



# Empire Lite: Nation Building in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan

*Michael Ignatieff*

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## **Empire Lite: Nation Building in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan** Michael Ignatieff

In *Empire Lite*, Michael Ignatieff explores both sides of what he sees as a new global empire - the imperial and the humanitarian - and argues that the international community has failed to engage intelligently with the problems of nation building in the aftermath of apocalyptic events. The collapse of political order around the world is now seen as a major threat, and a new international order is emerging, one that is crafted to suit American imperial objectives. This presents humanitarian agencies with the dilemma of how to keep their programs from being suborned to imperial interests. Yet they know that it was American air-power that made an uneasy peace and humanitarian reconstruction possible, first in Bosnia, then in Kosovo, and finally in Afghanistan. This is the new world of geopolitics we live in and must try to grasp. The vivid, cogent essays in this book attempt to understand the phenomenon of state collapse and state failure in the world's zones of danger and the gradual emergence of an American led humanitarian empire. Focussing on nation building in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan, Ignatieff reveals how American military power, European money and humanitarian motive have combined to produce a form of imperial rule for a post-imperial age. Drawing on his own experiences of war zones, and with an extraordinary account of life in Afghanistan, Ignatieff identifies the illusions that make a genuine act of solidarity so difficult and asks what can be done to help people in war-torn societies enjoy the essential right to rule themselves.

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