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More Borders, Less Conflict? Partition as a Solution to Ethnic Civil Wars

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The conventional wisdom among scholars and policymakers opposes solving ethnic conflicts by drawing new borders and creating new states. This view, however, is flawed because the process of fighting civil wars imbues the belligerents with a deep sense of mistrust that makes sharing power after the conflict difficult. This is especially true in ethnic civil wars, in which negotiated power-sharing agreements run a high risk of failing and leading to renewed warfare. In light of these problems, this article argues that partition should be considered as an option for ending severe ethnic conflicts. The article shows how failure to adopt partition in Kosovo has left that province in a semi-permanent state of limbo that only increases the majority Albanian population's desire for independence. The only route to long-term stability in the region—and an exit for international forces—is through partition. Moreover, the article suggests that the United States should recognize and prepare for the coming partition of Iraq rather than pursuing the futile endeavor of implementing power-sharing among Iraq's Shi'ites, Kurds, and Sunnis.

The conventional wisdom regarding borders in political science and the policy community is that we already have plenty and do not need any more. Scholars and policymakers alike tend to oppose the creation of new states, especially as a means to end civil conflict. They argue that secession and partition generate more problems than they solve and lead to new conflicts. The preferred solutions to these conflicts take the existing borders as given and concentrate on fostering negotiated settlements that arrange power internally through such mechanisms as power-sharing, regional autonomy, or federalism. As Ted Robert Gurr has written, "threats to divide a country should be managed by the devolution of state power and . . . communal fighting about access to the state's power and resources should be restrained by recognizing group rights and sharing power."[1] Other researchers agree, maintaining that the key factor in sustaining negotiated settlements to ethnic conflicts is the degree to which the agreement institutionalizes power-sharing or regional autonomy.[2]

Recently, however, scholars have begun to challenge this single-state-solution orthodoxy, arguing instead that dividing states and creating new borders may be a way to promote peace after ethnic civil wars. One view,

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represented by Chaim Kaufmann, stresses that ethnic civil wars cannot end until contending groups are separated into homogeneous ethnic enclaves. When groups are intermingled, each side has an incentive to attack and cleanse the other. Once separation is achieved, these incentives disappear. With the necessary condition for peace in place, political arrangements become secondary. Unless ethnic separation occurs, Kaufmann argues, all other solutions are fruitless because ethnic intermingling is what fuels conflict.[3]

A second approach recognizes the importance of demography but focuses on intentions. This view contends that ethnic wars have features that undermine the viability of negotiated settlements based on power-sharing or autonomy within a single state. Fighting a civil war undermines each side's ability to trust that its recent enemy now has benign intentions and that those intentions will not change in the future. Civil war belligerents do not have the luxury of retreating behind borders and maintaining their own military forces as states do after interstate conflicts. To end a civil war, combatants must disarm and combine their army with that of their former adversary, forfeiting their ability to protect themselves as well as their ability to enforce compliance by the other side. Fear of betrayal makes groups loath to disarm after the war, and mistrust hinders the functioning of power-sharing institutions. In fact, negotiated settlements of ethnic civil wars fail to prevent another conflict at least half of the time. Third-party intervention—often recommended as a means to reassure and protect the parties in the transition period—is inevitably temporary, which causes actors to worry how their former adversary will behave after the intervener departs. Moreover, third parties often intercede in conflicts to impose agreements that do not match what one or both of the belligerents wants or believes it can achieve by fighting, and thus intervention may contain the seeds of further conflict.

In this article, I argue that partition—defined as separation of contending ethnic groups and the creation of independent states—should be considered as an alternative to power-sharing and regional autonomy as a means to end civil wars. Partition does not require groups to disarm and make themselves vulnerable to devastating betrayal. Nor do formerly warring groups have to cooperate and share power in joint institutions. Partition also satisfies nationalist desires for statehood and fills the need for security. In cases of severe ethnic conflict, when perceptions of the adversary's malign intentions are so entrenched as to impede any agreement based on a single-state solution, partition is the preferred solution.

