³¹ John A. Akec, 14 Sep 2010, article in Sudan Tribune, "*To confederate or not to confederate is a matter of strategy*," www.sudantribune.com. Article accessed 14 Sep 2010

Perhaps the very first thing that any experienced U.S. military planner will say, following even the most cursory review of the operational environment, is "we've seen this before." And that doesn't speak well of the situation. Even before the U.S. military can begin to discuss dealing with any enemy forces and overcoming the logistical challenges of operating in Southern Sudan, it must understand the operational environment.

Conditions of the Operational Environment, Tasks, and Command and Control Relationships

The US military must expect the following four conditions³² to exist, and remain, throughout the duration of the intervention:

- Condition #1. The International coalition (if there is one) will be woefully unprepared for complexity of operational environment³³
- Condition #2. There will be a lack of national priority, focus, and competence from the national decision-making entities as well as from the interagency partners³⁴
- Condition #3. The International coalition (again, if there is one) will be completely dependent upon US military for successful outcome³⁵
- Condition #4. The US military will be forced to take the lead in non-traditional, 'nation-building' areas^{36, 37, 38}

The US military must expect that any mission set will include the following³⁹ – either as stated tasks or as implied tasks:

- Task #1. Conduct military operations and eliminate resistance.
- Task #2. Prepare conditions for transfer of regional power to civilian authorities.
- Task #3. Assist in reestablishing civilian and governmental structures.

³² The following conditions are all courtesy of LTG (Ret) Ricardo Sanchez, "*Wiser in Battle, A Soldier's Story*." LTG Sanchez was talking about Phase IV Lessons Learned - they are just as applicable to Phase) and Phase I.

³³ Ibid. page 131. "...situation that involved a regime change, the complete dissolution of political structures, a void in security structures, ethnic and religious hatreds, poverty and economic strife, individual village militias, and people who did not recognize international borders." (And, I add: we must expect high and unrealistic expectations of immediate change for the better due to US involvement).

³⁴ Ibid. page 131. "...Washington was quick to demand action without a clear understanding of culture, the situation on the ground, or potential collateral damage. Many of their directives were simply unrealistic." (And, I add: remember, political pressure to have fully-evident success by no later than 4 months prior to federal election).

³⁵ Ibid. page 131. "...The military, however, had not initially resourced post-major combat operations (Ph IV), and was sorely lacking the organizational structures, funding, and personnel necessary for the majority of tasks that had to be accomplished."

³⁶ Ibid. page 131. "...US military forced to take the lead in the following areas: fighting a low-level insurgency; building police and security force capacity; restoring basic utility services; creating an effective Intel-capability in a Third World-type environment; building detention facilities; and reestablishing the social, economic, and political base of [the AO]."

³⁷ Ibid. page 171. Additional PH IV considerations (from experiences of ORHA, and US in early stages of OIF): facilitating reconstruction; protecting infrastructure;

³⁸ Ibid. page 174. Additional PH IV considerations: RSOI functions for coalition forces (to include equipping with basic needs, integrate into US military logistics system/sustainment plan, and integrate into C2 structure and scheme of maneuver IAW the force restrictions (restraints/constraints) imposed by their national leadership).

³⁹ Ibid. These tasks were included in the mission statement of Task Force Falcon in Kosovo, 1999 (see page 121) and also reflect CJTF-7's three-fold mission in OIF (see page 197). Specifically, CJTF-7's three missions were: 1) Continue offensive operations. Eliminate enemy forces still in country, to include former regime residual enemy groups, terrorists, insurgents, or the like. Defend the nation from all external threats. 2) Provide direct support to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). 3) Provide aid for humanitarian assistance and reconstruction of Iraq.

In fact, if we were to simply paraphrase the mission statement of CJTF-7⁴⁰ from OIF 1 to a Southern Sudan scenario, we would likely read:

Task Force XXX deploys to Southern Sudan, NLT (date), in order to conduct combat operations, in conjunction with the Armed Forces of the Government of Southern Sudan, aimed at defending the territorial integrity of the country against the Armed Forces of Sudan, provide direct support to the Government of Southern Sudan, and provide aid for humanitarian assistance and reconstruction, as directed.

Based upon his painful, first-hand experiences in Kosovo and Iraq, Lieutenant General (retired) Sanchez advised that future large-scale intervention efforts would be best served if the following three conditions were to be established *prior* to deployment⁴¹:

#1. A grand strategy must be in place. In this case, there needs to be consensus on a clearly-defined (quantifiable, achievable) vision of near-term future of Southern Sudan. Otherwise, there is the risk of operations being conducted in a strategic/operational vacuum, and the risk of governmental, nongovernmental, national, international organizations struggling with competing objectives, working at cross-purposes.

#2. There needs to be real unity of command. Unity of Effort is just a neat-sounding but meaningless phrase, if there is no mechanism, or authority, to compel, coerce, and hold accountable. While the U.S. military is only organization with the inherent and available strategic and operational planning capacity, the C4I systems, and the logistics capability required for success, putting the military in the lead is the wrong answer – and it should be stressed that the military itself is loath to take on that role.

