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US FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS SOMALILAND/SOMALIA: A LITMUS TEST FOR A NEW WORLD ORDER

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by SAID YUSUF ABDI

A new guide published by Americas' Army Intelligence and called 'Restore hope Soldier Handbook' passes over U.S. links to the old Siyaad Barre government, in a half sentence, and without even the briefest reference to the hundreds of millions of dollars the U.S. spent on Siyaad Barre, who, along with Mobutu and Moi, was one of the Sub-Saharan Africas top three U.S. aid recipients up to 1991, the year of his overthrow. In today's Global village, it is always a bit simplistic to blame all the problems of the Somalis to internal factors; the linkages between external factors and internal ones have to be noted and opportioned accordingly. In this article and others I want to examine the foreign policies of other countries that hold great responsibility for Somalis' plight and their roles played in sowing seeds of destruction. More specifically, in this article, I want to examine the U.S. role in the Somali difficulties particularly from 1988 on.

The U.S. foreign policy toward the Horn in general between 1945-90 was guided by a series of Cold War calculations that saw the region as a means for solving non-African problems and as a means of preventing the further advance of Soviet Communism. Following Said Barre's break with the USSR and after the Ethiopian-Somali war and following the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan, the U.S. readily embraced Siyaad Barre for the Middle East, Arabian Gulf and Indian Ocean strategy. It was Carter that sought security arrangements with the Siyaad regime, but it was the

Reagan administration that wholeheartedly cemented the relationship. The U.S. was granted a military base for Rapid Development force in Berbera in 1980. U.S. Economic and military assistance for the Siyaad regime was around \$800 million. Moreover in the economic field, with western blessing, the IBRD, IMF and multilateral Donors flocked to Siyaad's side. Western sponsored development programs to Somalia, and emergency aid for hundreds of thousands refugees from Ethiopia, overwhelmed the country. Agreements on debt reduction and rescheduling in the Paris Club and IMF structural adjustment programs dominated U.S. official economic policy towards the S.D.R. The U.S. had a responsibility; it must admit, for the effect, superpower strategies had on the Somalis and in terms of prolonging Siyaad Barres twenty-one year grip on the people and in providing the fuel of armaments that were used in the fratricidal civil war that followed. The U.S.A. propped up the Dictatorial Siyaad regime, and supplied it with the weapons which it fought its own people, and maintained total domestic repression.

The escalating civil war in Somalia that continued in the aftermath of SNM's offensive in May 1988, while igniting congressional resistance and criticism of Siyaad's regime resulted in American National Security Agencies supporting Siyaad's government. As a result of the April 1988 Ethiopian-Somali accord, the SNM entered the Somali city of Burao on the evening of May 27 1988. The SNM scored stunning successes against Barre's armed forces. In this final offensive, the SNM captured Burao, assassinated all the corrupt senior government and military officials, and captured the greater parts of Hargeisa (The second largest urban area in the country). At this critical

stage in the conflict, and when there was unwritten agreement between U.S. and SNM, that SNM will not attack U.S. base in Berbera, the U.S. Department of Defense in June 18, 1988 delivered \$1.4 million in lethal assistance to the Siyaad's armed forces including M16 rifles and 2.8 million rounds of ammunition. 500,000 unarmed civilian Isaacs were purposefully murdered by the Somali armed forces between 1988 and March 1989. The major cities of Burao and Hargiesa were bombarded and mostly destroyed. As the U.S. defense was shoring up Siyaad's government against SNM, the U.S. Democratic Congress and specially the House Subcommittee on Africa, became more focal in its criticism of U.S. Somali relationship. Congress became critical of U.S. weaponry being used by Siyaad's forces to urban areas indiscriminately, and the executing of civilians whose only crime was belonging to the Isaaq clan. Congress also criticised the gross violation of Siyaad's regime of human rights and of the fact that Siyaad's regime lacked the support of the people.

With the house subcommittee threatening to cut off all U.S. aid to Somalia, the department of State tried to reconcile the positions of Congress and the defence establishment, by placing voluntarily a hold on any further lethal military aid to the Siyaad regime. Congressional pressure led to the department of States acquiescence and Bush Administration's decision to reprogram \$2.5 million of military aid originally targetted for Somalia in fiscal year 1989. In addition to the suspension of military aid, the economic support fund for security assistance to Somalia beginning fiscal year 1988 was subjected to notification demands of Congress. \$21 million were suspended in fiscal year 1988

Economic Support fund to Somalia, and reprogrammed in September 1989 to other African countries. The evolution of U.S. foreign policy in Somalia from 1988 until the overthrow of Siyaad demonstrated executive-congressional stand off. The intensification of the armed oppositions to Siyaad Barre attracted the attention of a highly vocal group in the democratically controlled Congress that sought to limit the defence establishment's enthusiasm and involvement with a corrupt and illegitimate regime; this group forced a voluntary hold on U.S. military aid.

