

The Perils of Profiling

Civil War Spoilers and the Collapse of Intrastate Peace Accords

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In an influential 1997 *International Security* article, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," Stephen Stedman introduced a typology of "civil war spoilers," defined as "leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, worldview, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it."¹ A key contribution of Stedman's article was to focus attention on the relatively underappreciated role of elites in the negotiation and implementation of peace processes. In so doing, Stedman sought to develop a more nuanced and descriptively comprehensive theory of intrastate conflict that moved beyond the primarily structural and abstract focus that had theretofore dominated the study of internal wars and ethnic conflict.² By reintroducing the role of individual decisionmakers into the analysis of the stability of peace accords, Stedman added significantly to the understanding of the dynamics of intrastate wars, as well as enriched and expanded the debate on the causes of ethnic conflict. We recognize the significant contribution made by Stedman and those who have adopted his "spoilers" framework.³

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1. Stephen John Stedman, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Fall 1997), p. 5.

2. Ibid.

3. See, for instance, Bruce D. Jones, "Military Intervention in Rwanda's Two Wars: Partisanship and Indifference," in Barbara F. Walter and Jack Snyder, eds., *Civil War, Insecurity, and Intervention* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000); John Darby, *The Effects of Violence on Peace Processes* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001); and Edward Newman and Oliver Richmond, eds., *Challenges to Peacebuilding: Managing Spoilers during Conflict Resolution* (New York: United Nations University Press, 2006). Other scholars have used the spoiler model as a starting point for developing broader analyses, including Suzanne Werner, "The Precarious Nature of Peace: Resolving the Issues, Enforcing the Settlement, and Renegotiating the Terms," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (July 1999), pp. 912–934; and Ethan Bueno de Mesquita, "Conciliation, Counter-terrorism, and Patterns of Terrorist Violence: A Comparative Study of Five Cases," paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, Illinois, April 3–6, 2003.

An overreliance on this framework, however, greatly underestimates the considerable influence that structural factors continue to exert on the trajectory of the implementation of peace processes. Although individuals do play an important role in peacemaking, the prevailing opportunity structure and the relative power of parties to peace accords remain the primary determinants of the course of negotiations once a peace process has begun. Thus, the causal mechanism behind the generation of spoilers actually operates in reverse of the way the spoiler model suggests. That is, the type of spoiler does not determine the kinds of outcomes that are possible; instead, the kinds of outcomes that are possible determine the type of spoiler that may emerge at any given time. Hence, a capabilities-based model offers both a better framework for analysis of peace processes and a more robust set of prescriptions for how to respond to actors and groups that most threaten them.

As such, contrary to the implications of the spoiler model, the critical first step in peacemaking should not be defining the type of spoiler one is confronting. Rather, it should be changing the decision calculus of active or potential spoilers by identifying (dis)incentives that can be put in place to discourage or forestall their emergence and the steps that can be taken to change the potential payoffs associated with cooperation versus confrontation.⁴

In the first section of this article, we review the key tenets of the spoiler framework and demonstrate why a modification of the model is appropriate. Second, we present our alternative, capabilities-based approach; explain why it represents an improvement over the extant model; and make several predictions that should be borne out if our model offers greater analytical leverage than the spoiler approach. Third, we reexamine three of Stedman's case studies using our model. In the concluding section, we highlight the implications of the case study findings, in light of events in Iraq from 2003 to 2006, and provide a series of recommendations designed to aid policymakers confronting real and potential spoiler problems.

Are Civil War Spoilers Born or Made?

Stedman argues that the United Nations and other intermediaries, which he refers to as "custodians of peace," have traditionally made the mistake of assuming that all parties to an agreement are negotiating in good faith and of treating them all equally. Although such even-handedness may help the UN

4. This fact is critically important because, as Stedman notes, the "crucial difference between success and failure of spoilers is the role played by international actors as custodians of peace." Stedman, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," p. 6.

maintain an appearance of impartiality, as an approach to peacemaking it is both too simple and too naive.⁵ Instead, Stedman argues, “the creation of an effective strategy of spoiler management rests first on the correct diagnoses of the spoiler problem . . . and the selection of an appropriate strategy to treat the problem. Choice of strategy depends on judgment about the intentions of the spoiler.”⁶

The spoiler model proposes aggregating threats to peace processes into three ideal types: “limited,” “greedy,” and “total.” Limited spoilers have narrow goals; their demands can often be met by adjusting the peace process to better reflect their interests and preferences. Greedy spoilers are more opportunistic; their demands wax and wane as conditions on the ground permit. The threat they pose can be contained either by acceding to some or all of their demands, or by altering the situation so that it no longer favors opportunistic behavior. Finally, total spoilers can only be satisfied by achieving total power. Their goals do not change, and they cannot be co-opted; hence, for a peace process to move forward, total spoilers must be either suppressed or marginalized.

Under certain conditions, this kind of personality profiling may be useful in structuring behavior toward various parties to a peace process. Determining individual leaders’ personal wants and particular idiosyncrasies should help outsiders leverage their position as the *de jure* arbiters of peace processes. But it cannot suggest the best set of strategies for deterring or defeating those who might seek to undermine peace processes, because context-specific/actor-specific measures and strategies tend to affect diplomatic instruments only at the margin.

This is because it is the prevailing opportunity structure, not actors’ intentions, that presents them with the available options, which in turn determines their behavior. Parties to a peace process adjust their goals (but not their preferences) according to the prevailing opportunity structure because the most significant determinant of a peace initiative’s ultimate success is the distribution of power among the competing factions on the ground and those implementing the peace.⁷ As such, would-be spoilers with the power to unilaterally alter the precarious balance negotiated into peace accords are likely to do so, whereas those with less power are likely to continue to sue for peace to maintain their otherwise shaky position.⁸

5. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

7. Werner, “The Precarious Nature of Peace.” This point is less relevant for those satisfied with the terms of the agreement, that is, actors who favor the status quo. But spoilers are, by definition, revisionists.

8. Leaders may evaluate their circumstances in different ways—either as a result of their own cog-

Moreover, the spoiler model contains several definitional ambiguities that reduce its usefulness, as both a diagnostic tool and a guide for outsider action. First, the model underdefines the distinction between greedy and limited spoilers and genuine hard bargaining. This indeterminacy is problematic because a group does not “become” a spoiler when it acts in ways that are contrary to the peace process—which is dictated by group behavior—but rather when the outcome of their action spoils the process—which depends equally on the group in question and the other parties to the peace agreement. This is significant because if outcomes (not actions) define spoiler behavior, then defining who is a spoiler depends more on identifying which parties the custodians of peace can suppress or co-opt than on discerning the goals and personalities of the elites in question.

Second, by focusing only on manifest and identified threats to the peace, the spoiler model ignores potential (or latent) spoilers. By recognizing only individuals and groups already considered to be important enough to warrant inclusion into the peace process, the model fails to take into account the entire set of determined but weak actors who would oppose the implementation of a peace accord, if only they had the material wherewithal to do so. This is important because if shifts in relative power change actors’ decisionmaking calculations, then dogs that did not originally bark may later emerge, threatening potentially painful bites.

Third, according to the spoiler model, any commitment made by a total spoiler represents nothing more than a tactical concession because, by their very nature, total spoilers see the world in such immutable terms that it should be impossible for them to transmute into greedy or limited spoilers.⁹ Yet,

nitive biases or because of the motivated biases of their subordinates. If this were the case, then spoiler type might reenter a material analysis through the back door. The conflict between cognitive and purely material analyses has a long history and shall not be reprised in this article. If, however, parties to a peace process undertake even moderately rational strategies, then Bayes’s rule suggests that as data accumulate after a policy change, all parties should eventually converge into a correct appraisal of the material circumstances. This rationality assumption does not presuppose that all actors who begin with the same set of beliefs will not make mistakes, or even that different actors will update their beliefs at different rates. Rather, given sufficient information (as should be available in civil wars in which the parties have abundant opportunities to accumulate data about one another) and plausible feedback/updating cycles, one should expect the material basis to eventually dominate the cognitive basis of action. Also, actors who systematically disregard the feedback from the world around them (i.e., by acting irrationally) will tend to find themselves selected against and may no longer serve as potential spoilers in any case. See, for example, Robert Jervis, “War and Misperceptions,” in Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb, eds., *The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 101–126; Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers* (New York: Free Press, 1986); and James G. March, *A Primer on Decision Making: How Decisions Happen* (New York: Free Press, 1994).

9. See Marie-Joelle Zahar, “Reframing the Spoiler Debate in Peace Processes,” in John Darby and Roger McGinty, eds., *Progressing towards Settlement* (London: Palgrave, 2004).

they can and they do.¹⁰ Thus, we argue, the degree of spoiler behavior one witnesses at any given time—latent, limited, greedy, or total—is largely a reflection of the probability that a given actor assigns to the likelihood that he can unilaterally alter the situation on the ground and the level of risk he is willing to assume to do so, rather than a fundamental difference in type. Therefore, every real or potential spoiler will be as greedy as he thinks he can afford to be.¹¹ By focusing on actors' preferences and motivations—rather than on their capacity to either conclude or undermine a given peace process and on the incentives to cooperate or defect—the spoiler model underspecifies outcomes and detracts critical attention from aspects of the conflict environment that make (would-be) spoilers a greater threat in some cases than in others.¹² Below we offer a refinement of the model that addresses both of these shortcomings.

When and Why Spoilers Emerge or Retreat: A Capabilities-Based Model

Determining how threats to peace agreements become manifest requires consideration of the conditions that lead to them being signed in the first place. Many analysts believe that agreements are most apt to be accepted when the fighting has reached a "mutually hurting stalemate" (i.e., a situation in which both sides recognize that the costs of continued fighting will likely exceed the potential benefits).¹³ Four factors thus determine the characteristics of a peace accord: (1) the relative power of the indigenous parties to the conflict; (2) the mandate, willingness, and ability of international custodians to redress this balance and maintain it once in place; (3) actors' willingness to accept the risks and costs they would incur from a return to the battlefield; and (4) their different policy preferences. Although the third and fourth factors might be ascribed to spoiler type, they should already be captured in the details of a peace accord that all the combatants are willing to sign.¹⁴ Because preferences and personalities will be recognized within the accords themselves, and as these actor-specific factors have typically proven extraordinarily long-lived, changes in

10. See, for instance, Stedman, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," pp. 11–12.

11. Or perhaps he will be as greedy as he needs to be, because for those for whom peace likely means death or incarceration, few incentives to cooperate exist.