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In the remainder of this paper, I will elaborate further on this argument and apply it to the case of Kosovo, demonstrating why autonomy for Kosovo within Serbia is impossible. Following an evaluation of the various options being considered for Kosovo's independence, I will argue for a

partition of Kosovo along the Ibar River accompanied by the return of the Serbian population to Serbia. Finally, I argue that like it or not, partition is probably in Iraq's future.

Negotiated Settlements in Civil Wars: Why They Fail

In the literature on civil war settlements, three findings stand out.[4] First, most civil wars are decided by military victory rather than negotiated agreements. Of the internal conflicts that have ended since 1945, 77 percent terminated when one side decisively defeated the other, compared to 23 percent that ended in a negotiated settlement.[5] Compromise outcomes, in other words, are relatively rare in civil wars. Second, civil wars that conclude in negotiated agreements are between two and three times more likely to resume at a later date than those that end in decisive victory. Different studies yield slightly differing numbers, but the pattern is consistent: Belligerents in about 12 percent of conflicts ended by military victories fight again in the future, whereas 29 percent of negotiated settlements break down into renewed warfare.[6] Negotiated settlements, in short, are less stable than decisive victories. This may also account for the finding that on average, states in which civil wars are ended by compromise agreements tend to be less democratic over time than states where one side or the other won decisively.[7]

Third, of the negotiated settlements to civil wars that failed, every one occurred in a war in which ethnicity, as opposed to ideology, was the central line of cleavage. Ethnic civil wars that end in negotiated agreements, in fact, eventually resume in between half and two-thirds of all cases.[8] By contrast, no ideological civil war has ever reignited after being concluded by negotiation. Given that two-thirds or more of all civil wars are ethnic in nature, the vulnerability of negotiated settlements in these conflicts is disturbing. It calls into question the international community's growing belief that negotiated settlements are the desired method for ending these wars. What explains the paucity of negotiated settlements in civil wars generally, and why are they prone to failure in ethnic civil wars?

Protagonists in civil wars face a painful dilemma when deciding whether to accept a negotiated settlement. To implement the settlement, belligerents are required to relinquish their arms and integrate their military forces with those of their adversary. In doing so, however, each belligerent loses its ability to defend itself should the other side cheat on the agreement, fail to disarm, and launch an attack. By giving up its military option, each party also forfeits its ability to enforce compliance with the agreement. This is a concern in interstate wars as well. However, in these cases, states do not have to surrender or combine their armed forces, and they can take a variety of steps to protect themselves from the possibility of betrayal. The steps required for settling a civil war, however, make the price of guessing incorrectly about the adversary's intentions so high that it impedes the negotiation of settlements in the first place, hinders the implementation of agreements that are reached, and causes some to collapse into renewed warfare.[9]

The key issues here concern the adversary's intentions, the consequences of being wrong about those intentions, and the inability of either side to commit to carry out the terms of an agreement absent any enforcement mechanism. The process of fighting a war gives both belligerents plentiful evidence of the adversary's malign intentions. Beyond the normal costs of conflict, civil wars are often characterized by depredations against civilians, including ethnic cleansing, massacre, rape, bombing, starvation, and forced relocation. These factors produce deep feelings of hostility and hatred, and make it hard for former belligerents to trust each other. Belligerents have little reason to believe their opponent's intentions suddenly have become benign, especially given the incentives to misrepresent those intentions in order to lull the other side into a false sense of security. Moreover, even if the adversary's intentions seem benign now, what guarantee is there that they will not change in the future? These issues are of critical importance. Without any way to force the other side to keep to its word, the price of being wrong may be destruction.

