



Foreign Policy after the Cold War: The Bush and Clinton Administrations

The world leaves one epoch of cold war and enters another epoch. . . .
The characteristics of the cold war should be abandoned.

FORMER SOVIET PRESIDENT MIKHAIL GORBACHEV
DECEMBER 1989

The successor to a doctrine of containment must be a strategy of enlargement,
the enlargement of the world's free community of market democracies.

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George Bush, Ronald Reagan's vice president, was elected president in November 1988 less on a commitment to change the course of U.S. foreign policy and more on Americans' desire for continuity. Unlike Reagan, Bush came to office not as a foreign policy ideologue but as a pragmatist without a strongly held worldview. In this sense, Bush's initial foreign policy impulse leaned toward maintaining continuity with the recent past rather than seeking change. However, this commitment was challenged by the dramatic events that began at the end of his first year in office: the demise of the Soviet empire, the emergence of new political, economic, and social openness in Eastern Europe, and the movement toward German reunification.¹ The end of the Cold War was at hand.

By 1990, therefore, President Bush had begun to modify American foreign policy away from the anticommunist principles of the past and toward a course steered by the changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, and the American and allied response to it, gave further impetus to seeking a new direction for American foreign policy. Indeed, shortly after the beginning of the Persian Gulf War, Bush acknowledged as much, when he announced that "we stand at a defining hour."² With the Gulf War, the Bush administration sought a new rationale for America's global involvement using the old rubric of a "new world order."

Bill Clinton also ran for president on the theme of change—in domestic as well as foreign policy.³ With the end of the Cold War, candidate Clinton argued, American foreign policy must change to meet the challenges of the end of the twentieth century and to prepare for the twenty-first. Needed for this new era, he claimed, was "a new vision and the strength to meet a new set of opportunities and threats." "We face," Clinton said, "the same challenge today that we faced in 1946—to build a world of security, freedom, democracy, free markets and growth at a time of great change."⁴ Indeed, he contended that the Bush administration's leadership had been "rudderless, reactive, and erratic," when the country needed leadership that was "strategic, vigorous, and grounded in America's democratic values."⁵ Clinton promised to meet that need with a new direction in American policy based on its traditional domestic values.

In this chapter, we analyze the foreign policy values, beliefs, and approaches of the Bush and Clinton administrations as the Cold War was ending and as a new era emerged. For the Bush administration, we outline the dramatic events that ultimately led to the demise of the Cold War and the Soviet Union, the initial efforts to build a "new world order," and the impact of the Persian Gulf War of 1991 and related events on American foreign policy in the early 1990s. For the Clinton administration, we identify its initial commitment to expanding free peoples and free markets around the world and assess the extent to which it succeeded in achieving those goals during its first term. Given the altered political landscape at home, including Republican majorities in Congress, and Clinton's successful reelection to a second term, we discuss how his approach evolved from initial idealism to greater realism by the end of his time in office. Throughout these analyses, we survey numerous foreign policy actions to illustrate each administration's approach and we assess the values and beliefs that were now at the core of American foreign policy at the end of the twentieth century.

THE VALUES AND BELIEFS OF THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION

In contrast to the Reagan administration's initial ideological approach, the goal of the Bush administration was continuity but also the pursuit of modest change in foreign policy. Although this commitment to continuity was quickly challenged by the dramatic events in Central Europe and the Middle East, Bush's values and beliefs remained markedly unchanged throughout his term.

Pragmatic and *prudent* were favorite terms used to describe the Bush administration's basic foreign policy values.⁶ President Bush did not come to office with a grand design or with a "vision thing" (as he himself might have said) for reshaping international politics. Instead, his approach reflected the values, beliefs, and temperament of Bush himself, a moderate, middle-of-the-road professional politician who was well trained in foreign affairs—as director of the CIA, American representative to the People's Republic of China, ambassador to the United Nations, and Reagan's two-term vice president. Although at various times he claimed to be from Texas, Connecticut, or Maine, Bush had spent most of the previous twenty years deep within the Washington establishment. Thus, he was prepared for the give and take of Washington and global politics.