12. For recognition that this may indeed be a weakness of the model, see Stephen John Stedman, "Introduction," in Stedman, John Rothchild, and Elizabeth M. Cousens, eds., *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2002), p. 14.

13. See, for instance, I. William Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa*, 2d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

14. See, for instance, Gary S. Becker, "Public Policies, Pressure Groups, and Dead Weight Costs," *Journal of Public Economics*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (December 1985), pp. 329–347; and Gary S. Becker, "A Theory of Competition among Pressure Groups for Political Influence," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 98, No. 3 (August 1983), pp. 371–400.

these characteristics cannot serve as a basis for post-accord renegotiations of the status quo.¹⁵ Spoiler behavior is thus, we posit, more closely causally linked to strategic exigencies than to individual motivations.

Consider the issue through the lens of bargaining, which is generally understood to mean a process by which two or more parties decide how to divide the gains from joint action. In principle, all sides would prefer to sign an agreement and gain the benefits of cooperation,¹⁶ particularly because fighting is costly.¹⁷ Given, however, that all parties also want to maximize their share of the joint gains, individual incentives sometimes stand in the way of reaching such an agreement, and so conflict commences; or, in the case of spoiling, continues.¹⁸

Viewed from this perspective, the most significant factor at play is the expected utility of continuing to fight. Rightly or wrongly, if combatants believe they have the capacity to unilaterally achieve a better deal than the one on the table, they are likely to resort to spoiling behavior.¹⁹ Factors that upset the fragile status quo that prevailed when the agreement was struck—and shift power away from the agreement's parameters and in favor of one group or the other—can catalyze spoiler behavior, because the greater the divergence between the accords and the actual distribution of power, the more the opportunity structure facing the ascendant party(s) militates in favor of their seeking to unilaterally shift the status quo in their favor.²⁰

As the cases below demonstrate, such circumstances can emanate from both

15. Stedman makes a similar point in an earlier article where he cites data suggesting that, in intrastate conflicts, unilateral military victories produce more stable outcomes than do negotiated settlements. The results indicate that parties often use cease-fires and truces for tactical advantage—thus altering their means (spoiler behavior) but never their preferences. Again, given that a spoiler can be limited on the day of the signing of a peace accord and total a year later, trying to moderate one's behavior according to a static perception of a spoiler typology is both dangerous and likely to be self-defeating. See Stephen John Stedman, "Negotiation and Mediation in Internal Conflict," in Michael E. Brown, ed., *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), p. 375.

16. Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960).

17. See, for instance, Robert Powell, "Bargaining Theory and International Conflict," *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 5 (June 2002), pp. 255–289; and James D. Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organization*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (Summer 1995), pp. 379–414.

18. R. Harrison Wagner, "Bargaining and War," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 44, No. 3 (July 2000), pp. 469–484; and Suzanne Werner, "Negotiating the Terms of Settlement: War Aims and Bargaining Leverage," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (June 1998), pp. 321–343.

19. Werner, "The Precarious Nature of Peace."

20. As a result, custodians must be willing either to invest sufficient resources to maintain the balance of power that existed when the accords were signed or to adjust the agreements to reflect the distribution of power on the ground. Although it would be ideal to have a means by which the original accords might be adjusted should circumstances change, if accords are too flexible, they cannot serve as a focal point for further confidence building. Therefore, although room to maneuver is desirable, to the extent that a signed accord serves any purpose beyond recognizing the power on the ground, it is likely in its enforceable inflexibility.

endogenous and exogenous causes. Thus, if peace accords are to be sustainable, the opportunity structure that prevailed during the negotiations must be perpetuated. This does not require that custodians be able to overwhelm (or co-opt) either or all of the combatants, but it does require that the international community have the independence, will, means, and mandate to counter-cyclically intervene in the ongoing implementation of the accords.

A second factor concerns so-called credible commitment problems.²¹ Absent credible third-party guarantees that the balance established during the negotiations will be maintained during the implementation phase of the accords, convincing combatants to demobilize their armies and surrender conquered territory may be very difficult, particularly when taking such steps will limit the combatants' ability to enforce the treaty's other provisions as well as increase their vulnerability to future predation.

A third factor that may catalyze spoiling is a shift in domestic political incentives, such that leaders might actually be better off fighting and losing than adhering to a peace agreement, if their supporters become rabid enough. In such cases, there is no effective bargaining range because continuing the war is actually rational for leaders, who themselves escape the costs of the war.²² In other words, in some situations even if spoiling does not make strategic military sense, it may make tactical political sense.

Fourth, even if leaders wish to make peace themselves, changes in the internal distribution of power may mean that they are no longer powerful enough to bring their followers with them.²³

These four factors are not mutually exclusive, but each is independently sufficient to stimulate spoiling behavior and undermine a peace process.²⁴ Moreover, contrary to the assumptions of the spoiler model, none of the four is intention driven or personality specific. Therefore, custodians of peace need

21. See, for instance, Barry R. Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," *Survival*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Spring 1993), pp. 27–47; Barbara F. Walter, *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2002); Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War"; and Caroline A. Hartzell, "Explaining the Stability of Negotiated Settlements to Intra-state Wars," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (February 1999), pp. 3–22.

22. Henk E. Goemans and Giacomo Chiozza, "International Conflict and the Tenure of Leaders: Is War Still *Ex Post* Inefficient?" *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (July 2004), pp. 604–619.

23. For instance, some observers suspect that this was the situation in which Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana may have found himself vis-à-vis the extremists in his National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development Party in the period leading up to the 1994 genocide. See, for instance, Stedman "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes"; and Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 198–203.

24. Although evidence suggests that, in line with the argument offered herein, changes in the relative distribution of power do tend to be the *most* significant factor leading to instability in the post-war phase. See Werner, "The Precarious Nature of Peace."

only minimize leaders' potential gains from spoiling or minimize the probability that they will view the expected costs of negotiation and compromise as outweighing the benefits of peace. In classical deterrence theory terms, effective spoiler management requires provision of a conditional, but highly credible, commitment to retaliate if parties fail to uphold the terms of the agreement, accompanied by credible inducements for cooperation.²⁵ Although engaging in such strategies may be costly for custodians, we posit that when they do make the investment, spoilers can indeed be deterred or defeated.²⁶

Cases of Intrastate Conflict and Negotiation: Evaluating Our Model

To test our capabilities-based model, we revisit three of the case studies examined in Stedman's "Spoiler Problems": Angola, Mozambique, and Cambodia, which represent for him cases of greedy, limited, and total spoilers, respectively.²⁷ Specifically, we hypothesize that shifts in such actors' willingness to negotiate should coincide with changes in the distribution of power and with the demonstrated readiness of the custodians of peace to change the opportunity structure on the ground.

We construe changes in the distribution of power to include shifts in military capabilities—for example, the balance of forces; battlefield victories; and territory taken and held—as well as shifts in latent capabilities—for example, the existence (or absence) of foreign aid; access to easily trafficked commodities; and level of support from the noncombatant population.²⁸ This is because, in those cases where real or potential spoilers have access to natural resources that are vulnerable to looting or where they can rely on the support of neighboring countries that oppose peace, their relative capabilities are enhanced,

25. This includes promising to punish all parties who fail to cooperate, not only those who have been identified as potential spoilers.

26. Although madmen do exist, in the vast majority of cases, potential spoilers—regardless of the degree of their demands—are strategic actors and, faced with the right set of (dis)incentives, can be deterred or co-opted. Even Joseph Kony, the notoriously "mad" leader of the Lord's Resistance Army runs his organization in a rational, strategic manner. See, for instance, James Bevan, "The Myth of Madness: The Organization of the Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army," paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, San Diego, California, March 22–25, 2006.

27. To be clear, we do not seek to identify the conditions writ large under which peace agreements will be successfully implemented. Rather, we aim to identify the best strategies to deter or defeat actors who would seek to undermine peace processes for their own ends.

28. On the relative importance of extractive resources in civil wars, see, for instance, Mats R. Berdal and David M. Malone, eds., *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2000); and Karen Ballentine and Jake Sherman, eds., *The Political Economy of Armed Conflict: Beyond Greed and Grievance* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2003).

Figure 1. Probability of Spoiler Emergence and Predicted Level of Greed for a Given Distribution of Power

		Domestic Opposition's Relative Power	
		Strong	Weak
Custodians of Peace	Strong	low latent nonspoiler (least greedy)	medium greedy to greedier
	Weak	medium greedy to greedier	high greediest

and as such, they “are a more likely and greater threat to peace.”²⁹ Likewise, evidence of custodians’ demonstrated willingness to engage in effective deterrence and to punish defectors should also be correlated with shifts in spoilers’ willingness to cooperate.³⁰ Thus, if our model is correct, we should observe all spoilers seeking to be as greedy as their relative power within the prevailing opportunity structure permits them to be (see Figure 1).

THE ANGOLAN CASE

Stedman argues that Jonas Savimbi, leader of the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) rebel movement, represents the archetypal greedy spoiler.³¹ He is not alone in focusing on the role of Savimbi as the source of the failures of the 1991 Bicesse peace accords and the 1994 Lusaka

29. Stedman, “Introduction,” p. 14.

30. The literature on the importance of outsiders in making peace agreements work is extensive. See, for instance, Fen Osler Hampson, *Nurturing Peace: Why Peace Settlements Succeed or Fail* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996); Roy Licklider, “Obstacles to Peace Settlements,” in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds., *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001); Donald S. Rothchild, “Settlement Terms and Postagreement Stability,” in Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens, *Ending Civil Wars*, pp. 117–138; Hartzell, “Explaining the Stability of Negotiated Settlements to Intrastate Wars”; Walter, *Committing to Peace*; and Werner, “The Precarious Nature of Peace.” The issue of effective spoiler strategies is consistent with—but not identical to—the issues surrounding what makes peace processes succeed or fail.

31. Stedman, “Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes,” pp. 37–39.

Protocol, which were to have ended the Angolan civil war that had been raging since 1975.³² We contend, however, that while Savimbi's commitment to being a spoiler waxed and waned, these fluctuations can be linked more directly to his military fortunes than to particular personality traits. Confronted with similar circumstances, leaders whose behavior would have been otherwise described as "limited" or "total" would likely have behaved as Savimbi did.

