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WORKING PAPER

Fragile and Weak States

Adding 3Ns to the 3Ds: Lessons from the 1996 Zaire Mission for Humanitarian Interventions

ANDREW F. COOPER

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Working Paper No. 4
December 2005

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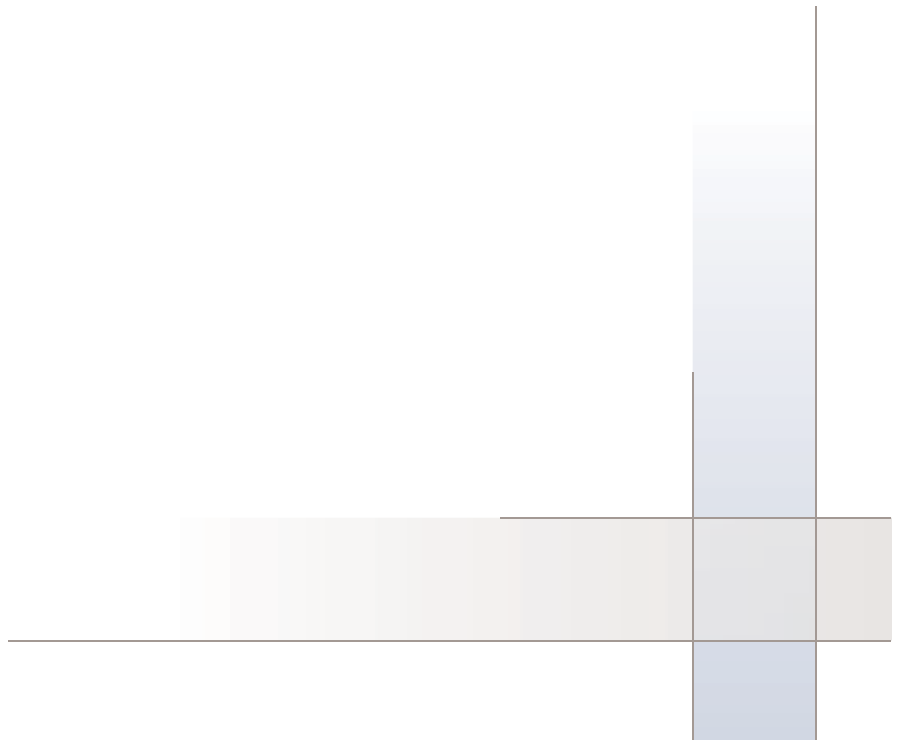
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Abstract

This paper examines the 3D (defence, diplomacy, and development) framework for humanitarian interventions in weak states and/or conflict situations. It accepts that there are some considerable strengths built into this strategic concept for it privileges both a "whole of government" approach and the need to emphasize capacity building in all areas of governance. It argues, however, that the 3D framework remains too narrow in its logic and mode of application. The paper asserts that the 3D approach needs to be complemented by another configuration termed the 3Ns - *niches, norms,* and *networks*. In suggesting that the framework guiding humanitarian interventions needs to be extended in this fashion, this work considers both evolving cases (Afghanistan, Haiti, and potentially Darfur) and offers a detailed examination of the pivotal Canadian rescue mission to Zaire at the end of 1996. At the core of the paper is the contention that Canada needs to cast its involvement in humanitarian interventions through a less bureaucratically driven approach. What is required instead is a fuller appreciation of contextual considerations.

1. Introduction

This work examines a number of inter-connected frameworks and activities central both to the Canadian role in the world and the jagged and fragile international environment in which Canada must engage. The opportunity to contribute to these debates is highly salient in light of both the range and intensity of the discussion concerning what to do (or not to do) with respect to weak states such as Afghanistan, Sudan/Darfur, and Haiti. Whereas, the contributions by experts with enormous practical expertise have tended to focus on a detailed analysis of what is occurring in these specific cases from timely front-line perspectives, I will endeavour to situate these experiences and controversies in a wider conceptual and temporal context.

The starting point for this paper is an examination of the Canadian "3D approach," with the 3Ds being defence, diplomacy, and development. This model encompasses a clear recognition that security must be defined and delivered in a comprehensive fashion. It recognizes that security is not only defensive in nature, that is to say, simply a means of reacting to crises, but a forward-thinking mechanism with a strong dimension designed to prevent or ward off "sudden disasters." It also meshes governance issues into the security equation, with a good deal of attention on the development of functionality and accountability at the state level. As Prime Minister Paul Martin emphasizes: "The common thread in the three 'Ds' is capacity building in all areas of governance… The three Ds means building public institutions that work and are accountable to the public for their actions."[1]

Potential and performance, however, remain two different things. In many ways, the logic of employing the 3Ds as an international tool as a component of an international policy framework (with particular relevance to so-called humanitarian interventions), has been restricted by the tight hold of various government departments anxious to retain their bureaucratic preserves. As signalled by the April 2005 International Policy Statement (IPS),[2] the hallmark of success for the 3Ds is related, above all else, to its ability to serve as an integrative device between key departments,

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[1] Martin, Paul. Address by the Prime Minister on the occasion of his visit to Washington, DC. 29 April 2004. <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news.asp? category=2&id=192>.
[2] For the document, see *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World*, see <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/cip-pic/ips/ips-en.asp>.

including Foreign Affairs Canada (FAC), the Department of National Defence (DND), and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). In principle, this approach is consistent with the animation of the "whole of government" concept. In practice though, the instinct to narrow, not expand the framework comes to the fore. Indeed, each of the 3Ds remains associated not so much with a fluid boundary-spanning approach, but with departmental "proprietorship" with one of the Ds (DND with defence, FAC with diplomacy, and CIDA with development).