Scholars have offered two solutions to the dilemmas and dangers of negotiated settlements. First, some argue that the more institutionalized the agreement is, the more it will allay the former belligerents' security fears and increase their ability to safeguard their interests. These optimists maintain that negotiated settlements, by creating institutions to share power in the central government or devolve power to sub-state regions, increase the likelihood of success by allowing groups to govern themselves and prevent others from implementing measures harmful to their interests. Examples of power-sharing institutions in the central government include reserving executive posts and government ministries for members of different groups, joint decision-making, proportional representation, and a minority veto. Institutions that devolve power include regional autonomy agreements or federalism. By working together in common institutions, groups may moderate their views of their former adversary's intentions and even come to trust each other.[10]

Second, intervention by a third party is thought to be an effective way to reduce security fears and facilitate agreement implementation. If the key problems are that both sides fear betrayal and there is no mechanism to enforce the agreement, interposing a third party into the situation can resolve these issues by increasing the likelihood that the parties will keep their promises and mitigating the costs to the other if one of them does not. Providing troops on the ground during the early phases of implementation is critical for stability, security, and protection when groups are disarming and institutions are taking shape.[11]

Unfortunately, neither power-sharing institutions nor third-party intervention provide more than a temporary band-aid for the critical underlying problems, which are uncertainty about the adversary's intentions and inability to commit to the agreement. For several reasons, negotiated settlements are likely to fail even when they include provisions for institutions and third-party enforcement. Because an intervener's presence is likely to be temporary, former belligerents are reluctant to disarm and integrate

their military forces with those of their past enemy. Once the third party leaves, the parties again have to rely on each other's promises to abide by the agreement. Fear of future betrayal—fed by experiences of past malign intentions—prompts groups to keep their guns, which increases the likelihood of a return to war.

In high-conflict or post-conflict environments, elections tend to resemble ethnic censuses. Out-group conflict increases in-group solidarity, and those who advocate compromise with former enemies are easily branded as traitors betraying the group's interests. In the aftermath of civil wars, people tend to support nationalist parties and politicians who promise to protect the group's interests. Post-war elections are likely to bring hard-line leaders to power who are reluctant to trust the other side and make the compromises necessary to implement the agreement.

As a result, political institutions that require trust and accommodation are likely to be gridlocked. When these institutions break down, third parties may step in to govern in their stead, but this is only a stop-gap solution because it renders these institutions even less likely to work when the outside party leaves.

Furthermore, if the war was characterized by ethnic cleansing, agreements that call for expelled minorities to return to their former homes may lead to further violence. The now-dominant majority group may destroy or inhabit the homes of those who were expelled. Minorities often face hostility, discrimination, and difficulty finding employment. When the third party leaves and no longer can provide protection, they may be forced out again.

Finally, recent research on cease-fires in interstate wars has found a striking correlation between third-party intervention and increased risk of another war in the future. The logic is that "agreements that specify terms that do not correspond well with the expected military outcome of renewed fighting" are more likely to fail than those in which the terms reflect the outcome on the battlefield or the consequences that renewed fighting would bring. Third-party intervention often short-circuits a war before a clear battlefield outcome has emerged, and thus "considerable uncertainty remains regarding the consequences of continuing the war."[12] This uncertainty undermines agreements because one or both sides may believe that it could achieve a better outcome by fighting. Third-party intervention also increases the likelihood of a mismatch between the agreement's terms and the probable outcome of the war. This is because outside parties tend to intervene to prevent one side from decisively defeating another and to restore the status quo ante. Agreements like these are particularly unlikely to last when the third party withdraws because the side that was winning in the previous round of fighting believes that it can achieve a better outcome by returning to war. Once the agreement's enforcer departs, the stronger side has an incentive to attack to revise the terms of settlement. Similarly, single-state-solutions imposed by third-party intervention when one or more of the parties prefers independence run an increased risk of failure because they go against the preferences of the groups involved.

Negotiated settlements in civil wars are scarce—and often violated—because former adversaries have little confidence in each other's benign intentions now or in the future, have difficulty trusting each other, and cannot commit to hold up their end of the bargain. Institutions are unlikely to solve these problems because they require trust and cooperation to function. Third-party intervention may help in the short term, but it merely postpones the key problems. Moreover, third-party intervention may interrupt a war that both sides still think they can win, roll back the stronger party's gains, or impose power-sharing on groups that want independence, thereby giving them an incentive to re-start the war to obtain a better deal. This consequence of external intervention exacerbates the tendency for former combatants to retain their arms and remain wary of the other side's intentions.