The Commitment to Continuity: A Problem Solver, Not a Visionary

Bush might have described himself as a policy conservative, but he was more than that. He was a problem solver who worked well with those with whom he disagreed.⁷ His underlying political philosophy might best be summarized in this way: Results are more important than ideological victory; results are the best way to achieve political success.

The tenets of **realism** (Chapter 4) come the closest to describing the general principles of Bush's foreign policy making. He essentially wanted to deal with the world as it existed and sought only those changes that would not be too unsettling for the international system as a whole. Further, his administration was much more interested in relations with the strong (e.g., the Soviet Union and China) than with the weak (e.g., the Third World). In this sense, his policy orientation came closer to the balance-of-power approach that Nixon, Kissinger, and Ford brought to U.S. policy than to the staunchly anticommunist ideological approach of the Reagan years or the idealism most of the Carter years. Although these earlier principles continued to hold sway, the rapid unraveling of the Cold War from 1989 to 1991 compelled the Bush administration to adopt broader values and beliefs—largely from America's past—to guide U.S. policy for the future.

Bush's personal style is another reason to assert that personal values influenced his foreign policy. Unlike Reagan, Bush was actively involved in policy making—usually with a relatively small group of advisors. According to observers, he continuously "worked the phone" to accomplish his foreign policy objectives. And because he had served around the world and had been vice president for eight

years, he did indeed have a close working relationship with leaders from many nations. This personal dimension was most evident during the last half of 1990 and the early part of 1991 as Bush put together, and kept together, the anti-Iraq coalition prior to and during the Gulf War.

Critics of the Bush administration viewed the president's initial pragmatic and cautious approach as indecisive, cautious, and ad hoc. Most agreed that a design was nonexistent or, more charitably, still emerging. As Theodore Sorensen, a former Kennedy administration official, put it, the early part of the Bush administration was "all tactics, no strategy."⁸ William Hyland, a former official in the Ford administration, was more supportive of the Bush's cautious and pragmatic foreign policy, saying at the time, "It is the nature of the problems, however, not the style, that has dictated this approach."⁹ Other questions were raised about Bush's "hand-on" policy making and the dangers that might result from it. In his administration's decision to support the failed coup attempt in Panama in October 1989, for example, the president was apparently deeply involved in its tactics, perhaps much to his regret. By contrast, and perhaps indicative of his later style, he took a more detached approach in the Gulf War, leaving most of the tactical decisions to his military advisors. Even in this case, however, he did not stay too far away from the details and was given frequent briefings and updates.¹⁰

Bush's Foreign Policy Team: "Sensibly Conservative" ¹¹

The foreign policy team that occupied Washington in the Bush years, conducted the initial policy review, and made policy decisions that generally lent credence to this pragmatic, cautious-yet-realist description of the Bush administration's approach to foreign policy. Like Bush, the people chosen for the key cabinet and national security positions in the administration were individuals without strong ideological posture but given to practical solutions to problems. His choices for secretary of state, James Baker, and national security advisor, Brent Scowcroft, for instance, shared his commitment to incremental change in global affairs. According to one longtime foreign policy analyst, "The Baker-Scowcroft combination is the most competent-looking pair of people any new president has put in those jobs."¹²

The other key foreign policy participants in the Bush cabinet largely shared similar characteristics. At the Department of Defense, for instance, the appointment of Richard Cheney as Secretary of Defense reflected a choice of a policy maker of the same caliber as the others. While Cheney, a former member of Congress, had a conservative voting record, he was also viewed as pragmatic and reasonable in his approach to policy questions. His experience as chief of staff during the Ford administration demonstrated his pragmatic approach particularly well, and his handling of policy making during the Persian Gulf troop buildup and during the war itself won him high marks from several quarters. At the CIA, William Webster, Bush's first director and a holdover from the Reagan administration, was generally recognized as a top-flight professional without the ideological fervor of his predecessor, William Casey. At Treasury, Nicholas Brady, a personal friend of the president and a former U.S. senator, came from this moderate policy tradition, as did Carla Hills, the U.S. Trade Representative.