BACKGROUND TO THE ANGOLAN CONFLICT. As colonial empires collapsed across Africa in the early 1970s, three Angolan independence movements were fighting among themselves to be well placed to claim the spoils of the fleeing Portuguese. They were Holden Roberto's well-financed, but politically and militarily ineffectual, National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), Agostino Neto's Soviet- and Cuban-backed communist Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), and Savimbi's politically strong, but militarily weak, UNITA movement.³³ Unable to decide on a successor, the Portuguese granted Angola independence on April 11, 1975, and made good their escape.

In the lead-up to independence, Savimbi sought to create unity among the disparate Angolan independence movements and establish a forum for lawful elections because, as the weakest of the three movements, UNITA "was not foolish enough to imagine, nor martial enough to wish, it could gain power through force."³⁴ Instead, as our capabilities-based model would suggest, it was the MPLA—supplied with sizable quantities of Soviet weapons and Cuban advisers—that took advantage of its relative position of strength during this period to become the total spoiler of the stillborn 1975 Alvor agreement, which was intended to provide for a peaceful transition to democracy in Angola.³⁵

32. See, for example, Victoria Brittain, *The Death of Dignity: Angola's Civil War* (Chicago: Pluto, 1998); and James Ciment, *Angola and Mozambique: Postcolonial Wars in Southern Africa* (New York: Facts on File, 1997).

33. Savimbi was a member of the Ovimbundu tribe, the largest ethnic group in Angola, which made up roughly one-third of its population. Rather than trying to leverage his popularity into creating a strong military force (which would have necessitated strong outside backing), Savimbi focused on the Maoist tenets of self-reliance and education of the peasantry. At the time of independence, he was no match militarily for the CIA- and South African-backed FNLA or the Cuban/Soviet-backed MPLA. See W. Martin James III, *A Political History of the Civil War in Angola, 1974–1990* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1992), pp. 53, 94.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 137. See also Daniel Spikes, *Angola and the Politics of Intervention: From Local Bush War to Chronic Crisis in Southern Africa* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1999). Spikes quotes Savimbi as saying, "It was no good committing ourselves to a war with the MPLA unless we were strong enough to fight them." *Ibid.*, p. 187.

35. Following the 1974 military coup in Portugal, the leaders of the MPLA, UNITA, and the FNLA agreed to participate in negotiations designed to pave the way for independence and a transition

Leveraging its relative strength, the MPLA launched unprecipitated attacks against UNITA (and remnant FNLA) forces, thereby driving Savimbi into the bush and into rebellion;³⁶ captured Angola's capital, Luanda; and laid claim to legitimate leadership of the country. In many ways, however, it was a Pyrrhic victory. With the flight of much of Angola's skilled labor force to other countries and the destruction of much of its industrial capital, the economy was in tatters.³⁷ Further, after taking the capital, the MPLA found that UNITA, which had received assistance from former FNLA forces and strong backing from South Africa's apartheid regime, could not be decisively defeated.³⁸ With substantial foreign assistance from both sides of the Iron Curtain, both the MPLA and UNITA dug in and fought a long, grueling war of attrition, which had reached a stalemate by the end of the 1980s.

As the Cold War drew to a close, leading South African and Cuban combatants to withdraw and external aid to plummet, the impetus for peace grew, if haltingly. Demobilization agreements also introduced the UN to Angola for the first time in the form of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) I operation, which ran from January 1989 through May 1991. After successfully overseeing the departure of the Cuban forces, the UN turned its attention to moderating the conflict between the MPLA and UNITA.³⁹

Given the legacy of distrust between the warring parties, credible commitment problems were particularly salient. This led to intransigence on the part of the MPLA-led government, which was eager to avoid conferring legitimacy on Savimbi by agreeing to conduct direct negotiations with UNITA.⁴⁰ As Donald Rothchild and Caroline Hartzell write, the MPLA resisted until the superpowers exerted "leverage over the Angolan government and the two direct

to democracy. Given the fluid strategic situation and the profusion of arms pouring into the country, however, the agreement was essentially dead on arrival.

36. Spikes, *Angola and the Politics of Intervention*, p. 142. See also James, *A Political History of the Civil War in Angola, 1974–1990*, pp. 55, 72.

37. James, *A Political History of the Civil War in Angola, 1974–1990*, pp. 106–107, 219.

38. In the waning days of the war against the Portuguese, the FNLA launched an attack from the north and was soundly defeated. Some FNLA elements joined forces with UNITA, while others formed the core of the South African special forces battalion that operated out of Namibia and southern Angola. During the Bicesse negotiations, former FNLA leader Holden Roberto returned from exile and demanded that the FNLA be granted the same status as UNITA and the MPLA at the bargaining table. Roberto was too weak to press his claim, however, so the demand was ignored, and the peace process moved forward.

39. Daniel S. Papp, "The Angolan Civil War and Namibia: The Role of External Intervention," in David R. Smock, ed., *Making War and Waging Peace: Foreign Intervention in Africa* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993), p. 186.

40. Paul Hare, "Angola: The End of an Intractable Conflict," in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds., *Grasping the Nettle: Analyzing Cases of Intractable Conflict* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2004), p. 217.

interveners through the manipulation of incentives.”⁴¹ The outcome of this second round of UN-sponsored talks was the 1991 Bicesse peace accords.

The Bicesse accords called for a complete and permanent cease-fire, free and fair multiparty elections, respect for civil liberties, and the integration of MPLA and UNITA forces into a single military.⁴² The accords were to be implemented with UN supervision under the aegis of a new mission, UNAVEM II. In November 2001, the MPLA and UNITA agreed on the details of the electoral arrangements, including the provision that the president would be elected by direct and secret suffrage, with a second ballot if necessary, based on a majoritarian winner-take-all system. UNAVEM II's mandate was then expanded to include responsibility for planning and conducting the elections, which would be held the following September, ideally after the full demobilization of both MPLA and UNITA forces.

Although the mission had been equal to the task of overseeing the departure of foreign forces from Angola, it was ill equipped to undertake the additional tasks to which it was assigned under the Bicesse accords. UNAVEM II's soldiers and civilian staff were chronically short of food, transport, and equipment; and the expanded operation was desperately underfunded and undermanned⁴³—with a maximum deployment of only 366 military, 90 police, and 100 electoral observers.⁴⁴ Still more critically, its mandate greatly limited UNAVEM II's room for maneuver, which in turn undermined its ability to persuade the warring factions that there would be consequences for engaging in spoiling behavior.⁴⁵

THE UN AND THE BICESSE ACCORDS. Still, had the distribution of power between the MPLA and UNITA remained relatively static during the period leading up to the election, the small UN force might have been able to maintain a balance of forces and push on with its peacekeeping mission. This, however, was not to be the case. While the demobilization process lagged on both sides, UNITA was able to maintain a far greater proportion of its fighting force than was the MPLA. By election time, 65 percent of MPLA forces but only 26 per-

41. Donald Rothchild and Caroline Hartzell, “Great- and Medium-Power Mediations: Angola,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 518, No. 1 (November 1991), p. 41.

42. See Yvonne C. Lodico, “A Peace That Fell Apart: The United Nations and the War in Angola,” in William J. Durch, ed., *UN Peacekeeping, American Policy, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997).

43. Its budget of \$118 million was dwarfed, for instance, by the budget of the UN mission to Mozambique, which was \$327 million in 1993 alone. See International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance, 1995–1996* (London: IISS, 1995).

44. See IISS, “Angola,” *The Military Balance, 1991–1992* (London: IISS, 1991); IISS, *The Military Balance, 1992–1993* (London: IISS, 1992); and Hare, “Angola,” pp. 218–219.

45. Lodico, “A Peace That Fell Apart,” p. 111; and Ciment, *Angola and Mozambique*, p. 4.

cent of UNITA forces had been demobilized, and only 8,000 (of a planned 50,000) troops had been inducted into the new Angolan army.⁴⁶ Thus, whereas in the period leading up to the Bicesse agreement, government troops outnumbered UNITA forces by 2 to 2.7:1, shortly after the 1992 election, this force ratio had shrunk to something closer to 1:1.⁴⁷

Moreover, the new Angolan army remained relatively disorganized and poorly disciplined relative to UNITA's forces.⁴⁸ In addition, just before the accords were signed, UNITA seized key diamond mines in the north, thus ensuring its capacity to continue funding the war effort if it suffered defeat at the polls.⁴⁹ So, although Savimbi was justified in his contention that the government was also hedging by loading the police with its own forces, the balance of power was clearly shifting toward UNITA.⁵⁰

Consistent with greedy behavior, as long as Savimbi believed that UNITA would prevail in Angola's winner-take-all elections, he was willing to adhere to the Bicesse accords. Absent an electoral triumph, however, there were few incentives in place to encourage continued cooperation. Thus, after being unexpectedly defeated on election day, Savimbi prepared to exploit his material advantage to recoup on the battlefield what he had lost at the polls.⁵¹ On October 31 the MPLA, sensing the precariousness of the situation, launched a preemptive strike, plunging Angola back into full-scale war. By September 1993, UNITA controlled 70 percent of Angola's territory, including the provincial centers of Huambo and Uige, the major airfield at Negage, and the diamond center of Cafundo.⁵²

In his article Stedman acknowledged the material effects of these events on UNITA's bargaining position, yet the spoiler model privileges the role of

46. Roland Paris, *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 66.

47. For instance, in 1991–92 government forces reportedly numbered between 96,000 and 127,000 (plus 50,000 reserves), while UNITA boasted 28,000 regulars and 37,000 in militia units. By June 1993 government forces had fallen to 45,000 (plus 20,000 paramilitaries), while UNITA forces hovered around 40,000, reportedly bolstered by continuing aid from South Africa. See IISS, "Angola," *The Military Balance, 1991–1992*; IISS, "Angola," *The Military Balance, 1992–1993*; and IISS, "Angola," *The Military Balance, 1993–1994* (London: IISS, 1993).

48. Hare, "Angola," p. 219.

49. Ciment, *Angola and Mozambique*, p. 86.

50. Lodico, "A Peace That Fell Apart," p. 119.

51. As leader of the Ovimbundu, Savimbi was favored to win. In the end, he received only 40 percent of the vote, while the MPLA candidate, Eduardo dos Santos, received 49 percent. Why Savimbi lost remains an open question, but some observers suggest that the majority of Angolans preferred MPLA corruption to UNITA violence. One popular motto was "The MPLA steals, but UNITA kills." See, for instance, "The Shameless Rich and Voiceless Poor," *Economist*, January 22, 2004, pp. 42–43.

