

The New Age Of Warlords

"The New Warrior Class" by Ralph Peters, in *Parameters* (Summer 1994), U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, Pa. 17013-5050.

After decades of Cold War preparations, the U.S. Army today is finely tuned for battle with Soviet-style armies. But the coming years are likely to bring a very different enemy, warns Peters, an army major assigned to the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence. Instead of disciplined soldiers, he says, American troops will face brutal "'warriors'—erratic primitives of shifting allegiance, habituated to violence, with no stake in civil order."

A "new warrior class," already numbering in the millions, is emerging in many parts of the world, Peters believes. "We have entered an age in which entire nations are subject to dispossession, starvation, rape, and murder on a scale approaching genocide—not at the hands of a conquering foreign power but under the guns of their neighbors. Paramilitary warriors—thugs whose talent for violence blossoms in civil war—defy legitimate governments and increasingly end up leading governments they have overturned. This is a new age of warlords, from Somalia to Myanmar/Burma, from Afghanistan to Yugoslavia." Lately, the warriors have been joined by ex-Soviet military men, who now serve as mercenaries or volunteers in the former Yu-

A Hobbesian World

In much of the globe, Michael Mandelbaum, a professor of foreign policy at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, writes in *Foreign Policy* (Summer 1994), life is becoming "nastier, more brutish, and shorter than [it was] before the Europeans arrived."

The world is ready for a government; or rather, it is ready for more international governance than ever before. But the [United Nations] is not a world government and it will not become one. The instruments of order are sovereign states. But there is no effective method of extracting resources from states to pay for governance. Further, the most powerful state, the United States, has shown little interest in making the large-scale contributions necessary to fulfill the international mandate arising from the end of the Cold War.

Thus, for large parts of the world beyond the secure, prosperous triad of Western Europe, North America, and Japan, one of the great developments of the modern era is being reversed. The revolution in the technology of transportation and warfare over the past several centuries led to the expansion of European power throughout the world. Although in historical perspective that expansion was not in all ways a benign development, it did bring order to much of the world. Tribes, nations, and sects that had fought one another with primitive weapons were forced to submit to the supe-

rior firepower of alien conquerors and to accept their institutions.

Now, however, the Europeans and their North American offspring have gone home and are disinclined to return. The response of the West to the ensuing disorder has not been to intervene; instead, it has tried to wall itself off from the misery that disorder brings. For many parts of the world where Europeans once governed it will be as if they had never come, with two exceptions: The traditional indigenous sources of order have long since been weakened if not destroyed, and the arms available are more numerous and deadlier than ever before. Saddam Hussein, Mohammed Farah Aidid, and Slobodan Milošević, the political descendants of premodern chieftains, have equipment such as rocket-propelled grenades, long-range artillery, and jet aircraft, which can do far more damage than anything in the possession of their equally brutal predecessors. Thus, in much of the world beyond the prosperous industrial triad, continued suffering and carnage of the kind northern Iraq, Somalia, and Bosnia have experienced is a very real prospect.



Are General Aidid's ragtag warriors a harbinger of enemies to come?

goslavia and in conflicts throughout the former Soviet Union.

The United States has already been tripped up by a late-20th-century warlord in Somalia, where its attempt to bring General Mohammed Farah Aidid to heel was an embarrassing failure. But the United Nations has experienced even more trouble in the former Yugoslavia, Peters maintains: "Imagining they can negotiate with governments to control warrior excesses, the United Nations and other well-intentioned organizations plead with the men-in-suits in Belgrade, Zagreb, and Sarajevo to come to terms with one another. But the war in Bosnia and adjacent regions already has degenerated to a point where many local commanders obey only orders which flatter them." If a peace treaty ever is signed, the only way it could be made to work would be "for those forces loyal to the central authorities to hunt down, disarm, and if necessary kill their former comrades-in-arms who refuse to comply with the peace terms. Even then, 'freedom fighters,' bandits, and terrorists will haunt the mountain passes and the urban alleys for years to come."

Warfare with warriors, Peters says, "is a zero-sum game. And it takes guts to play." The United States, he urges, should begin amassing intelligence on specific warrior chieftains for future use, and the army should give more time to training its officers and soldiers to deal with warrior threats.

Meanwhile, he says, some basic questions must be answered: "Do we have the strength of will, as a military and as a nation, to defeat an

enemy who has nothing to lose? When we face warriors, we will often face men who have acquired a taste for killing, who do not behave rationally according to our definition of rationality, who are capable of atrocities that challenge the descriptive powers of language, and who will sacrifice their own kind in order to survive. . . . Are we able to engage in and sustain the level of sheer violence it can take to eradicate this kind of threat?"

Out of Control?

"Out of Control: The Crisis in Civil-Military Relations" by Richard H. Kohn, in *The National Interest* (Spring 1994), 1112 16th St. N.W., Ste. 540, Washington, D.C. 20036.

"The U.S. military is now more alienated from its civilian leadership than at any [other] time in American history," and civilian control over the military is becoming dangerously frayed. So contends Kohn, who was chief of Air Force history from 1981 to '91 and now teaches at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The situation today, he observes, is very different from what it was during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, when civilian leaders aggressively asserted control over the military. Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara imposed restrictive rules on military operations in South Vietnam, and President Lyndon B. Johnson personally selected bombing targets in North Vietnam. Aiming to keep the war limited, they instead were keeping it from being won, in the eyes of many officers. After McNamara, Kohn notes, the military and its political allies reacted powerfully against what they regarded as civilian meddling in military affairs.

Other developments widened the civilian-military breach. As "national security became a matter of intense partisanship," beginning in the late 1960s, the professional military "became politicized, abandoning its century-and-a-half tradition of non-partisanship," Kohn writes. "It