Dark threats and white knights: the Somalia Affair, peacekeeping and the new imperialism

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'Savage Wars of Peace'

The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line, – the rela-
tion of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and
the islands of the sea.

W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903)[1]

I still think today as yesterday that the color line is a great problem of this cen-
tury. But today I see more clearly than yesterday that back of the problem of race
and color, lies a greater problem which both obscures and implements it: and that
is the fact that so many civilized persons are willing to live in comfort even if the
price of this is poverty, ignorance and disease of the majority of their fellowmen;
that to maintain this privilege men have waged war until today war tends to
become universal and continuous, and the excuse for this war continues largely to
be color and race.

W.E.B. Du Bois, Preface to new edition of *The Souls of Black Folk* (1953)[2]

Our security will require transforming the military you will lead – a military that
must be ready to strike at a moment's notice in any dark corner of the world.

President George W. Bush, Speech to West Point graduates, 2003[3]

The hands of Canada's most well-known general clasp the hands of two Black
children in war-ravaged Sierra Leone. Almost destroyed from his encounter
with the 'devil' in Rwanda, General Roméo Dallaire, known for his efforts to
stop the genocide in that country, has returned to Africa. He has come to
work with children traumatized by war. They have something in common:
each has seen great brutality and suffered trauma as a result. The general
wants to come to terms with his past, not only with post-traumatic stress but

with the 'ghosts of Rwanda,' the 800,000 people he felt he couldn't save; they were massacred while a skeletal UN peacekeeping force looked helplessly on.[4] This is the story of peacekeeping we want to remember: our mission in the First World to save Africans, our helplessness and vulnerability in the face of so much horror, and our bravery in continuing nonetheless to help. For us, peacekeeping is Rudyard Kipling's white man's burden, barely transformed from its nineteenth-century origins in colonialism, when it provided moral sanction for waging 'savage wars of peace,' wars to 'fill the mouth of famine' and 'bid the sickness cease.' The nineteenth-century poet exhorted white men – Americans on the eve of an imperial war in the Philippines – to take up the thankless burden of meeting the needs of their 'new-caught sullen peoples, / Half devil and half child.'[5]

For a brief moment in national history, modern peacekeeping revealed its sordid colonial origins. In Canada, two incidents stand out amidst the half dozen or more officially acknowledged ones and scores of uncounted others. On 4 March 1993, two Somalis were shot in the back by Canadian soldiers, one fatally. Barely two weeks later, on 16 March, a Somali prisoner, sixteen-year-old Shidane Abukar Arone, was tortured to death by soldiers of the Canadian Airborne Regiment. Dozens of men looked on or knew of the torture. Gruesome photographs of the 16 March event survive; photographs of the bloodied and battered head of a Black man, a baton holding his head in place for the camera as his torturer posed grinning beside him. For a while the photos confirmed that what had gone on during the Canadian peacekeeping mission in Somalia in 1993 could not be easily separated from racism, or indeed from colonialism. Soldiers had acted more like conquerors than humanitarians, and their actions underscored the meaning of Black bodies both here and there, historically and in the present.

As time went on, the racial dimensions of the peacekeeping encounter became even more evident. On 15 January 1995, *CBC Newsworld* announced that it had obtained a videotape of Canadian Airborne Regiment soldiers serving in Somalia. Filmed as a holiday video, the tape showed soldiers uttering a number of racist remarks as they sat around drinking beer under the hot sun. Corporal Matt MacKay, a self-confessed neo-Nazi who said he had quit the white supremacist movement two years earlier, gleefully reported, 'We haven't killed enough n— yet.' Private David Brocklebank (later court-martialled for his role in the murder of Shidane Arone) announced to the camera that the Somalia operation is called 'Operation "Snatch Nig-Nog."' In the background, Private Kyle Brown (also later charged with the torture and murder of Shidane Arone) was silent. Another soldier explained that a stick is used for cracking the heads of Somalis, while another commented that the

Somalis were not starving and that 'they never work, they're lazy, they're slobs, and they stink.'[6] No sooner had the public digested the first videotape than another emerged depicting violent and racist hazing rituals of another unit of the Airborne Regiment during a party in Canada. In this videotape, we see a Black soldier being smeared with faeces spelling out the words 'I love the KKK,' then tied to a tree and sprinkled with white flour. He is later made to crawl on all fours and to suffer a simulated sodomizing.[7]

Still later, trophy photos surfaced of soldiers posing with bound and hooded Somali youth, some of whom appeared to have been beaten. In the photo that appears on the cover of this book, young children sit tied and hooded; they are made to wear signs around their necks with the word 'thief' in Somali and forced to sit in the hot sun in plain view of everyone. This photo, perhaps even more than the ones of a tortured Arone, seemed to leave no room for doubt that something had gone terribly wrong in Somalia, something more widespread than a single incident of brutality. The soldier apparently standing guard over the children is Captain Mark Sargent, then the military chaplain. Captain Sargent has never spoken publicly about his role, but the military ombudsman for whom he now works as an investigator, and others, have claimed that he was merely trying to ensure that the children were not further harmed.[8] Others maintain that the chaplain had simply indulged in the common practice of having trophy photos taken whenever there were detainees. As military police investigations revealed, several soldiers had posed for such photos, some sending them home as souvenirs. A copy had even been posted on the refrigerator door in the unit's tent in Belet Huen. It is clear, too, that the soldiers' superiors knew about the practice of the humiliation of children, and also about the taking of trophy photos. Colonel Serge Labbé maintained that when he first witnessed the humiliation of children, he ordered that it be stopped, an order Lieutenant Colonel Carol Mathieu jotted down in his field-message book. If this was indeed the order given, it was not obeyed. In late January 1993, when the photo of the five children and the chaplain was taken, several soldiers recorded the event either by taking trophy photos themselves or writing about it in letters home. Once the killing of Arone came to the media's attention, however, trophy photos were ordered to be destroyed. As General Ernest Beno wrote to Colonel Labbé in April 1993, if the Canadian public ever saw such photos, they would be disturbed.[9]

It is not clear just how routine was the event depicted in the photo. Some soldiers have claimed that they were initially disturbed by the routine practice of the 'bagging and tagging' of detainees.[10] As ex-Captain Michel Rainville (who was himself implicated in the 4 March killing) explained to the media, he shared his misgivings with his superiors and was reassured that the humili-

ation of the children was the only acceptable way to deter petty thievery.[11] Another soldier, breaching military rules, made the photo available to a national inquiry on the events in Somalia and planned to testify about what he felt was a contravention of the Geneva Convention. (For his actions, Corporal Michel Purnelle was disciplined and charged by the military with a series of infractions, among them leaving his post to appear before the commission of inquiry).[12] The soldier who took the photo, Captain Jeff DeLallo, maintained that the signs around the children's neck were the idea of the Somali interpreter and were 'for their own good.' When he was interviewed by military police in July 1994, Captain DeLallo felt himself to be the target of a government witch-hunt, presumably prompted by the furor over the torture and murder of Shidane Arone.[13]

What should we feel about six- to eight-year-old children being tied up, humiliated, and left to sit in the scorching sun for two hours? It may well be, as one journalist suggested, that Canadian peacekeepers were merely taking the advice of the local population in tying up the children and seeking to deter thievery through humiliation, although this explanation begs the question of whether we would have taken such advice if the children had been our own.[14] Seen alongside the 4 March and 16 March incidents, the videotapes, other incidents that would later come to light in a national inquiry, and subsequent military efforts to cover up what happened, the actions of peacekeepers seem far less benign than a cultural misunderstanding.

The first reports of what became known in Canada as the 'Somalia Affair' briefly highlighted for Canadians the connection between racism, peacekeeping, and the violent events we now know to be an aspect of most if not all peacekeeping ventures. The connection shook our sensibilities to the core, challenging as it did national claims to a special expertise in peacekeeping, and more importantly, to a history without racism. The flare died, however, as quickly as it was born. Today, despite a national inquiry into the deployment of troops to Somalia, what most Canadians are likely to associate with peacekeeping is the nation's glorious role as peacekeeper to the world, and its traumatized heroes such as Roméo Dallaire. Few would now recognize the name of Shidane Arone and many would be outraged at the juxtaposition of the word peacekeeping with racial violence. At most, some would concede that what happened in Somalia was horrible, but they would put it down to a few 'bad apples,' bad generals, and a 'rogue regiment,' the latter now happily disbanded.

Racism has all but disappeared from public memory of the Somalia Affair, despite its early dramatic appearances in the photographs and films. 'Spectacle,' Toni Morrison writes, 'is the best means by which an official story is formed and is a superior mechanism for guaranteeing its longevity. Spectacle

offers signs, symbols and images that are more pervasive and persuasive than print which can smoothly parody thought.'[15] The official story that emerged from the spectacle of the Somalia Affair – a spectacle that began with photos of the violent death of a Black man in custody and Black children bound and humiliated – was that of a gentle, peacekeeping nation betrayed by a few unscrupulous men. Violence transformed into gold.

This book explores what racism had to do with the Somalia Affair, what it has to do with modern peacekeeping, and how it disappears in the law and in national memory. These three themes are pursued through an examination of the voluminous records of military trials and the public inquiry into the deployment of Canadian troops to Somalia. They are also pursued in the texts of popular culture where both national and international mythologies about peacekeeping in the post–cold war era can be tracked. I follow two racial stories. One is the story of the violence itself and what would drive men from the North to commit such atrocities against people of the South. This is a story about race and the masculinities that make the nation white. The second story, and in many respects the more significant one, concerns the ways in which peacekeeping violence is largely forgiven and ultimately forgotten, both erased and de-raced, when the story of the violence travels from the South to the North and enters legal arenas such as military trials and a national inquiry. Race disappears from public memory through a variety of tricks, and incidents of racial violence become transformed into something else, something we can live with. In place of racial epithets, humiliated children, and tortured, beaten, and executed bodies, a new story emerges about the heroism of the peacekeepers of Northern countries and the traumas *they* have had to endure as they go about the business of assisting Third World nations into modernity.

Why tell these two stories now? First, the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and the resulting 'war against terrorism' have made us all aware, if we were not before, of the racial underpinnings of the New World Order. In this book, recalling W.E.B. Du Bois's famous observation, I refer to these underpinnings as the colour line. Embedded deep within the conceptual foundations of the Bush administration's notion of a life-and-death struggle against the 'axis of evil' is a thoroughly racial logic. Disciplining, instructing, and keeping in line Third World peoples who irrationally hate and wish to destroy their saviours (as Kipling's poem predicted) derives from the idea that Northern peoples inhabit civilized lands while the South, in Chinua Achebe's words, 'is a metaphysical battlefield devoid of all recognizable humanity into which the wandering European enters at his peril.'[16] On such battlefields, violence occurs with impunity and is often legally authorized. As it was in Somalia in 1991, colour-line thinking was certainly in evi-

dence in the American invasions of both Afghanistan in 2002 and Iraq in 2003, invasions justified on the ground that it was necessary to drop thousands of bombs on Afghanis and Iraqis in order to save them from the excesses of their own society. For Kipling as for President George W. Bush, a savage war of peace 'To veil the threat of terror / And check the show of pride' is the West's burden to bear. Oil, the free market, and the historical support the United States has given to the Taliban and to Saddam Hussein, among other despotic regimes, all disappear under 'smart' bombs. Once the smoke clears, peacekeepers walk in.

Second, the legal transformation of peacekeeping violence into a story of Northern goodness and heroism tells us a great deal about *how* violence directed against bodies of colour becomes normalized as a necessary part of the civilizing process. National and international mythologies of heroic white people obliged to make the world safe for democracy and needing to employ violence to do so flood our airwaves. Saluting Noam Chomsky for having unmasked 'the ugly, manipulative, ruthless universe that exists behind that beautiful, sunny word "freedom,"' Arundhati Roy underlines this key feature of the New World Order: great crimes against humanity are committed in the name of justice and righteousness.[17] Law has an important role to play in this process, for it is in the courtroom and at hearings that a public truth is proclaimed about who we are as a people and as a nation. The explanatory frameworks utilized in the legal context reveal how racial hierarchies are organized through knowledge production. We see, for example, how the notion that Somalis possessed different values from ourselves enabled the court to understand that violence in such a setting was both normal and necessary. Such assumptions, racist in their origin and impact, enable us to know ourselves as superior. Examining legal narratives for the ways in which they organize how we come to know ourselves is a valuable undertaking if we are to dismantle those deeply internalized myths about our civilizing mission.

This book examines the eviction of Third World peoples from the realm of common humanity through a detailed look at one such legal encounter: the military trials and national inquiry into the deployment of Canadian troops to Somalia. Employing a case study such as the Somalia Affair to say something about the larger global story of racism and modern peacekeeping has an important advantage. The case-study approach provides an opportunity to examine up close how individuals perform national and international mythologies. Through a study of these performances we can move beyond the myths and the stories that nations and regions tell about their origins and history. We can begin to understand who people think they are and how this informs what they do. When Canadian peacekeepers went to Somalia, who did they

think they were and what did they think they were doing in the hot desert of Belet Huen? By the same token, when a nation announces itself as peace-keeper to the world, and when its national subjects derive from this and related mythologies a sense of self, history, and place, what material structures and practices sustain these beliefs and are, in turn, sustained by them? And what racial hierarchies underpin and are supported by such apparently innocent beliefs? The hold that mythologies have should not be underestimated. They have the power to make a nation replace tortured and dead bodies with traumatized soldiers. Mythologies help the nation to forget its bloody past and present. By showing in a context-specific way both how a racially specific national and international subject is performed, produced, and sustained and how such performances keep the global order in place, I hope most of all to reveal that subject's fictive and destructive core and to suggest another, more ethical way of imagining ourselves and of living in the world.