#3. The US military must identify (and subsequently deploy) an existing force structure that is trained, resourced, and capable of conducting both strategic-operational and operational-tactical level tasks. Given the time constraints, complexity of operational environment, and scale of strategic, operational, and tactical tasks, it is inappropriate to designate/deploy an ad hoc structure and build an organizational structure ‘on the fly.’ LTG Sanchez advised that the best solution is two distinct headquarters, one focused on the strategic/operational level of war, and the other focused on the operational/tactical level of conflict.

The rationale for each of these conditions should be self-evident; the way to assure a successful outcome is to ensure consensus exists on what we are doing, and why; to ensure a real unity of effort exists; and to ensure that we fully resource our own efforts. But, *while all of this should happen, it has never really happened before - certainly not in the recent past, so it is unlikely it will happen this time.* What will happen - based on our recent experience in Iraq and

⁴⁰ Recall that CJTF-7 assumed command of mission in Iraq after CENTCOM/CFLCC left, and before MNF-I/MNC-I were established.

⁴¹ Ibid. page 132. Conditions #1 and #3 are drawn from the key recommendations of then BG Sanchez’ AAR for Task Force Falcon. Concerning condition #2, then-BG Sanchez recommended giving the US military both the responsibility and authority or the mission, at least for the initial 12-18 months. I strongly disagree with putting the military in the lead, but do recognize that the military has the wherewithal that the other interagency partners lack.

Afghanistan, is that the rush to *do something* - and to be seen as having *done something* - will overcome any considered discussion about what exactly we are doing, and why (meaning there will not be much of a plan, and even less of a strategy).

Logistical Considerations

Logistically, it simply doesn't get any harder than this: Southern Sudan presents an absolute logistical and operational nightmare! The region is landlocked and highly inaccessible. **Literally**, Southern Sudan is at the 'ends of the earth.' And, if you do manage to get there, it is even harder to get around. The infrastructure is negligible. In fact, to talk of infrastructure is to misuse the term. There simply is no real infrastructure to talk about. Everything you will need has to come in with you. And since the Ports of Entry (POEs) are few, and underdeveloped, you'll be competing with **literally** everyone, and everything else, at the POEs.

Southern Sudan is huge: 640,000 square kilometers (247,105 square miles). If the region became independent, it would become the 42nd largest country in the world – smaller than Afghanistan, bigger than France! The distances between major points are immense:

Straight-line distances:

498 miles from Khartoum to Abyei
407 miles from Port Sudan to Khartoum
905 miles from Port Sudan to Abyei
1075 miles from Port Sudan to Juba
392 miles from Juba to Abyei
915 miles from Djibouti, DJ, to Juba, Sudan
338 miles from Entebbe, Uganda, to Juba, Sudan
570 miles from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to Juba, Sudan
564 miles from Nairobi, Kenya, to Juba, Sudan
What is important to remember is that there isn't a whole lot in between

Southern Sudan is sparsely populated, with a population of approximately 8 million people. The Southern Sudanese are the farthest thing from being a homogenous population: there are over 200 ethnic groups (23 large ones), and they speak over 400 dialects! One piece of luck: English is one of two official languages (a local dialect of Arabic being the other).

The capital city, Juba, poses its own set of logistical problems. Originally a dusty little garrison town, the city has experienced phenomenal growth since the signing of the CPA. And yet the city has only three paved roads! Credible estimates vary, but it grew from a population of 160,000 in 2005, to approximately 260,000 in 2006, to (according to several accounts) half a million in 2010. If these numbers are anywhere near accurate, that computes to a growth rate of greater than 300% in 5 years! The only population centers that can handle that kind of growth are refugee camps.

The Enemy Forces

It is widely accepted that the U.S. military is without peer in terms of conventional forces. So why then would one expect the Government of Sudan to use its conventional forces?

The obvious answer is that we shouldn't. The Government of Sudan has been particularly adept at fueling conflict simply by paying its enemies to fight each other. And we should assume that they have been drawing some lessons on U.S. military capabilities from the on-going operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The most likely course of action is that, after conducting an initial seizure of the Abyei oilfields, the armed forces of the Government of Sudan would go into a wait-and-see posture. If the U.S. appeared likely to counterattack, we should expect to see a reduction in their 'footprint' and their 'signature;' meaning it'll be harder to find their conventional forces. But this would have almost no impact on their level of activity, because they'll shift the focus of those efforts to their proxies – in this case, the Misseriya tribesmen. That kind of battle can be won, but it is incredibly manpower-intensive. This is because you practically have to defend everywhere at once, while the enemy has the ability to pick the time and place of the engagement.

