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SMART PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION IN IRAQ AND OTHER HIGH SECURITY RISK NATIONS: LESSONS FROM COLONIAL EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

Outcomes of armed conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq indicate that the U.S. has been unprepared to fully address the panoply of problems related to establishment of social and economic stability, security and governance in the aftermath of war. How the war against terrorism should be fought is an issue beyond the scope of this article. However, if U.S. policy makers are to succeed in obtaining stability, security and good governance in these nations and in other parts of the world where significant development assistance is provided to highly unstable nations, they should learn lessons from past U.S. colonial experience, and from the experience of other nations. Such context include U.S. colonial administration of the Philippines after the Spanish-American War, the administration of the British Empire in India, the occupations of Germany and Japan after World War II and European colonization of Africa. Lessons from these cases, good and bad, may be examined in attempt to identify elements of what we term "smart practice" neo-colonial administration. No claim is made here that the U.S. is operating as a colonial power in Iraq. Rather, our argument is that lessons may be learned from colonial experience that are applicable to Iraq and other high security risk nations where development and reconstruction is badly needed.

INTRODUCTION

The advent of the war on terrorism, beginning most visibly with the terrorist attack against the US on September 11, 2001, combined with other recent events, have stimulated significant shifts in U.S. foreign and national defense policy. As a consequence, the U.S. faces the responsibilities of what may be construed as neo-colonialist occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan (Lieven, 2003). The U.S. has used its military superiority to subdue political regimes identified as its enemies. The initial outcomes of these conflicts reveals that the U.S. did not plan effectively to deal with the aftermath of war and the full burden of occupation and rebuilding, i.e., policing, security, governance building, social and economic stabilization. In the worst of these two cases, the U.S. confronts inability to sustain security and to establish many of the essential institutional arrangements necessary to carry out the responsibilities of governance in Iraq. These conditions manifest themselves in inability to develop independent and self-sustaining national leadership and governance mechanisms, difficulties in drafting and implementing new constitutions to establish a regime of government and law, widespread absence of civilian and military security, and severe breakdowns in building and maintaining a workable public service infrastructure to foster the social and economic development. With respect to public-private sector partnership, the Iraqi oil industry, expected to pay for much of the long-term costs of rebuilding of the nation, has not yet been able to meet the minimum needs of Iraqi citizens (Chow, 2003).

It may be argued that had the U. S. done better planning to assume the responsibilities of its neo-colonial burden, many of the problems encountered could have been minimized or avoided. We argue in this article that in planning for post-war reconstruction, and for development administration in high security risk and highly unstable nations, U.S. policy makers, and the world development community in general, fails to study and learn from previous U.S. and other experience with colonial administration, some of which took place as long as a century ago. For example, following the Spanish-American War in 1898, Cuba became a U.S. protectorate and remained so from 1898 to 1902, and from 1906-1909; the Philippines was a U.S. protectorate until 1945; Puerto Rico remains a U.S. territory. A century ago, at the height of the era of “manifest destiny,” the U.S. accepted its role as a colonial power, openly recognizing its responsibilities, investing adequate resources (military, political and economic) into nation-building, and as a result was, by and large, successful. It may be argued further that the U.S. also could and should have drawn upon other historical examples to learn and apply lessons of success and failure in colonial administration, e.g., from the British Empire or the experience of colonialist European nations in Africa. Our point is that now, more than ever, U.S. policy makers need to study history to learn what “what works, what doesn’t and why” in colonial administration to increase the likelihood that what we term “smart practice” will supplant the very evident initial debacles of occupation and nation building in Iraq and Afghanistan (Carothers, 2003).

No claim is made here that the U.S. is operating as a colonial power in Iraq. Rather, our argument is that lessons may be learned from colonial experience that are applicable to Iraq and other high security risk nations where development and reconstruction is badly needed.

DEFINING SMART PRACTICE IN CONTEXT

While much of the public management and development literature focuses on defining and identifying best practices that may be applied in other contexts, we think the term “smart practice” (Bardach, 2000: 72) is better suited to the context of establishing security and supporting development in Iraq, Afghanistan and other highly security risk unstable nations. Smart practice analysis attempts to identify the “...causal mechanisms and processes that allow particular processes to counteract the tendency of political, technical, and organizational systems in the public sector to perform unsatisfactorily with respect to evolutionary adaptation.” (Barzelay and Campbell, 2003: 14)

Scholars have found numerous examples of cross-national policy problems where problems in one setting have effects on other nations (Geva-May, 2002). For example, instability in Afghanistan increases the threat risk in Pakistan; unrest in Pakistan affects India, etc. However, analysis of public management reform by Borins (1998) and others (Jones and Kettl, 2003) argue that although problems seem similar across nations, types of solutions that are effective in one public sector context may not succeed in another political, economic or social setting. Comparison between nations permits scholars and practitioners to assess the relative applicability of different governance and development practices in different settings. Therefore, we wish to caution against generalization of assumptions and solutions from one context to another and, more fundamentally, as a methodological approach.