Du Bois, writing fifty years after his prophetic declaration that the colour line would remain the problem of the twentieth century, noted that behind the colour line was the fact that so many people were willing to live with its effects. Du Bois's insight that we are somehow able to live with the pernicious effects of the colour line suggests that it is imperative to understand how our daily participation in a colour-lined world is secured. In this study of peace-keeping violence, what is revealed is that we come to know ourselves in intimate ways *through* the colour line. A Canadian today knows herself or himself as someone who comes from the nicest place on earth, as someone from a peacekeeping nation, and as a modest, self-deprecating individual who is able to gently teach Third World Others about civility. So deep is this sense of self that it becomes inconceivable to imagine that Third World Others have any sort of personhood. Race, as Anthony Farley has written, drawing on Frantz Fanon and others, is a form of bodily pleasure and 'legal expressions of the colorline are, similarly, sensations that people have both in and about their bodies. The master and his slave may both come to see and feel themselves through the law that defines, commands, and is their expression of their situation.'[18] To unmake the colour line is to unmake ourselves. It is to give up race pleasure.

The colour line and the race pleasure on which it depends have a long history. As Kipling describes in his poem, 'savage wars of peace' were exactly how nineteenth-century colonial projects were characterized. When New World Order mythologies refer to the obligation of the First World, and the United States in particular, to teach the Third World about democracy, the underlying logic is the same as nineteenth-century colonialism and imperialism's notion of a civilizing mission. As Edward Said has often pointed out, imperialism is not

just about accumulation but about the *idea* of empire. What distinguishes imperialist projects of the nineteenth century and of today from earlier empires is the idea that certain territories beseech and require domination. Empire is a structure of feeling, a deeply held belief in the need to and the right to dominate others *for their own good*, others who are expected to be grateful. The imperial past lives on in contemporary American proclamations of 'we are number one, we are bound to lead, we stand for freedom and order, and so on.'[19] Individuals come to define themselves within these scripts, believing deeply in 'the illusion of benevolence'[20] and requiring, as before, grateful natives.

In the chapters that follow, I show how modern peacekeeping is constructed as a colour line with civilized white nations standing on one side and uncivilized Third World nations standing on the other. In chapter 1, this line is revealed in the peacekeeper as a figure who is entrusted with the task of sorting out the tribalisms and the warlords that have mysteriously sprung up in regions of the world where great evil dwells. Confronted with such savagery, peacekeepers can 'lose it,' either by descending into violence themselves or descending into madness. The traumatized peacekeeper, an important Canadian icon, is a man who bears witness to the savagery and who is overcome by it. I locate his story in both an older national narrative about the special qualities of a middle-power peacekeeping nation and a global one about a family of civilized nations forced to stand together to confront 'absolute evil.' Such narratives, I argue, achieve coherence only if we imagine the world to be divided between the civilized and the uncivilized.

In chapter 2, I show what happens when men from the First World go to Africa to assist Africans into modernity. Men who understand themselves to be on colonial terrain, as some Western peacekeepers seem to have done, have humiliated, raped, tortured, and killed the local population they came to help. Many incidents involve children and are collective, openly accomplished events, remarkable indicators of how much the violence is driven by an impulse to teach the natives a lesson, and how much it is considered to be ordinary. In this chapter, I show the pervasive character of the violence in Somalia – that is, its everydayness. In answering the question, 'What did the soldiers think they were doing?' I suggest that acts of violence helped to convince the men of their own masculine and racial superiority. I emphasize that the men who committed the most egregious acts of violence shared with those who watched, condoned, or encouraged it a belief that in Somalia they had an obligation to discipline and instruct the natives, a duty that was clearly patriotic.

What is the relationship of soldiers of colour to the colour line? The question arises in the Somalia Affair because two of the key perpetrators of violence, at least the two so identified in legal processes, were of Aboriginal

origin. In chapter 3, I explore their participation in the violence, a participation some have tried to explain as an attempt to 'outwhite the white guys' in order to gain acceptance. I reject this compensatory line of argument, one that suggests that men of colour compensate for their low status by seeking the prestige that engaging in violence provides. I show that although men from subordinate groups (working-class white soldiers and the two Aboriginal soldiers) ended up bearing almost exclusive responsibility for the crimes committed in Somalia, their acts of violence sprang from the pursuit of racial dominance that intimately structured the peacekeeping encounter. All soldiers were invited to 'act white' – that is, to come to know themselves as men from the land of clean snow whose presence in the hot desert of Belet Huen was a civilizing one. For some men, the civilizing endeavour required violence.

There is no question that the Somalia Affair shocked the nation. It prompted us to disband the Canadian Airborne Regiment and to establish a Commission of Inquiry, one that was shut down by the Canadian government, however, before it could investigate fully the events of 4 and 16 March 1993, and particularly before it could probe the role of military leaders. Chapter 4 discusses the public truth we ended up with once the Inquiry had submitted its final report. Race could hardly be ignored in the Inquiry but its role was considered to be largely limited to white supremacist activity among the soldiers. Beyond noticing the use of racial slurs, the Inquiry did not view the encounter as one that race overdetermined. The result, I argue, while a courageous naming of the duplicity and irresponsibility of the leadership, nevertheless exonerated the troops who were thought to have been pushed to the brink by the savagery of Africans and Africa itself and who were abandoned by their leaders. The Inquiry also exonerated the nation, reinstalling our innocence through the trope of a nation betrayed. Officially, we remember ourselves as the principal victims of the Somalia Affair, a remembrance that keeps the colour line intact. We believe we were duped by our own, and that it was our very niceness and national naïveté that led to the debacle in Somalia. We still have not abandoned our sense of the world as a place where we sally forth, often as the 'hero's friend,' to help those less fortunate than ourselves. We cannot imagine that we are implicated in the crises we set out to solve.

I end this book with reflections on what it means to act morally in the New World Order. Morality seems besides the point, superfluous, as Hannah Arendt observed of the totalitarian regime of Adolf Hitler, in a world transformed by U.S. determination to consolidate itself as an empire. Amidst the war cries of the American administration, first against Iraq and now moving relentlessly on towards Syria and Iran, it feels foolish even to attempt to grapple with the issue of morality. How, Arundhati Roy asks in her book *War*

Talk,[21] can we resist empire? This study of peacekeeping has provided some signposts. In the conclusion, I consider the features of the moral universe in which both warmongers and peacekeepers locate themselves – a universe of white knights fighting for peace in the 'dark corners of the earth,' as George W. Bush characterized it. I argue for a rejection of this moral universe and its colour line, urging instead that we put ourselves back into history, rendering 'evil' thinkable and finding out how we have produced it. Only then, can we find ways of acting morally.

The story of racial violence at the heart of peacekeeping is clearly not a Canadian one alone. In this post–cold war and apparently largely decolonized New World Order, violence of the kind evident in the Canadian example has occurred elsewhere. From Somalia to Bosnia, it is hard to find a peacekeeping venture that has not included incidents where peacekeepers tortured, raped, and killed, as well as racially degraded the population they came to assist. The violence of peacekeepers has often been ignored or, more often, justified by the tense, warlike circumstances in which it occurs. More often than not, when it is acknowledged, peacekeeping violence is exceptionalized. Outrage and condemnation, not to mention accountability, have been particularly lacking in legal inquiries. Concern centres on military inefficiency and on the failure of the United Nations to properly plan and execute peacekeeping missions. It is rare to find an acknowledgment that peacekeeping violence occurs, and rarer still to encounter explanations that pay attention to the racial features of the peacekeeping encounter. Legal inquiries seem to contain the violence, functioning as a kind of 'narrative shield' that dissolves the horror in 'a storm of words.'[22]

Although it makes several references to them, this study does not fully explore peacekeeping violence in other countries. Instead, what it provides is a framework for understanding such violence principally as colonial violence enacted in the name of nation. We cannot fully appreciate how peacekeeping violence occurs and is forgiven without understanding its connection to specific national projects. When American, Italian, and Belgian troops committed heinous acts of peacekeeping violence, their nation's specific colonial histories and mythologies profoundly shaped who the perpetrators thought they were, what they thought they were doing, and, ultimately, what the home country thought of their activities. What remains true for all examples of peacekeeping violence, however, is their overtly race-based nature.

On the question of the importance of acknowledging the context in which we write, anthropologist Renato Rosaldo gives an example of how personal history might influence scholarship: 'Has, for example the writer of an ethnography on death suffered a serious personal loss?'[23] Rosaldo uses this ques-

tion to make his point that we are neither partial nor impartial, innocent nor complicit; we are simply involved. Rosaldo's question prompts me to examine my own relationship to the issues of racial violence and peacekeeping and to the Somalia Affair. I hasten to add that this relationship was not informed by a serious personal loss, although the last stages of the book's completion occurred in the months following my father's death and was surely deeply inspired by his relentless questioning of the 'international' and of the place of Muslim and Black bodies within it. Neither was this work driven by a sense that what happened to individual Somalis was deeply personal. I am not Somali and I have not suffered the kind of grief that the parents of Shidane Arone have endured. Where the personal connection is, however, is in the relationship I bear towards those everyday national mythologies about Canada as a kinder, gentler nation – mythologies enacted in peacekeeping.

This national mythology has always depended on race. It is informed by the notion that 'we' know about democracy and 'they' do not; 'we' have values of integrity, honesty, and compassion that 'they' do not; that 'we' are a law-abiding, orderly, and modest people while 'they' are not. As an immigrant to Canada from the Third World, I have long understood that the 'we' is a white category and that it refers to people who imagine themselves to be the original citizens (Aboriginal peoples are considered dead or dying and people of colour are considered recently arrived). Again, the fault line is a racial one. In the national fantasy, the 'we' are of Anglo-Saxon origin, descendants of a Northern people who consider themselves innately given to civility.[24] The instruction of the natives that is so central to peacekeeping is also central to the everyday experiences of immigrants of colour in the North. It is a civilizing process that is deeply familiar and utterly dehumanizing. My impulse to name the colour line in peacekeeping springs from this everyday experience of eviction from the national, an eviction that swiftly occurs whenever racism is named.

Civilizing missions have wrought terrible damage. There is, as Homi Bhabha observes, a profound emergency in the lives of racialized peoples.[25] The people of Iraq, and the people of Palestine are only two examples of those who have not only borne the brunt of civilizing missions but who have in the bargain been accused of causing their own destruction. On the home front, Aboriginal peoples are driven by the police to the outskirts of the city and left to freeze to death. Black men die in police custody, as Shidane Arone did. Dozens of Aboriginal women working as prostitutes were murdered before anyone official took serious notice. And all the while we insist that there is no racism here, or that racism is worse elsewhere. Internationally, while we bask in the warm glow of being a peacekeeping country, a profound emergency goes

on that we have had a hand in creating. It will not do to stand above it all proclaiming our innocence and vulnerability and at the same time our willingness to help.

What the Somalia Affair has to teach us is that the dehumanization of others is more easily accomplished and condoned when we understand those others to be different and when we understand ourselves to be standing outside of the world's crises as impartial and compassionate observers. In the Somalia Affair, we see some of the everyday common-sense notions that blunt the responses of the average person to violence – notions about saving people from themselves, about their mysterious descent into evil and into the thrall of warlords, and about a belief in our own equally mysterious capacity to do good. We see how it happens that we care less and see less about the human rights of others, even while paradoxically we assert our special responsibilities towards them. This study demonstrates that the essence of racism, a dehumanizing of the Other, is accompanied by a profound belief in our own superiority, a superiority conveyed in the thousand ordinary phrases we use to express national character and belonging, and to expel so many Others from the nation. We may not be able to give up these patriotic and exclusionary impulses altogether, but we *can* learn to 'love a *land* instead of just patrolling a territory,' as Roy poetically insists.[26] The profound emergency in the lives of racialized peoples requires no less. It requires that we divest ourselves of the fantasy of the white man and his burden at both the national and international level and begin to acknowledge how we are implicated in the crises of our time. Only then can peacekeeping transcend the racial scripts in which it is so deeply mired.

CHAPTER 1

Those Who 'Witness the Evil': Peacekeeping as Trauma

States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world.

President George W. Bush referring to North Korea, Iran, and Iraq,
State of the Union Address, 2002[1]

We came into contact with absolute evil.

Canadian peacekeeper and witness of ethnic cleansing and
other atrocities in the Croatian wars[2]

It is said that a Canadian speech-writer in the Bush administration coined the phrase 'axis of evil,' which has been so much a part of American political vocabulary since the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.[3] If this is true, it is fitting. For the better part of the 1990s, Canadian peacekeepers have described their activities in Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Croatia as encounters with 'absolute evil.' The American president and the Canadian peacekeeper quoted above both imagine the international as a space where civilized peoples from the North go to the South to do battle with evil. So great is the evil that (mysteriously) dwells in the South that it defies description.

