

- Name:**
- Date:** 31 March 2008
- Title:** U.S. Policy in Kenya
- Purpose:** To convince my classmates by proposition of policy that the United States should change its policy concerning Kenya.
- Thesis:** The United States policy in Kenya is not proving effective because democracy cannot be forced upon a nation from an outside source.
- Preview:** First, we will discuss the problems associated with the United States' policy in Kenya; next, we will discover some of the causes of those problems; and, finally, we will develop some solutions to the problems.
- Organization:** Problem-Cause-Solution

**Introduction:**

- I. "My wife was burned to death with our two children, aged 5 and 1 ½... Now I have no wife, no children, no house, no job. I have nothing" (Kristof).
- II. Nicholas Ochieng is now a refugee in his own country (Kristof).
- III. Another refugee was given the head of her husband after a mob had beheaded him (Kristof).
- IV. Sixteen-year-old Robert Ochieng was brutally circumcised by a mob and almost beheaded before being rescued by police (Kristof).
- V. This violence didn't occur in the Congo.
- VI. It didn't occur in Somalia, or Darfur.
- VII. Instead it ravaged a country that was considered by the West to be one of Africa's most stable countries.
- VIII. These stories, published in the February 21, 2008, *New York Times*, all describe the ethnic violence that consumed Kenya after rigged elections late last year (Kristof).
- IX. Because of those elections and this violence, Kenya went from being an African success story to being another African tragedy, and the United States, although it spends hundreds of millions of dollars in Kenya each year, failed to prevent this.
- X. To understand why the United States' policy failed, we will first discuss the problems associated with the United States' policy in Kenya; next, we will discover some of the causes of those problems; and, finally, we will develop some solutions to the problems.

**Body:**

- I. The two biggest problems with the United States' policy are that it is both extremely expensive and incredibly ineffective.
  - A. James Swan, Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, summarized this policy before a Congressional subcommittee on February 6, 2008, saying that the goal of the United States in Kenya is to, among other things, promote "democracy, human rights, and good governance;" to that end, the United States has poured aid into Kenya.
    1. According to USAID's *FY2008 Foreign Assistance Budget Summary and Highlights*, in 2006 alone, the United States spent over two hundred million dollars in Kenya, almost thirty million of which went toward

“programs in democracy and governance, basic education and economic growth.”

2. To give you some idea of how costly this is to the United States, the *Historical Tables, Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2006* published by the U.S. government, reported that the federal debt in 2004 was slightly over seven trillion dollars.

3. The financial aid given to Kenya for the year 2006 alone could potentially account for three percent of the entire federal debt.

B. It is possible that if the United States’ policy was effective in Kenya, it would be worth the cost; however, as evidenced by Kenya’s recent elections, America’s policy is not working.

1. In fact, this is apparent every five years when the country holds elections.

a. Every five years, the country’s unrest and dissatisfaction with its political system erupts in violence.

b. But the last elections were the worst to date.

1) In these elections, which were held on December 27 of last year, incumbent president Mwai Kibaki’s hold on the presidency was challenged by a member of a smaller ethnic group, Raila Odinga.

2) During the campaigning, up until, and even through the actual voting, the election process was fairly peaceful.

3) However, after the ballots were cast and before the winner was announced, there is substantial evidence that the vote was rigged.

4) So, on December 30, when President Kibaki was declared the winner, even though he had trailed Mr. Odinga in the exit polls and in the vote count until a questionable pause was called in the counting, the country exploded.

5) The result was ethnic cleansing.

a) According to the previously cited February 21 issue of the *New York Times*, over 1,000 Kenyans were killed in this ethnic violence (Kristof).

b) Over a quarter of a million were displaced (Kristof).

6) Western powers, including the United States, soon stepped in, leading negotiations between the two rival leaders while, at the same time, threatening economic sanctions in order to try and restore peace.

7) Finally, on February 28, an agreement was reached that created a powerful prime minister position for Mr. Odinga, and peace is gradually making its way back into Kenyans’ lives.

(But why did this violence even happen? Why couldn’t the United States prevent it?)

II. The answer to these questions is two-fold: first, the United States has, in the past, failed to implement its policy well and, second, the policy is itself flawed.

A. Two of the problems that we've had in implementing our foreign policy are that we have been inconsistent in enforcing policy and have often pushed for short term rather than long term solutions.