The U.S. launched a rescue mission of its personnel and of Mogadishu as a result of Ambassador Bishop's urgent cable of May 3rd 1991. The decline in the perceived need for military access to Somalia as the result of the decline of the Cold War (The U.S. even evacuated the Soviet ambassador and 35 staff) netted an Executive inattention and delegation of policy to department of state and national security bureaucracies.

Also the congressional constraints and preferred strong desires of the armed opposition to maintain and enhance Somalia-USA relations, prevented U.S. directly shoring up Siyaad Barre when he was overthrown in January 1991. American attention was on the Gulf War. Somaliland Republic declared its independence from Somalia in May 1991, when Yugoslavia was disintegrating. Overshadowed by the Iraqi conflict, the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. and the end of the Cold War, and the civil war in Yugoslavia, the Somali issues attracted little attention. The U.N. fled Mogadishu and all western embassies evacuated their diplomats.

While US ally Siyaad Barre's government was collapsing, U.S.

statements were restricted to no comment, but two unwise and underhanded decisions were taken. U.S. delegated responsibility of Somali issues to former European colonial powers (i.e. Italy and Britain) and also supported the unity of Somalia and Somaliland, through the Jibuti Conferences (meaning refusal to recognise). In contrast to this negative response and approach to events in Somaliland and Somalia, I want to compare the creative policies adopted by the U.S. towards Eritrea and Ethiopia.

In Ethiopia the U.S. demonstrated an unusual degree of creativity in responding to events prior to and after Mengistu's departure. The U.S. had an Intehse Involvement in negotiations between the Ethiopian government and the armed opposition (EPRDF and EPLF). The net result of U.S. Involvement was an important contribution to transfer of power to liberatory movements and the avoidance of bloodshed and clan conflicts evident still in Somalia. Secondly, the most critical element of the Cohen mediated May agreement, was U.S. support for a U.N. supervised referendum in Eritrea, within a period of roughly two years. The U.S. decision to support regional self-determination through the ballot box represented a significant change in U.S. foreign policy in Africa. This challenged the hallowed OAU concept of the inviolability of frontiers and changed U.S. support for the territorial integrity of the Ethiopian Empire from the 50's to the 80's. The successful U.S. policy to seek out liberatory opposition leaders and establish working relationships and the prudent U.S. advocacy of self-determination for Eritrea, both allowed the success of bringing about peaceful change in Ethiopia

and Independence to Eritrea.

These policies stood apart from the way the U.S. policies were conducted in Somaliland and Somalia. The official U.S. policy which followed the lead of the former European colonial powers (Britain and Italy) was a cop-out and a deliberate attempt to support the manifesto group and intended not to recognize the liberatory opposition movements and to empathize with the concerns and plight of Somaliland. By sending its official U.S. observer to the Jibuti Conference in 1991, it made it clear U.S. favoured the preservation of the Republic of Somalia as originally and illegally constituted in 1960. The department of state made it clear they were following the lead of Europeans and specially what Italy wanted. In addition to following the lead of Britain, and Italy, the U.S. officials endorsed U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali's (whose views and biases about Horn issues are well-known as well as his support and his nation's strong backing for Said Barre's criminal regime), U.N. role as being a cornerstone of future reconciliation of the Somalis. Boutros Ghali and Egypt were strong supporters of Siyaad and as a policy, always advocated a united Somalia to weaken and counter Ethiopian challenges in the issue of water and the blue line.

Relevant for understanding the U.S. policy in the Somali conflict, is the nature of opposition groups. There were four main opposition groups fighting the regime of Siyaad Barre: The SNM (The Somali National Movement, 1981) the USC (United Somali Congress 1989), the SPM (The Somali Patriotic Movement) and the SSDF (Somali Salvation Democratic Front). The first armed opposition group seems to have stumbled into existence; after failing in an anti-Siyaad coup attempt, Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf

fled to Ethiopia when he established the SSDF. The SSDF quickly atrophied as a result of (1) heavy reliance on Qaddafi's Funds (2) Abdillahi Yusuf's Dictatorial Leadership (3) and Siyaad's ability to appeal to most of majertan clans Involved (His fighters came mostly from Abdillahi Yusuf's own sub group) as cousins within the Darrod clan family. Siyaad was even able to entice (with funds and clan appeals) the bulk of SSDF fighters to return from Ethiopia and participate in his wars against Hawiye in Mogudishu.