Without a specific history, 'absolute evil' is nonetheless understood *through* history. The biblical overtones of the phrase takes us back to Indian or 'savage' wars fought long ago against 'heathens,' and to an even more distant memory of crusades starting in the eleventh century, when Christian knights battled Muslim armies, and the future of Europe itself was believed to be at stake. Providing the 'resurrected togetherness and enabling of "religion,"'[4] the encounter between good and evil promises a *racial* togetherness. An 'axis of evil' reassures

people of the North that, as in a colonial era, they belong to a family of civilized nations, a family forced to confront the savagery of the nether regions of Africa, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe. Whether in peacekeeping or in George W. Bush's (and his father's) apocalyptical encounters with Saddam Hussein, colour gives the phrase 'axis of evil' its currency, and it is colour, too, through a call to join the family of civilized nations, that gives peacekeeping its allure. Citizens of nations who join the alliance against evil come to know themselves as members of a more advanced race whose values of democracy and peace are simply not shared by others.

An apocalyptical encounter between good and evil is hard to resist. Myths evoke 'a complex system of historical association by a single image or phrase.'[5] John F. Kennedy, for example, relied on the idea of the frontier to mark himself as a president ready and able to fight communism abroad, recalling in a single word cowboys and Indians, the undeniable civilization (and victory) of the one and the savagery of the other.[6] The remembered past evoked by the phrase 'axis of evil,' a past of the internal colonization of Aboriginal peoples and external colonizing ventures across the South, culminates in a contemporary encounter. As this latest instalment goes, the West's historic burden to fight against evil must be taken up again with the end of the cold war and the birth of what has come to be widely described as the New World Order. We thought we could rest. We hoped that with the collapse of the Soviet Union, 'a new order of free nations' would begin to take shape. Michael Ignatieff describes 'our' state of mind: 'With blithe lightness of mind, we assumed that the world was moving irrevocably beyond nationalism, beyond tribalism, beyond the provincial confines of identities inscribed in our passports, towards a global market culture which was to be our new home.'[7] Impossibly naive, we became victims of our own innocence. Instead of our hoped-for global fraternity, the New World Order is 'the disintegration of nation states into ethnic civil war; the key architects of that order are warlords; and the key language of our age is ethnic nationalism.'[8]

In these New World Order stories, warlords and ethnic nationalism, indisputable scourges of our age, are often pictured as though they have risen up from the landscape itself and not out of histories in which the West has featured as a colonizing power. No longer anchored in a history, nationalisms and the violence that accompany them seem to be properties of certain people and certain regions. Following the media story of ethnic violence, for instance, leads to three inescapable conclusions, observes Jan Pieterse: '(1) the perpetrators are mad, (2) the West and onlookers are sane, and (3) humanitarian intervention under these crazy circumstances, although messy, is the best we can do.'[9] We are easily tempted into believing that, no sooner had they ended, col-

onism and the 'savage wars of peace' described by Kipling are strangely upon us again. Myth, in this instance of an inexplicable rise in savagery, 'disarms critical analysis' because it appeals to a deeply racially inflected memory: for North Americans, the golden age of cowboys and Indians, and for Europeans, African and Asian colonial adventures.[10] It is not surprising that North American soldiers in Vietnam and peacekeepers in Somalia both described where they were as 'Indian country.'[11] When racial chords are struck it becomes difficult, as I will show, to think beyond the simple storylines of mythology.

Peacekeeping has a starring role to play in the mythologies of the New World Order. Under the auspices of a United Nations dominated by the United States, peacekeepers are entrusted with the task of sorting out the tribalisms and the warlords, protecting the people of the South from the internal evil that threatens them. The evil, however, is powerful and the international a realm fraught with danger. Human rights violations mark the Third World 'as a region of aberrant violence.'[12] Confronted with such savagery, First World peacekeepers sometimes 'lose it,' descending into savagery themselves, as some are seen to have done in Somalia and upon their return home, or else they can become traumatized from too close a brush with 'absolute evil.' Increasingly, and this is perhaps true more of middle powers like Canada than it is for the United States,[13] peacekeeping encounters are narrated as captivity narratives once were a century ago, although the hero of the peacekeeping-trauma narrative is most likely to be a man, and the 'capture' by the 'Indians' is no more than an encounter.

> The hero of the captivity narrative is a White woman (or minister) captured by the Indians during a 'savage war.' The captive symbolizes the values of Christianity and civilization that are imperilled in the wilderness war. Her captivity is figuratively a descent into Hell and a spiritual darkness which is akin to 'madness.' By resisting the physical threats and spiritual temptations of the Indians, the captive vindicates both her own moral character and the power of the values she symbolizes. But the scenario of historical action developed by the captivity narrative is a passive one that emphasizes the weakness of colonial power and ends not with a victorious conquest but with a grateful and somewhat chastened return home.[14]

The stories of peacekeepers who are overwhelmed by the inherent evil of the land and its peoples are narrated in documentary films and news features as stories about traumatized white men (and only a few white women) in Africa and Eastern Europe. Upon their return these peacekeepers bear witness to an alien world, a world so savage that only a powerful alliance of civilized nations can intervene to stop the carnage. Like the narrative about an axis of evil, the story

of traumatized peacekeepers depends for its coherency on the logic of rational
men and women from white nations who encounter people and things in the
south that are beyond rationality, things that can literally drive them mad.

To speak of the racial logic of peacekeeping trauma is to speak about the
work that is done by narratives. A narrative is different from a personal story
and it is important to hold the difference in mind. Peacekeepers do experience
trauma, and the rotting bodies, snipers, and child soldiers are real enough, but
the events of trauma, Kali Tal notes, are codified in narrative form until they
become a signifier for something else.[15] It is the codified story, and not the
individual experiences, that I refer to when I consider trauma. Deconstructing
narratives – that is, looking for the way in which they are about something else
– means separating the experiences of individuals from the way their stories
are assembled for our consumption.

Attending to the work that narratives do, Renato Rosaldo suggests, is less
about demystification than it is about dismantling. As he does with the narra-
tive of imperialist nostalgia, where people mourn the passing of what they
themselves have destroyed, Rosaldo suggests that while demystification is use-
ful, such as revealing the connection between nostalgia and guilt or demon-
strating how little about imperialism there actually is to be mourned, it is more
important to dismantle narrative by probing its productive function.[16] Imperi-
alist nostalgia, the yearning for the glorious days of the Raj, for instance, trans-
forms colonial agents into innocent bystanders harmlessly sipping tea in old
palaces in much the same way that witnessing the evil and becoming trauma-
tized by it transforms peacekeepers and their nations into hapless victims of a
timeless evil, rather than agents implicated in complex histories of colonialism
and neo-colonialism. In probing what is produced by stories of traumatized
peacekeepers, we might ask, as Kali Tal suggests for narratives of the trauma of
the holocaust and of sexual violence, what 'is the connection between individ-
ual psychic trauma and cultural representations of the traumatic event?'[17]
Focusing on cultural representations of peacekeeping in the 1990s, stories
about trauma, the special qualities of middle-power nations, and the burden to
be borne by the family of civilized nations in the New World Order, I explore
in this chapter what it means for us in the North to cast ourselves as trauma-
tized in both a national and an international story about the West's confronta-
tion with absolute evil.

I. Those Who 'Witness the Evil'

It is worth noting at the outset what is at stake in dismantling peacekeeping
stories of trauma. Reflecting on the embracing of traumatized figures in

national U.S. culture (in Berlant's example the figure is the child worker traumatized by exploitation), Lauren Berlant asks about 'the place of painful feeling in the making of political worlds.'[18] What the frame of trauma accomplishes is the installation of 'the feeling self as the true self, the self that must be protected from pain or from history.'[19] Traumatized subjectivity replaces rational subjectivity 'as the essential index of value for personhood and thus for society.'[20] One important consequence is that we can no longer talk about injustice and how it is organized. Instead, we talk about pain and how to heal. When 'feeling bad becomes evidence of a structural condition of injustice' and 'feeling good becomes evidence of justice's triumph,' then both the problem and the solution are removed from their material and historical contexts.[21]

In the case of peacekeeping, the television documentaries and news features of traumatized soldiers that are considered here visually draw us to dead and mutilated African and Eastern European bodies, but mostly so that we might feel the horror of what it was like for Northern men and women to witness such atrocities. With their experiences at the core of what we feel, it becomes difficult to contest the story. To challenge such pain, Berlant reminds us, is to inflict violence on already damaged persons.[22] How, in the face of the enormous personal pain of witnesses (we do not talk much about the actual survivors of these atrocities), do we talk about our complicity in the production of the atrocities? And how do we move towards responsibility? Keeping in mind what the trauma narrative dislodges and renders unspeakable, and in particular the way that it traps us in a story about a civilized West in a primeval encounter with evil, I begin the task of dismantling.

Roméo Dallaire: The Making of an Icon

The Rwandan genocide in 1994, in which over 800,000 people were slaughtered while a skeletal UN peacekeeping force watched helplessly, remains one of the century's enduring images of evil. Not surprisingly, Rwanda (and not Somalia) is the context most often referred to in Canadian trauma narratives. It is not difficult to understand why any peacekeeper who confronted the thousands of corpses, most displaying signs of brutal violence, would be traumatized by the sight. Canadian peacekeepers found themselves in the middle of the Rwandan genocide. Early in 1994, the commander of the UN peacekeeping mission, Canadian General Roméo Dallaire had gathered evidence of an approaching and well-planned Hutu massacre of Tutsis. He appealed to his Canadian superior at the UN for help. Remembered for his now famous telex of 11 January 1994 to General Maurice Baril in which he inserted a personal plea for intervention, 'where there's a will, there's a way, let's go,' Dallaire has

since been described as a 'voice in the wilderness of horror.'[23] When no help was forthcoming, and the genocide ensued, Dallaire returned to Canada a traumatized man – suicidal and unable to put the horrors behind him.

Dallaire is not without his critics, but they have been remarkably few for so controversial a mission. Only one journalist has suggested that Dallaire's inexperience and infatuation with the idea of the ideal peacekeeper as someone without a gun who simply tries to talk people out of things, might have cost the lives of at least the ten unarmed Belgian paratroopers whom the Hutus killed, and perhaps the lives of many more.[24] Another newspaper, renowned for its conservative and anti-feminist stance, dismissed Dallaire's trauma narrative as a fabrication, just as it dismissed women who accused their fathers of childhood sexual violence.[25] A senate committee of the Belgian government criticized Dallaire for having failed to come to the aid of the Belgian peacekeepers he assigned to guard Rwanda's interim president.[26] For the most part, however, although opinion is divided on whether Dallaire could have done more, most concede, as does Alison Des Forges of Human Rights Watch, that he is a tragic hero, a man who faced impossible odds.[27]

What Dallaire actually did or did not do has long ago ceased to matter. The narrative, a nationally specific, cultural story, has taken over. By 1998, with Dallaire as its iconic figure, there were a series of documentaries made by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), and a succession of newspaper and magazine articles that conveyed to the public the figure of the traumatized peacekeeper. Sometimes joined in these stories by journalists and NGO workers who describe 'the physical and emotional scars that will never heal,' traumatized soldiers share the pain of being witness to 'unspeakable evil.'[28] In 1998, the Canadian military produced *Witness the Evil*, a documentary on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) suffered by peacekeepers. Intended for use within the military and also for the media, the film became the subject of the CBC documentary *The Unseen Scars*, shown several times on Canadian television in recent years. It is in *Witness the Evil* and *The Unseen Scars* that we see the full emergence of the traumatized peacekeeper and his function in national mythology.

Witness the Evil ensures that viewers also bear witness to the Rwandan genocide. Images of mutilated bodies, fields filled with corpses, and large piles of machetes dramatically convey a brutality that is frequently described as an apocalypse. In an opening scene, a Canadian soldier makes the sign of the cross in his tent and we know that we are watching a story unfolding in an unholy place. The soldiers give their testimony, breaking down in tears when they describe the smell of rotting bodies, the packs of dogs fighting over corpses, and, most of all, the hundreds of beheaded and mutilated children. They nar-

rate their utter helplessness and vulnerability when confronted with the barbarism and irrationality of Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) soldiers. Medical units describe being watched by RPA soldiers from the bushes, others tell of dangerous roadblock encounters in which the Rwandan troops slap a Canadian soldier and try to buy a female medical officer for the price of a chicken. Soldiers describe their duties searching for mass graves and the surreal experience of accidentally stepping into a hole that turns out to be the chest cavity of a corpse, the first of several layers of corpses. We are easily convinced by these scenes that nothing is left of Rwanda but bodies piled upon bodies.

Corporal Daines reveals that his encounters with the bodies of massacred children have deeply affected his own family life. Corporal Cassavoy describes how certain smells and sights (roasted meats, newborn children, rusted out vehicles) trigger his flashbacks. Dallaire himself, deeply sad, confirms that he too is haunted by smells and sounds, and often wishes he had lost a leg instead of his 'marbles.' The soldiers all report their terrible frustration that wearing the blue helmet of the United Nations meant very little. Major Lancaster found himself in the middle of a massacre, able to grab babies off their mothers' backs but unable to do much else. Village elders stopped the killing in this instance. The following day, Lancaster recounts that he was unable to get out of bed, overwhelmed by feelings of helplessness. The images of the genocide give way at the end of the documentary to images of Canadian soldiers bathing African children as a voice-over lists the clinical symptoms and chemistry of post-traumatic stress disorder, suggesting that it is a physical condition that can affect behaviour both during and after active duty. 'Helpless witnesses to evil' and immobilized by the overwhelming knowledge that 'all the best thinking in the world went into the UN' and yet the West still could not prevent a genocide, the soldiers return home. We, the television viewers understand that even the best institution the West had to offer was no match for the evil of Africa. A voice-over reassures us that at least we made things a little bit better. Tearfully, the soldiers conclude that while they have enormous pride in the good they did, the price was often too high.