Despite the admiring characterizations of the administration's foreign policy advisors as "closely integrated and coherent" and "a parallel-minded team," some critics complained that few dissenters resided within this inner circle.¹³ True, the absence of dissenting advisors may have appeared a problem, but the personal Bush strategy of broad consultation diminished the potency of this criticism.

BUSH'S FOREIGN POLICY APPROACH

At the outset of his administration, President Bush called for a "**policy review**," which was centered in the National Security Council system but inevitably involved the entire foreign policy machinery. The review took almost four full months to complete and its results were mainly announced not through a single document but through a series of speeches that Bush gave in April and May 1989.¹⁴ Although these speeches failed to reveal much in the way of foreign policy departures from the Reagan administration, they conveyed a positive approach toward working with the Soviet Union and Europe.

The Policy Review: Initial Ideas and Proposals

During his 1989 commencement address at Texas A&M University, President Bush spelled out his administration's plan for dealing with the Soviet Union and for the ending the Cold War: "We are approaching the conclusion of an historic postwar struggle between two visions: one of tyranny and conflict, and one of democracy and freedom. . . . And now, it is time to move beyond containment to a new policy for the 1990s—one that recognizes the full scope of changes taking place around the world and in the Soviet Union itself." Thus, his administration would "seek the integration of the Soviet Union into the community of nations." To achieve that aim, Bush outlined a number of changes in Soviet foreign policy that the United States would seek:

- The Soviet Union must change some of its global commitments (e.g., its support for the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua and its ties with Libya).
- The Soviet Union must undertake several changes in Eastern Europe, including reducing Soviet troops there and tearing down the iron curtain.
- The Soviet Union must work closely with the West in addressing conflicts in Central America, southern Africa, and the Middle East.
- The Soviet Union must demonstrate a substantial commitment to political pluralism and human rights and must join with the United States in "addressing pressing global problems, including the international drug menace and dangers to the environment."

For its part, the United States would commit to completion of the **START** negotiations, move toward approval of verification procedures to permit the implementation of two signed—but unratified—treaties between the United States and the Soviet Union limiting the size of nuclear tests, and support a renewal of

the “**open skies**” policy between the two nations. Further, as soon as the Soviet Union reformed its emigration laws, the United States would seek a waiver of the Jackson–Vanik Amendment to free up U.S.–Soviet trade.¹⁵

In another early address, President Bush was equally forthcoming with an expression of hope for a new era in Europe. Regarding Eastern Europe, for instance, he applauded the emergence of democracy in Poland and offered various forms of assistance from the United States and the international community. He also expressed hope for more changes in the region. As for Western Europe, he expressed American support for unification into a single market in 1992, for the development of new mechanisms of consultation and cooperation, and for the maintenance of U.S. military forces “as long as they are wanted and needed to preserve the peace . . .” Most important, on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the NATO alliance, President Bush summarized his view of a new Europe in this way: “Let Europe be whole and free. . . . The Cold War began with the division of Europe. It can only end when Europe is whole.”

Juxtaposed against this proposed strategy of Soviet–American cooperation and European integration, President Bush reaffirmed the commitment to a strong national security for the 1990s largely consistent with the Reagan tradition. The United States would continue “to defend American interests in light of the enduring reality of Soviet military power.” It would also seek to “curb the proliferation of advanced weaponry . . . check the aggressive ambitions of renegade regimes; and . . . enhance the ability of our friends to defend themselves.” His attitude toward other areas, and particularly Third World trouble spots, was equally traditional, as revealed during the Gulf War:

In cases where the U.S. confronts much weaker enemies, our challenge will be not simply to defeat them, but to defeat them decisively and rapidly. . . . For small countries hostile to us, bleeding our forces in protracted or indecisive conflict or embarrassing us by inflicting damage on some conspicuous element of our forces may be victory enough, and could undercut political support for U.S. efforts against them.¹⁶

Early Actions: A Mix of Moderation, Caution, and Realism

Unlike his bold speeches on the future of Eastern Europe and on ties with the Soviet Union or even his advice on Third World trouble spots, Bush’s early policy actions mainly reflected the impulses of **pragmatism** and **moderation**, albeit occasionally mixed with political realism. U.S. policy in four major trouble spots reflected this mix and set the tone for the administration’s handling of the major political changes that occurred in Central Europe in late 1989 and throughout 1990.