The connotation of the words “best practice” indicates to us the conception of sets of solutions that may be applied from one context to another, whether the context is private to public sector or between nations or categories of nations, e.g., developing nations. For example, in assessing factors thought to stimulate management reform in government it has been argued that financial stress and the internationalization/transfer of concepts such as New Public Management (NPM) have played a strong role in stimulating government reform globally in rich and poor nations (Kettl, 1998; Klingner, 2000; Pollitt and Bouchaert, 2000). However, recent research points out cases where other factors better explain why reform has ascended in the political agendas of a number of nations (Klingner and Pallavicini, 2001; Barzelay, 2003).

Our preference for the concept of “smart practice” is based on the assumption that we learn much from comparative study; in fact we argue it is essential to do so. However, what we conclude is wise in applying lessons from what we learn has to take into account a number of variables specific to the context to which lessons are to be applied. Thus, what we argue here as smart practice for Iraq and other high risk developing nations is based not just on assessment of what has succeeded or failed in other contexts, but on how we apply these lessons to the complex task of stabilization and reconstruction needed in such nations. Consequently, we argue for example the requirement of creating a satisfactory enough political critical mass of participants composed of all necessary and appropriate stakeholders to draft a constitution and to construct rule of law in Iraq and other high risk nations. Obviously, this recommendation does not pertain to nations that have established their legal frameworks. More to the point however is that in Iraq, Afghanistan and other high security risk settings, how the composition of the critical mass of stakeholders is specific to the context and may not be generalized for application elsewhere beyond a few observations. We prefer the term smart practice, drawn from Bardach (1998), and Barzelay and Campbell (2003), because the definition we adopt emphasizes reducing mechanisms and factors that inhibit adaptation to contingency. In high security risk environments adaptation to contingency is essential – without it little or no progress will obtain and the policy context will be appropriately characterized as fraught with wicked problems that by definition defy resolution (Roberts, 2000).

UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS AND POLITICAL REALITY: LIMITED OPTIONS IN IRAQ

The buildup to war in Iraq could have been better informed by some of the unsatisfactory outcomes with multi-lateral interventions in Bosnia under NATO and Afghanistan under the UN (Bender, 2003). While the U.S. considered post-war issues during this period, the plans proposed for post-conflict rebuilding of Iraq were, in our view, extraordinarily ambitious and optimistic (Ottaway, 2003). The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), charged with implementing reconstruction, proposed a, “Vision for Post-Conflict Iraq” under which U.S. contractors would restore infrastructure (e.g., electric utilities, water systems, oil wells and pipelines, roads, etc.) and public services (e.g., health and education) within a year. Even more remarkable, the Agency proposed to replace the existing centralized, hierarchical, clan-based Saddam Hussein dictatorship with a decentralized, transparent and participatory democratic government and governance system based on local elected assemblies.

Following the war, and contrary to U.S. Department of Defense expectations, U.S. forces were regarded as liberators by only parts of the Iraq citizenry. By October 2003 it had become clear that the original plan for participatory democracy would not work. The policy alternatives chosen in November 2003 by the Bush administration was, essentially, the negotiated imposition of a centralized, Iraqi dominated regime supported by the U.S. military and UN policy, to be followed by turnover of the reigns of governance to Iraqi leadership by mid-2004.

Given the approach chosen by the Bush administration, we may inquire about the probability that this plan will achieve the objective of bringing peace and freedom to Iraq. Given the historical record, we have some doubts about the extent to which the arrangement devised will be effective. First, we cite evidence compiled by the Congressional Research Service: about 16 of the more than 200 military interventions abroad that the U.S. has conducted since its independence may be classified as successes in nation building (Pei, 2003). The type of intervention attempted by the U.S. in Iraq is perhaps the most difficult, costly and potentially frustrating of the available alternatives, since it requires regime change, deployment of large numbers of U.S. ground troops to provide security so that basic public services can be restored, and active participation by U.S. military to obtain civilian personal security to support a post-conflict administration (Pei, 2003). The ideal form of political transition, and that preferred by U.S. policymakers, envisioned the drafting of a constitution and establishment of elected government prior to turnover of power to Iraqis. Transfer of power to legitimately elected leaders was the preferred option. However, for a variety of reasons, including international and UN pressure and the upcoming Presidential elections of 2004, the U.S. chose to follow a road it may not have preferred as its first option.