The Fourth Thesis: The costs to the US geo-strategic interests throughout Africa will be high, profound, and far-reaching

Throughout this paper I have intended to add to the debate by providing the critical analyses that I felt has been lacking: an effort to extrapolate the likely outcome of U.S. intervention, an analysis of the costs associated with that intervention, and to assess the risks to our national interests – and there are many. Here is a list of the risks we run:

- **In Egypt**, we will likely strengthen the hands of the fundamentalists (Islamic Brotherhood), and cause all Egyptians concern about the security of their most vital national interest – the waters of the Nile.
- **In Nigeria**, we will likely sow mistrust for our intentions by having created a dangerous precedent – Nigeria's oil wealth lies in the Christian/animist south, while the regime is predominantly northern Muslim – a situation that directly parallels that of Sudan.
- **In South Africa**, whose ANC-leadership still harbors doubt and mistrust about the US (because our opposition to the Marxist/communist-inspired ANC led US to lend support to the apartheid regime), US intervention will fuel concerns about neo-colonialism.
- U.S. relations with the states of **North Africa**, from Egypt to Morocco, will be strained because of the appearance of having fought a campaign against the *Dar al-Islam*.
- Suspicions about **US Africa Command**, whose roll-out was met with alarm about neo-colonialism, will return.
- The **nine neighboring countries** (Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Chad, and Libya) will all resent U.S. involvement because it will be seen as having contributed to the instability, but not contributing to the solution.
- The **African Union** will resent U.S. intervention – as much for the terrible precedent it sets as for how it will make the AU look powerless.
- Any conflict that ends with **Bashir** still in power will be to the lasting detriment and shame of the United States. Such an outcome will be interpreted – correctly – as a validation of Bashir's right to govern and contemptuous of the **International Criminal Court**.

- The lack of meaningful support and partnership by the **United Nations, African Union**, and the **European Union** will cause many to question U.S. leadership and authority.
- Domestically, **President Obama** will be accused of not sharing the same priorities as U.S. citizens: the economy, and taking care of the wars we are already fighting.
- The **Democratic Party** will suffer by being prodded to support intervention in Sudan, at a time when the economy is lousy and their previous opposition to the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will make them look hypocritical.
- The **U.S. Military** will continue to be hard-pressed.
- Within the **U.S. Department of State** there is the very real likelihood that key leaders and different bureaus will form into a circular firing squad. The **Bureau of African Affairs** will be castigated for having gotten the U.S. into an un-winnable war, sarcastically congratulated for serving as midwife to a failed state. The **Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton**, will suffer the most political fallout, as she will get hit from all sides: certainly from some international audiences (this of course, is part of the job), from the domestic political opposition (who think about the outcome of U.S. involvement in Southern Sudan only in terms of the next U.S. presidential election), and from supporters of President Obama who will accuse her of failing him.

Finally, and it pains me to say this, but China and Japan will be the only geo-strategic winners. In fact, we know right now that China and Japan will be the only winners. This is because China and Japan have been investing in massive infrastructure projects aimed at getting the oil to market. One such project, known as the Lamu-Southern Sudan Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET)⁴², has the following components: building quays and port facilities in Lamu Port and Manda Bay, a standard gauge railway line to Juba, a transcontinental highway running parallel to the railway, an oil refinery at Lamu, considerable investment in three airports, and three resort cities (Lamu, Isiolo, and Lake Turkana shores). But China will not just get the oil – it has also secured contracts to put vast areas of land in southern Sudan under food crop production.⁴³

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to address what I felt to be three critical elements missing from current discussions and analysis of the situation in Southern Sudan. To recap, they are:

1. A full appreciation of why the Government of Sudan has no choice but to fight – and, most disturbing, why they assess that they will ‘win.’
2. A sense that the Southern Sudanese appear to be misreading U.S. commitment for the *process* as a commitment to their *cause*.

⁴² Article: “Lamu Port – Taking Shape,” accessed at: <http://architecturekenya.com/2010/09/05/lamu-port-taking-shape/>, accessed on 22 Sep 2010.

⁴³ Article: “Kenya: China ready to Invest in Second Port in Lamu,” accessed at: <http://www.dredgingtoday.com/2010/05/04/kenya-china-ready-to-invest-in-second-port-in-lamu/>, accessed on 22 Sep 2010

3. The lack of strategic analysis guiding U.S. involvement; in particular, the lack of any effort to extrapolate the likely outcome of U.S. intervention, to analyze the costs associated with that intervention, and to assess the risks to our national interests.

My sense is that the U.S. has been led down a path leading to armed intervention by a values-based advocacy community whose primary motivation is to ensure the U.S. *does something* to stop bad things from happening. I am particularly troubled by how easily this advocacy community suggests that U.S. involvement in Southern Sudan can lead to a similar involvement in Darfur. The unspoken premise is that, with just a little effort and commitment from the U.S., everything will work out alright. As I have worked through the likely evolution of the official U.S. policy decision, I have come to the conclusion that this policy is prodding the U.S. into a war it is neither prepared for nor willing to fight.

The greatest danger is not that the U.S. military will lose on the battlefield, but that the U.S. will serve as midwife to a failed state – and, in so doing, cause irreparable harm to our real geo-strategic interests in Africa. I believe the President of the United States has reached a critical decision point. Before he chooses to continue with the current official policy, which I believe to have shown will lead to war and ruin, he should pause and the questions, “is this really a good idea?” and “are there any other viable options?”

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