In two early instances, the Bush administration employed its stated pragmatism and moderation. The first involved accommodation with Congress over future support for the **Nicaraguan Contras**. Realizing that Congress was in no mood to provide further military support, the Bush administration quickly fashioned a bipartisan proposal that provided some support for the Contras, as the president

wanted, and committed the United States to the ongoing Central American peace process, as Congress wanted.¹⁷ This package called for \$50 million in nonmilitary aid to the Contras, pledged the Bush administration to employing diplomatic and economic measures to pressure the Sandinistas to open up their political system, and allowed congressional involvement in suspending aid if deemed appropriate.¹⁸

The second instance occurred in the administration's approach to the ongoing civil war in **Cambodia**. During the summer of 1990, in a sharp break with previous policy, the United States withdrew its support from the three parties opposed to the Vietnam-supported Cambodian government and agreed to direct talks with Hanoi over Cambodia's future.¹⁹ This strategy, formulated in cooperation with the Soviet Union, was intended to motivate all parties to accept a UN peace plan, first through an internationally supervised cease-fire and then through an internationally supervised election. Indeed, within two months, the competing factions had committed themselves to the UN framework for settling the Cambodian conflict.²⁰

Policy accommodation, however, was not practiced everywhere by the Bush administration, as its actions toward **Panama** and the **People's Republic of China** demonstrated. The Panamanian government of General Manuel Antonio Noriega had been an ongoing source of annoyance and trouble for the Reagan administration and had become so for the Bush administration as well. In February 1988, Noriega, a longtime CIA operative, was indicted on drug-trafficking charges by a federal grand jury in Florida and was widely reported to be involved in numerous other unsavory international activities. Although the Reagan administration had imposed economic sanctions on Panama and had employed other economic measures as a way to force Noriega's resignation,²¹ none of its efforts proved successful.

The Bush administration continued these efforts. First, when Noriega nullified Panama's national election results in May 1989, it asked the Organization of American States (OAS) to investigate. The OAS condemned the actions of the Noriega government and asked that he step down, but Noriega refused. Second, President Bush declared that Noriega's handpicked regime was illegitimate, called for the installation of the democratically elected government, and declared that its ambassador to Panama, who had been called to Washington for consultations, would not return. Earlier, Bush had sent more American forces into Panama, and, for political effect, had ordered military exercises to be conducted there. Still, all measures failed to loosen Noriega's grip. Next, the Bush administration threw lukewarm support behind a coup attempt in October 1989, but it, too, failed—within hours—much to Bush's embarrassment.²² Finally, and as a last resort, an invasion force of 13,000 troops was ordered into Panama (adding to the 11,000 already stationed there) in December 1989. The invasion succeeded in a matter of days, and Noriega was captured and returned to the United States to stand trial for drug trafficking. In essence, the Bush administration opted for and sustained a realistic approach in its decision to intervene in this case.

President Bush showed the same reliance on political realism in his policy toward the People's Republic of China. During May and early June 1989, massive prodemocracy demonstrations calling for political reforms occurred in Beijing and other Chinese cities. The government tolerated them for a time, but finally

decided to put them down in a violent and bloody assault on demonstrators in Beijing's Tiananmen Square. Hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of demonstrators were killed.²³

The Bush administration initially condemned the Chinese use of such force as a violation of human rights and threw its support behind the democracy movement. It immediately imposed a series of economic sanctions through an executive order; stopped arms sales; suspended visits between U.S. and Chinese military officials; offered humanitarian and medical assistance to those injured in the military crackdown; and instructed the U.S. immigration service to be sympathetic to Chinese students in the United States wishing to extend their stay. Yet Bush wanted to maintain ties with China, even in the context of continuing repression: "I understand the importance of the relationship with the Chinese people and the Government; it is in the interest of the United States to have good relations."²⁴ Indeed, the administration vetoed legislation that would have allowed Chinese students to stay in the United States after their visas had expired and it authorized high U.S. government officials to meet with Chinese officials even though a ban on such meetings was in effect.