Under these conditions it cannot be assumed that bureaucratic tensions will simply dissolve under the momentum of the 3D approach. On the contrary, there exists some likelihood that the 3Ds will become hardened as a new form of silos in policy-making. Using the 3Ds as justification or even an incentive to differentiate the Ds, competition could actually grow between the "owners" of the defence, diplomacy, and development Ds, both in terms of status recognition and resource allocation. The defence establishment has campaigned for new equipment and personnel on an extended front. FAC pushed for the establishment of a $500 million Global Peace and Security fund. CIDA has gained control over the Canada Corps.

These tensions are exacerbated, moreover, when non-state actors are added to the 3D mix. Two of the three Ds, defence and development have vocal champions at the societal level. On the one side, the Conference of Defence Associations (CDA) privileges the defence D with an explicit accent on its use as a military tool to achieve military ends. The privileging of defence as the foremost D is evidenced by declaratory statements. For example, Lt. Gen. Mike Jeffery (Retd) stated that the Canadian Forces did not want to become "a bit player on someone else's team"[3] during a panel discussion on the 3Ds held at the CDA annual general meeting. It also emerges in the composition of the forums of discussion, as the same CDA meeting "unfortunately seemed to be missing one of the Ds" in that "[t]here was no diplomatic panellist".[4]

Conversely, groups such as Project Ploughshares point to the need to de-emphasize defence with a greater orientation towards development. Two other Ds that can, and according to Ploughshares, should be taken into account are democracy and

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[3] Jim Creskey, "Soldier Talk," Editorial. *Embassy* 1, no. 44 (9 March 2005): 4.
[4] Creskey, 4.

disarmament. In its words: "The current public debate has focused a great deal of public attention on boosting a vaguely defined military capability, but enhanced security through development, human rights and democratic governance, environmental protection, and arms control and disarmament needs significantly enhanced attention as Canadians decide the shape and size of their security dollars".[5]

Although the diplomacy D lacks this type of embedded client support, backing for an enhanced position for this mode of activity has been re-generated in intellectual/policy circles. One significant sign of this upsurge in intellectual/public support arose from the attention generated by Andrew Cohen's (2003) publication, *While Canada Slept: How We Lost Our Place in the World*, which bemoaned the loss of Canadian diplomatic capabilities. This phenomenon has extended beyond academics and journalists to embrace former diplomats. Increasingly organized and vigorous in their advocacy, members of this group have lobbied hard for acts of commission (higher levels of monies for diplomatic activities) and omission (against the de-merger of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade).

To suggest that the 3D approach has enormous value in pushing the Canadian agenda, and the definition of the tasks which specific actors could take on, is not therefore to overlook the limitations of this approach. The 3D initiative is a significant advance from other models that have been attempted in the recent past, most notably the 3Cs representing common, comprehensive, and co-operative security. In addition, the 3Ds as a vehicle for humanitarian intervention has the advantage of being able to ride the intellectual wave galvanized by the advent of the "Responsibility to Protect" doctrine or R2P.[6]

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[5] Ernie Regehr and Peter Whelan, "Reshaping the Security Envelope: Defence Policy in a Human Security Context," Project Ploughshares, April 2004: 28. In the same vein, Ian Smillie argues that the 3D approach needs "to be implemented with care in order that scarce funding for prevention, emergency assistance, reconstruction and longer term development don't devolve to government departments and others for whom they are secondary priorities. For these activities CIDA should lead." Quoted in Sarah McGregor, "Three Dimensions of Intervention," *Embassy*, 26 January 2005: 7, 11.

[6] On this and other ideas emanating from International Commissions, see Ramesh Thakur, Andrew F. Cooper and John English, eds., *International Commissions and the Power of Ideas* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2005).

Expanding on these contextual components referred to above, the 3D approach needs to be complemented by a configuration termed the 3Ns or niches, norms, and networks. Only by adding these components into the framework, can an inclusive and more accurate portrayal of Canada's international image in terms of humanitarian interventions be understood.

In addressing these themes, and offering the prescription of the 3Ns in conjunction with the 3Ds, I rely on two academic devices to which I have already alluded. The first device locates my argument in a conceptual toolkit based on the assumption that an exclusive reliance on the 3D approach falls short of what is required if Canada is going to move towards an authentically integrated model of dealing with emergencies in weak states. This wider operational lens requires some extensive mapping of the 3N approach.

The second device entails an analysis of past experiences, in order to justify why the 3N approach is valuable in determining what Canada should (or should not) be doing in cases such as Darfur. This route turns scrutiny away from the diverse narratives concerning this situation (and others such as Afghanistan and Haiti) back to the 1996 humanitarian disaster in Zaire. Not only do we have a relatively complete picture of what went right and wrong for the international community in this crisis, we have the lessons "learnt" from the Canadian experience in leading a humanitarian intervention of enormous scope and high intensity through this case study. While not exaggerating the similarities between the Zaire experience and Darfur, nor other crises of the moment, neither should the parallels between them be ignored.