What makes negotiated settlements of ethnic civil wars so prone to failure? Several factors are at work. Ideological civil wars are almost always contests for control of the state, but ethnic conflicts are usually separatist in nature. Groups typically seek greater autonomy (or self-determination) for their territorial homeland from state control. Although outright secession is not always the objective, the longer the war goes on, the greater the hostility and mistrust, and the greater the autonomy a group may feel it needs to be secure. The group eventually may conclude that political independence is necessary. Furthermore, ethnic wars tend to polarize society more than ideological conflicts. Each belligerent recruits mostly from its own ethnic group, and inter-group violence and atrocities make ethnic lines increasingly difficult to cross. As stable social groups, ethnic groups are fairly easy to mobilize, which means that the costs of returning to war are relatively low.

The poor record of negotiated settlements in ethnic civil wars that leave borders intact, whether or not they are facilitated by third-party intervention, suggests that a new approach might be necessary: one based on partition rather than power-sharing. In this model, third parties would intervene not to turn back the clock to the pre-war situation, but to inflict a decisive defeat on one side or the other. This would reduce the likelihood that the defeated party would think it could gain anything by resorting to war in the future. In those cases where a third party intervenes on behalf of ethnic rebels, military victory will result in partition. Partition can only lead to peace, however, if it is accompanied by ethnic separation. Interveners should work to make sure that the states are as ethnically homogeneous as possible so as to reduce the likelihood of future cleansing, rebellions by the remnant minority for union with its brethren in the other state, or war to rescue "trapped" minorities. Finally, both sides should be militarily capable of defending themselves, and the borders between them should be made as defensible as possible to discourage aggression, either by following natural terrain features or by building demilitarized zones or other barriers.

Problems in the Balkans

The international community evinces a curious attitude toward partition. Few object to cases of partition that are agreed to by both sides and occur non-violently, such as the departure of Norway from Sweden in 1905, the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the velvet divorce of the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1993, or the split of Ethiopia and Eritrea, also in 1993. When attempts at secession or partition are accompanied by violence and war, however, this tolerance disappears and turns into opposition. Rebellious Biafra, for example, obtained little support for its bid to quit Nigeria in the 1960s. Nor have the Tamils of Sri Lanka or the Chechens in Russia found many international patrons for their causes.

When Western democracies intervene to facilitate settlements in civil wars, they eschew partition in favor of power-sharing and regional autonomy to preserve multiethnic states. In Bosnia, the United States coerced the Bosnian Serbs, Muslims, and Croats into accepting the Dayton Peace Agreement, which created a weak federal Bosnian state composed of a Serb region—the Republika Srpska—and a Muslim-Croat federation. Although many accused the United States of acquiescing in the partition of Bosnia, it became clear through the emphasis on refugee return, attempts at military integration, and removal of officials deemed to be obstructing the state's reintegration that the United States and its European allies firmly opposed any break-up of Bosnia into ethnic cantons.

Nonetheless, despite power-sharing institutions and long-term NATO and European Union military occupation, Bosnia remains a deeply troubled country 10 years after Dayton owing largely to the factors identified above. Bosnia's Serbs and Croats have displayed remarkable resistance to the formation of a unified military. Because these two groups would prefer that their regions join Croatia and Serbia, respectively, or become independent, disarming would eliminate any chance of achieving those dreams. Furthermore, nationalist parties, which—although corrupt—promise to protect group interests, dominated the immediate post-war elections and remain strong. Bosnia, moreover, is largely run by the international community's High Representative owing to political gridlock in the country's complicated power-sharing institutions. Despite some refugee returns by minority groups, Bosnia is largely segregated ethnically. Unemployment is high, particularly among returnees, who often face discrimination. Many young people would like to leave the country altogether, seeing a dim future ahead. Thus, Bosnia's viability without a foreign presence to keep it unified is questionable.