POLITICAL CHANGE AND EASTERN EUROPE

Nicaragua, Cambodia, Panama, and China demonstrate the mixture of moderation and realism practiced by the Bush administration toward regional trouble spots. However, the imminent changes in Eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union were to pose its greatest challenge. In large measure, the Bush administration pursued the same policy mix, even as the Soviet Empire and the Soviet Union itself unraveled. Moderate and pragmatic responses, occasionally infused with doses of political realism, were still the governing principles.

The events of 1989 and 1990 can only be described as monumental in the way they shook the foundations of U.S. foreign policy. In the space of less than two years, the Soviet Empire collapsed, with most of the states of Eastern Europe moving from socialism to capitalism and from communism to democracy; the future of a divided Germany was resolved through reunification at the end of 1990; and, by the end of 1991, the Soviet Union itself had dissolved. In effect, the central issues of the Cold War—a divided Europe and Soviet–American antagonism—were seemingly resolved by these events.

The Collapse of the Soviet Empire

The initial changes within Eastern Europe began in Poland in early 1989.²⁵ Although *Solidarity*, the banned Polish trade union movement, had operated for many years, its success in gaining legal status by April 1989 set in rapid motion many democratic reforms. By June 1989, *Solidarity* or the candidates it backed had won all of the available seats in the lower house of the Polish parliament, and 99 out of 100 seats in the upper house in free elections. By August 1989, a *Solidarity* member

had been chosen as the first noncommunist prime minister in an Eastern European state since the end of World War II. A little more than a year later, in November 1990, the founder of the Solidarity movement, **Lech Walesa**, was elected president.

Hungary and Czechoslovakia followed a similar pattern. In January 1989, the Hungarian parliament took the first steps toward guaranteeing individual liberties, and, in October 1989, it adopted a number of sweeping democratic reforms. Parliamentary elections were held in March and April of 1990, with democratic parties and their coalition partners capturing most of the seats. The switch to democracy in Czechoslovakia was even more rapid and equally nonviolent. The first popular demonstrations for democracy occurred later (November 1989) than elsewhere, but democratic change occurred quickly once started. By early December, **Vaclav Havel**, playwright and leader of the reform movement, was named president. By June 1990, free and democratic parliamentary elections were held in Czechoslovakia with democratic reform candidates faring very well.

In East Germany, pressures for democratic reform had begun in August 1989, when East Germans began fleeing to West Germany, using Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Austria as access routes or seeking asylum in the West German embassy in Czechoslovakia. By October 1989, the number of East German refugees numbered almost 11,000. Popular demonstrations followed, and by March 1990, free and democratic elections were held in East Germany, with the conservative Alliance for Germany obtaining the greatest percentage of votes.

Nascent democratic movements occurred in other Eastern European states, but their success was slower and generally much less complete. Dissidents in Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Albania called for change, but democratic reform was less assured in each case. Elections in Bulgaria, Romania, and Albania produced regimes that grew out of the still remaining Communist parties or that were closely allied with them. In the former Yugoslavia, a series of successor states emerged, but the degree of democratic reform was less immediately certain. Instead, intercommunal violence developed among the religious and ethnic groups within some of these new states (e.g., Bosnia) and between others (e.g., Serbia and Croatia).