The outbreak of the civil war in the North (now the Republic of Somaliland) in 1988 signalled the beginning of the collapse of Siyaad Barre's government. During 1990 the civil war devastated the whole country and fighting between Siyaad's troops and the opposition intensified. SNM, USC and SPM in the final days had an agreement that there should be no discussion with ~~Siyaad~~ Barre, and that the fighting to oust Siyaad Barre should continue, and a provisional government be formed after his overthrow, followed in two years by elections. The understanding was that each separate political movement should initially re-establish its own regional administrations and then hold a conference to form a national administration. But after Barre's defeat in January 1991, the 'manifesto group' with Italian backing, speedily appointed Ali Mahdi, Interim President, and, without consulting any of the opposition groups, including the SNM in the northern region. This contravened the August 1990 agreement of the opposition. The "Manifesto group" were principally politicians, civil servants and businessmen, and were former establishment figures of the majertan clan. The manifesto group virtually played no

role in the anti-Siyaad struggle until just before his fall - both the SNM and Aideed's USC refused to recognize the manifesto group.

Somaliland declared its own separate state; the proclamation of independence was unanimously supported by the masses and was from bottom up. Many leaders of SNM had a material interest in Mogadishu and personal ambitions in union politics; but were afraid to express their view in the public seminars that preceded the Burao Congress. These leaders were afraid of strong mass retaliation; they could not deny the wishes of the majority and still retain credibility. The case for Somaliland Independence, was on the agenda from start of the illegal merger between Somaliland and Somalia. The irreconcilable differences between the colonial heritages, between the Italian mafia infested and the clear professional British concepts of governance, financial systems, and trading practices, immediately posed unsurmountable hurdles. Somaliland found itself stripped of political and military power and drained of manpower and resources in favour of the developing and corrupt South. The attempt to uproot the northerner's after the 1978 war and the 1988 savage bombing of northern cities deepened the resentment of northerners against the South. The people of Somaliland were bitterly disappointed that the U.S., after trying to support sweeping changes in Italy's mafia corruption as a result of the end of the Cold War, did not see to the fact that mafia corruption was one of the root causes of the Somali strife and conflict. Full investigations of the Italian Christian Democrats - as western representative of EC countries and the U.S.A. in the Cold War - role in the Somali conflict should be undertaken. In the 70's and 80's both

Italians and U.S. preferred the corrupt mafia controlled Italian Christian Democrats to the Communists.

We Somali's now ask whether we will be denied the benefits of changes in the Italian 'Kick-back culture' and whether past links of Siyaad and the Christian Democrats, should not be publicly and internationally examined, so as to realize the mafia impact on Southern Somalia in terms of rigged elections, corrupt system of proportional representation and a system of nepotism and political patronage. The U.S. also cannot prolong to preserve a fictional united Somalia as a realistic option. During the Cold War, the U.S. and the West were major obstacles to the creation of a greater Somali nation; this now undermines any forced union of Somaliland and Somalia with the decline of the Cold War, the bureaucratic justification of territorial integrity of former Somali Republic no longer rings true and since the U.S. recognised the independence of Eritrea, it cannot disregard the informed nature of politics and wishes of the Somali people and in defence to Italian and Egyptian (employing its son Boutros Ghali, at the helm of the U.N. as Secretary-General) colonial foreign policies. In the South (Somalia), there were two facts underlying the political conflict. First the dispute between 'Aideed's USC' - that overthrow Siyaad Barre - and the 'Manifesto group' which was all along manipulated and designed by Italy to usurp power. Secondly there has been the disputed leadership of the Hawiyee clan-based USC.