'Wars re-circulate as trauma,' writes Patricia Zimmerman, referring to the trauma of women raped in Bosnia, mothers of the disappeared in Latin America, survivors and their descendants of the internment of Japanese Canadians and Japanese Americans during the Second World War, and, archetypically, the survivors of the Holocaust. For these trauma victims, documentaries heal.[29] They enable victims to move beyond their pain by speaking out and rejecting 'victimization, isolation, individualism, and silence.' Trauma narratives in documentaries are 'productive, performative acts' enabling victims to survive.[30] Zimmerman observes that the trauma victims of the documentaries she

reviews refuse 'to speak only in pain.' They speak of injustice. War is depicted not only as an image but 'as an act of aggression against women, scarring bodies, psyches, family histories, memories.'[31] How are peacekeeping trauma narratives productive performative acts? Certainly peacekeepers who speak of their trauma attest that speaking out is the beginning of healing. But their speaking out is not about genocide they have directly experienced.

Witness the Evil and *The Unseen Scars* depict a genocide whose victims are first and foremost the peacekeepers who witness it, most of them after the killing had stopped. It is their pain and not the Rwandans' that we are invited to listen to, and it is injustice directed against them that we must consider. Injustice revolves around the inefficacy of the military for not paying attention to peacekeeping traumas, the UN for producing the helplessness of the peacekeepers, and, for Dallaire at least, other Western governments who had no interest in stopping the genocide. If we are to fix the trauma, the films suggest, we must offer counselling to peacekeepers and either refuse to send our soldiers into situations where they can do very little, or prepare them better for the little they can do, an argument that anticipates those who call for increased military spending.[32] It is as though the Germans who watched Jews dragged off to concentration camps, or the Canadians who saw their Japanese neighbours forcibly removed to internment camps have become the primary victims.

The trauma of peacekeepers is of a different order than other trauma victims and the biggest difference is what they are traumatized by. Mapped on to the nation, peacekeeping trauma narratives produce a biblical narrative of a First World overwhelmed by the evil of the Third World. As Dallaire himself describes, his trauma was born out of an encounter with the devil and what followed was a slow descent into hell. 'Je suis couvert de sang' ('I am covered in blood') he told journalists, describing vividly his nightmares upon return to Canada,[33] a direct connection between the hacked up bodies and ourselves that is made clear in the only display case in Canada's national war museum devoted to peacekeeping missions in the 1990s. The display case shows Dallaire's bulletproof vest worn in Rwanda, his UN blue helmet and beret, and two Hutu machetes. The machetes were aimed at us, the display implies; the invisibility of the Rwandans is more or less complete.

As Liisa Malkii has suggested, the erasure of the experience of Rwandans themselves and their 'speechlessness' in the stories that are told of the genocide should greatly concern us. It signals our investment in understanding ourselves outside of history. We come to know of the Rwandan genocide as a horror that is unknowable and unthinkable. The 'flood of terrifying images' tells us all we need to know, and in place of history and context, the very information needed to consider the future,[34] we install 'absolute evil' and the good

soldiers overwhelmed by it. If time 'must be given to the tasks of witnessing and testimony of Rwandans,'[35] then this is a bearing witness that is fundamentally different from the peacekeepers' witnessing of the evil. Whereas the one requires us to pursue accountability (ours as well as theirs), the other invites us only to consider genocide as timeless and unchangeable, a feature of the landscape. Throughout *Witness the Evil*, the act of aggression that is the source of trauma remains amorphous, overwhelming, and African. Visually, it is hacked up Black bodies on an African landscape. These images do not only 'displace narrative testimony' of the Rwandans themselves but also actively silence and dehumanize Africans by presenting them as a 'mere, bare, naked, or minimal humanity.'[36]

As witness, the peacekeeper is not personally implicated in what has traumatized him. He stands in the place Dana Nelson has described as the 'objective and disembodied space of the universalist standpoint.' From this vantage point, he is witness to a depravity that can be named but is no less mystical. His is an 'occulted standpoint,' the viewpoint of the observer who is not himself of the landscape yet who is able to understand hidden things (the presence of the devil) that the Rwandans themselves presumably cannot see.[37] For Mary Louise Pratt, 'a fantasy of dominance and appropriation' is built into this 'otherwise passive, open stance,' a position she notes of imperial naturalists and scientific observers who thought themselves unconnected to imperial conquest but whose assumption of the right to define and name what they saw and to encode the landscape as empty and awaiting European improvement was a cornerstone of imperialism.[38] 'The improving eye' of Pratt's 'anti-conquest man' (her term for the naturalists and scientists who saw themselves as different from conquerors) is clearly in evidence in refugee experts and relief officials, as Malkii has pointed out for Rwanda, standing 'surrounded by milling crowds of black people peering into the camera, and benevolently, efficiently, giving a rundown on their numbers, their diseases, their nutritional needs, their crops, and their birth and mortality rates.'[39] And it is in evidence when the camera scans the mounds of bodies, and we let it tell us all we ever need to know about Rwanda.

The story of an encounter with unfathomable evil is only intelligible through race. It is perhaps no accident that so many writers of Dallaire's story compare Rwanda with Joseph Conrad's Congo in his 1901 novel *Heart of Darkness*, and Dallaire to Marlowe, the narrator of Conrad's novel. Journalist Carol Off, for instance, writing of Dallaire, begins her chapter 'Into Africa' with an epigraph from Conrad. For her, Dallaire is like Marlowe who sees the folly of colonial greed in Africa (in Dallaire's case the folly of the UN) as well as the 'lusty red-eyed devils' lurking in the jungle.[40] For those caught between 'two strains of

the truly sinister,'[41] there is only madness, either as trauma or as violence. When peacekeepers are violent, as they were in Somalia, we are easily able to forgive it and even to expect it, understanding that it is the cruelties of Africa and Africans who push Western men to violence. Edward Said, in discussing Conrad's understanding of imperialism in *Heart of Darkness*, points out that Conrad is largely unable to think outside of imperialism. For him there are no subjects who inhabit Africa.[42] Chinua Achebe put it more forcefully: Africa, for Conrad, 'is a metaphysical battlefield devoid of all recognizable humanity, into which the wandering European enters at his peril.'[43]

Witness the Evil and the news features on Dallaire invite us to understand ourselves racially as well as nationally – that is, as good people forced to stand helplessly by as evil unfolds and as more powerful nations refuse to help. To be invited, as these documentaries do, into the 'abstracted space of universalizing authority over others' is to join a fraternity, the fraternity of those who are neither of the hacked bodies on an African landscape nor of the unscrupulous United States or incompetent UN. Before long, we begin to feel the bond that comes from sharing such high moral ground.[44] An international thus constituted is an 'affective space,' a place where middle-power nations can experience belonging.[45] Dallaire himself has made explicit the affective space of the middle-power nation. Upon his return from Rwanda, he spoke passionately of Canada's noble calling. As he put it in an interview, 'To be that intermediary between the superpowers – who don't give a s– anyways [*sic*] – and the Third World Countries who know they need the presence of our capabilities ... tabernacle,[46] you've got a hard time to find a more noble concept.'[47] Canadians have a unique destiny to fulfil as a middle power. Our nobility lies in 'keeping the big boys out of it.'[48]

We look to Dallaire to narrate in his person the moral responsibility of a middle-power nation. In the words of American Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) newscaster Ted Koppel, he is simply 'a soldier who was caught in the middle, trapped between what he knew he ought to do and what he was being ordered to do,' a man 'caught between the madness of genocide' and 'a world largely indifferent to it.'[49] He is unmistakably on high moral ground, a place, to paraphrase Dallaire himself, where moral values, ethical values, and religious beliefs come up against the UN's rules of engagement and its prohibition against the use of force. Profiled on the national news in a segment entitled 'Death and Duty,' Dallaire was nonetheless careful not to dispense with the UN as an institution altogether:

> However, you can't crucify the UN when ultimately people wanted it to be ineffective. And I mean I had people come on the ground and tell me that they were

doing an estimate because under their parameters, it would take about 85,000 dead Rwandans to risk one white or black Western soldier's life. I mean some of them actually had mathematics on this stuff. So when I'm asked, you know, why did you stay; why didn't you pack it in? I said if we can save one Rwandan, at least morally we've attempted to stymie the debacle that was going on.[50]

As the *National Post* concluded, Dallaire has become a symbol of 'the level of impotence that Canadian soldiers have experienced during recent peace-keeping missions.'[51] His plight is the plight of the nation, a nation destined to be sidelined by the United States (most recently through peacekeeping activities in Afghanistan in 2003) and by an inefficient UN. While his return to Africa (Sierra Leone) in 2001 as Canada's special adviser on child victims of war reassured us that we still had people to save, and that we could still do the saving, Dallaire continues to personify our fragility in encounters with absolute evil, our hesitant but deeply moral stance, and, above all, our non-involvement in the horrors. As one writer rendered Dallaire in a fictionalized account, in Rwanda, the Canadian commander of UN troops was 'a miracle of mimesis, a perfect incarnation of his country and his employer too ...: Unassuming, apprehensive, ineloquent and naive, like Canada.'[52] Dallaire is also 'The Last Just Man,' which is the title of an award-winning 2002 documentary in which he is once again the living embodiment of what it means to go into the heart of darkness and to find oneself as the only moral being.[53] So much do we identify with his plight that in 2000, when Dallaire was found drunk and passed out in a park near Ottawa, the news cameraman who found him did not take photos. As he later explained, 'I didn't shoot it because I was depressed to imagine a man like that could be here and didn't have help.'[54] As a nation, our responsibility is clear: We must go 'to General Dallaire's rescue.'[55] In saving him, we save ourselves.

Canadians have turned with alacrity to the vision of ourselves as a good nation overwhelmed by the brutalities of the New World Order. Recent Canadian novels have been written, journalist Graham Fraser approvingly observed, 'in support of Canada's role on the world stage.'[56] In Alan Cumyn's 1998 novel *Man of Bone*, a fictional Canadian diplomat Bill Burridge is taken hostage. Described by Fraser as 'a trauma-damaged idealist,' Bill Burridge is captured and tortured by guerrillas in a fictional Third World country whose history he barely knows. Burridge does not even know where Santa Irene is when he is first told of his posting there. In Cumyn's second novel, Burridge appears before a UN Human Rights Committee, and like Dallaire who broke down when he took the stand, Burridge is humiliated by losing control of his bowels. 'This is a risky time for Canada,' Fraser writes sympathetically of Cumyn's

hero, reading the novel as a story of the plight of a middle-power nation in the New World Order. Conservatives insist that we stay home and avoid the risks, even abandoning our historic role of peacekeeping. However, as Fraser reassures us, Liberals know that politics is not only about the local. Most 'Canadians want their country to be engaged with the world.'[57]

Our engagement with the world is everywhere depicted as the engagement of the compassionate but uninvolved observer. In November 2002, Toronto artist Gertrude Kearns held an exhibition of paintings entitled 'Undone: Dallaire/Rwanda.' The exhibition included large canvases of earth-coloured, military-camouflage markings within which figures were discernable: Dallaire with his hands covering his face; Dallaire showing horror and helplessness; a landscape of corpses and machetes; and a UN jeep sitting uselessly atop a mound of bodies. Only the blue of Dallaire's eyes and the blue of the UN helmet relieve the unrelenting brown of the camouflage landscape. For the artist, the camouflage signals the jungle, the land itself. It also reflects Dallaire being deceived by the Hutus, by the UN, and by his own mind. The title 'Undone' suggests the UN's responsibility, its failure to complete its mandate, and Dallaire's own state of coming apart. As the show's curator explains:

> Gertrude Kearns uses camouflage as a metaphor for psychological deception. Its pattern thinly veils the hard silhouette of what we deeply know. We hide our vulnerability, sometimes to the point of unfeeling. Better to conceal the truth and shun what we cannot change than admit our fallibility. Dallaire's voice and stories advance and recede in the fabric of Kearn's canvasses. She pulls his guilt and frustration through the camouflage screen. We are left with the prospect of our collective impotency.[58]

Impotent, moved, undone: this is our fate. Viewers of the exhibition congratulated Kearns in the gallery's book of comments for her depiction of what it is to be 'powerless in the face of colossal evil.' Both Dallaire and the artist are saluted for their courage in revealing to us 'man's inhumanity,' an inhumanity that leaves us stunned and overwhelmed. Trauma narratives help to organize our place in the world in just the way the novels and art exhibitions illustrate. We come to know ourselves as a compassionate people; indeed, trauma suggests that it is our very vulnerability to pain that marks us as Canadians. From our position as witness, we help to mark out the terrain of what is good and what is evil. Possessed of unique sensibilities, sensibilities that take us to the depths of grief and trauma, we can diagnose the trouble and act as the advance scout and the go-between. In this way, trauma narratives furnish middle-power nations such as Canada with a home-made, that is to say a spe-

cifically *national*, version of the politics of rescue. What can be so wrong with this? Again, Malkii elucidates the problem:

> It is difficult to see what might be so problematic in seeing the suffering of people with the eyes of 'humanitarian concern' and 'human compassion.' It is surely better than having no compassion or simply looking the other way. But this is not the issue. The issue is that the established practices of humanitarian representation and intervention are not timeless, unchangeable, or in any way absolute. On the contrary, these practices are embedded in long and complicated histories of their own – histories of charity and philanthropy, histories of international law, peacekeeping and diplomacy, histories of banishment and legal protection, histories of empires and colonial rule, histories of civilizational and emancipatory discourses and missionary work, histories of the World Bank and other development initiatives in Africa, and much more.[59]

When we produce narratives of 'anonymous corporeality and speechlessness,' when we hide our own implication and stand outside of history, preoccupied with our own pain, we stake out the colour line, producing ourselves as individuals and as a nation on the civilized side of things.[60] In this we have not been alone, although the position of 'trauma damaged idealist' has suited our middle-power aspirations to a T.