The Reunification of Germany

The **reunification of Germany** was the second major Eastern European event of 1989–1990 and the one most directly related to the ending of the Cold War. Having been intentionally divided by the victorious allies at the Yalta Conference in February 1945, and having existed as two separate states since 1949, Germany was formally reunited on October 3, 1990.²⁶ If the pace of events elsewhere in Eastern Europe during the previous two years was surprisingly rapid, both the ease and speed of this reunification—from mid-1989 through the end of 1990—were, by any assessment, spectacular. The pressures for reunification began with the massive East German emigration to the West in August 1989, but the opening of the **Berlin Wall**—the most tangible symbol of a divided city in a divided nation—on November 9, 1989, ignited even more calls for political reunification.

Despite Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's contention on November 15, 1989, that German unification "is not a matter of topical politics,"²⁷ later that month, West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl proposed a "confederation" of

the two Germanys. The major wartime Allies—the United States, France, Britain, and the USSR—still retained rights over the future of Germany and, in particular, Berlin. However, this obstacle was quickly overcome at a February 1990 meeting of the foreign ministers from the Allied countries and from East and West Germany, where a reunification formula was agreed on. These so-called Four Plus Two talks called for the two Germanys to discuss plans for reunification and then to meet with the four Allied powers to resolve remaining security matters.

By May 1990, East and West Germany had worked out the terms for reunification, with existing borders agreed to. An economic union was initiated on July 1, 1990; a treaty setting out the legal and social bases of the new union was signed on August 31, 1990; a formal treaty among the Allied powers renouncing their rights and powers over German affairs was completed on September 12, 1990²⁸; and formal reunification as the Federal Republic of Germany took place on October 3, 1990.²⁹ Finally, democratic parliamentary elections across a unified Germany were held in December 1990.

The Collapse of the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union itself was not immune to the changes that were sweeping Eastern Europe. Although not as rapid in 1989 and 1990 as they were elsewhere in Eastern Europe, change quickened by 1991, eventually producing the demise of the state itself. Initial reform efforts were largely within the limits of maintaining a modified socialist system. In August 1991, however, the Soviet Union received a dramatic jolt when a coup by Soviet hardliners against the earlier reforms failed after three days. Internal change accelerated, and there were now calls for greater regional autonomy and greater democratization. The future of the Soviet Union appeared in doubt. By late 1991, moreover, the Baltic republics had achieved independence, and a looser confederation had emerged among the other Soviet republics.

In December 1991, the Soviet Union itself collapsed, and the new nations that replaced it would challenge long-held American attitudes regarding foreign policy. In order for the significance of the changes in Europe to be appreciated, the events of 1989–1991 require a more detailed explanation.

Prior to the **August 1991 coup**, changes of two kinds occurred in the Soviet Union: (1) Efforts were made to institutionalize democratic political reforms and Western-style market reforms; and (2) pressure for greater autonomy and even independence was placed on Moscow by some of the constituent republics. Indeed, democratic political reforms were essential to Mikhail Gorbachev's implementation of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, his mechanism for making the country more efficient and more globally competitive (see Chapter 4). In March 1989, for example, in the freest election since the Revolution of 1917, voting was held for seats in the new legislative body, the Congress of People's Deputies.³⁰ Later that year, an effort was even made to eliminate the "leading role" of the Communist party.³¹

Market reform progressed more slowly. By the second half of 1990, a plan for a 500-day transition to a market economy was developed, but was shelved, along with less dramatic versions of it, by the end of the year. During the last months of 1990 and early 1991, moreover, Gorbachev moved toward slowing down and

even halting the political and economic liberalizations that he had initiated. Many of the internal reforms within the Soviet Union appeared stalled by the middle of 1991, and economic conditions worsened.

Equally dramatic were the demands for independence by several of the Soviet Union's constituent republics. The three Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia took the boldest steps in this regard by declaring their independence or eventual independence from the central government in Moscow. In addition, Georgia and Armenia, among others, and even the largest Soviet republic, Russia, sought greater independence.