2. The Zaire Intervention as a template for the 3Ds and the 3Ns

The relevance of the 1996 Zaire intervention as a guide for current crises is demonstrated in a number of ways. Firstly, it reveals the capacity for misconception of Canadian motivations for responding to select "sudden" disasters. When the initiative was launched, it appeared to confirm that there was some move towards convergence between state and non-state actors regarding the need to take action. It was commonly believed that the main catalyst for state officials to act arose from societal pressure on the ground. In terms of profile, this call for the state to act and act quickly came from groups clustered around the Rwandan nongovernmental

(NGO) Executive Committee, which did much to prepare the way for governmental action. To be sure it was organizations such as the Red Cross, Oxfam, Care Canada, and Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) (all of which had extensive networks of field workers in central Africa) that provided the figures relating to the sheer extent of the displacement of people (estimated at approximately 1.2 million) in the sub-region.

In terms of posture, the campaign became centred on calls that were mindful of the need to rescue refugees caught in the intensified fighting on the borders of Eastern Zaire and Rwanda in late 1996. In one graphic description of the situation, Bernard Kouchner the head of MSF said that "if there was not an outside rescue mission…what would be needed would not be doctors without borders but gravediggers without borders."[7]

Through this lens, the intervention was constructed as a massive rescue effort based on the values of human security. The difference was one of timing, with a lag time between the initial leadership of the NGOs and a catch-up in terms of leadership by the Canadian government and select "like-minded" states. As expressed by then Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, the language utilized to explain the intervention echoed the sentiments of good international citizenship so vital to the mobilization by NGOs themselves. In a press conference held on November 12, 1996, the Prime Minister declared that: "Canada may not be a superpower but we are a nation that speaks on the international scene with great moral authority…now is the time to use that moral authority to stop suffering, avert disaster."[8]

A re-examination of the intervention, taking into account different sources and explanations, highlights not only the commonality of approach between the Canadian state and NGOs, but their stark divergence. From the outset, there was a difficulty of interpretation that shifted the focus of attention vis-à-vis the state away from values to interests; that is to say, a focus on humanitarian motivations to those that

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[7] Libération, 10 February 1996, cited in Simon Massey, "Operation Assurance: The greatest intervention that never happened," *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, online ed. (June 3 2000). <http://www.jha.ac/ articles/a036.htm>.
[8] Jean Chrétien, Press conference by the Prime Minister. Transcript. *CBC Newsworld*, 12 November 1996.

privileged the initiative as a response to the request by the Clinton administration that Canada become the proxy or the "beard" of the United States (US) in a region traditionally dominated by Belgium and France.[9]

With the benefits of distance, these re-assessments have become much stronger. The memoirs of James Bartleman devote a long chapter to the US connection as the driving force for the intervention. As Bartleman notes in a section entitled "An Offer too Good to Refuse":

> In surprising back-channel calls to me from the president's national security advisor, Tony Lake…the Americans offered to place their military forces under Canadian command if we could lead the international mission…perhaps the [US] turned to us, because lacking a colonial past, we would be more credible …than France, or for that matter [the US]. Perhaps the Pentagon was comfortable working with the Canadian Armed Forces…Perhaps the [US] expected that Canada would allow it to lead the operation from behind the scenes…Perhaps the Pentagon thought that with Canada out in front [the US] would find it easier to terminate their participation on a set date…And…they probably did not suspect how limited Canada's military resources actually were" (Bartleman 2005, 183-4).[10]

Nor did the NGO community escape increasingly critical scrutiny regarding their own actions. If "angels" compared to many other actors (including arms dealers and commercial carpetbaggers) their image became tarnished with the recognition that "they made mistakes" both in their interaction with the perpetrators of the genocide in Rwanda and for their tendency to exaggerate the number of refugees in order to maximize their resource flow. The issue of "refugee warriors" and complicity are explored not only by academics such as Howard Adelman,[11] and journalists like David Reiff,[12] but also by former NGO workers,

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[9] Anthony Wilson-Smith, "Mission of Mercy: Canada takes the lead as refugees pour out of Zaire," *Maclean's*, (25 November 1996): 88-90.

[10] James Bartleman, *Rollercoaster: My hectic years as Jean Chrétien's Diplomatic Advisor 1994-1998.* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2005): 183-4.

[11] Howard Adelman, "The Use and Abuse of Refugees in Zaire," in Stephen John Stedman and Fred Tanner eds., *Refugee Manipulation: War, Politics, and the Abuse of Human Suffering.* (Washington: Brookings Institute Press, 2003): 95-134.