The case of Kosovo is even more interesting. The United States and its NATO allies intervened in 1999 to stop Slobodan Milošević's expulsion of Kosovo's ethnic Albanians, but never supported the Albanians' claim to sovereignty over Kosovo. UN Resolution 1244 called for Kosovo to remain an autonomous province within Serbia and Montenegro. The United Nations has maintained this fiction while governing Kosovo since the war, engaging in so-called "kick-the-can diplomacy," putting off the difficult

decisions to the future.[13] Rather than calming the situation, this delaying tactic has raised the ire of the Kosovar Albanians, who see their treasured goal of independence slipping away. "We are here, suffocated with UNMIK [the UN Mission in Kosovo] over our heads, and Serbia over our necks," protested one Albanian. "UNMIK is now six years here without a deadline. We want a deadline. To become independent from a stronger place you need action, not process."[14] Veton Surroi, the Albanian publisher who now serves in Kosovo's parliament agrees: "The focus has been on buying time, and that's the only focus there has been." [15] Even UNMIK officials concur with this assessment: "One of the profound problems bedeviling the international community," one bureaucrat noted, "is that it has not yet defined the goal of what we're working toward here."[16] In short, the UN strategy of keeping Kosovo in a "deep winter," its refusal to endorse the objective of independence for Kosovo, and the delay in opening negotiations on the future of the province have caused the Albanians to become increasingly frustrated and led to outbursts of anti-Serb violence, such as the riots of March 2004 that killed 19 people.[17]

Kosovo is plagued by the problems that typically undermine single-state solutions after ethnic wars. Given the province's uncertain political future, both Albanians and Serbs have incentives to remain armed. In June 2003, the United Nations Development Program estimated that there were approximately 333,000 to 460,000 privately held small arms in Kosovo, of which only 20,000 were legally owned.[18] UN-sponsored gun collection drives bring in few weapons; one three-month campaign that ended on Oct. 1, 2003, netted just 155 guns.[19]

Trepidation over Kosovo's future status makes both ethnic communities reluctant to part with their weapons. According to a report by the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency, "Faced with an uncertain future and constant wondering about whether conflict will ensue once again, people may want to keep weapons to provide protection and security if the situation once again becomes precarious."[20] Comments by both Serbs and Albanians confirm this motivation. According to an Albanian tour guide in Drenica, for example, "Nobody knows if another war is going to happen or not. If they don't give us independence, that might mean that the Serbian forces will be allowed to come back—and most people here don't want to be caught empty-handed when that happens." Serbs, for their part, believe that self-help is the only way to safeguard themselves from vengeful Albanians. As one Serb from Gracanica commented, "We believe that none of the security forces operating in Kosovo at the moment are able to fully protect the Serbs, so we have to look out for ourselves."[21]

Moreover, support for an independent Kosovo is unanimous among the province's ethnic Albanians. It is debatable whether autonomy within Serbia was a possible solution to the conflict before 1999, but Milošević's attempt to expel the Albanian population destroyed any chance of a solution short of independence for Kosovo because Albanians will never trust a Serbian government to protect them.[22] Former Kosovo Liberation Army commander Hashim Thaçi put it simply: "There is only one solution, and that is Kosovo as an independent and sovereign country."[23]

Kosovo has a 120-seat parliament with at least 10 seats reserved for Serbs. However, the Serbs boycotted the October 2004 election, and UNMIK wields most political power in the province. As in Bosnia, the strong international presence has retarded local governance capacity rather than enhancing it and also has raised questions about democratic accountability.[24] This has led Albanians to protest their lack of real power, and Serbs to reject participation in Kosovo's power-sharing institutions altogether given that Serbs will always be in the minority.

Kosovo is an ethnically segregated society, and there is little chance this will ever change. Kosovo's Serbian population of around 100,000 is concentrated north of the Ibar River (an area free of Albanians) and in isolated enclaves to the south. In his October 2005 report to the UN Secretary General assessing Kosovo's preparedness for final-status negotiations, Special Envoy Kai Eide noted that "little has been achieved to create a foundation for a multi-ethnic society . . . Lack of security and respect for property rights as well as uncertainty about the future contribute heavily to the fact that the overall return process [of Serb refugees] has virtually come to a halt . . . it is a wide-spread view . . . that currently as many or more Kosovo Serbs are leaving Kosovo than returning."[25] The March 2004 riots—in which a reported 50,000 Albanians participated—exemplify the fragility of the security situation. Indeed, anecdotal evidence indicates that most Serbs would leave Kosovo if it became independent.[26]