52. Hare, "Angola," p. 221.

Savimbi's personality and ambitions over the opportunity structure that provided him with incentives to try to win the war unilaterally.⁵³ But these material factors were critically important: the combination of a weak UN, access to external funding and supplies, and a disintegrating MPLA created an opportunity structure that Savimbi—once UNITA lost the elections—was bound to exploit.

As our model would suggest, during his early gains, Savimbi repeatedly turned down the appeals of MPLA President Eduardo dos Santos—who had replaced Neto as head of the MPLA upon his death in 1979—to resume negotiations.⁵⁴ Also consistent with our model, however, Savimbi's recalcitrance was subsequently tempered by a series of battlefield reversals and a shift in the balance of forces. Following their early defeats, government forces grew in number and were bolstered by the recruitment of mercenaries and the introduction of foreign-trained elite commando units; by late 1994, these better-trained (and handsomely equipped) government forces outnumbered and outgunned UNITA forces by about a two-to-one margin.⁵⁵ At the same time, UNITA's logistical train had become impossibly long, making it difficult to supply its now far-flung forces.⁵⁶

THE LUSAKA PROTOCOL AND UNAVEM II AND III. Thus, after being soundly defeated by the newly superior government forces as well as adversely affected by the abandonment of his former patron—the United States—Savimbi returned to the negotiating table. Peace (or, more precisely, a state of nonwar) was restored with the signing of the Lusaka Protocol, the implementation of which was to be overseen by an expanded UN force (UNAVEM III), comprising about 6,700 troops and another 500 military and police observers.⁵⁷ By then, 300,000 Angolans had died in the worst fighting since independence.

The Lusaka Protocol also failed to stop the fighting, however. One key stumbling block was that the protocol failed to address the diamond issue, even though UNITA retained control over approximately two-thirds of the country's diamond-mining regions and garnered more than \$400 million per year from the sale of these precious gems.⁵⁸ Another problem was that, although

53. Indeed, he acknowledged the possibility that had Savimbi been in a position of military weakness at the end of the 1992 elections, "and had the international community held a monopoly of rewards, inducement might have brought him back into the fold." See Stedman, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," p. 26.

54. Brittain, *The Death of Dignity*, p. 62.

55. See IISS, "Angola," *The Military Balance, 1995–1996*, p. 230.

56. Hare, "Angola," p. 221.

57. See IISS, "Angola," *The Military Balance, 1996–1997* (London: IISS, 1996).

58. See, for instance, Margaret Joan Antsee, *Orphan of the Cold War: The Inside Story of the Collapse of the Angolan Peace Process, 1992–93* (New York: St. Martin's, 1996); and Paul Hare, *Angola's Last Best*

Lusaka contained provisions for other members of UNITA, it ignored the fundamental political question of Savimbi's own future.⁵⁹ This did not bode well for an agreement that one observer called "a ceasefire with permanent violations," particularly because Savimbi (at least publicly) claimed the government was intent on assassinating him.⁶⁰

Additionally, primary responsibility for implementation of the protocol was assigned to the local parties rather than to UNAVEM III. This exacerbated already extant commitment problems, further stymieing UNITA's cooperation and demobilization efforts.⁶¹ As Savimbi himself put it, "You cannot ask for everything: Let us have your army! Here, have it. Let us have your weapons! Here, have them. Let us have your money! Oh, come on, get real! Nobody will accept that."⁶² The already elevated level of UNITA's distrust was further exacerbated by government actions that included launching attacks characterized by an "excessive use of force," moving troops into UNITA-controlled diamond regions, and intervening militarily in neighboring Congo-Brazzaville in an attempt to cut off UNITA's supply chain.⁶³ Some observers argue that these moves further stimulated UNITA's desire to "maintain a residual military force as a form of insurance against unilateral actions by the government or the collapse of the peace process"—additional powerful motivations for continued spoiling.⁶⁴

THE ANGOLAN ENDGAME. In February 1999, "frustrated with the recalcitrance of the local parties and fearing for the safety of its personnel," the UN terminated its mission in Angola.⁶⁵ The fighting continued until February 2002, when government forces killed Savimbi, prompting the MPLA and UNITA to sign a permanent cease-fire. Given that Savimbi's death produced a breakthrough, some observers have argued this proves that Savimbi was indeed a total spoiler whose "messianic sense of destiny" drove him to "seek absolute power," qualities that did not lend themselves to "compromise or to playing second fiddle in a regime headed by someone else."⁶⁶

Chance for Peace: An Insider's Account of the Peace Process (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998), p. 124.

59. Victoria Brittain, "Savimbi . . . Again," *Southern Africa Report*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (March 1995), p. 14.

60. In an interview in the French newspaper *Libération*, Savimbi declared, "As long as there is a plan to assassinate me I won't be part of all this. The government will really have to prove that they will keep their side of the bargain—just signing a paper is not enough." Quoted in *ibid.*

61. Paris, *At War's End*, p. 68.

62. Quoted in Hare, *Angola's Last Best Chance for Peace*, p. 124.

63. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 142.

64. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 105.

65. Paris, *At War's End*, p. 68.

66. Tony Hodges, *Angola from Afro-Stalinism to Petro-Diamond Capitalism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), pp. 18–19, quoted in Hare, "Angola," p. 220.

According to Stedman's account, however, Savimbi was not a total spoiler, but rather only a greedy spoiler. We concur. As our model suggests, Savimbi was as greedy as the incentive structure and his own capabilities permitted him to be. With few (and later no) provisions in the peace accords for Savimbi, and ample opportunities and incentives to continue to engage in spoiling behavior, it is not surprising that the conflict continued until the government's actions forced the issue militarily. In the end, Savimbi's death was the result of UNITA's changing fortunes and strategy, rather than its cause.⁶⁷

Indeed, less than two months after Savimbi's death, his successor, Paulo Lukamba (aka General Gato), proclaimed that he was simply carrying out Savimbi's wishes in signing the government-backed cease-fire. As Gato put it, "It was a not a political decision taken by the present leadership, but was the continuation of a programme which Dr. Savimbi had in relation to peace and national reconciliation. . . . We came firstly because it was the way the president [Jonas Savimbi] had chosen and secondly, because we analysed the national and international situation and decided that negotiation would be the best option—but it was not the only option."⁶⁸

Gato may have chosen to attribute UNITA's change of heart to Savimbi for a number of reasons, including a wish to preserve his own reputation as a hard-liner. Still, Savimbi may indeed have been considering a return to the negotiating table, in light of the reversals UNITA faced in the months leading up to his death. Not only had the Angolan government implemented a diamond certification scheme that—along with sanctions—had significantly reduced UNITA's diamond-related revenues, but the movement was also facing profound fuel, food, and supply shortages. At the same time, the government's own revenue stream was increasing following the army's repulsion of UNITA forces from the country's oil-producing regions.⁶⁹ By any measure, the tide appeared to be turning in favor of the government. As Paul Hare noted, "The situation at the beginning of 2002 was quite different from what had existed before. If not knocked out, UNITA was on the ropes. The government could essentially dictate the terms of settlement."⁷⁰

Thus, irrespective of the validity of the claim regarding Savimbi's willingness to bargain, the decision of his successor to refrain from further spoiling makes sense in the context of a capabilities-based model. First, while denying that UNITA had been defeated, Gato conceded that the government had

67. See, for instance, Fred Bridgland, "Ghost of Savimbi Haunts Angola," *Scotsman*, February 22, 2003.

68. Quoted in Justin Pearce, "General Gato: UNITA's New Leader," *BBC News*, April 4, 2002.

69. IISS, *Strategic Survey, 2001–2002* (London: IISS, 2002), pp. 318–319.

70. Hare, "Angola," p. 225.

gained a “strategic victory” by “decapitating” it.⁷¹ Second, by unilaterally declaring a cease-fire in March 2002 and offering concessions to the emerging leadership, the government had implicitly allowed for UNITA’s remaining capacity for mischief and designed the new peace accordingly. In short, not only did the question of what type of spoiler Savimbi happened to be play little role in the conflict, but also Savimbi’s switch from a nonspoiler prior to Angolan independence (late 1960s, early 1970s), to greedy spoiler (1991), to total spoiler (1992), to limited spoiler (1994), and back to total spoiler (post-Lusaka) reflected changes in the distribution of power and demonstrates that spoiler type is dependent on the situation on the ground rather than the other way around.

Our conclusion in the Angolan case is not distinct from Stedman’s: Savimbi was a greedy spoiler. But because our model suggests that all spoilers are greedy, the two models will sometimes produce confluent findings. What distinguishes our capabilities-based model is that, unlike the spoiler model, it allows one to predict *ex ante* if and when spoilers might emerge or retreat. Where this distinction becomes especially telling is in those cases where the spoiler model characterizes actors as types other than greedy, such as the Mozambican and Cambodian cases explored below.

THE MOZAMBIKAN CASE

At the time that peace accords were signed in Mozambique and Angola, the two countries shared many similarities: both were former Portuguese colonies; both had been freed from colonial rule in 1975 by Marxist liberation movements; and both spent their first two decades of independence mired in bitter internecine conflict. However, whereas the peace accords and UN missions to Angola resulted in failure, despite their many minor flaws, the General Peace Agreement and the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) were highly successful.

According to the spoiler model, the UN’s failure to understand Savimbi’s spoiler behavior and structure its policy accordingly explains its poor results in Angola, whereas the UN’s ability to follow a strategy in line with the spoiler model produced success in Mozambique. In contrast, we argue that Mozambique was a success because the custodians of peace put sufficient resources on the ground, and because the war effort so exhausted the warring factions that they no longer possessed either the means or the support that would permit them to be very “greedy” spoilers.⁷²

71. Pearce, “General Gato.”

72. Consider, for instance, that in the Angolan case, the balance of power tipped toward Savimbi

BACKGROUND TO THE MOZAMBIKAN CONFLICT. After thirteen years of armed struggle, in early 1975 the Marxist Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO) gained control of the country in the wake of the retreating Portuguese. Yet, because many Portuguese wealth-holders and educated Mozambicans, bureaucrats, and skilled laborers decamped along with the colonial government, the prospects for a prosperous FRELIMO-led Mozambique were dim.⁷³

The country's prospects were further enfeebled by the actions of the white minority government in Rhodesia. In response to FRELIMO's hostility toward Rhodesia and because of its support for rebel groups within it, in 1976 the Rhodesian security forces created a counterrevolutionary movement, the Mozambican National Resistance (known by its Portuguese acronym: RENAMO), made up of disaffected Mozambicans and former Portuguese colonists to undermine the FRELIMO government and the anti-Rhodesian rebels it supported.⁷⁴ From 1975 until 1978, RENAMO was, "for all intents and purposes [...] only a Rhodesian fifth column operating in Mozambique . . . [relying] entirely on Rhodesian aid for survival."⁷⁵

The death of RENAMO's founder, André Matsanagaissa, in 1978 and the collapse of Rhodesian support in 1980 threw RENAMO into chaos. After a brief internal power struggle, however, RENAMO found a new leader in Afonso Dhlakama and was resuscitated with aid from the South African armed forces, which sought to maintain RENAMO as a viable fighting force to counter mounting African National Congress pressure. Yet, despite the South African assistance, RENAMO was unable to overthrow the FRELIMO-led government; and by the early 1990s, the two had fought themselves to a stalemate.

THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE GENERAL PEACE AGREEMENT. By the end of the 1980s, the two sides had recognized the futility of continuing to seek a unilateral military solution, although both remained unwilling to negotiate until

as the Bicesse process moved toward fruition, whereas the balance tipped away from Dhlakama in Mozambique. During the mid-to-late 1980s, government forces held a 1.6 to 1.8:1 advantage over the rebels. In 1989, however, the government's advantage ballooned to 3:1. It expanded still further in 1990, the year the cease-fire that produced the General Peace Agreement was signed. See the Mozambique sections in IISS, *The Military Balance, 1987–1988* (London: IISS, 1987); IISS, *The Military Balance, 1988–1989* (London: IISS, 1988); IISS, *The Military Balance, 1990–1991* (London: IISS, 1990); IISS, *The Military Balance, 1991–1992*; IISS, *The Military Balance, 1992–1993*; and IISS, *The Military Balance, 1993–1994*.

73. See Alex Vines, *RENAMO: From Terrorism to Democracy in Mozambique?* (Oxford: James Currey, 1996), pp. 5–10.

74. Pamela Reed, "The Politics of Reconciliation: The United Nations Operation in Mozambique," in Dorch, *UN Peacekeeping, American Policy, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s*, p. 27.

75. Vines, *RENAMO*, p. 16.

their foreign military support had largely evaporated.⁷⁶ Once this happened, however, the Catholic lay community Sant'Egidio was able to exploit the parties' interest in finding a diplomatic solution by initiating a process that eventually yielded the General Peace Agreement in 1992.⁷⁷ Again, in marked contrast to Angola, Mozambique entered its peace process in a state of exhaustion.⁷⁸ Even so, for as long as it remained possible, the two sides continued to jockey for strategic advantage both on the battlefield and at the negotiating table.

In December 1992 the UN mounted a peacekeeping operation to oversee the implementation of the General Peace Agreement. Despite a slow ramp-up in troop strength, ONUMOZ, led by UN Special Representative Aldo Ajello, had several factors in its favor compared to the UNAVEM II mission in Angola. Most important was interest at all levels of Mozambican society in ending the conflict.⁷⁹ Although for several months after the signing of the agreement, "UN action was little more than symbolic," with support from Mozambican society and the resolve of their respective armies both flagging, neither faction had the ability to seriously disrupt the momentum for peace.⁸⁰

By the time the two sides were strong enough to attempt any challenges to the agreement, ONUMOZ had successfully managed to amass the resources needed to counter them; in the wake of the Angolan disaster, UN donors ensured that this time the mission was fully funded and sufficiently staffed.⁸¹ For instance, in contrast to the \$118 million budget devoted to Angola, ONUMOZ boasted appropriations of \$327 million in 1993 and \$295 million in 1994.⁸² These efforts, along with the presence of thousands of UN troops and observers, increased faith among the exhausted Mozambican population that ONUMOZ would guarantee the peace and protect them against possible predations by defectors from the agreement. By way of comparison, during the period of demobilization and lead-up to elections, nearly 8,000 international troops and civilian police observers were on the ground in Mozambique—an

76. Paris, *At War's End*, p. 141; and Cameron Hume, *Ending Mozambique's War: The Role of Mediation and Good Offices* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1994).

77. See Vines, *RENAMO*, chap. 5.

78. Richard Singe, *Mozambique: UN Peacekeeping in Action, 1992–94* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), p. 10. See also Jim Wurst, "Mozambique Disarms," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Vol. 50, No. 5 (September/October 1994), p. 36. Wurst notes that the general war fatigue of people from all strata in Mozambican society and the carnage created by the war served as a major catalyst for the peace process.

79. See Wurst, "Mozambique Disarms," p. 36; and Carolyn Nordstrom, *A Different Kind of War Story* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), p. 226.

80. Singe, *Mozambique*, p. 27.

81. Reed, "The Politics of Reconciliation," p. 284. Ajello described the level of international backing as a "miracle." Quoted in Singe, *Mozambique*, p. 32.

82. See IISS, "Mozambique," *The Military Balance, 1995–1996*.

area less than two-thirds the size of Angola—whereas only 556 observers were on the ground in Angola during the analogous period, 100 of whom were only election observers.⁸³

Moreover, demobilization was far more comprehensive and more earnestly embraced by the respective armies in Mozambique than it had been in Angola. In contrast to Angola, neither side in Mozambique would have gained an advantage during the demobilization process. Indeed, the demobilization crisis experienced by ONUMOZ resulted not from a lack of enthusiasm for disarmament, but rather from a surfeit of it. When both RENAMO and FRELIMO attempted to hold their best troops in reserve, war-weary troops attempted to compel their own demobilization by staging mutinies and riots.⁸⁴ Such uprisings transpired at demobilization centers throughout the country, as combatants on all sides demanded a speedier return to civilian life.⁸⁵

The nature of the threat posed by the spoiler in the Mozambican case also differed from that posed in Angola. Stedman attributes this difference to RENAMO's Dhlakama having been a limited spoiler, whereas UNITA's Savimbi was a greedy spoiler. The differences between Savimbi and Dhlakama, however, were a consequence not of fundamental difference in type, but of fundamental differences in capabilities and, hence, opportunity structure. Whereas UNITA had access to profitable gem mines and other precious resources, RENAMO had none. Moreover, of RENAMO's two earlier patrons, Rhodesia had ceased to exist, and South Africa had been improving relations with FRELIMO since President Joaquim Alberto Chissano's election in 1986.⁸⁶ So, unlike Savimbi—who long continued to receive external support from Zaire, Congo-Brazzaville, and rogue elements in South Africa—Dhlakama had no such funding.

At the same time, in what represented a powerful additional incentive for his continued cooperation, Dhlakama was being paid \$300,000 a month from a UN trust fund. Ultimately, Special Representative Ajello recognized both the importance of the UN trust fund and Dhlakama's weakness, noting that "I [Ajello] don't believe Dhlakama is an angel. But I look to his real interests. He will try to get what he can. . . . The relatively small amount of money needed for the trust fund was the insurance everything else would work."⁸⁷

83. Ibid.; and IISS, "Angola," *The Military Balance*, 1992–1993.

84. See Vines, *RENAMO*, pp. 154–155; and Singe, *Mozambique*, p. 102.

85. Singe, *Mozambique*, p. 91. See also "Teetering at the Verge of Peace," *Economist*, August 13, 1994, p. 41.

86. Nordstrom, *A Different Kind of War Story*, p. 229; and Reed, "The Politics of Reconciliation," p. 280.

87. Quoted in Singe, *Mozambique*, p. 45.

THREATS TO THE PEACE PROCESS. Some observers might still argue that Dhlakama's relative timidity is best explained by his being a limited as opposed to a greedy spoiler. The crises initiated by Dhlakama in the lead-up to the elections in Mozambique, however, belie this assertion. As the elections approached, and it became increasingly clear that RENAMO was unlikely to win, Dhlakama twice attempted to derail the peace process. In both cases, he revealed himself to be every bit as greedy as his Angolan counterpart.

First, Dhlakama demanded a redrafting of the General Peace Agreement to allow for a power-sharing arrangement in a government of national unity, in the event he lost the election. As prospects for such an agreement dimmed, Dhlakama's demands took on an ominous tone. Ajello and the other custodians remained cool to the idea, however; and, in the end, Dhlakama's bluff was called by the superior resolve and resources of the custodians. His prospects for effective spoiling were further hobbled by the support FRELIMO received from outsiders keen to see Mozambique's democratic transition succeed.⁸⁸

Second, Dhlakama pulled RENAMO out of the national elections, citing vote fraud.⁸⁹ Yet here, too, his material weakness stymied his bid for an increased role in postwar Mozambique. Carolyn Nordstrom, a volunteer at a UN polling station in Mozambique, wrote of the reaction to the RENAMO boycott: "None of the RENAMO representatives there knew if Dhlakama's boycott meant a return to war. None knew if they would be threatened or killed for defying the boycott. None knew what was happening in the other provinces and polling stations. For all any of us knew, war could have already broken out in other locations. But they defied the boycott and came to the polling stations."⁹⁰ Despite RENAMO's boycott, the voter turnout was uniformly high, even in RENAMO-controlled areas.

THE MOZAMBIKAN ENDGAME. RENAMO's election failure is a perfect example of power over preferences. Although Dhlakama sought to derail the process, he was marginalized by his own inability to carry out his objectives. According to the spoiler model, this makes him a limited spoiler. As our model suggests, however, had Dhlakama possessed more military and economic resources, had Chissano or Ajello shown less resolve in either the government of national unity or the boycott crises, or had RENAMO garnered more support from the Mozambican population (i.e., latent capabilities), then Dhlakama's gambit might have paid off. Either war or a unilateral settlement would have

88. Paris, *At War's End*, p. 144; and Ciment, *Angola and Mozambique*.

89. Singe, *Mozambique*, p. 131.

90. Nordstrom, *A Different Kind of War Story*, p. 227.

resulted, and Dhlakama would have become a total spoiler, irrespective of a lack of change in either his personality or his preferences.

In sum, Ajello's admittedly deft handling of Dhlakama aside, RENAMO was no less greedy than UNITA, and UNITA was no less limited a spoiler than RENAMO. The key difference in the two outcomes was the tactical exigencies that the opportunity structure, manipulated by the UN and underscored by RENAMO's material poverty, made necessary in the calculations of each of the leaderships. Had RENAMO possessed UNITA's resources and troop concentration, had it been as popular as UNITA,⁹¹ or had ONUMOZ been plagued by the same problems that afflicted UNAVEM (i.e., limitations of leadership, direction, and resources), then the situation in Mozambique could well have resembled that of Angola.