Clearly, the premise that conditions in Iraq would permit the establishment of a functioning electoral system, viable moderate candidates, and the instruments of democracy with indigenous support in a period of roughly one year from the point where the war was declared won in Iraq proved to be overly optimistic. What the U.S. faced in early 2004 was an elevation in the aggressiveness of Muslim extremists, foreign terrorists and their followers, presumably to overthrow the U.S. occupation and install in its place a regime headed by a religious majority, supported by a military or paramilitary force, and likely representing one religious faction over others (Haqqani, 2003). Clearly, the scenario would be inimical to the establishment of democratic or any type of stable government and civil security in the long term due to the likelihood of civil/religious/ethnic war in its aftermath.

Consequently, given the road chosen by the Bush administration in Iraq relative to the contingencies present, to what extent can the lessons of colonialism be applied? Before addressing this question it may be observed that one option for the U.S. might have been to move more quickly to establish a multi-lateral UN-led administration in Iraq (Zakaria, 2002). This could have increased the legitimacy of the post-conflict administration (Kagan, 2003a and 2003b), allowing a sharing of rebuilding costs, and discrediting the perception of U.S. imperialist ambitions. However, this approach supposes a UN willing and able to take on this task, and a secure enough environment for the UN to function and protect itself. Americans tend to believe strongly in democracy, for others as well as themselves, and the post-war U.S. occupation,

supported by an expensive military force, has represented a reality both economically and psychologically painful to many U.S. citizens (Hirsh, 2003).

If it had been possible for the U.S. to turn over post-war administration to the UN early in 2004, would this course of action been adopted? Given that this option was not chosen by the Bush administration, the question whether the UN was both willing and capable of assuming this responsibility by before July 2004 cannot be answered. A corollary question is whether and to what extent this option would have been acceptable to the different stakeholder groups and factions in Iraq, separated as they are by religious preference and leadership, ethnicity and geography. Suffice it to say that legitimate doubts may be raised as to whether such an option could have been pursued, and if it had been feasible, whether some European governments might have opposed it. It is evident that some European leaders and many international and U.S. citizens believe the U.S. used poor judgement and bad information in going to war in Iraq in the first place, and therefore in their view the U.S. “deserves” to bear the consequences (financial and political) of unilateral nation-building in the aftermath of war (Cirincioni, 2003). Such attitudes make it even more difficult to reach any resolution to the dilemma presented by Iraq.

We may observe that even if a multi-lateral reconstruction coalition can be established, there are still strong arguments in favor of continued U.S. led military occupation and nation building. We are reminded that the Monroe Doctrine, a unilateral declaration (1823) of U.S. policy, included four prohibitions: no further European colonization, no extension of European political systems to the Western hemisphere, no European intervention to crush revolutions, and no U.S. interference in Europe’s internal affairs. While European nations did at times intervene in Latin America, the Monroe Doctrine’s long-term consequence was to make Latin America part of the U.S. sphere of influence (Zimmerman, 2002: 14-15). Could a similar outcome result for Iraq? Any answer to this question would be so speculative at this point that it is not worth pursuing.

Second, the U.S. emerged from a fifty-year Cold War reliance on multinational coalitions to maintain world order in an era more accepting of unilateral action in favor of national self-interest (Kissinger, 2001a and 2001b; Zakaria, 2002). Two types of American intellectuals argue that imperialism, though not politically correct in today’s international climate, has many supporters, and is necessary to maintain U.S. international interests (Judis, 2003; Foster, 2002; Marano, 2003). One group – the assertive nationalists – supports the continued use of unilateral military force overseas to preserve U.S. interests. Another group – neo-conservative democratic imperialists – supports nation building abroad as a means of preserving order against terrorism. Whatever their arguments, these American neo-imperialists agree that our military and political pre-eminence is unparalleled in history, and that we should use it to greatest advantage (Foster, 2002). Policymakers in the Bush administration have turned away from the advice provided by these groups, albeit as a concession to Iraqi opposition, world opinion and electoral politics. Perhaps the Bush administration’s long-term view is that, as with the case of the British Empire in the 19th century, once Iraq has become stable, U.S. interests can best be extended by peaceful economic means, backed by military capability if necessary where otherwise the absence of strong, indigenous political organizations would lead to anarchy or another dictatorship (Foster, 2003).