Possible Partitions for Kosovo

Clearly, the question in Kosovo is no longer whether the province should become an independent state, but when, how, and what form it will take. Two key factors to consider are whether the remaining Serb population of about 100,000 will remain in Kosovo or leave for Serbia, and whether the entire province of Kosovo will become independent or only the portion south of the Ibar. This combination of variables yields four possible plans. The first option—which has been widely endorsed—would grant independence to the whole province but make it conditional on the government agreeing to respect the rights of minorities, who would remain in place.[27] Failure to protect the Serb population would result in international sanctions and perhaps even intervention and revocation of sovereignty. This seems to be what most international officials have in mind for Kosovo.

A second option also would make all of Kosovo an independent state but scrap the provisions for minority protections. Instead, the remaining Serbs would be removed from Kosovo and sent to Serbia. This option is probably least acceptable to Serbia because it entails the loss of Kosovo and the expulsion of its Serb population. The third plan calls for the partition of Kosovo along the Ibar River, allowing the 15 percent of Kosovo's territory north of that line to go to Serbia along with one-third of the province's Serbs. The Serbs living south of the Ibar, however, would remain and be protected. The fourth plan replicates the third but would transfer the Serbs south of the Ibar back to Serbia.

I argue that the fourth plan is preferable. It partitions Kosovo along a natural barrier and recognizes the existing segregated situation on the ground rather than trying to impose Albanian rule over an area inhabited solely by Serbs. The lone alteration that I would make to this plan would be to compensate the Albanians for the loss of northern Kosovo by giving them the Albanian-majority districts of Presevo, Medveja, and Bujanovac, which border Kosovo on the southeast. Shortly after World War II, to dilute the growing demographic dominance of Albanians in Kosovo, these districts were removed from the province, and the Serb-majority area north of the Ibar was added. Reversing these territorial swaps returns Kosovo to its original boundaries while simultaneously increasing the ethnic homogeneity of both Serbia and Kosovo.

Partition: The Future of Iraq

Despite international attempts to encourage power-sharing and federalism as a means to preserve a united Iraq, a partition of the country into three states—a Kurdish state in the northeast, a Shi'ite state in the south, and a Sunni state in the northwest—is probably unavoidable for the same reasons it is unavoidable in Kosovo. The history of violence and repression has made it hard for Iraq's ethnic groups to trust each other. The Kurds suffered such brutality that they insist on maintaining their own armed forces and prefer an independent Kurdish state to remaining part of a united Iraq. The Sunni Arabs—the dominant and privileged group under Saddam Hussein's regime—have suffered a major status reversal and are now marginalized. The Sunni-based insurgency that has raged since Saddam's downfall in 2003 signals not only many Sunnis' attachment to and reverence for Saddam, but also their mistrust and suspicion of Iraq's Shi'ites and Kurds. The 2005 constitution was negotiated mostly without Sunni input and over their vehement objections. Unsurprisingly, Sunnis voted overwhelmingly against the document. Last-minute promises by Shi'a and Kurdish leaders that would allow the constitution to be renegotiated following new parliamentary elections are small consolation to Sunnis, who will always compose a small minority of the country's elected representatives and thus will wield little power. The constitution's federal provisions represent Shi'ite leaders' recognition that the Kurds insist on near total autonomy—and thus that the Shi'ites should form their own federal bloc as well. Given the powerful centrifugal forces at play, this process will lead to the eventual partition of Iraq.