THE CAMBODIAN CASE

When the UN accepted the entreaty of Cambodia's warring factions to implement the peace agreement the parties had reached in October 1991, after fifteen years of civil war and extraordinary levels of internal violence, "it embarked on a mission of unprecedented ambition."⁹² As such, the Cambodian case is significant because—with a budget for a two-year operation of more than \$2.1 billion and staffing of more than 20,000 international personnel⁹³—it should underscore both the UN's potential and its limits. It should also yield insights into the UN's capacity to marginalize powerful spoilers, such as the State of Cambodia (SOC)/Cambodian People's Party (CPP), as well as into its capabilities vis-à-vis less significant threats such as the Khmer Rouge (KR). The Cambodian case also illustrates the merits of a capabilities-based model within which events such as the disintegration of the KR—once perceived as the biggest threat to peace—and the hijacking of the government by the SOC/CPP—which had not been recognized as a threat at all—become both explicable and predictable. Finally, it also powerfully demonstrates how actions taken

91. Unlike Savimbi in Angola, Dhlakama lacked "a critical mass of support" and consequently could maintain his bases only by terrorizing the local population into compliance. Quoted in M. Anne Pitcher, "Celebration and Confrontation, Resolution and Restructuring: Mozambique from Independence to the Millennium," in York Bradshaw and Stephen N. Ndegwa, eds., *The Uncertain Promise of Southern Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), pp. 192–194.

92. Sorpong Peou, "Implementing Cambodia's Peace Agreement: Challenges, Strategy, and Outcome," in Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens, *Ending Civil Wars*, p. 499. Although the 1960–64 UN mission to the Congo had more men on the ground, Trevor Findlay and others have argued that the scope of the Cambodian mission was unprecedented. For details, see Findlay, *Cambodia: The Legacy and Lessons of UNTAC* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

93. Grant Curtis, *Cambodia Reborn? The Transition to Democracy and Development* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1998), p. 9.

by custodians of peace to marginalize one spoiler may inadvertently and inopportunely strengthen another.

BACKGROUND TO THE CAMBODIAN CONFLICT. The conflict in Cambodia commenced in 1975, following a communist takeover. The country spent three years in the throes of a KR-led domestic “revolution” that resulted in the deaths of more than one million Cambodian citizens. In late 1978, Vietnam invaded Cambodia and ended the KR’s genocidal reign. The Vietnamese occupation, however, did not end the war, which would rage on for another decade—catalyzed by extensive support both from the superpowers and from neighbors on both sides of the Cold War ideological divide.

A military alliance comprising the governing group that would later become known as the SOC/CPP and Vietnam dominated the battlefield through the mid-1980s, with armies of 60,000 and 100,000, respectively.⁹⁴ The alliance’s troop numbers dwarfed separately (and collectively) the opposition KR—which had 30,000–50,000 troops—and the royalist United National Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC) and the Khmer People’s National Liberation Front—each of which boasted 5,000–15,000 troops.⁹⁵ Sometimes these three opposition groups fought together, as the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea; sometimes they fought separately; and sometimes they fought among themselves. In whatever permutation, however, they could not be decisively defeated. While the SOC/CPP managed to destroy several key rebel bases and retained the support of the Vietnamese until the mid-1980s, it was unable to crush the resistance.⁹⁶

Confronting a military stalemate and a weakened political, diplomatic, and economic situation, the Vietnamese withdrew in 1989, dealing a deathblow to the SOC/CPP’s already dubious hopes for a decisive victory. Although the SOC/CPP still held a 2 to 3:1 advantage over the KR, KR forces were considered vastly superior. Unlike SOC/CPP troops, who were prone to defection and “acquired a reputation for raping and looting their way through remote villages,”⁹⁷ KR troops were “disciplined and widely feared,” leading some to

94. That is, the People’s Republic of Kampuchea, which would later become the State of Cambodia, whose political arm was the Cambodian People’s Party.

95. However, “little reliable evidence [was] available” during this period of Cambodian history, so these figures should be approached with some skepticism. IISS, *The Military Balance, 1988–1999* (London: IISS, 1998), p. 166; and IISS, *The Military Balance, 1989–1990* (London: IISS, 1989), pp. 155–156.

96. Peou, “Implementing Cambodia’s Peace Agreement,” p. 502.

97. *Ibid.*, p. 503.

view the KR as the strongest, albeit not the most numerous, armed faction in the country.⁹⁸

Starting in 1987, steps were undertaken to induce the combatants to come to the negotiating table. After a series of false starts, negotiations culminated in the 1991 Paris peace accords. Conditions for the agreement appeared auspicious. The major factions had reached a hurting stalemate; thus there were significant incentives for all sides to turn to diplomatic and political alternatives to reach their goals.⁹⁹ In addition, as the Cold War was over, external aid to all of the factions was evaporating.¹⁰⁰ Finally, the usually quiescent Association of Southeast Asian Nations took an uncharacteristically strong stance, in part to block Chinese domination of the area.¹⁰¹ Still, the combatants proved unprepared to seriously consider abandoning their unilateral goals. As the reality of the UN's presence began to constrain them, their continued cooperation with the accords became increasingly untenable.¹⁰² As is shown below, this would have differential consequences on the various signatories in accordance with their relative power positions vis-à-vis each other as well as the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC).

THE KHMER ROUGE. The KR, led by Khieu Samphan, was widely viewed by the custodians as the primary threat to the Paris accords. Despite its misgivings given the group's genocidal history, the UN had nevertheless decided to try to include the KR in the peace process, because it could otherwise present a formidable danger to any new coalition government.¹⁰³

The KR proved a difficult partner. Its members interpreted the Paris agreement to mean that UNTAC was to dismantle certain SOC/CPP institutions—institutions that were needed to facilitate daily life in Cambodia, something that neither UNTAC nor the SOC/CPP was prepared to do.¹⁰⁴ Further, the KR demanded that the SOC/CPP's Vietnamese "advisers" leave the country and

98. Jai Bhagwan, "Khmer Rouge: The Bone of Contention in Kampuchea," *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 12, No. 8 (November 1988), pp. 893–903, cited in *ibid.*

99. Curtis, *Cambodia Reborn?* p. 3.

100. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

101. Michael C. Williams, "Cambodia: Return to Darkness?" *World Today*, Vol. 53 (July 1997), p. 181.

102. Findlay, *Cambodia*, pp. 17, 103.

103. The KR was also included because of its close relations with China, the main regional power and a Permanent Five member of the Security Council, as well as because of its important role in the tripartite rebel government headed by FUNCINPEC. It was this government in exile that held Cambodia's seat at the UN. MacAlister Brown and Joseph J. Zasloff, *Cambodia Confounds the Peacemakers, 1979–1998* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 74.

104. *Ibid.*, p. 143. Findlay maintains that, whatever the perception of observers in the "heady days" after the signing of the Paris accords, the UN had neither the mandate nor the capability to replace the SOC/CPP at every level in Khmer society—nor, in most cases, to even oversee their activities effectively. See Findlay, *Cambodia*, p. 13.

that all ethnic Vietnamese be expelled, regardless of their citizenship or vocation. (The KR claimed that they were infiltrated soldiers.)¹⁰⁵ The KR's disruptive behavior, culminating in their abrupt departure from their political headquarters in Phnom Penh in April 1993, increasingly threatened the peace process.¹⁰⁶ Despite this, and against French Gen. Jean-Michael Loridon's advice, UNTAC Special Representative Yasushi Akashi continued to resist employing force against the KR.¹⁰⁷

In spite of the necessity of the decision not to openly target the KR, UNTAC had to find a way to limit its ability to undermine the peace process. Special Representative Akashi did so by using what Stedman has termed the "departing train strategy," which is to say that UNTAC set election dates and made plans to move the peace process forward irrespective of whether the KR was on board.¹⁰⁸ The KR ultimately decided to sit out the elections, though it made no move to disrupt them.¹⁰⁹ The decision to abandon the democratic process resulted in a gradual unraveling of the organization, which eventually led to the KR's effective dissolution by 1997.

According to the spoiler model, the holding of free and fair elections in Cambodia was a product of the careful evaluation of the goals, strategies, and spoiler typologies of all parties concerned. Thus, by sidelining the KR total spoiler, the process was able to proceed. The assertion, however, that the KR was a total spoiler that required such marginalization because it could not be co-opted is dubious. Instead, evidence suggests that the KR intended to cooperate with the accords (or at least take a wait-and-see approach) until it came to believe, with some justification, that UNTAC was colluding with the SOC/CPP.¹¹⁰ As Steve Heder put it, "Evidence given by Khmer Rouge members

105. Mats Berdal and Michael Leifer, "Cambodia," in James Mayall, ed., *The New Interventionism, 1991–1994: United Nations Experience in Cambodia, Former Yugoslavia, and Somalia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 43.

106. For a more complete accounting on KR obstructionism, including the killing of seven UN personnel, see Brown and Zasloff, *Cambodia Confounds the Peacemakers*, pp. 137–140.

107. Findlay, *Cambodia*, p. 38. Loridon left Cambodia in 1992 in disgust over Akashi's timidity in dealing with the KR.

108. Stedman may have been inspired by FUNCINPEC leader Prince Ranariddh who said, "They [the KR] are trying to catch a train that they not only missed, but that they tried to sabotage. The train is going on, so why not try to catch the train of peace?" Quoted in Brown and Zasloff, *Cambodia Confounds the Peacemakers*, p. 186.

109. Their reasons for doing so are difficult to understand. Explanations range from lack of capacity, Chinese pressure, organizational collapse (which was demonstrated by sporadic voting of KR units in some areas of the country and not others), and a hope that FUNCINPEC would win and give them a place in the new government. See Williams, "Cambodia," p. 181. See also Brown and Zasloff, *Cambodia Confounds the Peacemakers*, p. 158.

110. Sheri Prasso, "Cambodia: A \$3 Billion Boondoggle," *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, Vol. 51, No. 2 (March/April 1995), p. 36.

who did demobilize 'belies any simple assertion that [they] never intended to go along with the terms of the Paris Agreements.'"¹¹¹

Moreover, some observers—including U.S. Ambassador Richard Solomon, who negotiated the Cambodian peace agreement—are convinced that the KR could have been co-opted; instead, the UN chose to leave it behind, and in doing so, paved the way for the SOC/CPP's 1997 takeover.¹¹² Leaving the KR behind was probably relatively easy because, by the time of the Cambodian election, the balance of power had so shifted in favor of the UN and its SOC/CPP partner that the KR had concluded that becoming a total spoiler was simply not an option.¹¹³ Two factors support this claim.