Third, U.S. intervention has been justified on humanitarian grounds, i.e., a moral obligation to intervene to prevent genocide or other bad outcomes (Salhani, 2003). This is particularly true now that three facts are abundantly clear in the wake of the buildup to the Iraq war: (1) the UN's failure to prevent war against Iraq weakened the perception of it as an effective problem solving forum and world peacekeeper; (2) French and German fears about a hegemonic world order dominated by the U.S. provided incentive to support U.S. led multilateral efforts more strongly in word than in deed, (3) the U.S., alone among nations, has the power to attack and dismiss authoritarian regimes such as that of Saddam Hussein (Jervis, 2003). Some (Fox, 2001) even suggest establishment of a permanent U.S. peacekeeping force, protected by international law and governed by commitment criteria that clearly reflect U.S. interests.

In this context, and recognizing the heavily laden political risks inherent in analysis of alternatives for the restoration of peace, freedom, democracy and economic prosperity in Iraq, let us turn to our main question: what can we learn from past colonial experience that might lead the U.S. and other nations to do a better job, where necessary, as colonialist powers in the 21st century?

LEARNING FROM OUR IMPERIALIST AND COLONIALIST EXPERIENCE

The U.S. is engaged in a long-term, expensive and politically difficult occupation and rebuilding campaign in Iraq (*Economist*, 2003). The U.S. Department of Defense was presented with expert projections before the war that the aftermath would be lengthy and expensive, and for many military and civilian leaders the outcome as of early 2004 came as no surprise. Now that these predictions have been proven valid, it is our view that it is time to face up to reality, learn from our previous experience as colonial administrators, and begin to do better at it. The stakes are particularly high for a number of reasons, not the least of which is because U.S. military bases throughout the Middle East are terrorist targets as well as tools against terrorism (Marion, 2002; Cannistraro, 2003; Cirincione, 2003); the presence of U.S. troops in Iraq are necessary to maintain order yet their presence threatens relationship with some Iraqi factions and Middle Eastern leaders (Brumberg, 2003), most of whom already have been angered by the Israeli-Palestine conflict. The situation is similar in many respects to U.S. relations with Caribbean, Latin American and Asian nations a century ago (Judis, 2003; Matthews, 2003).

“Imperialism, the extension of national authority over alien communities, is a dominant note in the world-politics of today,” wrote America's preeminent expert on global military domination through sea power, Alfred Mahan, in 1902 (Zimmerman, 2002: 231). This statement was made at the time scarcely a generation away from the end the Civil War, and still less since completion of the first transcontinental railroad in 1869. The U.S. was in the midst of making a tremendous leap from an agrarian economy and society to an industrial powerhouse.

Our first colonial era began in 1898 when a mysterious explosion sank the U.S. battleship *Maine* in the Havana harbor and fanned a drumbeat of “yellow press” journalism in support of war (Glass, 2003). The war itself, like the one against Iraq, was quick and decisive. Sudden annihilation by the U.S. of Spanish fleets near Manila and Havana revealed that Spain lacked the resources or navy needed to sustain an overseas

empire, and that the U.S. Navy was a global force European nations needed to reckon with. Under terms of peace signed in 1902, Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines all became U.S. protectorates. The Teller Amendment guaranteed Cuba independence once order and civil government had been established. Whether Puerto Rico and the Philippines would remain protectorates or become independent or part of the U.S. was left to the future to decide.

Then as now, the President (McKinley) faced pressures from imperialists and anti-imperialists (Baker, 2003). The imperialists justified an overseas empire on ideological and pragmatic grounds. Ideologically, it was an era of rampant and unthinking jingoism, when many asserted that U.S. claims to a manifest destiny extended not only to the borders of the continental U.S., but also to the Caribbean and Pacific oceans.