[12] David Reiff, *A Bed for the Night: Humanitarianism in Crisis* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002):178-179.

most notably by Fiona Terry[13] in her book *Condemned to Repeat? The Paradox of Humanitarian Action,* NGOs are also the target of commentary by former state officials such as James Bartleman who writes in his memoirs that: "The Interhawe took charge of distributing supplies provided by the humanitarian agencies, appropriated the (considerable) surplus for themselves, and thus strengthened their hold on the camps used as bases to attack the Tutsis who now governed Rwanda."[14]

Secondly, and of significance to this discussion, the Zaire case demonstrates how the 3Ds took shape through ad hoc processes (an interdepartmental task force) prior to their establishment as a "whole of government" doctrine. In such an organizational setting, the sequencing of the different Ds was quite distinct. As in some current crises such as the 2004 South Asian Tsunami, FAC swung into action in a fashion designed to showcase its capability to play the lead facilitative role in these "just in time" activities.

In the lead up to the Zaire crisis, the appointment of Lloyd Axworthy as Minister of Foreign Affairs added momentum to the human security agenda in Canada's international policy. The result was the development of a new sort of tool-kit for responding to crisis situations as part of a broader focus on peacebuilding. The introduction of these new mechanisms also reflected the Department's desire to maintain its position of policy leadership. With these outputs in mind, Axworthy announced in October 1996 a $10 million special peacebuilding fund, which would assist in filling urgent gaps in Canadian activity by promoting innovative approaches and making use of a wider array of Canadian talent and expertise. This "new tool of diplomacy," it was declared, "would support flexible and timely Canadian responses in critical situations where events are moving quickly."[15]

In the development of its strategy towards failed and weak states, DND also proceeded on an ad hoc basis. Even today, DND continues to express a far more ambiguous or even contradictory response to crises such as the one in Zaire.

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[13] Fiona Terry, *Condemned to Repeat? The Paradox of Humanitarian Action* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

[14] Bartleman, 179; see also John Watson, "Three-Legged Stool," Presentation to the CDAI Annual Seminar. Ottawa, 3 March 2005.

[15] Lloyd Axworthy, "Building Peace to Last: Establishing a Canadian Peacebuilding Initiative," Address by the Minister of Foreign Affairs at York University. Toronto, 30 October, 1996.

In common with the position adopted by Lt.-Gen. Romeo Dallaire (Retd) on the current crisis in Darfur, DND was quite comfortable with sending a small technically-oriented force to Zaire. At the centre of the department's preparations was the establishment of a Canadian Forces Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) capable of responding within 48 hours of a government decision to send assistance anywhere in the world composed of a small team of medical personnel, engineers, a transport and signals unit, and an infantry platoon for security.[16] Yet, akin to the counter arguments of Maj-Gen. Lewis MacKenzie (Retd) to the position of Dallaire and others, DND became highly sceptical that a "super DART" would be sufficient to deal with the situation. In principle, a decidedly raised military profile had enormous attractions not only for the Canadian defence, but also for the diplomatic establishment, a form of organizational leverage (or compensation) allowing Canada to sit at the table of decision-makers in the Western alliance despite a decrease of commitment in other areas. John Anderson, the Canadian ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), made explicit this linkage between Canada's role in the Zaire operation and its institutional access, in a newspaper interview: "We've astonished a few people by playing a leadership role on Zaire. I think its going to be a benchmark for Canada's foreign relations in the future that we decided to take the lead, with all its risks. … We're known as doers. We continue to earn respect and a place at the table through our actions."[17]

Abundant questions remained though about the practical implications for the Canadian military if such an ambitious approach was adopted. Could Canada deliver a force of 1000 plus personnel and if so would this robustness translate into overstretch in other peacekeeping commitments?

It was only after a long moment, and indeed the wrap up of the formal initiative in Zaire, that the third D, that of development, finally began. Canadian state officials moved to chair a number of meetings of bilateral and multilateral donors designed to co-ordinate plans for the post-conflict reconstruction and the institution-building

[16] David Collenette, "Disaster team for response anywhere," *Canadian Speeches* 10, no. 4 (July/August 1996): 57; see also Anthony Wilson-Smith, Luke Fisher and Andrew Phillips, "Canada leads aid mission to Zaire," *Maclean's*, (November 25, 1996).
[17] Anderson quoted in Gordon Barthos, "Canada fights for its role as NATO opens to East," *Toronto Star*, 29 November 1996, A27.

process. As Don Boudria, then Minister of International Co-operation, states: "We have taken on the leadership of the whole intervention, so it seems totally logical that the leadership be taken for the humanitarian interventionism and remember, the only reason there is military interventionism to start with is to offer the humanitarian aid."[18]

Still, despite this sense of enthusiasm, the focus on this activity raised more criticism than kudos. Having only given modest amounts to the central African area as a whole, less than the sum given to Jamaica, the region suddenly became a priority. This jump in interest (perhaps inevitably) thereby led to charges from the NGO community that this shift in approach came too late and without co-ordination from NGOs, and by foreign policy experts who, with some justification, lamented that once again Canadian activity was being driven by a diffuse and reactive orientation.[19]

3. Beyond the limitations of Ds

Apart from the detail of this case study, it is understandable why the Canadian government moved towards an approach that would facilitate bureaucratic coherence. From this organizational perspective, the need for a 3D approach is one of the bluntest lessons from the Zaire intervention. Nevertheless, the 3D model should be considered the beginning, not the end of rethinking about humanitarian interventions. While the Ds are a vital operational tool, the need to transpose the 3Ns into the equation can be demonstrated by revisiting the Zaire narrative from other conceptual angles.