Ungrateful Natives and Helpless Soldiers

Since the early 1990s, the Canadian Armed Forces have opened five Operational Trauma and Stress Support Centres across the country. A Canadian study conducted in 1995 found a post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) prevalence above 20 per cent six months after peacekeepers came home.[61] In 2002, the Armed Forces published a report on the systemic treatment of soldiers with PTSD, in response to the complaint of Christian McEachern (a soldier who had driven a vehicle into the doors of army headquarters in Edmonton) that he had been poorly treated in the army once he had been diagnosed with PTSD.[62] Canadian activity on PTSD is matched elsewhere. As Ben Shepherd documents, since the 1980s – with the 're-discovery' of trauma and the publication of a check-list of symptoms for it in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual III* (DSM III) and the establishment of such organizations as the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies – trauma has become a household word, a universal condition shared by survivors of rape, holocausts, war, football riots. and personal tragedy. Treatable through drugs as well as therapy, by the 1990s, trauma had nonetheless become a timeless and hopeless

condition, unconnected to factors in individual patient biographies.[63] For peacekeepers, trauma is seen to develop more out of the everyday stressors of their missions than from battle. For Christian McEachern, for example, one source of trauma was the discrimination he experienced as a reservist, at the hands of soldiers who were 'regular army; another was his frustration that he was unable to stop the rape of a woman whose cries he heard outside the Canadian camp.'[64] The twenty-five soldiers who filed suits claiming that they suffered PTSD, which the Canadian military ignored, maintain that they were psychologically scarred because of inadequate military funding. Unable to help wounded civilians dying in the street, the soldiers say that they experienced considerable duty-related stress.[65]

Offering the controversial thesis that the proliferation of trauma cases and the 'therapy culture' that surrounds them reflect a 'feminization of public life' and a shift in values away from Protestant restraint and towards 'self-indulgence and sentimentality,' Shepherd laments that the link between masculinity and war has now been severed. War is no longer a test of manhood and men today are 'too vulnerable.'[66] An examination of clinical studies of peacekeeping trauma reveals, however, not the passing of the glorious age when men were men, but rather a moment in history when soldiers describe (and clinicians interpret) their breakdowns as originating in the helplessness they feel when they are unable to stop atrocities. Just as peacekeepers and presidents see themselves as embroiled in encounters with 'absolute evil,' so too clinicians plot the etiology of an illness born out of encounters between aggressive natives and soldiers unnaturally restrained by the UN. In this way, clinical studies repeat, without interrogation, threads of the same narrative line discernable in television documentaries and newspaper articles about trauma. That is to say, trauma occurs when men from civilized nations are pushed to the brink by the intolerable conditions under which they are obliged to keep the peace. A race shadow haunts the pages of these seemingly objective and scientific studies in both the explanations given and those omitted. Researchers rarely seek to historically and socially contextualize their explanations, preferring to describe them merely as conditions of the New World Order. It is commonplace, Linda Polman shows, for governments, aid workers, journalists, and, I would add, clinicians, to describe the UN as though it were an organization that had nothing to do with its member countries.[67] Equally, peacekeepers are often described as helpless victims of the UN's excesses, as though they too bear no responsibility for their actions.

In 1994, shortly after the American-led UN peacekeeping mission in Somalia ended, a Norwegian scholar Lars Weisaeth, who had been studying soldiers trauma for some time, coined the phrase 'UN Soldiers Stress Syndrome.'[68]

What was thought to distinguish this form of stress from earlier forms (for example, in Congo in the 1950s where a Swedish study determined that soldiers under twenty-one were more vulnerable to stress than were others) was the changed nature of peacekeeping. In a UN-sponsored book on international responses to traumatic stress, published in 1996 and introduced by the then secretary-general of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Weisaeth and two military analysts elaborated on the new form of peacekeepers' stress. Peacekeepers were now more likely to be involved in peace enforcement, a situation that differed from traditional peacekeeping in that there was not always consent from all the conflicting parties. Peacekeepers thus found themselves in warlike conditions, surrounded by populations who did not always welcome their presence. The new stressor was 'fear of losing control over one's aggression,' a stance of neutrality required by the UN (retaliation is only permitted in self-defence) but made difficult in practice by conditions of 'physical danger, provocations, and humiliations, and being a passive witness to helpless victims of violence attacked by the feuding factions.'[69]

Importantly, as a 1996 study by Brent Litz explained, '[p]eacekeepers who suppress their frustration, fear, resentment and anger are at risk of acting-out their feelings both during a mission (e.g. unnecessary acts of violence, callousness, dehumanization of one or more parties), and/or upon their return home (e.g. reduced empathy towards significant others, quick temper).'[70] Prefiguring in an alarming way the explanations that surfaced when Canadian peacekeepers tortured and executed Somalis, and when Gulf War veterans killed their wives,[71] the new etiology of trauma naturalized the peacekeeping encounter as one between peacekeepers struggling for restraint and civility in an environment where even the most civilized man, confronted with ungrateful natives and dangerous warring factions, could fail.

With Somalia and not Rwanda as the focus, clinical PTSD studies began to identify in greater detail the unique aspects of the encounter between Somalis and peacekeepers that contributed to trauma. Peacekeepers in Somalia were hypervigilant, and experienced a general sense of fear, a situation Litz hypothesizes may have been due to the close proximity of the Somalis and the frustration of soldiers trained for combat but charged with providing humanitarian aid. Hostility and anger were predictable (and by implication legitimate) responses. More than one-quarter of U.S. soldiers qualified for a diagnosis of PTSD after service in Somalia.[72] The events that were described as most stressful include: rocks thrown at unit (76 per cent), unit fired upon (65 per cent), and rejection by Somalis when trying to help (56 per cent). If the best peacekeepers were warriors, as both scholars and journalists proclaimed about the era of peace enforcement rather than peacemaking, then the international

environment exposed them to three new perilous conditions: ingratitude, often expressed aggressively; the stress of not being able to respond as warriors should, that is, with force; and the 'malevolence of the environment.' Faced with these, peacekeepers increasingly could not find meaning in their activities, and, as a consequence, coped less well with its stresses, experiencing trauma and/or resorting to violence.[73]

In clinical studies, peacekeeping violence is reconstituted as an illness and what remains unexamined, as Tracy Karner noted of PTSD and Vietnam veterans, is social and military socialization that influences how soldiers respond to stressors. There is a 'medicalization of masculinity' at work in the explanations of PTSD, Karner hypothesizes. Loss of control of one's aggression and the hardships of practising an unaccustomed restraint are both naturalized in trauma studies as qualities that emerge from the environment itself and not from hegemonic notions of who the ideal man/soldier is.[74] If notions of hegemonic masculinity invade the texts of trauma research, a racial masculinity is also present. Soldiers who imagine themselves in a primeval confrontation with evil, a showdown between the civilized and the uncivilized world, are unlikely to respond constructively to what are undoubtedly situations of great danger and stress. They may well be enacting a racism that clinicians have rarely considered.

Racial socialization can profoundly affect what soldiers are likely to find meaningful. Possessing little understanding of either their own or the history of the population they have come to help, and steeped in the racism prevalent in their countries of origin, Northern peacekeepers can easily subscribe to a simplistic and colonial understanding of their role as being about helping those less fortunate, a charitable act that requires properly grateful recipients who must be seen as deserving. Certainly the emphasis that is placed on grateful natives calls to mind a very old colonial trope that Toni Morrison has described as 'the plight of the rescued.' Discussing Friday, the 'savage' saved by Robinson Crusoe, Morrison notes that the price of rescue for Friday is that he must offer his master his services, loyalty, and even his language. The rescuer 'wants to hear his name, not mimicked but adored.' Friday's dilemma is that he owes too much.[75]

Two further studies of peacekeeping stress done by Litz and his co-authors[76] have begun to denaturalize the peacekeeping relationship, suggesting some of the factors that complicate what is otherwise too easily a colonial narrative. In an empirical study in which 3,310 American peacekeepers who served in the Somalia mission responded to questionnaires, the researchers evaluated four factors: peacekeepers exposure to combat-like events and circumstances (for example, the number of times peacekeepers went out on dangerous patrols);

exposure to everyday circumstances that disheartened or frustrated soldiers (for example, the harshness of the climate and the looting of camp supplies); the pressure to uphold restraint; and the presence of positive factors such as the provision of humanitarian aid. These factors were then correlated to the presence of PTSD, measured by such indicators as the presence of suicidal feelings. Perhaps the most significant finding is that while peacekeepers who experienced combat-like events as well as everyday stressors were most likely to experience PTSD (a finding similar to trauma studies conducted with Vietnam veterans), the key factor likely to produce trauma were the everyday stresses of the mission. Thus, 'although one might surmise that a degree of life threat that a peacekeeper encounters would produce greater frustration when forced to restrain from action, it appears that the *lower magnitude, daily discomforts of peacekeeping* are more strongly implicated.'[77] The pressure to uphold restraint was *not* a factor in PTSD. Finally, the researchers conclude: 'Identifying strongly with the population served in a peacekeeping mission may obviate the ameliorative influence of rewarding elements on PTSD symptoms.'[78] Peacekeepers who believed in the merits of their humanitarian work were less likely to experience trauma. In one of the few studies to control for race, Litz and his co-authors observed an important pattern:

> When male and female soldiers were compared on these various dimensions, differences were negligible. When comparisons were made among Caucasian, Hispanic, and African American soldiers, a salient effect was that African Americans were more gratified by the humanitarian aspects of the mission than were both Caucasians and Hispanics.[79]

An encounter that is conceptualized broadly as one between vulnerable, imperilled peacekeepers and a dangerous, alien population seems likely to produce trauma. In contrast, peacekeepers who experience their environments as something other than one in which they are in danger from out-of-control natives may in fact fare better. Mythologies that constitute the international simply, and racially, as a space of warring tribes, ungrateful natives, and unpredictable dangers abstract both the peacekeepers and the parties of the conflict from their interconnected histories and invite soldiers into a drama of mythic proportions.

It is clear that peacekeeping and humanitarian work *are* immensely dangerous and challenging. In 2002, *Sharing the Front Line and the Back Hills*, another UN-sponsored book on the traumas of peacekeepers and humanitarian aid workers, was published and introduced by the secretary-general of the United Nations, Kofi Annan. The editors begin with the heart rending last e-

mail of UN worker Carlos Caceres shortly before he and his co-workers were murdered in East Timor. They also begin with Roméo Dallaire's story. As the collection of testimonials by peacekeepers, humanitarian workers, and scholars proceeds, we learn about 'mission stress' caused by the tremendous danger of UN missions, the frustration of not being able to help everyone, the lack of mission amenities, and the often intolerable geographical conditions. After reading the deeply moving stories of trauma in this collection, it is difficult indeed to challenge such pain, particularly when the stories are not those of violent peacekeepers but of murdered humanitarian workers. Yet we *must* challenge the pain not by denying that it is real but by socially and historically contextualizing the event in which peacekeeping trauma emerges.

Complicating the narrative lines of the peacekeeping and humanitarian experience is necessary if we are to escape the snare of the colour line – the belief that peacekeeping is primarily about civilized nations sorting out, at our great peril, the tribal antagonisms and ethnic nationalism of the South. Restricted to this narrative, we do not see the historical, social, political, and economic contexts in which atrocities, as well as the tragedy of trauma for those who witness and are unable to stop them, occur. To go beyond our pain and our helplessness, to take responsibility, we must begin with our investments – investments that trauma narratives have revealed to be deeply national.

II. On Being the Hero's Friend:
Canadian Investments in Peacekeeping

If Canada can be considered a model middle power, then peacekeeping has been for Canadians a classic middle-power activity.[80]

Canadians have generally (but not always) liked peacekeeping and often stubbornly claim that it, like the telephone, is their own invention. Peacekeeping has reinforced the values Canadians hold dear. Canadians like to see themselves as friendly, commonsense folk, who would rather mediate than fight. In so large a country with so few people, with no common geography, language or religion, peacekeeping seems to be one of the few symbols – along with hockey and the Mounties – to which Canadians can look to define their identity in the world. But the world has changed in recent years and so seemingly has the nature of peacekeeping.