The white supremacist assertion, based on the preaching of Darwin's disciples about the survival of the fittest and extended by Herbert Spencer to races and nations as social Darwinism, fostered the confident perspective that the U.S. not only could improve the world by "civilizing and Christianizing" developing nations, but was required to do so in the same sense that parents are obligated to take care of children until they grow up enough to care for themselves. Pragmatically, there was a growing consensus that continued Spanish rule of Cuba and Puerto Rico posed an unacceptable risk to American naval and mercantile interests in the Caribbean; and that Pacific islands with deep harbors (like Manila in the Philippines) were essential as coaling and re-supply stations for global naval operations. These risks became more pronounced as the U.S. came closer to constructing a cross-isthmus canal in Panama or Nicaragua. Anti-imperialists were an uneasy coalition of idealists (who believed that colonialism would permanently distort our democratic principles), isolationists (who feared the political entanglements or economic burdens of empire), and racists (who invoked fears of negative consequences of involvement with "inferior" nations and peoples).

Then as now, President McKinley confronted a dilemma – once deciding to be a colonial power, how was the U.S. to benevolently rule these former Spanish colonies in the interests of their inhabitants, without threatening the national interests that had led to the war and occupation in the first place by ceding complete sovereignty to them. Unsure even in his own mind that this dilemma could be resolved, he appointed Secretary of War Elihu Root the nation's first colonial administrator. Root took as his model the best aspects of British colonialism in India and Egypt, combining firm military rule with generous consideration for local inhabitants. His implied contract with them stated,

. . . it is our unquestioned duty to make the interests of the people over whom we assert sovereignty the first and controlling consideration in all legislation and administration which concerns them, and to give them, to the greatest extent, individual freedom, self-government in accordance with their capacity, just and equal laws, and opportunity for education, for profitable industry, and for development in civilization." (Root, as cited in Zimmerman, 2002: 368)

McKinley quickly determined that Puerto Rico was not ready for independence. It was extremely poor and lacked resources. The Foraker Act (1900) confirmed its status as a protectorate. The Army of occupation worked first in hurricane relief, and later on domestic reforms – mass vaccination, education, and penal reforms (though Puerto Rico

retained its Spanish-based legal code). Congress later approved the right of Puerto Rican goods to enter the U.S. without tariffs. The end result was a quadrupling of trade between the two countries within ten years (Zimmerman, 2002: 368-370).

The Teller Amendment committed the U.S. to Cuban independence once pacification was achieved. No one had clearly defined what pacification meant, or the extent to which the Cuban rebels who had fought alongside U.S. troops would be allowed to participate in governing. In a well-intentioned effort to avoid chaos, President McKinley stated a preference for retaining Spanish colonial administrators in their positions. From the start, American authority in Cuba, military and civil, was through a military dictatorship by which the administration sought to balance a commitment to Cuban independence with continued U.S. influence there (Zimmerman, 2002: 370-374).

General Leonard Wood, the first U.S. colonial administrator, initiated a broad range of reforms. He increased government capacity by reforming the penal system, improving sanitation and transportation infrastructure, and building many new schools. He increased economic development by encouraging U.S. investment. The first step toward democracy was municipal elections in 1900, unexpectedly won by anti-American candidates. Next, the U.S. sponsored an election to select delegates for a national constitutional convention, with similar results. Faced with the uncomfortable options of continuing military occupation against the wishes of the Cuban people or allowing the country to become independent in a manner that left its relationship to the U.S. unclarified, Congress passed the Platt Amendment in 1901, granting Cuban independence with the twin stipulations that Cuba could not enter into any agreement with a European power that undermined its own independence, and that the U.S. retained the right to intervene to preserve Cuba's independence.

From our perspective a century later, it is evident that Cuba has continued to be a critical focus of U.S. foreign policy for the same reasons it was in 1901. From the U.S. view, it is too close to the U.S. to be completely independent as has been the case since Castro assumed power, and not considered a permanent U.S. possession (colony or protectorate) because its ethnic and cultural traditions tie it to Latin America. But it is too close to be ignored under any circumstance -- trade, travel and sanctions are the form of attention the U.S. has preferred over other perhaps more fruitful options for dealing with the problem of Cuba -- but this is another story.

The Philippines presented the most serious challenge to American efforts at benevolent colonialism (that is, "benevolent" at least in the eyes of U.S. policy-makers). The outcome was a combination of opposites, a U.S. occupation that was at times harsh and brutal with an idealistic vision of a democratic, independent Philippines (Baker, 2003). From 1899 until 1902 the U.S. Army was actively engaged in suppressing an ugly and embarrassing insurgency by Filipinos who, under the leadership of Emilio Aguinaldo, saw the Americans not as liberators from Spanish oppression, but as another colonial power bent on thwarting their desire for independence. An indigenous rebellion of freedom fighters led by Emilio Aguinaldo was crushed by the U.S., using military strategies perfected in the Indian wars to deprive rebels of food (through "scorched earth" destruction of villages and crops), civilian assistance (through reprisals against villagers and forced relocation of "pacified" civilians to resettlement camps not unlike the "secure hamlets" of Vietnam). It took almost two-thirds of the Army (70,000 soldiers), four years and 4000 U.S. casualties to end the rebellion (Boot, 2002a). This