First, the KR never politically recovered from the domestic reaction to the abuses it perpetrated during its three-year reign of terror. Paradoxically, the KR therefore had difficulty generating new sources of support, because it had acceded to a peace agreement that required disarmament and demobilization, but its nearly exclusive source of power was its military might.¹¹⁴ In Sorpong Peou's words, "The faction's pre-Paris insistence on a role in a non-elected government was premised on precisely this concern, in order to help it avoid losing an electoral contest where its assets—being military—were significantly less useful. During implementation, then, once the KR realized how negligible were its prospects of securing political power, demobilization of its troops could only be seen as an act of self-destruction."¹¹⁵

Unfortunately for the KR, this realization came too late, and as the election approached, it found itself not only politically but also militarily weakened. It has been estimated that by the time of the Cambodian elections, the KR had lost at least 50 percent of its pre-Paris accord troop strength.¹¹⁶ This would suggest that by June 1993, the KR had a smaller force structure than UNTAC,

111. Steven Heder, "The Resumption of Armed Struggle by the Party of Democratic Kampuchea: Evidence from the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea 'Self-Demobilizers,'" in Heder and Judy Ledgerwood, eds., *Propaganda, Politics, and Violence in Cambodia: Democratic Transition under United Nations Peacekeeping* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), p. 109.

112. Richard Solomon, "Bringing Peace to Cambodia," in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds., *Herding Cats: Multiparty Mediation in a Complex World* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1999), pp. 275–324. See also Peou, "Implementing Cambodia's Peace Agreement." Peou argues that the international community misread the KR, and that "greater attention to their minimal security and power requirements . . . had the capacity to induce more cooperative behavior." *Ibid.*, p. 501; see also pp. 499–530.

113. See Solomon, "Bringing Peace to Cambodia."

114. Michael Wesley, "The Cambodian Waltz: The Khmer Rouge and United Nations Intervention," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Winter 1995/96), p. 61.

115. Peou, "Implementing Cambodia's Peace Agreement," p. 514.

116. Consider that while the KR came to the 1991 Paris negotiations boasting 30,000 "disciplined and feared" troops, their numbers declined steadily in subsequent years. By 1994 the KR had fewer than 11,000 troops; by 1997 there were no more than 3,500 KR fighters; and by the following year, they numbered between 600 and 1,000. See "Kampuchea/Cambodia" in the 1990–91 through

which boasted a force of 16,000 soldiers, air assets, and 3,500 civilian police officers. At the same time, the military strength of the SOC/CPP had increased appreciably in the post-Paris period; by the time of the elections, the government held a 4 to 5:1 advantage over the KR.¹¹⁷

Second, the KR found itself financially hobbled, as its patrons (Thailand and China) had by this time halted their military and political support.¹¹⁸ Thus, despite the KR's limited ability to continue to fund itself through the illicit drug and timber trade, it found itself severely marginalized as elections approached. The UN's success in sidelining the KR, therefore, likely had more to do with the KR's inability to materially change the situation on the ground than with Special Representative Akashi's strategic acumen. Against as weak an opponent as the KR had become, by accident and by design, at election time any number of strategies would likely have worked.¹¹⁹

THE STATE OF CAMBODIA/CAMBODIAN PEOPLE'S PARTY. If the UN could make peace without the cooperation of the KR, it had no such freedom with respect to the SOC/CPP, led by ex-KR chief Hun Sen. The UN's decision to marginalize the KR had inadvertently magnified the strength of the SOC/CPP, making it the strongest single faction and undermining the delicate balance of power that had existed when the Paris agreement was signed. This had the further effect of making UNTAC so dependent on the SOC/CPP that it could not conduct the election without at least the tacit support of the faction; it even had to rely on SOC/CPP troops to guard election stations against possible KR attacks.¹²⁰

Moreover, while UNTAC was to provide an environment for free and fair elections, the SOC/CPP continued to hold all positions of administrative power within Cambodia.¹²¹ The SOC/CPP not only exploited this advantage in the lead-up to the elections but also engaged in concerted, systematic manipulation and obstruction of UNTAC as it attempted to carry out its man-

1998–99 issues of IISS, *The Military Balance*. After the 1998–99 issue, the KR was no longer even listed. See also Brown and Zasloff, *Cambodia Confounds the Peacemakers*, p. 181.

117. See the 1992–93 and 1993–94 issues of IISS, *The Military Balance*.

118. See, for instance, Elizabeth Becker, *When the War Was Over: Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge Revolution* (London: BBS, 1998), pp. 503–505.

119. The KR's situation deteriorated further in the ensuing years. Beyond the aforementioned loss of external support, the KR suffered serial splits within the movement and large-scale defections by former Khmer fighters, the vast majority of whom were absorbed into the CPP-dominated Royal Cambodian Armed Forces. By late 1997 the KR had become a political nonentity, fundamentally incapable of undermining the peace. See Curtis, *Cambodia Reborn?* pp. 39–41; and Becker, *When the War Was Over*.

120. Findlay, *Cambodia*, p. 41.

121. Brown and Zasloff, *Cambodia Confounds the Peacemakers*, pp. 102–103; and Berdal and Leifer, "Cambodia," p. 44.

date.¹²² Further violating both the letter and the spirit of the Paris agreement, the SOC/CPP waged an unrelenting assault on its political opponents (primarily FUNCINPEC) by using the police and so-called A-teams to propagandize, as well as to intimidate and murder, activists and voters belonging to other political parties.¹²³ As UNTAC Cmdr. John Sanderson put it at the time: "It was not the Khmer Rouge but rather the SOC, which had the capacity to undermine the election or to overturn the verdict of the people," as they would proceed to do just a few years later.¹²⁴

Thus, while UNTAC was the most expansive mission ever mounted by the UN, the behavior of the SOC/CPP demonstrated that the UN merely had the power to accommodate, not to coerce. Special Representative Akashi consistently refused to bring about an UNTAC–SOC/CPP showdown despite continuing violations.¹²⁵ Although this effectively guaranteed that UNTAC would be unable to carry out its mandate, perhaps Akashi was right to avoid conflict: a rift with the SOC/CPP would have led to either UNTAC's expulsion or a full-fledged fight for command over the country, of which the SOC/CPP controlled 80 percent.¹²⁶ The former was not acceptable; the latter was not possible.

UNTAC's inability to control the SOC/CPP resulted in an elections sham. Although the elections themselves were (more or less) fair,¹²⁷ upon losing, the SOC/CPP threatened to withdraw from the process. Further, at Hun Sen's behest, Prince Chakrapong (the political nemesis of Prince Ranariddh's half-brother and leader of FUNCINPEC) threatened secession.¹²⁸ Given UNTAC's relative power and limited military assets—by this point the SOC/CPP had more than 100,000 troops as well as an impressive arsenal at its disposal¹²⁹—UNTAC had no alternative but to acquiesce to SOC/CPP demands. Hence, although FUNCINPEC emerged victorious at the polls, the provisions establishing control of the government were rewritten to accommodate a government of national unity.

122. For a detailed account of these activities, see Judy Ledgerwood, "Pattern of CPP Political Repression," in Heder and Ledgerwood, *Propaganda, Politics, and Violence in Cambodia*.

123. Brown and Zasloff, *Cambodia Confounds the Peacemakers*, pp. 146–148. See also Berdal and Leifer, "Cambodia," p. 44; and Ledgerwood, "Pattern of CPP Political Repression," p. 129.

124. John M. Sanderson, "UNTAC: Successes and Failures," in Hugh Smith, ed., *International Peacekeeping: Building on the Cambodian Experience* (Canberra: Australian Defense Studies Centre, 1994), p. 27.

125. See, for example, Brown and Zasloff, *Cambodia Confounds the Peacemakers*, p. 104.

126. Michael W. Doyle, *UN Peacekeeping in Cambodia: UNTAC's Civil Mandate* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1995), p. 68.

127. Findlay, *Cambodia*, p. 82.

128. Brown and Zasloff, *Cambodia Confounds the Peacemakers*, p. 173.

129. See, for instance, "Cambodia," IISS, *The Military Balance*, 1993–1994.

THE CAMBODIAN ENDGAME. Writing in 1995, Trevor Findlay stated that the Cambodians' "ability to take advantage of a new beginning . . . will be [the] true test of UNTAC's legacy."¹³⁰ Yet only two years later, the SOC/CPP had completed its rout of UNTAC by assaulting the capital, driving out FUNCINPEC, and reestablishing total control of the country—developments that some observers assert were eminently foreseeable. As one UN aid official in Phnom Penh noted, "The present blood bath is really just 'the most drastic and important step in a coup that started in August '93.'"¹³¹ In any case, the coup represented a stunning blow to the painstakingly negotiated Paris agreements, which transformed UNTAC's enterprise from what many termed a limited success into a failed rescue of a failed state.¹³²

As our model would suggest, once UNTAC departed and its military counterpoise (i.e., the KR) had disintegrated, nothing stood between the SOC/CPP and a grab for power. Although not recognized at the time, an assessment of relative capabilities would have made clear that an UNTAC and SOC/CPP coalition would have had little problem forcing the hand of the already-marginalized KR. The inability to recognize this fact was likely due at least in part to the KR's violent genocidal history. As General Sanderson stated, there was "a tendency to blame the [KR] for initiating breaches of the peace process, and their historical baggage, including the secretive nature of the party's leadership, made them easy targets for such claims."¹³³

Whatever the cause of this myopia, the effect was unavoidable. Once it had marginalized the KR, UNTAC could do little to block the SOC/CPP's bid for hegemony. The SOC/CPP thus cooperated with UNTAC and agreed to hold the elections only because it, and everyone else, expected it to win at the polls.¹³⁴ As Peou put it, the SOC/CPP "wanted an election, but only one that helped it monopolize political power."¹³⁵ Finding itself in second place, the SOC/CPP changed both its strategy and its spoiler behavior.¹³⁶ And in the end, UNTAC proved even less able to coerce the SOC/CPP than it had been to bribe them. Consistent with its mandate, UNTAC managed to hold free and fair elections before departing. Still, its legacy was destined to be tarnished, be-

130. Findlay, *Cambodia*.

131. Quoted in "Hun the Atilla," *New Republic*, August 4, 1997, p. 7.

132. Brown and Zasloff, *Cambodia Confounds the Peacemakers*, p. 256.

133. Sanderson, "UNTAC," p. 18.

134. Brown and Zasloff, *Cambodia Confounds the Peacemakers*, p. 213.

135. Peou, "Implementing Cambodia's Peace Agreement," p. 512.

136. Although FUNCINPEC won in the election and was thus awarded a "first" position in the government, the CPP retained control of the security forces, bureaucracy, army, and judiciary. It also tenaciously held on to grassroots power by maintaining control over lower-level political appointments.

cause before UNTAC departed, the SOC/CPP was able to continually adjust its strategy up to the point of resistance from UNTAC—and this point was necessarily set so high as to be meaningless. In short, the SOC/CPP transmuted from a nonspoiler to a greedy spoiler to a total spoiler, shifting its position based on changes in the balance of power and the prevailing opportunity structure, not on any of Hun Sen's fundamental character traits.