The first of these Ns, niches relates to where Canada should target its humanitarian interventions pertaining to sudden disasters in weak states. NGOs, or at least the large international bodes with global reach, usually avoid approaching interventions in these terms, as they tend not to privilege borders or geography. Wherever disasters occur, these NGOs should and will be there. Indeed, in the context of a regionally-focused disaster such as the 2004 South Asian Tsunami which attracted enormous

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[18] Boudria quoted in Hugh Winsor, "Ottawa now focusing on aid," *Globe and Mail*, 21 November 1996, A15.
[19] Louis Delvoie, "Curious Ambiguities: Canada's International Security Policy," *Policy Options* 22:1 (Jan-Feb 2001): 36-42.

attention and resources, NGOs argued that they should have some flexibility to reassign donations away from the front-lines of this disaster to other areas of distress.

For other distinct reasons the Canadian military shares this scepticism about niches. At issue here is the military's perception of niches as a Trojan horse for turning them into a peacekeeping force, with a reduction in their capabilities as a wide-ranging military force.[20] The only way that the military can readily accept the niche-approach would be if niches were defined in such an expanded fashion that the term would be rendered meaningless. Again, as shown by his stretch of the term to suit his definition of objectives, Maj-Gen. MacKenzie (Retd) is a good bell-weather for this approach: "If you want to call a rapid reaction force a niche role, I can live with that."[21]

Alternatively, for states as complex multi-actor entities, the rationale for niche-picking is compelling. Not only does picking and choosing feed into the political/policy process in a generalized fashion, but the instinct to deploy this approach is embellished in times of fiscal cutbacks. Governments require this logic to sell initiatives to their publics or to justify non-involvement.

Selling the Zaire intervention to the Canadian public was necessary mainly because of the cautious mentality among segments of the population. Geographically, a number of observers argued that the mission was outside Canada's comfort zone. This type of criticism, for sure, contained a strong restrictionist strain that was distrustful about any activity beyond the confines of a narrowly defined security agenda based on the safety of the Canadian state from attack and territorial intrusion. However, it needs to be mentioned as well that these kinds of reservations were magnified by the targeting of the initiative on the African continent. As one critic asked directly: "What are we doing in Africa?"[22]

As suggested above, much of the "branding" exercise to sway favour concerned highlighting the attributes Canada possessed in contrast to other states. Unlike the

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[20] For a further analysis, see my article soon after the release of the Canada21 report, "In Search of Niches: Saying 'Yes' and Saying 'No' in Canada's International Relations," *Canadian Foreign Policy* 3, no. 3 (Winter 1995): 1-13.

[21] Lewis MacKenzie, Remarks to the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, Ottawa, 3 May 2004.

[22] Peter Worthington, "What are we doing in Africa?" *Toronto Sun*, 19 November 1996: 11.

US or France, for example, Canada has never had an imperial presence or geo-political stake in the region. In addition to this explanation, some additional positive points of identification existed: bilingualism and historical ties via missionary work and educational links. Robert Fowler, then Canadian Ambassador to the UN, drew the composite picture: "Canada has spent a generation paying a lot of attention to development in the Great Lakes region [of Central Africa], principally in Rwanda and Burundi...two little countries lost in the heart of darkness. No colonial baggage, no exploitation, and the ability to work in both languages."[23]

The ultimate determination of niches may actually be the Canadian relationship with the US. On Zaire (and in other current cases such as Haiti), the push for action ultimately came from an expression of US interests, where Canada was seen as being able to perform selective roles politically, if not militarily, unavailable to the US. In other cases, the opposite logic held with Canada not wanting to get involved in niche opportunities because of an association of these activities with the US.

The second N, norms complements an analysis of Canada's motivations as an agent with considerations of the international structure as either a receptor or constraint for humanitarian interventions. Prior to the advent of the R2P doctrine, the main argument utilized by both states and NGOs to intervene in times of sudden disaster was concerned with filling a vacuum of moral authority. The major gap between both camps was in their stance on whether legal authorization was needed. A country such as Canada, with its high degree of regard for multilateralism, was scrupulous in terms of its desire to obtain a mandate from the UN (as evidenced by UN Security Council Resolution 1080). NGOs, by way of contrast, tended to favour what was perceived as necessary versus what may have been deemed right.

What became paradoxical in terms of the Canadian approach at the state level was how the manner of recognition in meeting its obligations in terms of international institutions became wrapped up (and trapped) by these commitments. From the onset, great concern was taken to first ensure that the missions be cast as a humanitarian and not a peace enforcement initiative; second, that agreement be reached with parties on the ground; and finally, that rules of engagement be formalized, with weapons utilized only in cases of self-defence. Even with these limitations, Canada still faced

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[23] Fowler quoted in Hugh Winsor, "Envoy takes on toughest task," *Globe and Mail*, 1 November 1996, A14.

issues of non-intervention and sovereign rights. Acting as a harbinger of the Darfur crisis, no agreement could be reached with any of the states in the region to grant permission to set up a base, or be given landing or over-flight authority. The closest Canadian personnel could get to the crisis zone was the Entebbe airport in Uganda.