One day prior to the signing of the proposed union treaty among the Soviet republics giving them greater power, a group of hardline Communist party members and government officials (the "State Committee for the State of Emergency") deposed Mikhail Gorbachev and briefly seized power. This "three-day coup" (August 18–21, 1991) collapsed for three reasons: (1) massive protests in Moscow led by the popularly elected president of the Russian Republic, Boris Yeltsin; (2) the apparent failure of the KGB to attack the protestors surrounding the Russian parliament; and (3) virtually unified international condemnation. On his return to power, Gorbachev called the failure of the coup "a majority victory for perestroika" and pledged "to move ahead democratically in all areas."³²

Ironically, though, the coup attempt had the effect of pressuring for more fundamental reform, further weakening the central government. With his power effectively curtailed in this new environment, Gorbachev felt compelled to step down as general secretary of the Communist party. Indeed, he called for a disbanding of the party itself because of its role in the coup. Furthermore, he consulted with Yeltsin, over the appointment of a number of key political offices and named several key officials from the Russian republic to leadership posts in the central government.

Increased demands for independence by the constituent republics raised doubts about the future of a unified Soviet Union. Within weeks of the coup, in fact, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia finally obtained full independence, and a new transitional confederative arrangement was devised between the central government and most of the other republics. Eventually, a new constitution would be formulated giving the constituent republics more policy control.³³

As with political change in Eastern Europe, reform within the Soviet Union took on a life of its own, aided, ironically, by a coup that sought to topple the effort. By December 1991, **pressure for formal dissolution was rapidly building and, on December 25, 1991, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was officially dead**, some 74 years after the Bolshevik Revolution had brought it to life.

AFTER THE COLD WAR: BUSH'S POLICY TOWARD CENTRAL EUROPE

Throughout this period in Central Europe and the Soviet Union, the Bush administration was largely an **interested spectator**, not an active participant. Its policy was to encourage change without trying to shape it directly. The administration

was also careful to avoid any actions that would embarrass the Soviet or Eastern European governments. Similarly, the United States refrained from any actions that might appear as gloating over the extraordinary movement to democracy and capitalism in these countries. In short, Bush's pragmatism and caution remained intact, even in a context of dynamic and dramatic global change.

Perhaps indicative of the caution practiced by the United States was President Bush's restrained reaction on the day that the Berlin Wall was opened between East and West—undoubtedly one of the most dramatic moments in recent political history. Although he claimed to be “elated” by the development, he justified his reserve by saying, “I’m just not an emotional kind of guy” and “We’re handling this properly with the allies. . . .” Another administration official acknowledged the largely rhetorical nature of U.S. policy and argued for the measured American reaction to changing events: “I admit that when all is said and done it is a policy largely of stated desires and rhetoric. But what would you have us do? What we are dealing with in Eastern Europe, and to a lesser extent in the Soviet Union, is a revolutionary situation.”³⁴

Once revolutionary change was well under way, however, the Bush administration did outline some tangible policies regarding Central Europe, the reunification of Germany, and future relations with the Soviet Union. Toward Central Europe, the principal response was to provide some economic assistance to the new democracies and to encourage other European states (particularly the European Community) to do so as well. The funds would aid efforts to stabilize their economies; foster private enterprise; provide food aid, trade credits, and environmental funds; and support agricultural programs, technical training, and scholarship and educational exchanges with the United States.³⁵

Concerning the future of Germany, the Bush administration added some realist elements to its accommodative stance, especially after the collapse of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. As early as December 1989, the administration adopted the view that German reunification should proceed, that Germany's full sovereignty should be restored, and that other states (including the United States) would necessarily lose some of their rights over German territory. Later, it also made clear that the United States would accept only a reunified Germany that remained a full member of NATO.³⁶ This clear policy position proved significant in bringing about reunification. In this respect, the Bush administration was clear on its view of Germany's future and the kind of Central Europe that it wanted to see.