protracted and low-level conflict, also typical of British colonial wars during the 19th century (Beckett, 2001), was by most accounts less brutal than many European nations' practices toward the native inhabitants of their African colonies. Yet it also cannot be denied that Root, Taft and the incoming President Roosevelt all declined to take strong action against the U.S. military officers who authorized the tactics employed in this war. (Zimmerman, 2002: 415-416)

On the other hand, the American military officer in charge, General Elwell Otis, supported efforts to enhance civilian support by putting municipal and provincial governments in Philippine hands, and by initiating civil aid programs like food distribution, sewer construction, smallpox vaccination, and legal and educational reforms (Zimmerman, 2002: 388).

Once the insurrection had been reduced to a handful of regional conflicts that did not threaten U.S. domination, McKinley appointed William Taft as head of the Second Philippine Commission. He picked Taft because of his stature as a politician and, ironically, because he had originally opposed U.S. annexation of the islands. Taft's instructions, developed in detail by Root, involved the same kinds of reforms Otis had initiated. Taft immediately faced the opposition of General Arthur MacArthur, Douglas MacArthur's father, who favored an autocratic military occupation rather than continued pacification under a civilian government. In 1901, Taft was appointed civil governor of the Philippines; the military governor (now General Adna Chaffee) remained in command of those few areas in which public order had not been restored. Secretary of War Root wrote to Taft, saying that Chaffee, ". . . should get the Army out of the business of government and restore it to its proper and natural place as an adjunct of civil government." (Zimmerman, 2002: 395)

ASSESSING U.S. PERFORMANCE IN COLONIAL ADMINISTRATOR

Our previous colonial experience demonstrates the bad and the good in what may be termed our national character (Zimmerman, 2002: 415-417). On the negative side, they often behaved arrogantly toward Cubans and Filipinos. They preferred to deal with native oligarchs who often minimized popular discontent with the American presence. Naively assuming that they were considered liberators, they showed no haste to grant them self-government.

On the positive side, led by President McKinley, they showed a genuine desire to improve the conditions of their colonial subjects, investing considerable human and material resources in improving infrastructure and government capacity. Americans were for the most part reluctant colonialists, and moved more quickly than their European counterparts to transfer power to democratically elected local rulers (Boot, 2002b). Despite the hyperbolic jingoist rhetoric, the President and Congress were clearly not interested in a colonial empire from the old mercantilist perspective. They were, however, heavily invested in maintaining control over islands that had strategic importance to naval supremacy.

Not unexpectedly, the U.S. was most successful in the Philippines because of both a strong commitment to development, and the length and consistency of its occupation. The U.S. built schools, a free press, an independent judiciary, modern bureaucracy, democratic government and separation of church and state. Congress was so concerned

about preventing economic exploitation that it barred large landholdings by American individuals or corporations (Boot, 2002a). The Philippines remained a U.S. colony until 1935, then a domestically autonomous commonwealth, and finally an independent nation in 1946.

Considerations for economy in the explication of examples leads us to provide only an abbreviated description and analysis of U.S. performance as neo-colonial administrators in Germany and Japan after the end of World War II. It is abundantly clear that the failure to offer administrative and other types of support to European nations after World War I contributed to the conditions that made World War II almost inevitable. Indeed, many scholars view both wars as essentially one interrupted but protracted conflict. After World War II, the Marshall Plan and other initiatives provided unprecedented aid and development assistance to European nations, without which recovery would have been delayed decades. And the initial military occupation by U.S. forces transitioned into prolonged occupation as part of the strategy to combat the Cold War against the USSR. Post-war administration of Berlin divided responsibility and authority into four national zones, but it was the continued presence of U.S. and allied troops that enforced the peace. Although there were many pitfalls not avoided in post-war administration in Europe and Japan, the outcomes in terms of development of a stable and secure environment as a platform for economic growth and prosperity were successful in both nations for different reasons. What is clear from these periods of occupation is that the U.S. faced up to the burdens of long-term military occupation despite resistance from some regimes (e.g., France), that the financial burden of reconstruction was born and shared, that authority was not surrendered until the capacity to govern was relatively certain (it can be argued that this capacity was not achieved before occupation ended in some nations, e.g., Italy), that U.S. interests were served by economic recovery in both regions of the world, and that some problems continued to fester long after the post-war military occupation ended, e.g., regional instability between Greece and Turkey, instability in Yugoslavia (masked until the death of Tito).