Although the parties on the ground sent some early signals that they might be willing to bend this principle, when it came to sanctioning specific proposals a consensus remained among the warring parties that they would not break with the norm of external intervention. This resistance emerged most clearly on the later proposals concerning air-drops of relief supplies. Representatives of the collapsing Mobutu regime held firm that the Zaire government was "categorically opposed" to such a proposal because these flights would be staged from countries considered to be aggressors.[24] As they extended their campaign, the Rwandan government and its allies became progressively un-cooperative in granting access to territory they controlled or in offering support for airdrops launched from alternative spots. The Rwandan government opposed operations being launched from Entebbe in no uncertain terms.[25] And finally, to underpin the unanimity on this resistance towards the replacement of new (interventionist) norms for old (sovereign) principles, the rebel commander, Laurent Kabila insisted that he should have the final word on where and when food aid was dropped in Eastern Zaire.[26]

The third N, networks adds additional dimensions to the analysis. As in the case of several initiatives associated with Canadian diplomacy, such as the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and the International Criminal Court (ICC), one target of networking was putative "like-minded" states. Canada kept in close contact with a variety of these cluster of countries in developing the Zaire initiative. In large part, these countries remained the traditional grouping that Canada had worked with on issue-specific coalitions over the decades and include Australia, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and the Netherlands. As in the ICBL and ICC cases, overtures were made as to prospective "new" middle powers, with particular reference to South Africa.

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[24] Derek Ferguson, "Canada rallies support for air drops in Zaire," *Toronto Star*, 29 November 1996, A1.
[25] See George Koch, "Operation Political Assurance: How Jean Chrétien's African crusade descended into a farce," *Alberta Report* 23, no. 52 (9 December 1996): 13-14.
[26] James C. McKinley, Jr., "Scaled-down aid: Perils lurk in plans for Zaire," *New York Times*, 2 December 1996, A8.

The standard view is that the Zaire initiative reinforced this type of network. Indeed, in the immediate aftermath of the crisis, Prime Minister Chrétien called for a greater formalization of this type of middle power coalition building.[27] Upon closer examination though, Canada misread some signals coming from the "new" constellation. This was especially so with reference to South Africa. One mistake was that Canadian diplomats equated President Mandela, who offered some initial support for the initiative, with the South African position. In doing so, Canadian state officials missed the importance of the ascendant role of Thabo Mbeki and his more Africa-centric approach. Nor did Canada extract some flexibility from the South Africans by its appearance of status seeking. Refusing to budge on calls that this position be given to an African, Lt.-Gen. Maurice Baril took on the role of the commanding officer for the humanitarian initiative. Because of these features, the parallels with the current Darfur situation become quite striking. As in Zaire, Mbeki has held out for an African-made solution with the formative African Union in the lead.

A second type of network that Canada assembled, or more precisely club, included the major powers of the US and Britain. It is argued that any humanitarian mission undertaken by Canada requires co-operation with these states, whether directly through military personnel, or indirectly through lift capacity and/or intelligence gathering. Although Canada's C-130 Hercules were still reliable for small, short runs, they had a far different capacity/ range level to the US C-5 (Galaxy) and C-17 military cargo planes.[28] The US with its transport helicopters, airfield engineers and logistical assistance, also possessed the means by which an effective air-bridge could be built into eastern Zaire if needed.

The US and Britain also had an asymmetrical advantage in information gathering (or, as some observers have suggested the dissemination of disinformation). Using both satellite imagery and fixed wing over-flights (with the US Navy P-3 Orion, buttressed by a National Intelligence Support Team, and Mombassa based TALCE team; and the RAF PR-9 Canberra reconnaissance aircraft), Eastern Zaire was closely scrutinized for signs of movement of people.

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[27] Helen Branswell, "PM Urges Cooperation," *Halifax Chronicle Herald*, 3 December 1996, A2.
[28] Paul Knox, "Canada pushes US for support," *Globe and Mail*, 13 November 1996, A1; Paul Koring, "US planes key for Canadians to get to Zaire," *Globe and Mail*, 13 November 1996, A1.

So impressive were these capabilities that any thought concerning a "Canadian led-initiative" were illusionary. When it suited the US and Britain to move on the initiative for geo-political reasons, they led Canadian state officials. When it no longer suited the "bigs," the plug on the initiative could be pulled and Canadian "leadership" dropped. As Louis Nastro and Kim Nossal report; "In Zaire, Canada was sandbagged by its British and American allies, who simply withdrew their support in mid-initiative."[29]

The third network highlights an important theme of the Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP) conference concerning state-non-state relations generally or military-NGO relationships more specifically. For the defence side of the nascent Ds, the best scenario for the Zaire intervention was a quick in-and-out operation. A result of this was a series of events on the ground that the Canadian state could claim to have assisted in delivering, and just as crucially to have done so without casualties. The potential dangers for Canadian military personnel were accorded at least equal, if not higher consideration than the risks facing the refugee population. By his comments from as early as November 19, 1996, that a humanitarian intervention might not be necessary, the Canadian Defence Minister, Doug Young appears to typify a pragmatic outlook. This interpretation is buttressed by Young's obvious sense of satisfaction that Canadian forces had played a substantial role in the "repatriation of over a million people without anybody hav[ing] to fire a shot."[30]

For the NGO community, this outlook reflected the easy distractibility of outsider states on the crises in the developing world.[31] Their image of the Canadian state, far from being elevated because of the intervention, was scorned as one component of an international coalition that lacked staying power. Instead of being credited with precipitating the exodus of refugees back to Rwanda, the mission was denounced

[29] Louis Nastro, and Kim Richard Nossal, "The commitment-capability gap: Implications for Canadian foreign policy in the post-cold war era," *Canadian Defence Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (Autumn 1997): 21-22.