> A partition of the country into three states is probably unavoidable

This result is not surprising. The basic logic for why Iraq would fall apart was laid out nearly 10 years ago in an article by Daniel Byman.[28] In this article, Byman argued that the legacy of bitterness and mistrust engendered by Saddam's use of massive violence against the Kurdish and Shi'ite

communities would make it nearly impossible for those groups ever to trust the Sunnis again, or to entrust their security to institutions they did not control. Byman cites Michael Ignatieff's argument that "Genocide and nationalism have an entwined history. It was genocide that convinced the Jews . . . that they were a people who would never be safe until they had a nation-state of their own. As with the Jews, so with the Kurds . . . for a people who have known genocide, there is only one thing that will do: a nation-state of their own."[29] These two communities are regionally concentrated in areas they view as homelands, increasing their ability and willingness to fight for secession and making partition relatively feasible to implement. Given each group's inability to rely on the others' benign intentions, the fact that each group is armed, and the likelihood that central power-sharing institutions will generate deadlock rather than consensus, it is likely that federalism will promote separation rather than unity and lead to partition. Byman's conclusion in 1997 still rings true: "Iraq . . . is a state that deserves to collapse and be partitioned."[30] The Kurds, of course, will be delighted at the prospect of achieving statehood, and the Shi'ites will accept the break-up of Iraq, as they will obtain the largest piece of territory as well as copious reserves of oil. The Sunnis—the group that stands to lose the most territory and natural resources—are also the group with the least capability to reverse partition. The insurgency is based in the areas that would become part of a Sunni state; thus it would lose steam once foreign occupation forces depart. Once new borders and states are created, the problem would become one of deterring and preventing cross-border aggression. This would be easier than quelling a domestic insurgency with strong social support and a task that Kurdish and Shi'ite forces—aided by smaller external forces—should be able to perform.

Rather than continue to promote power-sharing institutions that are ineffective or insist on the maintenance of a single Iraqi state in the face of mounting evidence that three states are going to emerge, the United States and other international actors should begin preparing the ground for partition. Three issues will be of primary importance. First, the United States needs to work with Iraq's neighbors to ensure they will not interfere or seek to exert undue influence over the successor states. The United States should work to reconcile Turkey to a Kurdish state, extract promises from Iraqi Kurds not to foment or encourage Kurdish nationalism in other countries, and warn Iran that it must allow Iraq's Shi'ites to determine their own future. The next task will be determining the new borders of the three states. It is beyond the scope of this essay to propose what those borders should be. However, the Shi'ite state probably would comprise the nine southern provinces plus the southern part of Diyala province. The Sunnis likely would receive Anbar, Salahuddin, Ninevah province west of the Tigris, and the western parts of Ta'mim and Diyala. Kurdistan would probably consist of Dohuk, Erbil, Suleimaniyah, Ninevah east of the Tigris (including Mosul), and the eastern third of Ta'mim (including Kirkuk). Finally, there is the question of Baghdad, home to large numbers of all three groups. Options for Baghdad include making it an international zone or an area of joint

control among the groups, or giving each state sovereignty over the areas where its people live.

These tasks will not be easy, but they acknowledge the reality that, as Peter Galbraith has put it, "The fundamental problem of Iraq is an absence of Iraqis."[31] The Kurds unanimously prefer independence, the Sunni Arabs fear oppression in a state dominated by their former victims, and the Shi'ites—although preferring a single Iraq that they would control—will accept a truncated state rich in natural resources and free of a Sunni insurgency. Civil wars generate intense mistrust, fear, and hatred that make the future maintenance of multiethnic societies via negotiated settlements and power-sharing institutions difficult. Iraq, like Bosnia and Kosovo, is no exception. After six years in Kosovo, the United States and the United Nations finally have realized that partition cannot be avoided. One hopes it will not take that long for a similar realization to dawn on them in Iraq.

Notes

[1] Ted Robert Gurr, "Ethnic Warfare on the Wane," *Foreign Affairs* vol. 79, no. 3 (May/June 2000), 52.

[2] See, for example, Caroline Hartzell, Matthew Hoddie, and Donald Rothchild, "Stabilizing the Peace After Civil War: An Investigation of Some Key Variables," *International Organization* 55, no. 1 (Winter 2001), 183–208. This approach builds on the work of earlier scholars who advocated power-sharing and territorial autonomy as solutions to ethnic conflicts. See Arend Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy," *World Politics* vol. 21, no. 2 (January 1969), 207–225, and Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 601–628.

[3] Chaim D. Kaufmann, "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars," *International Security* 20, no. 4 (Spring 1996), 136–175.