SMART PRACTICE COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION?

Based on our own history, what is “smart practice” colonial administration? What are the components that we should be combining to rectify the errors of our “shock and awe” approach to foreign policy. First, it is important to pick the right objective for occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. Nation building – building a common national identity among citizens – is different than state building (creating a functional government that can maintain security and provide basic services) (Boot, 2002). They are not the same thing. Many functional states (e.g., Bosnia, Northern Ireland and Somalia) are so deeply divided along ethnic, clan, or religious lines that forging a common national identity is out of the question (Ottaway, 2002). Iraq is arguably not a nation at all, but a contrived entity of Kurds, Sunni and Shi’ite Muslims created by the British after World War I (Elliott, 2002). As obvious as it sounds, it is easier to achieve success when expectations are lower and more reasonable. Consequently, building a nation in Iraq -- creating a sense of common values and national identity – is an objective that carries a higher risk of failure than state building. Moreover, U.S. objectives could be constrained to building government capacity so that military occupation is no longer necessary – whether or not Iraq becomes a unified in the short-

term. However, unless some accommodation by different stakeholders is made, civil war seems highly likely -- an outcome the U.S. would do well to avoid.

Second, successful state building takes time – almost 200 years for the British in India, and at least 45 years for the U.S. in the Philippines (Johnson, 2002; Kurtz, 2003). Efforts start by imposing the rule of law – as the U.S. did in the Philippines, and as Britain did in India, as a prerequisite for economic development and the eventual emergence of democracy. In both cases the colonial administration made major investments in infrastructure improvements – education, public health, transportation and communications – that increased economic development and citizen support. Third, both involved the improvement of education systems and the development over generations of an elite class of government bureaucrats (Kurtz, 2003). Fourth, increased national self-awareness mitigates internal differences of culture and language, and people begin to develop a national identity –although we are aware of the time this could take and the inherent risks present in the Iraq circumstance. Finally, the development of representative democratic institutions responsible for domestic policy-making is a transition phase to complete sovereignty (Kurtz, 2003). The alluring “quick fix” is to skip these steps and move immediately to state building by establishing a U.S. “puppet” regime. This may help with short-term stability, but it is not likely to result in long-term state building, much less a democratic government. Unilateral efforts (12 of the 16 cases studied) are more likely to fail than multi-lateral state building (Pei, 2003). Direct U.S. administration worked in Japan following World War II, but failed in Cuba and the Dominican Republic following the Spanish-American War.

Third, colonial policing – maintaining security and order as government capacity begins to increase – is a difficult task with many pitfalls. To begin with, military planners and strategists have generally preferred classic operations against identifiable enemy nations. Designing military operations in an era of constant, low-level insurgency is not something the military does eagerly or well (Vest, 2003). These are operations that are somehow trivialized as being beneath the dignity of major military planners or commanders (Donnelly, 2002). However, our colonial history indicates that maintaining order and building government capacity are jobs for both the military and for civilian workers and volunteers (Ottaway, 2002). Also, occupation duty sometimes leads troops into committing human or civil rights abuses that while often justifiable, are always counterproductive (Marion, 2002). Historically, they undermine support for the occupier in the occupied country itself, for it is understandable difficult to claim to be trying to win the “hearts and minds” of the populace while imprisoning, torturing or killing their young militants. They also tend to undermine support for the occupation at home, particularly if accompanied by government rhetoric that equates dissent with treason or government policies that infringe civil liberties in the name of anti-terrorism (Featherstone, 2002). And as our own ineffectual military performance in Somalia indicated, the primary objective of minimizing military casualties is not an option if building state capacity is the objective.

Fourth, there must be a plan to pay for the occupation and state building. The Bush administration initially underestimated the costs of reconstruction by a large amount, early on even claiming that costs could be supported by sales of Iraqi oil on the world market. In reality, experts agree that it will be years before Iraq’s production capacity is restored to prewar levels, and years more before conditions of political stability allow private companies to risk signing production contracts with the Iraqi government

(Chow, 2003). Also, authoritative cost estimates for occupation and reconstruction have increased dramatically from \$3.5 billion (projected by the Bush administration in March 2003) to between \$1 and 4 billion per month for occupation alone (Congressional Budget Office, 2003), to between \$31 and \$115 billion for reconstruction (American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2002).