[30] Douglas Young, Media Scrum with Minister of National Defence, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, 5 December 1996.

[31] Report Prepared by the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development and l'Association africaine pour la défense des droits de l'homme en République Démocratique du Congo), *International Non-governmental Commission of Inquiry into the Massive Violations of Human Rights Committed in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Former Zaire) 1996-1997* (Montreal: Rights and Democracy, June 1998).

for leaving other large groups of Hutu refugees, obscured from view in the forests in Eastern Zaire, facing retaliation and slaughter as the Rwanda-backed Kabila/ Tutsi offensive continued. Even as the Canadian-led mission was wrapping up, a wide number of NGOs were calling for a renewal of a cross-border interventionist effort to save lives.

4. Drawing out Lessons from the Ns

By including the 3Ns into the 3D framework, lessons from the 1996 humanitarian intervention in Eastern Zaire can be framed in a more comprehensive fashion. The Ds focus on the "how" of the intervention with special consideration on the functional organization of the mission. This component is a necessary part of the learning process, as revealed by the insights drawn from a number of state actors. At the bureaucratic level, two members of the interdepartmental Task Force established to co-ordinate Canadian involvement in the Zaire initiative drew up a long list of suggestions that focused on "Canadian reaction capability".[32] At the political level, Prime Minister Chrétien showcased the need "to put into place the mechanisms that in the future will allow us to respond to the next Zaire in a faster, better organized manner."[33] Cast by itself in isolation, however, this administrative side is insufficient for a deep analysis. What should not be forgotten are the "where," "why," and "with whom" issues.[34] Only when these elements are added can we get a full picture of what should and can be done to help in situations of sudden disasters in weak states.

The importance of understanding the role of niche-picking in determining where and when Canada should be involved (or not) in humanitarian intervention is brought out not only by the experience in Zaire, but in an array of current cases. Determining which crisis or set of crises are the most suitable targets for Canadian activity on this basis has some compelling rationale to it. But it should also be realized that niches are often chosen out a sense of political commitment or convenience, not because of their "natural" logic.

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[32] James Appathurai and Ralph Lysyshyn, "Lessons Learned from the Zaire Mission," *Canadian Foreign Policy* 5, no. 2 (Winter 1998): 93-105.
[33] Quoted in Branswell, "PM Urges Cooperation."
[34] For a discussion of some of these themes see Douglas Bland, "Canada and Military Coalitions: Where, How and with Whom?" in *Geopolitical Integrity*, edited by Hugh Segal (Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2005).

By most standards, Haiti should be highest on the list of weak states in which Canada should take an active interest. Politically, there is a strong domestic "lobby" group of Haitian-Canadians, amounting to some 200,000 in Canada, with much of this community strategically located in Montreal including the constituency of the current Foreign Minister, Pierre Pettigrew. There is as well, a sizeable international NGO presence in Haiti. Geopolitically, Haiti is in Canada's immediate neighbourhood. As Don Macnamara argues: "If the '3-D' public policy of joined-up defence, diplomacy and development is to mean anything, it must mean something in our own hemisphere."[35]

This conjunction of circumstances has meant that Haiti cannot be avoided. But this involvement has remained very diffuse in nature. The "hard" side of Canadian involvement has been seen through the use of members of the Joint Task Force to protect Canadian interests during the removal of President Aristide. The "soft" side has been embellished by the scramble of NGOs to re-establish themselves in Haiti with the infusion of CIDA resources into the country.

What is striking in this case is that Haiti has never been accorded the sustained strategic interest that one would have expected if it had been picked as a "niche." Unlike Zaire, Canadian state officials had a considerable familiarity with Haiti over its recent crisis and this familiarity has eschewed over-ambitious mandates. Moreover, in contrast to Zaire, the Haitian crisis could not be interpreted in any sense as a sudden crisis, but as part of a longer political trajectory that is both embedded and intractable. As such, there was no great push from the wider mobilized public for Canada to be involved.

This discussion points to the reactive quality of Canadian involvement in humanitarian interventions. As opposed to natural "niches," the logic for Canada has become that of either filling gaps dictated by the US relationship and/or where media/public opinion is targeting activity. What is fascinating about the Zaire initiative is that it at least initially satisfied both concerns. Other cases are far more complicated in nature. Afghanistan, among other areas of operation, as a "niche" absorbs a tremendous amount of resources from the Canadian military leaving Canada over-stretched in other current or potential operations.

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[35] Don W. Macnamara, "Haiti – An opportunity for Canada to apply the '3-D' concept," *Policy Options* 26, no. 2 (February 2005): 67.