1. The United States' failure to consistently enforce its policy has drastically reduced the effectiveness of the policy.

a. You can probably see how this would happen even from your own experiences.

b. If you see someone getting away with something that neither of you is supposed to do but that both of you want to do, why not do it?

c. Apparently, Mr. Kibaki asked the same question.

1) He saw other African nations, such as Ethiopia and Nigeria, "getting away with" "election irregularities" that the United States tolerated (Kristof).

2) It is likely that he expected the same toleration from the United States for his vote tampering, and, if it wasn't for the violence that followed the elections, he probably would have gotten it.

3) In fact, the United States did initially congratulate him on winning the election despite evidence of vote rigging.

2. An additional problem with the implementation of U.S. policy is that it often encourages short-term patch jobs over long-term solutions.

a. The faulty elections in other African nations that the United States let slide for the sake of stability are a perfect example of this and so is the recent agreement between the two rival parties in Kenya.

1) In a February 29 *New York Times* article, one Kenyan likened this agreement to a "marriage of convenience," saying "It's the best way out because it's going to get the country moving again, but it's not a solution" (Gettleman, "Kenya Rivals").

2) It's a patch job.

B. While this lack of enforcement is a serious roadblock to the effectiveness of U.S. policy in Kenya, perhaps an even more significant barrier to its success lies within the policy itself.

1. An integral part of U.S. policy in Kenya is to "promote democracy," but a true democracy can't be enforced from outside, and the problems that now face Kenya highlight this.

a. For example, although the United States wanted a Kenyan solution to the problem, enough pressure was put on the country's leaders that they had little choice in the matter.

b. One Kenyan official went so far as to tell the *New York Times* in the previously cited February 29 article that "the government felt as if it had its back to the wall" (Gettleman, "Kenya Rivals").

c. So in the name of democracy, the United States forced the Kenyan government to keep to what the State Department termed the “right track” (Verjee).

- 1) That isn’t democracy.
- 2) Forcing democracy onto other nations is essentially dictatorship.

(After considering just a few of the problems plaguing the current U.S. policy in Kenya, it is apparent that this policy isn’t working; it’s time to find a better policy.)

III. The political situation between Kenya and the U.S. is complicated, but the general policy that the U.S. should follow is actually fairly straightforward, and the way for you to encourage this policy, even more so.

A. In Kenya, the United States should follow a policy of noninterference and of non-financing of Kenya’s government.

1. No matter how admirable our intentions, we don’t have authority over Kenya and, therefore, shouldn’t dictate Kenya’s government.
  - a. Over half of you expressed similar sentiments when asked in our in-class surveys, and you aren’t alone in your opinions (Questionnaire).
  - b. For example, a former U.S. diplomat addressed this same issue in the January 28, 2008, issue of *CQ Press*, saying, “We have to respect [Kenya’s] sovereignty” (Graham-Silverman).
  - c. In other words, we have to let Kenya rule Kenya.
2. In addition to not interfering in Kenya’s government, the U.S. should not finance Kenya’s government.
  - a. One reason to not give aid to support the Kenyan government is that aid given in the past hasn’t been well used and has even been misused.
  - b. Take, for example, the recent elections in Kenya, which the United States supported and partially funded.
    - 1) These elections were rigged.
    - 2) The United States partially funded a rigged election, which led to the deaths of over 1,000 people.

B. Your part in solving this problem is simple: voice your opinion.

1. Inform yourself about the problems associated with the U.S. policy in Kenya and express your concerns, if you have any, to your representatives.
2. Use the democracy we have here in America to give Kenya the chance at a true democracy.

### **Conclusion:**

I. U.S. policy in Kenya isn’t working; it is expensive and ineffective because it is not well-implemented and because it is inherently flawed in its design—trying to force, from outside, a system of government which has to come from within.

- A. Condoleezza Rice was right when she addressed Kenyan officials saying, the time to find a solution was yesterday (Cooper).
  - B. President Bush and Deputy Spokesman Tom Casey were right when they said the people of Kenya deserve better (“Statement by the President”) (“Daily Press Briefing”).
  - C. However, the policy that allowed Nicholas Ochieng’s family to be murdered, that almost allowed a sixteen-year-old boy to be beheaded by a mob, is not right.
    - 1. This policy has to be changed.
    - 2. And, to respect the independence of Kenya, the United States should adopt a policy which does not interfere with Kenyan rights.
    - 3. To not misuse its resources, the United States should pursue a policy of non-financing for Kenya’s government.
- II. The United States should allow Kenya to govern itself.

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