However, there are justified concerns about U.S. ability and willingness to pay for this war in the face of steep federal budget deficits, e.g., projected at over \$500 billion for fiscal year 2004. U.S. net foreign indebtedness, after two decades of increasing annual trade deficits, reached 25% of the nation's GDP in 2003. With annual projected deficits of over \$400 billion for the next several years, foreign indebtedness may reach a much higher percentage of GDP by 2010. As Europeans or Saudis lose faith in U.S. economic and political policies, it is not unrealistic that they will withdraw their support for the already weakened U.S. dollar. After all, the U.S. played a similar role in crushing the Anglo-French invasion of the Suez Canal (1956) that marked the end of the British Empire. After years of propping up England by providing loans and money, the U.S. withheld its approval for an IMF loan, the pound crashed, Prime Minister Anthony Eden resigned in disgrace, and the Brits were relieved of their illusions (Greider, 2002).

Fifth, as a defense against legitimate nationalism within occupied countries, the U.S. must continue to insist that its objectives are the establishment of order and self-government rather than economic or geopolitical exploitation (McGovern, 2003). That is, any connection between imperialism, economic exploitation, and monopoly capitalism is to be carefully avoided – particularly in this era of global discontent with some of globalism's social and political outcomes (Foster, 2002; Farazmand, 1999; Hoogvelt, 2001); Klingner, 2003). This is in spite of the fact that the U.S. is highly dependent on imported oil; and that Iraq and Saudi Arabia have the largest proven reserves in the world. Also, it will be best if any occupation is of limited duration, despite the fact that the “war on terror” lacks clear criteria for victory and may be to a certain extent self-perpetuating (Gitlin and Packer, 2003; Foster, 2003). The U.S. backed-up self-restraint in the Philippines by turning over vast military bases (Subic Bay, for example), when asked to do so by the Philippine government. We returned administration of the Panama Canal to Panama in 1978. The British did the same thing, constructing many infrastructure improvements, and generally exercising a benign imperialism built upon freedom of the seas, defense of property rights, and the ability to enforce contracts (Walker and Krauthammer, 2002).

However, the lessons of colonialism in Africa also must be heeded. It may be argued that colonialist powers there withdrew too soon, before either long-term conditions of security were sustainable, and without competing the development of administrative capacity and stable civil society sufficient to prevent domination of nations by military dictators and the continual breakout of wretched civil wars. Further, rather than preventing economic exploitation by withdrawal, the opposite occurred despite significant but over-matched preventive multi-lateral and multi-organizational initiatives and assistance. The problem with colonialism in Africa was its character, of course -- exploitation more than development oriented -- and with its duration -- it ended before sufficient capacity for self-governance and stable and equitable social and economic progress was present.

CONCLUSIONS

There are obvious questions about the rise of the need for neo-colonialism in U.S. foreign policy that are beyond the scope of this article, primarily concerning the ultimate wisdom of choosing what has been characterized by opponents of the Bush administration as unilateral preemptive military action rather than multilateral diplomatic and military policies against terrorism. This question aside, if we are indeed embarking again on colonialism as a foreign policy best suited to achieve our national interests, we should use our own colonial past as a guide to “smart practice” colonial administration. Consequently in Iraq and other high security risk nations, we conclude that the U.S. and other nations and development assistance entities pursue the following courses of action:

- Based on the analysis rendered in this article, “smart practice” colonial administration in high security risk nations should comprehend the following points:
- Maintain a near-term focus on establishing and enhancing governance capacity to achieve social stability and economic recovery.
- Recognize that building government capacity typically requires years rather than months of patient assistance and financing.
- Understand that creating new national sovereignty is different from, and harder than, building government capacity.
- Exert diplomatic initiative sufficient to secure accommodation of various stakeholder interests to secure compromises required for formation of a sustainable independent government.
- Sustain a continued emphasis on social stability and economic recovery under self-governance to prevent economic exploitation.
- Develop a multi-lateral assistance plan and a multi-national, multi-institutional framework for financing development to pay for economic recovery and infrastructure construction over a long period of time, e.g., 20 years.
- Where occupation appears necessary to achieve security and stability, accurately assess and report all the costs of military occupation and state building.
- Resist political pressure that would lead to premature withdrawal of security, economic and political support prior to the point where high security risk nations are capable of self-governance.
- Do not withdraw military support in a way that increases in the likelihood of civil strife or war.

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