The two Italian-backed Jibuti conferences to rename Ali Mahdi as head of a transitional government and to rally international support for the 'manifesto group' was seen as

deceptive and insincere symbolisms of pretence, at political reform and self-determination, for Somalis. The U.S. by not negotiating with the liberating movements (The SNM, USC and SPM) and by using Italy, Egypt, and Jibuti (accomplices of Siyaad Barre) as proxies and by not recognizing the independence of the Somaliland Republic, sabotaged the cause and Somali sacrifices and struggles against the criminal system of Siyaad Barre. The U.S. agenda to discredit the opposition so as to cover U.S. ugly relationship with Siyaad and to bring Siyaad's people from the back-door cannot be lost on the Somalis. Is it any wonder, that Siyaad Barre was given asylum in Nigeria? America's best friend and ally in Africa. On the other hand, Aideed - the former Ambassador to India who was instrumental in overthrowing the government of Siyaad in his role as a USC military commander and who widely was expected to take power in Mogadishu is now on the run and is being haunted by the U.N. JESS has been moved out of Kismayu by the mass murderer Morgan, (Siyaad's son-in-law, who killed Somalilanders).under the noses of Belgian and American UN Troops. In Somaliland a non-SNM member has been installed as the new president in one of the most manipulated and corrupt in the history of elections and by a so-called tribal leaders. The SNM which presented the strongest challenge to Barre's leadership from 1988 on atrophied; having been denied recognition and developmental assistance and dealing with extreme external pressures through the Jibuti conferences - and elsewhere and for two whole years, the toll was great in terms of internal squabbles and in illegitimate elders usurping the SNM leadership. Tribalizing and rubbishing the mass struggles against Siyaads corruption and criminality and bestowing the oppressors with more

say and authority than the oppressed, in the destiny of the Somali people, will not work. The U.S. has a lot to answer for what has gone wrong in Somalia/Somaliland for the last 13 years. The destruction of the cities of Somaliland and the lack of recognition and development for the last two years, the famine, civil strife, and starvation in the South have their genesis rooted in the very character of the 21 years of Siyaad Barre.

As the old political orders gave away in Ethiopia and in the Somali Republic, the U.S. government took different approaches. In the Somali Republic the U.S. refused early on, to recognise the liberatory movements and the independence of Somaliland; this led to the troubles and anarchy of the last years which now we have to pay the price. In contrast, in Ethiopia the U.S. mediated in the transfer of power to two Christian liberation movements and recognised referendum for the Eritrean people and which made their independence inevitable. One then wonders why differing policies towards the Ethiopians and Somalis when Mengistu and Siyaad were removed from power. There are multiple factors accounting for U.S. initial activist role. Firstly, it is said that there was a desire to avoid duplicating the political disaster in Somalia when Siyaad was driven from power. Secondly, in Ethiopia, it is said that both Mengistu and the opposition favoured a greater role for U.S. as a mediator. Thirdly, Ethiopia's membership and seal on the security council was essential during the Gulf War. Fourthly and more importantly and for a direct white house role, was the political issue of the Falashas; 14000 Falashas who were stranded in Addis waiting departure for Israel. Finally and most importantly was the desire to preserve the Red Sea and Christian heritage in the

Horn and as a bulwark against Islamic movements. It is argued that within the Department of State, Bureau of African Affairs, Ethiopia was always considered the most attractive of all the countries of the Horn. In addition to other reasons already mentioned, Ethiopia's large population, economic potential and as a center and site of OAU Headquarters, are cited, as reasons why Ethiopia was considered a prize piece for rational foreign policy beyond the Mengistu Years. No wonder the U.S. recognized and bestowed sovereignty on two Christian Liberation movements in Eritrea and Ethiopia.

The backdrop of U.S. foreign policy stances, detailed, hints at U.S. foreign policy having had a hidden agenda all along. Somalis were distrusted and disfavoured because of their adherence to Islam; while Ethiopians are favoured and covertly for their Christian heritage, the destruction of the Somali Liberatory movements: and the timing of the U.S. intervention (see African Confidence vol. 34 no. 1, 8th Jan 1993) is widely seen as resistance to political Islam. The U.S. and the West have a clear vision of their interests, defined narrowly and seek to ensure the hegemony of global capitalism legitimised with the moral veneer of a political Christianity. Samuel Huntington, a well known American political scientist, in a recent U.S. Quarterly foreign affairs article, argues that now that we have come to the end of ideology, the conflicts among civilizations defined to a large extent by religion will become increasingly central. He claims the next confrontation to the west, will come from the Muslim world, first, because Islam is the most strict religion in the world outside of Christianity. Secondly, Islam

does not believe in secularism - the separation between religion and politics. Thirdly that there is a feeling that the Muslim world as a result of long western oppression and exploitation, is undergoing a renaissance. No wonder Mrs. Thatcher at the Nato meeting in May 1990, argued that the West will still need new flexible forces to deal with the Middle East. There is a fear that the Muslim states of the CIS (specially Kazakhstan) might facilitate the acquisition of such weapons by oil-producing states of the Middle-East who certainly have enough money to offer tempting prices for them. The Middle East still remaining the most sensitive area of conflict in the World Today, is linked to the spreading war in the Balkan by the sufferings of Muslims in Bosnia and the possible involvement of Turkey.