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

By maintaining that spoiler type determines success or failure in the peace process, the spoiler model treats spoiler type as the independent variable. Were this true, one would need to be able to hold spoiler type constant to determine its causal significance on peace processes—the dependent variable. At best, however, spoiler type is only an intervening variable that is subject to deeper causal processes. Evidence suggests that spoiler type does not determine the kinds of outcomes that are possible. Rather the kinds of outcomes that are possible determine the type of spoiler that may emerge at a given time. Although leadership style and what might be thought of as “preference stickiness” can serve as lenses through which power is filtered, if custodians of the peace shift the prevailing opportunity structures in their favor, in most cases parties to the process will alter their policies accordingly. This is because the distinction between limited, greedy, and total spoilers is situation dependent and not actor dependent. As, for example, in UNITA's case, limited spoilers may have appeared to be total spoilers for a time, but they were not total spoilers, according to Stedman's definition.

In the Angolan, Mozambican, and Cambodian cases, consistent with our capabilities-based model, the primary causal factor in the emergence, deterrence, or defeat of those who sought to undermine the peace was the distribution of power among the interested domestic and international actors. This is because signatories to a peace agreement will adjust their goals (but not their preferences) according to the opportunity structure confronting them, which is why Jonas Savimbi and UNITA as well as the KR stopped cooperating with the terms of the agreement and became spoilers; that is, they had more to lose by cooperating than not. The cases demonstrate that UNITA was long able to continue to undermine the peace in Angola, whereas the KR in Cambodia was not. This is more a reflection of respective capabilities than of any intrinsic difference in spoiler type. Likewise, Dhlakama and RENAMO stopped attempting to spoil the peace in Mozambique and started cooperating upon realizing that there was nothing to gain, and much to lose, through further recalci-

trance.¹³⁷ Finally, with no one to stand in its way, the SOC/CPP successfully pressed its relative advantage all the way to hegemonic control over the Cambodian state, thereby fundamentally undermining the democratic premises on which the Paris agreement was predicated.

All parties to a conflict are potential spoilers, but only the powerful ones tend to become manifest threats. By seeking to press their individual advantages, all actors effectively threaten the peace process. But, their actions undermine the process only when the other actors on the ground or the custodians of peace are unwilling or unable to contain the effects of their doing so. Thus the key variable is not spoiler type. Instead, the distribution of relative power and the availability of sufficient carrots and sticks are the primary variables that determine whether a spoiler will undermine a peace process. As such, and regardless of type, every real or potential spoiler will be as greedy as he thinks he can afford to be.

The relative virtues of our capabilities-based model over the spoiler-type model can be further illustrated in the context of the internecine struggles that have emerged since the 2003 ouster of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Looking at the situation through the lens of a static, context-specific analysis of the situation, it might be tempting to characterize the Kurds as limited, the mainstream Shiites, including the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution (SCIRI) as greedy, and the Salafi jihadists (e.g., al-Qaida in Iraq) and perhaps radical Shiites (e.g., Moqtada al-Sadr and his al-Mahdi army) as total spoilers. Doing so would be a mistake because, fundamentally, the potential threats to a stable and prosperous Iraq have been influenced more by the opportunities with which each faction has been presented than by their particular character traits. The Kurds—who want an independent Kurdistan—have, for example, generally been perceived as pursuing limited goals by many foreign observers. Yet should they perceive a shift in the opportunity structure more favorable to a unilateral move toward formal (as opposed to de facto) independence, they would almost certainly adopt a more total position.¹³⁸ Such unilateralism would almost surely result in war (perhaps bringing in Turkey), and thus the limited or marginally greedy Kurds could well become very greedy indeed, given the right (read wrong) opportunities.

Likewise, although the internationalist Salafi jihadists and hard-core Shiite

137. It remains an open question whether the KR would have continued cooperating had it been offered carrots akin to those offered to RENAMO.

138. See, for instance, "Peter Galbraith Discusses How Only Sunnis Can End Insurgency," *All Things Considered*, December 6, 2005.

militias may appear to be total spoilers, it is useful to note that the Salafi movement is international in scope, not an indigenous Iraqi opposition movement. As such, the larger Salafi movement sees all of Iraq as a target of opportunity. So although the jihadists may appear to be total spoilers in their demands and behavior today, if pressed, they might refocus their energies elsewhere, just as the 2003 war focused their energies on Iraq and (relatively) away from targets of lesser-perceived opportunity, such as Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia.¹³⁹ Although Stedman's "departing train" strategy might usefully be employed against them as it was against the KR in Cambodia, this could succeed only if their strength is broken within Iraq; the short-lived "successes" of early Iraqi elections point to the dangers of pursuing the departing train when the opposition retains the ability to haul it back into the station. Finally, although deemed a total spoiler early on, al-Sadr and his al-Mahdi army did moderate their demands after suffering heavy losses in Najaf in 2004, and then increased them again in late 2006, cannily (and greedily) shifting them as circumstances on the ground allowed.¹⁴⁰

Hence, in Iraq from 2003 to 2006, spoilers of varied and varying appetites emerged and subsequently transmuted, according to the opportunities and constraints they faced. Myriad opportunities to fruitfully manipulate shifts in the distribution of power since the U.S.-led occupation commenced have been squandered, and the prospects for peace in the near term are dim at best. Assuming that peace remains the ultimate goal, however, as long as the United States and other international custodians remain on the ground, they should concentrate their energies on either aggressively (re)establishing a balance of power that is propitious for peacemaking, or fostering conditions that will allow a balance to emerge of its own accord. In either case, the custodians should actively cultivate assistance from Iraq's neighbors—key sources of spoiler support and latent coercive potential. Absent a shift in the prevailing balance and opportunity structure, irrespective of the type of spoilers with which the custodians are confronted, Iraq faces further disintegration and unfettered escalation of the ongoing civil war.

Thus, both within the Iraq context and more broadly, to undermine (would-be) spoilers, custodians need not unduly concern themselves with the type of actor with which they are dealing, as much as with maintaining the power to

139. Anecdotal evidence from journalist accounts suggests that this may have started happening in late 2005–early 2006.

140. Kenneth M. Pollack, "A Switch in Time: A New Strategy for America in Iraq," Saban Center Analysis, No. 7 (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, February 15, 2006), p. 19.

either coerce or co-opt them. In classical deterrence theory terms, custodians of peace need to provide a conditional, but highly credible, commitment to retaliate or to exact retribution if another party fails to behave in a desired, compliant manner. They must likewise be prepared to offer credible inducements for cooperation. In addition, if support from outside actors is artificially boosting a spoiler's relative power, custodians should also be prepared to engage in aggressive diplomacy with the intent of cutting off the aid pipeline. These are widely recognizable requirements, as true for Afghanistan with regard to its neighbor, Pakistan, for instance, as they are for Iraq and its neighbors.

That said, the spoiler model may still be useful in determining the correct mixture of incentives and threats for any given situation in which custodians already have the advantage. There is no need to antagonize marginal spoilers with undue threats; for instance, although "soft" coercion helped move Dhlakama to the bargaining table, threats of military force may have unduly exacerbated the situation and further polarized the combatants. In addition, giving into greedy or total spoilers risks setting a precedent and creating a moral hazard, which might have occurred if UNTAC had given into some of the KR's more unreasonable demands.

Nevertheless, the key contention of the spoiler model—namely, that international custodians of peace processes must be cognizant of the type of spoiler with which they are faced—is at best overstated and at worst may even be counterproductive. Custodians are likely to be successful at deterring or defeating spoilers only when they are willing to wield power—either the power to coerce or to co-opt—that is at least greater than that of the largest party to a conflict, and ideally greater than the combined strength of all the parties. Thus the singular goal in every case should be constructing a coalition of forces that can punish/defeat spoilers who try to use violence.

Stephen Stedman suggests that peace implementation strategies based on the threat of force are useful only in certain situations, and his spoiler model suggests recommendations that are predicated both on complex psychological diagnoses and on intricate strategic formulations. In contrast, we contend that such complexity is unnecessary. Instead, custodians of peace need only to figure out how to minimize leaders' potential gains from spoiling behavior and then do what is necessary to prevent them from realizing those gains.¹⁴¹

141. See, for instance, Matthew Hoddie and Caroline Hartzell, "Civil War Settlements and the Implementation of Military Power-Sharing Arrangements," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (May 2003), pp. 34–54. Also, although in the cases examined here—with the exception of post-2002 Angola—the critical custodians of peace were external actors, they need not be. As Marie-Joelle Zahar has rightly noted, internal actors are sometimes those who exercise deterrence and enforce-

On the other hand, in cases where a spoiler is stronger than the custodians or where one party is measurably stronger than the others, and the custodians of peace are not prepared to take steps to rectify the situation, then the time is not yet ripe for the intercession of outsiders. Ineffective international action can make things worse than if there had been no intervention at all.

This is not to suggest that what we recommend herein will be particularly easy. Calculating the relative balance of power is itself a notoriously imperfect and difficult sort of science, prone to potentially costly errors. Contrary to a static, context-specific approach, however, the precepts of our power-based model suggest that initial misdiagnoses can be rectified, and such rectification can be undertaken before a peace process becomes moribund. In addition, as is true in cases of interstate coercive diplomacy, exercises of deterrence and coercion by custodians of peace will not always succeed. Identifying and implementing the correct mix of carrots and sticks can be tricky and take time. But, doing so will offer committed custodians a higher, and more generalizable, recipe for success than will a strategy that relies on complex and context-specific personality profiling.

ment and serve as the critical custodians of peace agreements. In the end, the pedigree of the custodians is not the critical issue; instead, what matters is whether they are willing and able to affect the opportunity structure and change the payoff matrixes of the actors on the ground. See Zahar, "Reframing the Spoiler Debate in Peace Processes."