

engagements result in American casualties, then the negative effect of coalition-building with the United States can be greatly exacerbated, as the American experiences in Somalia demonstrate.

On the other hand, involving American armed forces in UN operations and coalitions of the moment can worsen unintentionally already tense situations and lead to conflicts between coalition forces and local inhabitants. Americans for many reasons are international targets which some people wish to fire on simply to gain attention at home and abroad. Thus, putting Americans in situations – especially on the ground – where inhabitants might see them as opponents could turn a manageable situation into a hostile situation. Allies and coalition-builders ought to carefully consider the consequences of organizing coalitions around American assets and armed forces before they devise policies that assume that engaging Americans in multilateral coalitions is universally beneficial to national and international security interests.

What then might Canada do in these circumstances? Ironically, the best policy might be to support those Americans who argue for the restricted engagement of the United States in coalitions formed for missions outside America's direct interests. Doing this, however, would require others, including Canada, to pick up the American burden to relieve the United States from having to lead and underpin every coalition in NATO, the United Nations and elsewhere. Specifically, Canada and the other states would have to build the requisite command and control mechanisms, develop armed forces, especially army units and formations, and accept the costs these policies would entail. They would have to willingly lead when crises arise and to sustain their efforts until some reasonable outcome can be achieved.

This logic is behind much of what is happening with a greater European defence entity and it is expressed in the British deployment to Sierra Leone. However, keeping the U.S. engaged by giving it room for disengagement will fail if the political will and effective soft and hard assets are not forthcoming. What can Canada do to enhance its foreign policy through coalitions? Canada could begin the long process of building a credible Canadian capability to lead and support multilateral coalitions at levels commensurate with its traditions, wealth, international position, and global responsibilities.

ORDER AND GOOD GOVERNMENT IN COALITIONS BEGIN AT HOME

Although ad hoc and "lead department" procedures may work reasonably well for isolated crises and as a means to assemble a force for unique deployments under NATO or UN rules, it is a demonstrably weak system under present circumstances. This type of system is undependable when crises abound, when mandates, circumstances, and command authority are unclear; when deployments are prolonged and daily events are unpredictable; and when Canada's efforts involve resources from many departments, agencies, and national and international NGOs. The departmental system of public administration tends to be unresponsive, when it is asked to manage issues for which no one department is clearly the leader, no matter the skills or dedication of the various officials. Moreover, issues that have no home tend to be orphans, left outside the routine of collective senior management.

* we are helping others to take up some slack

(intended)

aren't they all isolated?