In the Bosnian case, the battle has been taken to Muslim people, innocent men and women are fighting for self-preservation, and neither the European Community nor the UN wish to see a muslim state in the heartland of Christianity. For the existence of such a state would officially associate Islam with the white continent of Europe. To the dominant west, the Muslim interests count for nothing, and Islamic protest is kept at private and domestic level and where public, its style of anger is stereotyped as motiveless malice or fanaticism. How do we thus dispel this western paranoia and prejudice about Islam? No religion with 14 centuries of history can fairly be reduced to the one word label (Fundamentalism) of western bigotry. No student of the bible or the Koran would also ever be able to authenticate a view that they instill terrorism. The Koran, orders believers to "enter fully into a state of peace". But the pursuit of an enduring peace, founded on justice and mercy is an

active affair. The multi-million dollar question is whether America after having defeated atheism and totalitarianism, and after electing a democratic government will be able to bring about a more peaceful, democratic and just world order? Will Clinton be able to address the negative aspects of capitalism, domestically and internationally? Will Clinton be able to explain when and where he will intervene or use force and be able to enunciate clear guidelines and criteria? Will Clinton make a clean break with the Cold War calculations and with the foreign policies of the Republican Administrations that preceded him, by encouraging the spread or consolidation of democracy abroad e.g. in Arabian Gulf and at a price and economic costs? Or will Clinton's four years be business as usual and with an eye to re-election and repeat of trying to install U.S. supported strongman and puppets (e.g. Siyaad and Doe) at the helm of Africa and third world countries? If Somaliland and Somalia are to be seen as a litmus test for Clinton's foreign policy, some areas of concern to be watched would be Development, Security, and Democracy.

Economically, there is a school of thought that reads an economic motive into the intervention of the U.S. in Somalia. Because of the suddenness and the heavy nature of U.S. involvement, some see Somaliland/Somalia still as part of U.S. Middleeastern, Gulf and Indian Ocean economic strategy. The Austrian T.V. has shown a documentary explaining that oil has been found in Somaliland and Somalia, which in amount, is equivalent to that of Kuwait. The economic priority of Clinton's agenda is also mentioned; initially, the U.S. decision to intervene was justified against the backdrop of failing

international relief effort to feed starving Somalis in the South of Somalia. But U.S. and U.N. involvement became open-ended. The nature of relief assistance, can undermine the ability of local economy, specially in Somaliland/and Somalia where local communities have not been empowered in delivering basic needs and services. Eventually, it is development that people need and Somaliland for two whole years has been denied development assistance; without any developmental support for two whole years, democratic values and commitments are becoming difficult to sustain. Clinton's activist vision of the U.S. as the great promoter of world democracy will be tested in the kind and amounts of developmental assistance given to the less developed and to the more democratic regimes and in addressing the north-south issues. Debt relief and reform of the negative aspects of adjustment programmes of the IMF, by a democratic administration, would be wise.

Security wise the Clinton administration has seized on assertive multi-lateralism; turning to the UN to help keep the peace, the model is the "Arabian Gulf War Model". But in both the Gulf and in Somalia, the model is a mirage, a contrivance designed to provide political cover in the Third, Muslim, and Arab Worlds. The security council is not representative of the members and it is time world views were to prevail rather than those of the West. Unless the U.N. is seen to be addressing the concerns of the majority of its 184 members, it will be seen to be acting as a western instrument or as a surrogate for western interests. the possibility of the Third World and Muslim countries being marginalized or recolonized in the post-cold war is real; the U.N. Council since the end of the Cold War has been dominated by the

Western three (Russia has been hamstrung by economic reliance on the west and by domestic upheavals; while China is very preoccupied by its own national concerns). The Security Council has become little more than an extra arm of western foreign policy and in turn of US (single super power) policy. The US and UN are not assisting Somalia build its own capacity for conflict resolution and peace keeping. The disgraceful bombing of civilians and killing demonstrators have unmasked and the hinted and hidden agenda of U.S. policies; the great humanitarian enterprise of helping starving Somalis turned into bombing the hell out of Somalis. Welcomed to feed the hungry, UN troops are now seen to be carrying American policies of neocolonialism.