Geoffrey Hayes, 'Canada as a Middle Power'[81]

In a remarkably candid and unusual paper presented at the Third Annual Banff Conference on World Development in 1965, Donald Gordon assessed

what he deemed to be the Canadian tendency, 'on an ever-increasing scale, to worship the myth of middle powermanship.'[82] Canadians, Gordon felt, perhaps realizing that they could have no major power pretensions, often tried to make a virtue out of their limited powers by claiming to possess the special qualities of the go-between – 'a link between east and west, between haves and have-nots, and between whites and non-whites.'[83] Peacekeeping is an important part of this claim, since it provides Canada with a definitive space in the international arena. Since peacekeeping 'has overtones of romance, adventure and intrigue,' it inspires domestic unity. (Peacekeeping is the one national activity that has the support of both French and English Canadians.)[84] Since 'there isn't as much obsessive attention [on Canada] as we would like to believe,'[85] Gordon pointed out, peacekeeping mythology goes far in convincing Canadians that they are in fact noticed internationally.

Beyond appreciating why countries like Canada are so drawn to peacekeeping, Gordon's short article is also open about the racial context in which peacekeeping takes place. Canadians are 'members of a white, "have," North American complex.'[86] When they enter peacekeeping situations in Africa, for instance, they are going to end up firing at non-whites and a racial incident will ensue. More to the point, in such peacekeeping encounters it is likely to be their alliances with other white Northern nations that will prevail unless Canadians want to risk those alliances. Belgium, for example, was an ally, a relationship that was likely to be compromised in peacekeeping operations in Congo (which Gordon, writing in 1965 or earlier, naturally had in mind). Neutrality, he warned, was seldom an option since silence on an issue, again in the Congo example, simply contributed to prolonging the conflict. There was in fact very little glory to be had in peacekeeping. Either one got caught in the problem of alliances or one became a laughing stock because UN operations were often so ineffective. Added to this was the fact that peacekeeping cost a great deal.

Gordon's early realism about peacekeeping as practice and mythology is unique. That peacekeeping has a racial context and that it is an activity related to how white Northern states secure their identities and positions are ideas mostly absent from contemporary national peacekeeping discourses. In its place, one sees a vigorous national mythology that attempts to secure both national and international status for Canada through the articulation of Canada as a middle-power nation that is nicer and less aggressive than the United States. Never having been a colonial power or engaged in aggressive occupations (internal colonialism is once again ignored) Canadians are content to see themselves as playing a secondary, more innocent role in world affairs, a position that is the basis for the national role of a traumatized and helpless people, as explored in the first part of this chapter.

The national role of helper to larger Western nations in their colonial activities in the Third World is readily in evidence in Canadian history and frequently romanticized by Canadian historians. Africa has long occupied the space of degeneracy in the European imagination and thus the space in which white nations and their national subjects come to know themselves as dominant. Canada has been no exception in this respect, although early Canadian activities in Africa were under the shadow of Great Britain. During the 1880s, for example, Canadian 'voyageurs' known for their skill as boatmen were called upon to rescue the British Governor General in Sudan from the Mahdists. The Metis, Aboriginal, and white boatmen who sailed up the Nile are recorded in the history books as brave men who helped the fledgeling nation of Canada to come to know itself, a nation without colonial possessions that nevertheless became sufficiently grown up to fight the Boers in South Africa and, ultimately, to help to defeat the Germans in two world wars.[87] Then, as now, nationhood and manhood required testing in war.

For Canadians, of course, as for Americans and other white settler nations, manhood and nationhood were first achieved through the suppression of Aboriginal nations. The suppression of the Riel Rebellion (the struggle of the Metis peoples in Western Canada for recognition as a people) in the latter half of the nineteenth century provided the newly formed nation of Canada with its first sense of 'maturity,' or, as two well-known Canadian military historians put it, the first sense that the new nation 'could hold its own.'[88] When there were few internal wars left to fight, and decolonization dramatically limited colonial terrain outside Canada, peacekeeping became the 'best guarantee that Canada's military would not go the way of the dodo.'[89] Not surprisingly, given the connection between military activities and the making of Canada as a white settler society, Canada's role as peacekeeper to the world easily replicated a colonial model.

Historically, peacekeeping is seen as enabling Canada to grow up outside the shadow of both Great Britain and the United States. Carving out this space, Canadian history texts describe the natural advantage Canada possessed as a peacekeeper as 'a disinterested, non-colonial power without military commitments' in the trouble spots of the world.[90] Canadians are therefore ideal to sort out the 'tribal and economic antagonisms' that erupt in the newly decolonized regions of the world. Giving full rein to the imperial fantasy, historians Jack Granatstein and David Bercuson describe Canadian peacekeeping activities in the Congo: 'At Leopoldville night clubs, Canadian soldiers can be seen escorting Congolese damsels and creating inter-racial harmony.'[91] Without a trace of irony, these historians point out that the unique skills possessed by Canadian peacekeepers, skills in resisting provocation, in handling hostile crowds, and in

carrying out their mandate 'without loss of face or, more important, loss of life,' are honed while subduing Canada's native populations, most recently at the siege of Oka in 1990.[92] Acknowledging that the Mohawks and their supporters might not agree, they nonetheless state with confidence that the Canadian army's actions in putting an end to Aboriginal protests at Oka (actions involving hundreds of armed troops and a handful of protesters) is a classic example of peacekeeping.[93]

Canadian scholars refer to peacekeeping as Canada's 'calling' and claim the nation's special relationship with the United Nations. In the words of Gregory Wirick, the 'United Nations has been Canada's avocation: a calling more than a duty, an inclination no less than an interest. Beginning with the creative engagement of such well-known figures as Lester Pearson, Escott Reid and John Holmes, the gallery of Canadian politicians and diplomats who have sought to improve the United Nations (UN) system and enhance Canada's standing in it has been long and impressive.[94] From this perspective, Canadians are 'instinctively committed to the UN and a multilateral approach; anxious to be involved and helpful; fearful that non-involvement might lead to penalties of some kind or, what would be almost as hurtful to the Canadian psyche, might simply cause the country to be ignored; and finally, stretching diplomatic and military resources to the utmost.'[95]

As a national vocation, and as the dream of a middle power who exists next door to the United States, peacekeeping neatly enables Canadians to tell a story of national goodness and to mark ourselves as distinct from Americans. Peacekeeping makes it possible to proclaim a history of 'doing good' and 'maintaining order among the fractious nations and peoples of the world.'[96] While Canadian peacekeeping has often served U.S. interests, Granatstein and others insist that it has also had 'an aura of independence and the implicit sense that it served higher interests than simply those of the United States, or even the West.'[97] Ironically, the only thing wrong with Canadian peacekeeping, in the view of military historians, is that Canadians sometimes fail to see when war and not peace is required: we should have been there in the Gulf, for example, despite the opposition of Canadians to the war with Saddam Hussein.[98]

Woven into the mythology of a nation of peacekeepers is the idea of climate. As public policy professor Seymour Lipset put it, 'Canadians are defined by their weather. The climate forces you to believe in co-operation and putting others' welfare first,' he says, noting the massive outpouring of relief during the Quebec ice storm and Manitoba floods.'[99] We can blame our world famous 'do goodism,' writes Professor Lipset, 'on those Canadian cold fronts.'[100] As I have shown elsewhere,[101] the Canadian national story is a characteristic settler one in this respect with its rhetoric and imagery of enterprising and hardy citizens

of a cold land who through their hard work have forged a nation out of nothing. In this compressed narrative, white people become the original inhabitants since it is only they who are cast as capable of making the country what it is. They bring order and civilization where previously there was none, a logic that survives intact in the responses of Canadian courts to Aboriginal land claims and immigrant rights. Canadian nationalism has relied on the notion that stronger and superior Northern peoples also have a superior capacity for governing themselves and a correspondingly greater commitment to liberty.[102]

The self-effacing, cooperative, peace-loving Canadian is the heart of the national mythology. Robertson Davies, a pre-eminent Canadian novelist, summing up the Canadian national character in 'The Canada of Myth and Reality' (1980), describes Canadians as possessors of a voice but one that is not forceful and self-centred. The Canadian voice is that of a 'secondary character, the hero's friend, the confidant; but the opportunity and heart ... is that of one who may be a hero, and a new kind of a hero, a hero of conscience and spirit, in the great drama of modern man.'[103] Canadians evidently share Davies's sentiments. As public opinion polls repeatedly confirm, peacekeeping provides Canadians with an identity that distinguishes them from Americans and that provides sufficient glory to enable Canadians to think of themselves as part of a global order.[104] The hero's friend, however, encountered new moral dilemmas in the New World Order where military aggression is required to keep the natives in line. For some, Canada has simply opted to 'sleep' through the dilemma and has ended up losing its place in the world. We failed to act even when our friends, the Americans, were threatened, refusing to participate in the war against Iraq in 2003 and condemning ourselves to mediocrity.[105] For those who argue along these lines, what Canada risks in failing to increase military spending and in limiting its participation in George W. Bush's 'War on Terror' is its very place in the international community, a community of Western Nations that sees itself as a family of civilized nations.

The Hero's Friend in the New World Order

The hero's friend is not a warrior. To keep his place in the family, he has had to make several adjustments in an era of what is often called muscular peacekeeping. Writers in the *Canadian Defence Quarterly* make some of these delicate adjustments to the national mythology. Keith Krause describes three types of peacekeeping actions: actions to restore stability to a region threatened from outside, for example, the Gulf War; the maintenance of order in weak states, for example, Somalia; and the promotion of justice in states where there are massive human rights violations such as ethnic cleansing, for exam-

ple Bosnia. Canada, Krause argues, should concentrate on the-maintenance-of-order type of peacekeeping since Canadians often do not support stability operations such as the Gulf War and Canada, by virtue of its 'professionalism' and history as a peacekeeping nation, is best at 'order creation' rather than the more aggressive 'be bloodied' activities of the stability efforts.[106] 'It is not Canada's job to articulate an overarching vision of a "New World Order," Krause concludes. Rather, the more modest role of participating in multilateral commitments is best for the nation.[107] The apparently lesser role in the global story that is outlined in national mythology enables Canada to participate in peacekeeping encounters as an entirely innocent party without troublesome histories or ethical dilemmas. Canadians unabashedly claim this higher moral ground, but in the 1990s and particularly since the Somalia Affair, they have had to work hard to keep it. As Canadian scholars, journalists and military analysts struggled with the story of peacekeeping as an inherently noble calling, peacekeepers as victims begin to appear alongside of peacekeepers as violent men. The traumatized peacekeeper handily resolved the contradiction inherent in Kipling's 'savage wars of peace.'

No picture conveyed to the world the peacekeeper as victim more than *Toronto Star* photographer Paul Watson's Pulitzer Prize-winning photo of a dead U.S. Marine's body being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu by an angry mob. The photograph conveys in unmistakable colour the perils white bodies encounter from Black mobs when they attempt to keep the peace. When an account of the Somalia Affair and Canadian peacekeeping violence is published with this photo as the cover page, the implication is clear: Canadian peacekeepers also encountered mob violence and their own violence towards Somalis is therefore more understandable. Indeed, Dan Loomis's private publication of an account of the Somalia Affair,[108] with just such a front cover, assists readers who are unable to make the connection. 'His picture clearly depicts the kind of problems Canadians faced in Somalia. One picture is worth a thousand words.'[109] Canadians, of course, were stationed in the village of Belet Huen, far from Mogadishu. No Canadian died at the hands of a Somali. Further, even the U.S. experience must be analysed critically. The claim that American peacekeepers were irrationally targeted by savage mobs must be put alongside of American bombing of Mogadishu and the thousands of Somali lives lost as a result.

While Loomis is writing an openly pro-military book, other scholars who make a greater claim to objectivity also juxtapose peacekeeping violence with the dangers faced by peacekeepers, the dangers serving to ameliorate if not annul the violence of peacekeepers. For instance, Geoffrey Hayes writes about the disturbing events in Somalia and moves, within one paragraph, to the dif-

ficulties Canadian soldiers faced in Bosnia and ultimately to the suicide of a
Canadian reservist upon his return home from Bosnia. Similarly, Pierre Mar-
tin and Michel Fortmann describe the crisis of peacekeeping as far as the
media is concerned and illustrate in the process how peacekeeping violence
and dangers faced by peacekeepers are juxtaposed:

> Two events exemplify the profound crisis as far as the media are concerned,
> namely the death of a young Somali at the hands of Canadian soldiers in March
> of 1993, and the incident in which Canadian soldiers were taken hostage and
> shot at by drunken Bosnians in December of the same year. In the first case, the
> Canadian image of fundamental goodness was called into question. In the sec-
> ond, the powerlessness and danger experienced by Canadian peacekeepers in the
> line of fire was starkly revealed.[110]

In the contest between peacekeeping violence and peacekeeping trauma,
trauma has won hands down. Martin and Fortmann report that Somalia not-
withstanding, Canadians have continued to show massive support for peace-
keeping. In a poll taken in March 1993, it was Bosnia and not Somalia that
touched the hearts of most Canadians, and the slight dip in support for peace-
keeping in 1993 was restored in polls of 1994.[111] The authors conclude their
analysis of Canadian public opinion by making three points about peacekeep-
ing in the New World Order: peacekeeping 'is becoming more complex and
difficult to comprehend'; peacekeeping goals are becoming more 'confusing';
and significantly, peacekeepers cannot be perceived as heroes but rather as
'weak and fallible human beings.'[112]

  Evidently, in a world of angry Black mobs and weak and fallible human
beings, 'war in defence of human rights' can go badly wrong. Canadians,
Michael Ignatieff counsels, would do well to exercise caution.[113] Canada
should return to the old days when intervention required that nations consent.
If peace enforcement is undertaken, Canadian historian Jack Granatstein
advises that the UN should not be ambitious; it should recognize the perils of
using force and note that it is easier to minimize the use of force if the United
States is not involved.[114] Canada and its 'friends' should nonetheless continue
to develop rapid-reaction forces. Cautious and aware of the perils, the hero's
friend is still nonetheless anxious to participate in the clean up of the New
World Order, for this is the very meaning of civility. In the end, the trepida-
tions of our scholars notwithstanding, Canadians find our place in the action,
and like other Northern nations, negotiate the tension between democracy
and military intervention through the colour line itself. That is, we are able to
participate in aggressive interventions on the strength of the argument that

the natives will understand little else but force. Our middle-power narratives about being the conscience of the world, and of being especially good at 'order creation,' flow easily into the global story about an out-of-control Third World that increasingly requires the firm hand of the First World.