The importance of determining which set of norms should be privileged by Canadian initiatives is if anything more engaging. The 2001 R2P principle, derived from the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, has lent considerable weight to the norm of employing "human security" as the justification for humanitarian interventions. Invariably, almost every reference to humanitarian interventions from a Canadian perspective has referred to this principle as a mobilizing force in a manner that was unavailable to the champions of the 1996 Zaire intervention.

If acting as a catalyst for action, this intellectual/policy pressure has brought with it a counter-reaction designed to stymie initiatives. As Robert Jackson informed a decade ago, it is precisely the most "weak" states that cling to the status and prerogatives of sovereignty so tightly.[36] Furthermore, as demonstrated once again by the Darfur case, these states can still count on a formidable set of allies to back them up whether on normative or opportunistic grounds.

Getting around these barriers is a formidable test. Even in the unlikely situation that Canada could muster the same-sized contingent as deployed in Afghanistan, a robust unilateral initiative in a case such as Darfur is not a possibility for Canada. A "middle power" intervention would be just as difficult, as President Mbeki has stood steadfast that any solution must be a "made in Africa" one. Therefore, the choices remain among possibilities at either end of the spectrum: an intervention "by invitation" (as witnessed by the Multinational Interim Force authorized by the UN Security Council for Haiti in February 2004), or a forceful intervention via the US or NATO alliance (as reflected in the Afghanistan case). Either scenario would constitute an enormous stretch for Canada in a case such as Darfur.

Understanding the importance of networking completes the trio of Ns. Any hope that Canada could construct a strategy of humanitarian intervention around a solid cluster of "middle powers" with like-minded attributes has been eroded. States that do intervene in cases of "weak states" (unlike the Canadian intervention in Zaire) are ones that can be considered to possess some regional weight: illustrative examples include Brazil in Haiti or Australia in East Timor and the Solomon Islands.

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[36] Robert Jackson, *Quasi-states: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

The network or club that Canada looks to for cues on humanitarian intervention has been magnified towards the Western alliance, whether on the US alone or through NATO. Indeed in some cases such as Afghanistan, there are signs that Canada attempted to balance its activities between those of the US and its NATO partners. In more military activities (including deployment of Special Forces), Canada has worked closely with the US. In reconstruction efforts, in turn, there is preference for the British-style of community-based work.

Networking between Canadian state personnel and NGOs remains available albeit awkward in nature. In principle, there is a recognition that both the military and NGOs operate in shared space with an interdependent skill set. In practice though, enormous gaps exist between approaches to humanitarian interventions. The military view themselves as the "lead" actor whose activities secure the environment enabling other actors to operate. As the President of the CDA has stated, "soldiers are not social workers with guns."[37] NGOs for their part want a strict compartmentalization of the military role, with no intrusion into the domains and responsibilities of NGOs. Nancy Gordon of Care Canada states for example, "We're not in the security-providing business and the military is not as effective as we are at providing humanitarian relief and development assistance…those of us working in humanitarian relief can get tarred with an impartial brush"[38]

5. Conclusion

The 1996 Zaire intervention has left a massive imprint on Canadian conceptual thinking and operational practices concerning humanitarian interventions. A cluster of puzzles associated with this initiative continue to be grappled with. The impetus for continued involvement in humanitarian interventions is caught between a nod towards values of good international citizenship and geo-strategic interest. The question of resoluteness was also an issue. Canada showed a high degree of willingness to move into action where there was little resistance. But it remains

[37] Richard J. Evraire, Remarks to the Sub-Committee on Human Rights and International Development of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Ottawa, 25 November 2004.
[38] Gordon quoted in Thorne, "New Canadian foreign policy blurs line between military, development roles," Canadian Press, 29 December 2004.

unclear as to what the Canadian resilience is for pressing on with initiatives when faced with counter-pressures. Finally, the question of "who Canada is with" creates an air of uncertainty as well. Canada would like to use humanitarian interventions to express some differences with the US. However, as shown by Zaire, these initiatives can be used to fill gaps where the US doesn't want to go.

Ultimately, humanitarian interventions are distinguished by how Canada would like to operate in the world and what it can be expected to deliver. Ambitious forms of activity, with their overtures of "rescues, crusades, and moral interventions"[39] have an obvious appeal, especially in cases such as Zaire, Haiti, Afghanistan and Darfur, in which there was considerable human suffering. But attempts to make a difference through "heroic" action have obvious pitfalls as well. Complex emergencies, as the Zaire episode demonstrated most convincingly, lay down imposing challenges for any member of the international community.

If Canada is not overwhelmed into a state of pessimism, it must work to lay out a strategic blueprint for dealing with the challenges of humanitarianism. What is needed to meet this objective is a merger of an inside-out approach giving due consideration to capabilities and coherence, with an outside-in approach alloying the contextual relevance of geography, motivations, and partners. Only when this formula is in place can we hope that the Canadian repertoire for humanitarian intervention, with a mind to the implant of governance practices, has the possibility of rising to the challenge in each and every crisis that it is called upon to respond.

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[39] John W. Holmes, "Most safely in the middle," *International Journal* 39, no. 2 (Spring 1984): 102.

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