[4] Much of the material in this section draws on Alexander B. Downes, "The Problem with Negotiated Settlements to Ethnic Civil Wars," *Security Studies* vol. 13, no. 4 (Summer 2004), 230–279.

[5] Barbara F. Walter, *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 169–170.

[6] Monica Duffy Toft, "Peace Through Victory?" paper presented at the annual convention of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, PA, August 2003, 11.

[7] Ibid., 23–24.

[8] Roy Licklider, "The Consequences of Negotiated Settlements in Civil Wars, 1945–1993," *American Political Science Review* vol. 89, no. 3 (September 1995), 686, and Toft, "Peace Through Victory?" 12.

[9] Barbara F. Walter, "The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement," *International Organization* vol. 51, no. 3 (Summer 1997), 335–364.

[10] Hartzell, Hoddie, and Rothchild, "Stabilizing the Peace After Civil War."

[11] Walter, op. cit.

[12] Suzanne Werner and Amy Yuen, "Making and Keeping Peace," *International Organization* vol. 59, no. 2 (April 2005), 269, 271.

[13] Michael J. Jordan, "Even in Eager Kosovo, Nation-Building Stalls," *Christian Science Monitor*, Sept. 22, 2004, 1.

[14] Beth Kampschror, "Kosovo Albanians Push for Talks About Self-Determination," *Christian Science Monitor*, Sept. 1, 2005, 4.

[15] Nicholas Wood, "Ambitious Experiment Leads Kosovo to a Crossroads," *New York Times*, Oct. 3, 2005, 3.

[16] Quoted in Jordan, op. cit.

[17] Quote is from Alexandros Yannis, "Kosovo Under International Administration," *Survival* vol. 43, no. 2 (Summer 2001), 44.
[18] Jennifer Perry, "Small Arms and Light Weapons Disarmament Programs: Challenges, Utility, and Lessons Learned," Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Advanced Systems and Concepts Office, July 12, 2004, 7–8; .
[19] Artan Mustafa and Jeta Xharra, "Kosovo Gun Amnesty Setback," Institute for War and Peace Reporting, Oct. 16, 2003; *www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/kosovo1/2003/1016setback.htm*.
[20] Perry, op. cit., 26.
[21] Quoted in Mustafa and Xharra, op. cit.
[22] Jacques Rupnik, "Yugoslavia After Milosevic," *Survival* 43, no. 2 (Summer 2001), 19–29.
[23] Kampschror, op. cit.
[24] On this problem in Bosnia, see David Chandler, *Bosnia: Faking Democracy After Dayton*, 2nd ed. (London: Pluto Press, 2000).
[25] Kai Eide, "A Comprehensive Review of the Situation in Kosovo," October 7, 2005, 9–10, *http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/540/69/PDF/N0554069.pdf?OpenElement*.
[26] Nicholas Wood, "Seeing Past the Hate: Kosovo's Factions Imagine a Future," *New York Times*, July 25, 2005, 4.
[27] See Independent International Commission on Kosovo, *The Follow-Up of the Kosovo Report: Why Conditional Independence?* (Solna, Sweden: Tryckeriet Åsbrink Grafiska, 2001), and International Crisis Group, *Bridging Kosovo's Mitrovica Divide* (Pristina: September 2005).
[28] Daniel L. Byman, "Divided They Stand: Lessons about Partition from Iraq and Lebanon," *Security Studies* 7, no. 1 (Autumn 1997): 1–29. See also Byman, "Let Iraq Collapse," *The National Interest*, no. 45 (Fall 1996), 48–60.
[29] Quoted in Byman, "Divided They Stand," 16.
[30] Ibid., 23. It is unclear what changed—other than the political climate—to cause Byman to reverse his recommendation for partition and instead support power-sharing in Iraq after the war in 2003. See, for example, Byman, "Constructing a Democratic Iraq," *International Security* vol. 28, no. 1 (Summer 2003), 47–78.
[31] Peter W. Galbraith, "How to Get Out of Iraq," *New York Review of Books*, May 13, 2004.