III. Sending in the Warriors:
'The Spread of Non-Democratic Regimes and Human Rights Abuses'

In her book *Manliness and Civilization*, Gail Bederman explores the way in which whiteness became a manly ideal in nineteenth-century America. Male power, she theorized, was linked to the notion of civilization. Civilized white men were thought to have 'a racial genius for self-government' and, in the words of President Theodore Roosevelt, 'a manly duty to "destroy and uplift" lesser, primitive men for their own good and the good of civilization,' a duty that had required the conquest of native peoples, the Philippines and the annexation of Hawaii. As Bederman reminds us, it was in order to 'exhort American men to conquer and rule the Philippines' that Rudyard Kipling coined the phrase the white man's burden.[115] Writing of the same period in American history, Dana Nelson uses the notion of white manhood to discuss how a white ideal of masculinity came to stand in for the nation. For Nelson, 'white male power was negotiated through imaginary and actual relationships to "Indians."' Men's longing 'to be part of a civic brotherhood' and to 'an imagined fraternity of white men' required perpetual engagement with the racial other.[116] The civic brotherhood and fraternity that is enabled through the civilizing mission is also evident in New World Order mythologies about rogue states and the civilizing initiatives they require, a world in which Canada is anxious to participate.

For the United States, David Savran remarks, the end of the cold war provoked a massive identity crisis. Anti-communism was replaced by the idea of a terrorist or rogue state – both an internal and external threat against which the state must defend itself.[117] The threat comes from governments that are 'inimical to democracy' and human rights as well as from drug traffickers. In the early 1990s, as Savran notes, in George Bush's vision, the U.S. was the 'freest,' 'strongest nation on earth' and 'the beacon of freedom in a searching world'[118] which was obliged to step in and save the world in Somalia. These or similar lines would be used several times over throughout the nineties in peacekeeping missions from Bosnia to Haiti, and they would be heard a great deal after 11 September 2001 and the terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center.

The literal meaning of rogue state is a state that does not regard itself as

bound by international norms. Since rogue states have no respect for human rights and the rule of law, they must be kept in line by states that do. Thus, the United States, 'hailed as the leader of "enlightenment states"' that are entitled to resort to violence as they see fit, 'engages in a number of activities designed to stop rogue states, activities ranging from peacekeeping, economic sanctions, military aid to opposition parties in rogue states, to outright military aggression.'[119] Relying on this logic, Noam Chomsky argues, the United States launched missile attacks against Iraq in 1991, despite lacking a UN Security Council resolution authorizing such force, and did so again in 2003. It invaded Panama, announcing its right to do so as one of self-defence against a state that was allegedly being used as a base to smuggle drugs to the United States. It shipped arms to Indonesia after the UN required Indonesia to withdraw from East Timor, and it has continued to back Israel after the UN ordered Israel to withdraw from its occupation of Lebanon and parts of Palestine. In both Turkey and Colombia, repressive regimes have been also covertly backed by the United States. Importantly, the use of force in contravention of the UN and international law is defended both as self-defence, as in many of the cases above, and as necessary in order to stop human rights abuses. Thus, the U.S.-led NATO bombings of Yugoslavia were intended to stop ethnic cleansing in spite of clear indications that the bombings would escalate the violence and increase the numbers of refugees.

Military intervention into the affairs of states is not an easy action to defend if one remains within the liberal paradigm of freedom, autonomy, and state sovereignty. However, as John Stuart Mill himself took care to clarify, sovereignty and autonomy, cornerstones of the liberal paradigm, are not concepts to be applied to 'barbarians.'[120] Violations of state sovereignty, therefore, have long been defensible practices when dealing with barbarians. For Winston Churchill, the use of force was justified against 'uncivilised tribes and recalcitrant Arabs'; for David Lloyd George, it was defensible against 'niggers.'[121] The paradox of humanitarian goals accomplished by force directly mirrors the paradox of liberalism itself where all human beings are equal and are entitled to equal treatment; those that are not entitled to equality are simply evicted from the category human and exiled to 'the other side of universality,' both a symbolic and material domain, the place where lesser humans reside.[122] It is this logic that enables peace enforcement to replace peacekeeping, with a minimum of fuss.

In government and scholarly publications and in the media, peace enforcement is generally introduced as follows: Everyone hoped that the end of the cold-war era meant a world of cooperation among former enemies. Unfortunately, this peace did not happen. States are disintegrating due to assertive

nationalism, environmental degradation, and 'the erosion of state sovereignty.' Most of all, there is a spread of non-democratic regimes in the Third World. (The disease metaphor is not, I believe, coincidental.) 'In other parts of the Third World, the combination of economic, social, environmental, demographic, and ethnic problems are undermining already weak power structures in which democracy – as it is understood and practised in the developed world – had never seriously taken root.'[123]

Large scale civil wars prevail, or, as in Somalia, a more 'primitive style, a kind of "high tech" gang warfare along road warrior lines that bear a greater resemblance to random mass criminal activity than to modern conventional or insurgent war.'[124] Western nations are called upon to do something about the chaos, the descent into tribalism, and the massive human rights violations that accompany these conflicts. (This project of cleaning up the gangs at the international level matches the rhetoric and practices at the national level.) Indeed, the chaos is such that peacekeeping nations have to abandon the traditional condition of peacekeeping, which is that the nation concerned has to consent to the intervention. There must now be what is often described as 'peacekeeping with teeth' or 'muscular peacekeeping' where Northern nations go in uninvited to sort out the mess.[125] The new peacekeepers are 'warriors of the New World Order.'[126]

Africa, as the place where democracy has simply failed to thrive, is often the focus of New World Order stories. Kofi Annan, secretary-general of the UN, for example, partially acknowledges Western complicity but describes Africa's inevitable descent into chaos in the New World Order:

> During the cold war the ideological confrontation between East and West placed a premium on maintaining order and stability among friendly States and allies, though super-Power rivalries in Angola and elsewhere also fuelled some of Africa's longest and most deadly conflicts. Across Africa, undemocratic and oppressive regimes were supported and sustained by the competing super-Powers in the name of their broader goals but, when the cold war ended, Africa was suddenly left to fend for itself. Without external economic and political support, few African regimes could sustain the economic lifestyles to which they had become accustomed, or maintain the permanent hold on political power which they had come to expect. As a growing number of States found themselves internally beset by unrest and violent conflict, the world searched for a new global security framework.[127]

'A new global security framework,' sufficiently vague, nonetheless opens the door for aggressive intervention. Annan's position has been taken on by Cana-

dians wholeheartedly. First, the Canadian response to Annan's 'Agenda for Peace' is to adjust the concept of peacekeeping until it can bear the contradiction of muscular peacekeeping. Wrestling with muscular peacekeeping, the Canadians have settled for 'Peacebuilding,' which centres on building stability and civilization but leaves sufficient room for the idea of a standing force that can strike quickly.[128] When the minister of foreign affairs described the Canadian peacebuilding initiative, he used Annan's analytical framework step by step. He began with the idea that this was a new kind of war, moved to the observation that traditional peacekeeping no longer suffices, and dramatically concluded that we must re-think the whole concept of security if what we are involved in are activities like intervening to stop ethnic cleansing.[129] Peacebuilding is 'providing a lifeline to foundering societies struggling to end the cycle of violence.'[130] Making peacebuilding sound like a development initiative, Lloyd Axworthy is careful nonetheless to leave the door open for more aggressive actions.

The perfect justification for a more aggressive peacekeeping is quite simply that the natives will understand nothing else and that the crises are so dire that no civilized nation would fail to aggressively intervene. The Canadian prime minister of the early 1990s, Brian Mulroney, put the new interventionist approach best when he stated in an address at Stanford University, 'Quite frankly, such invocations of the principle of national sovereignty are as out of date and as offensive to me as the police declining to stop family violence simply because a man's home is supposed to be his castle.'[131] Some authors proposing UN-sponsored peacekeeping even candidly suggest that peacekeepers may well be obliged to revive colonialism, in the interests of world security. Paul Johnson, for example, writes:

> We are witnessing today a revival of colonialism, albeit in a new form. It is a trend that should be encouraged, it seems to me, on practical as well as moral grounds. There simply is no alternative in nations where governments have crumbled and the most basic conditions for civilized life have disappeared, as is now the case in a great many third-world countries.[132]

'Happily,' he continues, 'the civilized powers need not get stuck in the old colonial quagmire, because they have the example of the trusteeship system before them. The Security Council could commit a territory where authority has irretrievably broken down to one or more trustees. These would be empowered not merely to impose order by force but to assume political functions. They would in effect be possessed of sovereign powers.'[133]

For peacekeeping countries, of course, from whom 'labor and expense will

be needed, as well as brains, leadership and infinite patience,' '[t]he only satisfaction will be the unspoken gratitude of millions of misgoverned or ungoverned people who will find in this altruistic revival of colonialism the only way out of their present intractable miseries.'[134] Significantly, as Johnson and other writers are careful to elaborate, the

> appeals for help come not so much from Africa's political elites, who are anxious to cling to the trappings of power, as from ordinary desperate citizens, who carry the burden of misrule. Recently in Liberia, where rival bands of heavily armed thugs have been struggling for mastery, a humble inhabitant of the capital, Monrovia, named after the fifth president of the United States, approached a marine guarding the United States Embassy and said, 'For God's sake come and govern us!'[135]

Remarkable for what the story leaves out more than for what it includes, the images of grateful natives confirm Westerners' sense of superiority, discouraging critique and mobilizing support for peacekeeping activities. Such images of beseeching and grateful natives, however, were in short supply as the nineties wore on.

Beginning with the UN peacekeeping mission in Somalia, the fairy tale of peacekeeping began to have bad endings. Peacekeeping was apparently failing, leaving in its wake ungrateful natives and increased violence. *New York Times* journalist Barbara Crossette, writing in 1999, illustrates what became the slightly revised New World Order storyline, written virtually without variation in all mainstream newspapers in the West by the end of the 1990s. 'The World Expected Peace. It Found a New Brutality,' reads the headline, beginning the now familiar descent into chaos.[136] The crises have piled up in the 1990s: Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Angola, Iraq, Haiti, and Serbia and all the while, the United Nations 'drift helplessly by.' Nobody is in charge and humanitarian interventions go hopelessly awry, as they did in Somalia. Washington, Crosette writes, seems to have retreated and grown soft, the rogues have grown more brutal and now kill more civilians: 'In this ugly new order, brutalizers act with impunity and prove daily that a peaceful, humane world is not going to be built with good governance programs. Force, or a credible threat of force may be necessary.'[137] To anyone believing the dominant media story during the 1990s, the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in 2001, in which 3,000 people lost their lives, confirmed both their worst fears and the solution: apply greater force.

For the most part, Western scholars have shared the journalistic paradigm evident in Crossette's column. The UN should abandon peacekeeping, opines

Canadian scholar Michael Ignatieff in the *New York Times*, because it cannot cope with 'new forms of ethnic tyranny.'[138] Instead, 'what's required are combat capable warriors under robust rules of enforcement, with armor, ammunition and intelligence capability and a single line of command to a national government or regional alliance.'[139] Others argue in more guarded tones, maintaining that the UN and the United States in particular must continue to participate in peacekeeping because 'the ability to project power for humanitarian purposes over long distances is the singular mark of a world power.'[140] However, it must be established that peacekeeping in this era, or more accurately peace enforcement, requires the highest level of 'political-military skills.'[141] Neutrality and passivity can no longer be the hallmarks of peacekeeping in 'failed state' situations where lawlessness prevails.[142]

Entire corpuses of new concepts are deployed to explain both the urgency to intervene and more aggressive interventions. Peacekeeping becomes peacebuilding, as in the Canadian state's response, or peace maintenance according to some scholars.[143] Reviewing new terms and conceptual shifts in peacekeeping literature, Jonathan Goodhand and David Hulme note the importance of two terms in particular: peacebuilding or conflict handling, referring to interventions in contexts where warlike circumstances prevail and where peacekeepers may be operating before, during, and after conflicts;[144] and complex political emergencies (CPE), referring to contexts in which there is 'prolonged and violent struggle by communal groups,' often 'ethno-nationalist in nature' where 'criminality becomes the political norm.'[145] Both terms organize the reality of contemporary peacekeeping in ways that reify the intervention of Western states into non-Western states largely through the idea that conflicts today lie outside civilization and require extraordinary measures. There is here very little interrogation either into what might have caused such descents into barbarism in the Third World or of the West's right, indeed moral obligation, to intervene or not intervene, for that matter. Instead, scholars have devoted their efforts to codifying the new violence and suggesting how it differs from violence of the cold war period.