The killing of the 23 Pakistanis are given as a justification for the bombardments and US cobra helicopter attacks on Mogadishu to punish Aideed. The killing of the Pakistanis was ugly and wrong, but how did the Pakistanis get killed? The U.S. version is that they were ambushed, while the Italian statement was that the Pakistanis tried to take over the Aideed's Radio, and that Aideed's forces rightfully fought back. There was to be an investigation, appointed and an official verdict; but neither has been forthcoming. By targetting Aideed the liberator of Mogadishu, the U.S. has finally uncovered its hidden partisan stand. Taking on Aideed so that a Ali Mahdi could take over, has not worked in Jubti and will not work now; this will not build a lasting reconciliation and a lasting constituency for democracy and peace. The U.S. all along was not interested in saving the Somalis from oppression but was interested in fighting Aideed in the South and in preventing him

coming to power; the ill-judged American sorties is rapidly becoming a laughing stock; they are seen as stunts devised to satisfy western T.V. viewers and are of no help to Somali people in the ground.

The U.N. and Colonial Governor Howe, have gone further than ever before, breaking precedents and stretching the mandate. When the Pakistani unit, in a vengeful mood opened fire on Somali Demonstrators, the U.N. spokesman originally suggested that members of the crowd fired on the Pakistanis. Later the story was dropped and a spokesman claimed that armed men were among the demonstrators, using women and children as a human screen. It was clearly implied that it is legitimate for U.N. forces in such cases to shoot women and children, in order to get at those who are using them as a screen. Where are the values of international behaviour that justify such action? The UN has been spraying unarmed demonstrators with automatic gunfire killing 20 people, and the U.S. has been bombing a crowded city for days on. The upshot of these disgraceful acts showed Clinton's ineptness and his acceptance of force and his total misunderstanding and ignorance of the dangers in Somalia. Domestically, suffering from the lowest popularity rating and seen as a draft-dodging wimp, he decided to show his macho credentials by ordering the world's most powerful military machine to bomb and kill innocent Somali civilians and not the powerful Serbs. The U.S. and U.N. motives which Somalis questioned from the start have been totally fractured. The ferocity of the force used have thrown Somali political problems back where they were; they are being treated with a military solution. Much of the political capital built by Mohamed Sahnoun and Robert Oakley in Somalia has been lost and

squandered. Now we hear Belgians being accused of killing 200 innocent Somalis in Kismayo; of Italians requesting to be part of the UNISOM command because of their credentials as former colonial masters of Somalia; and that the U.S. is bombing civilians again. To believe that Somalis will lay down their arms when genuine political understanding about their countries future, has not been reached, is pure wishful thinking.

In terms of democracy, what is missing from U.S. policy in Somaliland and Somalia is a basic respect for the people who are Muslim and who are Africans. The U.S. resists the option most consistent with a just and democratic process; that of letting people determine collectively their future by building on their desires, priorities and initiatives. The question is whether the U.S. and the democratic administration can in the post-cold war era, forsake expediency, narrow self-interest and bullying. The Somali ground will be litmus test for Clinton Administration's promise to make enduring commitment to democracy and human rights and through a process of preventive diplomacy. The people of Somaliland who have been fighting Siyaad Barre since 1981, have their main cities destroyed; the problem of a smooth transition to a democratic society is seen as being due to lack of a strong economic base and developmental assistance. The U.S. has refused to recognize somaliland and through indirect means (the two Jibuti conferences) have applied pressure of the west and other third world proxies (e.g. Egypt and Jibuti) to refuse recognition and developmental aid. In the Borama Shiir, where the SNM was buried, unrepresentative elders took over and installed a non-SNM as a president. According to one of the other candidates, the meeting