The new terms and constructs legitimating aggressive Western intervention often depend upon the language of human rights. For example, French governments of the late 1980s and early 1990s attempted to promote a new norm of international law called a 'right to interfere.' As Phillipe Guillot has argued for the French context, the right to interfere emerged in a context in which the French intelligentsia demanded the right to enforce human rights in the Third World.[146] Replacing proletarian internationalism with a new cosmopolitanism, the French public shifted to what Gerard Prunier[147] and others[148] suggest is a new white man's burden, a burden the public felt particularly

called upon to assume since France was understood to be the birthplace of human rights. When more conservative governments replaced the socialist ones that had initially endorsed the right to interfere, and when the failures of peacekeeping in Somalia began to emerge, 'humanitarian diplomacy' gave way to calls for withdrawal from conflicts and occasionally support for a more aggressive peacekeeping. In either an interventionist or non-interventionist climate, what remains constant is the making of Western nations through the positioning of themselves as more civilized than non-Western nations, an identity that Western politicians deploy to great advantage domestically and internationally.

Peacekeeping particularly provides middle powers with a role in international governance. In France's case, participation in UN peacekeeping helped to consolidate France's position as a permanent member of the Security Council.[149] In the case of Italy, Paolo Tripodi writes that Italy sought to improve its international status, damaged by years of failed development activities, by participating in UN peacekeeping efforts in Somalia.[150] In sum, peacekeeping provides a way for both settler colonies and ex-colonial powers to perform themselves as members of an international brotherhood of civilized states. The international epitomized by the United Nations becomes a space where there is no outright aggression or colonial domination. There is only Third World barbarisms. Tautologically, some scholars therefore argue that peace-maintenance cannot be a colonial enterprise in which the colonial power plays the role of master and the colonized plays the role of servant. Instead, peace-maintenance occurs under international authority, an authority that is 'the servant of both an international and locally supported rule of law and order.'[151]

Television cameras facilitate such opportunities for state-making and demonstrations of membership in the family of civilized nations. Third World nations descending into chaos and ethnic tyranny, First World nations trying their best to sort them out and to stop the bloodshed but finding that civility is not the most effective approach: this is a script that requires tyrants, heroes, and grateful populations. The international so constituted has to be *performed*. As Francois Debrix suggests, the only difference between peacekeeping initiatives in Somalia and previous colonialist enterprises is that peacekeeping 'had to be put on display by and for the media.'[152] Peacekeeping, he argues, 'depicts a fantasy space or dream land of international affairs (where peacekeeping is realized, etc.) inside which claims to neo-liberalism on a global scale can be made.'[153] Debrix considers peacekeeping as virtual in the sense that 'the vision of global unity or governance that peacekeeping is designed to mobilize is a matter of visual illusion.'[154] Perhaps most provocative is his contention that strategies such as peacekeeping are sometimes deployed in the absence of real

threats and the presence of a simulated danger.[155] (Here we might recall the United States' claim in 2003 that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction, weapons that were never found.)

Rogue states, drug trafficking, and so on enable the international to be imagined as besieged by unruly Third World peoples, a situation that the UN can address through peacekeeping: 'Through the UN, the international comes to represent a single international territory, the territory of the "universal social contract."'[156] As the first post–cold war peacekeeping encounter, Somalia was one of the first examples of peacekeeping as a staged event. Debrix concludes:

> Reinvested by George Bush's post–Gulf War vision of a New World Order, the United Nations has been given in Somalia a chance to perform as an indisputable 'international actor,' as a symbolic and legitimate power to be reckoned with as the century draws to an end. In Somalia, the UN's task is not simply to mobilize strategies of visual surveillance and panopticism (as was the case in North Korea and Iraq). It is rather to show the international community that it can actively construct and organize the neoliberal world order through its peacekeeping interventions. Somalia, in fact, inaugurates a series of panopticism in order to achieve global governance in practice in certain regions of the globe where, as will be argued, a more forceful intervention is required. Unlike panopticism, the strategies of visual simulation relied upon by the UN to achieve its ideological objectives are now intended to be highly visible. To put it bluntly, the UN will have to act, and it will have to be seen.[157]

To look at peacekeeping as a performance, and to consider what the performance secures, an international sphere that positions some actors as more civilized than others, and some states as having the right to intervene and discipline others, is not to deny that the conflicts of the post–cold war period have been bloody and terribly violent and do require intervention. What the hegemonic peacekeeping story accomplishes is to turn these conflicts into attributes of Third World states and Third world peoples, qualities that are somehow innate and unconnected either to colonial histories or to contemporary Western dominance. What is obscured, Jan Pieterse suggests, is that 'the cold war left behind a legacy of authoritarianism, the supremacy of security in politics, surplus armaments, and a tradition of politics of polarization – in many cases overlaid upon the earlier authoritarian legacy of colonialism.'[158] In Somalia for example, 'local wars over resources are fought out with cold war weaponry.'[159] The tribalism and hatreds of conflicts such as Somalia and Rwanda did not come out of thin air. Humanitarian intervention may well be

'the military corollary of neo-liberal globalization.'[160] That is to say, it provides 'a smokescreen for a new politics of containment in peripheralized regions.'[161]

Arguing in the same vein, Mel McNulty suggests how colonial histories affected conflict and peacekeeping in Rwanda in 1990–4. By far the most prevalent analysis of the Rwandan civil war and the ensuing genocide is that the crisis was ethnically driven. McNulty shows how France's Rwandan interventions were a primary cause of the prolongation of the conflict, resulting in the ironic situation where a powerful external actor with a direct hand in the conflict then became a peacekeeper. France has long had a colonial hand in the region first by ensuring that no real decolonization took place in its ex-colonies and that patron-client relationships replaced colonial regimes. France drafted military agreements with the states of francophone Africa, agreements to provide military technical assistance and support and used such agreements, for instance, to protect the dictatorship of Mobutu in Zaire.

In Rwanda, similar agreements were also made and in 1990, invoking this agreement, France intervened when civil war broke out, ostensibly to protect its nationals. The French stayed in Kigali for three years, however, actively training the Rwandan army and maintaining checkpoints and patrols. They actively backed President Hanyarimana even though his record on human rights was a weak one. (In particular, the Hanyarimana regime refused to grant refugees the right of return, a key demand from well-financed, educated, and organized exiles; French support for him scuttled any fledgling peace efforts). In April 1994, when President Hanyarimana was assassinated, France evacuated its own nationals as well as members of the government's inner circle, thereby preserving what McNulty describes as the chief ideologues of the genocide. As peacekeepers in 1994, France was not surprisingly seen as the regime's supporters. With little knowledge of internal conflicts in Rwanda, French peacekeepers made a number of decisions that prolonged and exacerbated the conflict.[162]

It is these kinds of histories that are taken out of the story of peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention, leaving the much simpler and more powerful story of a civilized West faced with the disintegration of African states and their descent into barbarism. As Mahmood Mamdani has written of Rwanda, many write as though genocide has no history and cannot be understood as rational. Showing how the Rwandan genocide 'needs to be thought through within the logic of colonialism,'[163] that is through the production of Hutu and Tutsi as political identities of native and settler respectively, Mamdani's work suggests what peacekeeping mythologies leave out: the historical, social, and political contexts that bring us to the terrible place of genocide.

The manifestly racial theme of the international story of peacekeeping invites Northern nations to participate in what might be accurately described as a brotherhood or family of civilized nations. Middle-power states, such as France, Canada, Belgium, Italy, and Australia have practically no other means to prove their membership in the club. A powerful and seductive story of the West bringing human rights and democracy to non-Western countries, the story of the New World Order is also a dangerous one with murderous consequences. When General Roméo Dallaire took up command of UN peacekeeping forces in Rwanda, he had, by his own admission, no knowledge of the African context. Unaware of Rwanda's colonial histories, it took the General some time to begin to appreciate Rwanda's contemporary power arrangements. He underestimated, for example, the sophistication of Rwandan elites, all schooled in Western universities, including Canada, and remained unaware for the longest time of the Rwandan government's human rights violations and of French power in the country. Dallaire, Carol Off writes, went to Africa 'full of wide-eyed innocence.'[164] Canadian peacekeepers went to Somalia sharing much the same sentiments. Impressed with their own nobility and superiority, and not at all equipped to understand the West's implication in the civil war in Somalia, peacekeepers were surprised and outraged when they found ungrateful natives and a complicated conflict. In such an environment, violence directed at Somalis enabled some peacekeepers to manage their own fears and ignorance and to see themselves as men in control.

Conclusion

'What the Afghans Need Is Colonizing,' read a headline in the Canadian newspaper the *National Post*, only one month after the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center and barely two weeks after the subsequent invasion of Afghanistan by the United States. America needs to take up 'the white man's burden' and 'civilize' the Afghans, wrote reporter Mark Steyn.[165] Too easily dismissed as ranting of the far right, this call for a revival of colonialism has in fact been a feature of the New World Order for most of the post–cold war period. The natives have descended into barbarism and will understand nothing else but force. They are in dire need of civilizing. They consistently mess up their lives and their states, and after 11 September (for those in the North), *our* lives and *our* states. As 'failed states,' comments journalist Pepe Escobar in the *Asia Times*, what is conveniently omitted is how they got to be that way in the first place.'[166] History is evacuated and the simplest of storylines remains: more civilized states have to keep less civilized states in line. In this sense, the story of the New World Order continues a much older theme captured so suc-

cinctly in Kipling's phrase 'the white man's burden.' Peacekeeping plays an important role in this new civilizing mission.

In examining the making of men and nations through both international and national mythologies about peacekeeping, what is most evident is that a racial hierarchy structures both. Civilized First World peoples and nations must discipline and instruct uncivilized Third World peoples in human rights and democracy. The storyline requires that the international be imagined as a space of a universal social contract. The UN oversees the contract and member states who do not respect the rules are disciplined by those that do. Like disembodied liberal subjects who have no prior history, so too states in this international order have no histories. That the histories of colonialism might have anything to do with how it comes to be that white men are in Africa teaching Africans about democracy (a lesson taught with guns) is resolutely struck from the story. The international racial epic is told again on the domestic front when the refugees and migrants of the Third World begin to make their way to the countries of the North. Here, too, a besieged and betrayed Northern peoples (like the traumatized peacekeepers) must force themselves to be uncharacteristically stern and impose strict border-policing measures.[167] Both are stories of white innocence.

The power of the story of good and evil enacted globally, whether in peacekeeping trauma narratives or in President Bush's speeches, should give us pause. For while it is its very refusal to consider history and context that gives the story its power, its psychic appeal surely comes, paradoxically, from the mythology that informs our history. In 1973 in *Regeneration through Violence*, Richard Slotkin advised us to remember the power of mythology and its constitutive role in the making of the nation. The real founding fathers, he argued, are not the politicians who drafted the constitution but rather

> those who (to paraphrase Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!* [1951]) tore violently a nation from the implacable and opulent wilderness – the rogues, adventurers, and land boomers; the Indian fighters, traders, missionaries, explorers, and hunters who killed and were killed until they had mastered the wilderness; the settlers who came after, suffering hardship and Indian warfare for the sake of a sacred mission or a simple desire for land; and the Indians themselves, both as they were and as they appeared to settlers, for whom they were the special demonic personification of the American wilderness. Their concerns, their hopes, their terrors, their violence, and their justifications of themselves as expressed in literature, are the foundation stones of the mythology that informs our history.[168]

Remarkably prescient, Slotkin anticipates that writers and critics who fail to

reckon with these mythological figures will be unable to see when they take over national politics. Slotkin discusses such American moments in the nineteenth century, moments when the national aspiration became defined as 'so many bears destroyed, so much land pre-empted, so many trees hacked down, so many Indians and Mexicans dead in the dust.'[169] In the twentieth century, national politics is dominated by intrepid men who confront evil itself and who, on slow days, bring order and civility to savage lands. These men are kin to Slotkin's Indian fighters, traders, missionaries, explorers, and hunters. They regenerate or reinvent themselves through violence, to borrow Slotkin's argument. If we are to think beyond these mythologies, we first have to identify how they operate and recognize their power, the project I have pursued in this chapter.

It *is* difficult to dismantle mythology and to begin to render things like genocide and ethnic cleansing 'thinkable.'[170] Even when we are able to dismantle mythologies and to consider the historical, social, and political contexts of the countries we set out to 'help,' a formula for responsible intervention does not come easily to mind. Categorically refusing to intervene is as irresponsible a position as intervening because 'they' will only understand force. What is at least clear, however, is that our only chance to assume a more responsible role lies in rejecting the simple and deeply raced storylines of traumatized nations, middle-power countries and their special capabilities, and showdowns with 'absolute evil.' As subsequent chapters explore, peacekeepers caught in these kinds of civilizing narratives of instruction and discipline of the Third World by the First World carry around in their heads those ideas Edward Said analyzes in the novels Europeans wrote about the Third World in the nineteenth century, 'notions about bringing civilization to primitive or barbaric peoples, the disturbingly familiar ideas about flogging or death or extended punishment being required when "they" misbehaved or became rebellious, because "they" mainly understood force or violence best; "they" were not like "us," and for that reason deserve to be ruled.'[171]

Such notions encase the violence of individual peacekeepers and white Northern states, sheathing them in a skin of civility. Only occasionally do the contents spill out, revealing blood, bone, sinew and gore, and even then, it remains seductive to believe that 'they' asked for it. Such is the power of mythology.