was one of the most undemocratic and corrupt conferences, in the annals of Somali history. Somalia is also unable to have the freedom to choose its leaders; so far the Somalis have failed to accept the U.S. and UN imposed solutions on them. Targetting Aideed was a deliberate attempt to tip the balance of power toward his enemies and has now worsened the chances for political settlement. The U.S. and UN new role in trying to make peace, before warring parties are ready, is a bad omen for disorder and pandemonium. The U.S. and the west cannot impose their notions of democracy on people whose cultures are so different, nor will Somalis again accept another cannibal like Siyaad, propped by the U.S. or Italy. Italy's demand to be part of UNISOM Command should be rejected; Italy wants to retain its former domination of Somalia. But American forces on military targets at the expense of genuine political reconciliation is wrong. If good governance, accountability, just representation, independent judiciary, clean and honest leadership, maximum mass participation and education are some of the general conditions for development to democracy and civil society, Somalis have to find their way to them. But the tribal system of Chieftains devised by colonialism is unworkable and a way of building grassroot democracy through regionalism, and party competition and unity at national levels has to be found.

A very relevant question to democracy in Somaliland and Somalia, is whether Clinton administrations advocacy of democracy and human rights will be applied in the Middle-East, the Arabian Gulf and in other Muslim countries and whether moderate political Islam and democratic Islam will be accommodated. Formulating a viable policy towards somalis will involve dealing with Somalis

as part of an African Third World people and as Muslims who will never give up their religious values and beliefs. As I have analyzed earlier, the fear of a political Islam, is given as a main motive of U.S. involvement in Somalia. Clinton as a democrat is expected to give Israel greater support than his Republican predecessors with their waspian disdain for all non-white people including Jews. During elections Clinton promised he would recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, including Arab East Jerusalem and that he would not recognize an independent Palestine state. Clinton has named Martin Indyk to run the Middle East desk on the National Security Council, and Samuel Lewis as head of policy planning at the state department - both persons are extreme Zionists and more on the right than Rabin. Lack of a creative Middle East settlement, and inability to see through a fanatic hate of a biblical liberal religion (i.e. Islam) may strongly limit Clinton's ability to create a new world order. In Somaliland and Somalia and elsewhere, Democratic American foreign policy strength will be tested in the Democratic example and whether it will accept and accommodate political Islam. Will the West accept association of Islam with Europe and North America? Will they permit Islamic education; the democratic right of the establishment of Muslim schools in Islamic communities residing in the U.S. and Europe and to be approved for government funding, on equal footing with Jewish and Christian schools? Secondly will the west allow the peaceful replacement of Monarchies and military dictators, which oppress Muslims, whose resources are being exploited by the West? If the answer is no, then nothing has been learned from two centuries of imperialism and

three decades of sending marines into Lebanon. Somalia may as well become the new Vietnam for a president who knows next to nothing about it; and who has been hoodwinked by Republicans. The SNM of Somaliland has advanced interfaith dialogue and transnational communication between christian Ethiopians and Somali Muslims. The SNM emigration to Ethiopia, like the early Muslim Pilgrims (AL MOHAAJEREEN) during the prophets time (PBUH), have brought about a permanent reconciliation between Somalis and Ethiopians and have advanced immensely the cause of interfaith dialogue. The racist rubbish of grotesqually dismissing our religion and complex cultures, simply because they are different, will only play into the hands of extremists. Not addressing the economic and social pressures within Dictatorial Muslim states, and the feeling of humiliation and the continued U.S. support for unrepresentative corrupt leaders will only make things more explosive. Nothing is worth our people dying for, if only people to benefit from their deaths are the enemies they fought.

There was no consultation with liberatory movements about U.S./U.N. Intervention and the debate among Somalis over the consequence of the Intervention has grown heated. Formulating a viable U.S. Somali policy should have involved the following points: first, the recognition of two somali states i.e. Somaliland and Somalia. Secondly, the greater and only weight should have been given to liberation movements and in terms of consultation, advice and governance. Thirdly regional representation and decentralization should have been advocated instead of tribal councils exaggerated by unscrupulous elites using to mobilize tribal support and then justifying centralization of power in their hands. Fourthly, Somali politics

should have removed from the colonialism of Italy and Egypt. Fifthly, open borders and strong economic interdependencies should have been advocated among Horn states. Finally, Islamic sensitivities, interests, and perceptions of Somalis should have been taken into account. The U.S. has a lot to answer for what has gone wrong in somaliland and Somalia during Barres' regime. Undermining liberation movements and suppressing the independent thoughts of Somalis will not go down well with the Somali people. Unless the U.S. and U.N. respect how Somalis see their problems and unless the Somalis have the say so about their destinies, the U.S./U.N. will fail to bring permanent order and stability. The consent of the governed not the force of arms shall determine who weilds power of government.