AFTER THE COLD WAR: BUSH'S POLICY TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION

Toward the Soviet Union prior to its implosion, administration policy had been cautiously optimistic, albeit not fully developed. Its goal was first to formally end the Cold War and then to establish the foundation for long-term cooperation. In 1989 and 1990, two major summits were held at which important agreements were signed to reach the first goal and several agreements and understandings on

political, military, and economic cooperation were initiated to reach the second. The **Malta Summit**, held in November 1989, proved to be a watershed in ending the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. As President Gorbachev said at Malta, “The world leaves one epoch of cold war and enters another epoch” and “the characteristics of the cold war should be abandoned.”³⁷

It was at Malta that the Bush administration and the Soviet leadership committed themselves to rapid progress on nuclear and conventional arms control. The administration also threw its support behind Soviet internal reforms and pledged to assist the Soviets in joining the world economy.³⁸ In a matter of months, the Soviet Union gained observer status in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).³⁹

If the Malta Summit set the tone for the end of the Cold War and for future relations, the June 1990 **Washington Summit** took several concrete steps to solidify the new U.S.–Soviet relationship. Agreements were signed (1) calling for the destruction of a substantial portion of each nation’s chemical arsenal by the year 2002, (2) pledging both parties to accelerate negotiations on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and the Conventional (i.e., nonnuclear) Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, and (3) initiating several cultural exchange pacts.⁴⁰

Toward the end of 1990, the Bush administration made three other important commitments that served as the capstone for the end of the Cold War in Central Europe and set the stage for European politics for the 1990s and beyond.⁴¹ First, at the **Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)** in November 1990, the United States and its NATO allies and the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies signed the **Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty**, which provided for a substantial reduction in conventional forces on both sides. Second, a declaration of nonaggression between the two sides was signed that officially ended the Cold War. Third, the parties to the CSCE (which includes the United States, Canada, and virtually all European states) signed an agreement to give the CSCE a greater role in European affairs.

Yet another sign of the importance that the Bush administration attached to its new relationship with the Soviet Union was signaled with its attitude and policy toward the Soviet effort to dissuade the Baltic Republics (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia) from pursuing independence in the spring of 1990 and the winter of 1991. In two instances, the Gorbachev government used economic sanctions and Soviet troops against them. The Bush administration decried these actions, but it did little more. In effect, the administration’s commitment to political realism and good relations with the Soviet Union was more important than supporting Soviet constituent republics in their fight for independence.

In July 1991, the Bush administration took two additional policy steps—one military, another economic—as part of its effort to maintain good U.S.–Soviet relations. In the military area, President Bush and President Gorbachev met after the London economic summit of leaders of the industrial democracies (the United States, France, Britain, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the European Community) to complete work in principle on a **Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START)**.⁴² (The agreement was formally signed about two weeks later at a hastily arranged summit in Moscow.) Under this agreement, the first

Document Summary 5.1 Key Components of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, July 1991

Limitations on Numbers of Nuclear Warheads and Delivery Vehicles

	United States	USSR
Total nuclear delivery vehicles (land-based and sea-based ballistic missiles and intercontinental bombers)	1,600	1,600
Total accountable warheads on all nuclear delivery vehicles	6,000	6,000
Total warheads on land-based or sea-based ballistic missiles	4,900	4,900
Total warheads on mobile land-based missiles	1,100	1,100
Nuclear warheads not covered by the treaty	c. 4,400	c. 2,000

Inspection and Verification Provisions

- Exchange of information between the United States and the USSR on all strategic offensive weapons would take place prior to the treaty signing.
- Twelve types of on-site inspections would be allowed under the agreement.
- Several types of cooperative procedures would be implemented to ensure verification.

Duration and Implementation of the Treaty

The treaty would be implemented over a seven-year period and last for fifteen years. It may be continued in intervals of five years thereafter.

Sources: Eric Schmitt, "Senate Approval and Sharp Debate Seen," *New York Times*, July 19, 1991, A5 (including the accompanying table entitled "New Limits on Strategic Weapons"); Office of Public Affairs, U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, "Strategic Arms Reduction Talks," *Issues Brief*, April 25, 1991.

in which the long-range nuclear arsenals of the two superpowers would actually be reduced, each side would decrease its nuclear warheads and nuclear delivery vehicles (land-based and sea-based missiles and intercontinental bombers). (See Document Summary 5.1.) In the economic area, another agreement called for economic assistance for the Soviet Union by the industrial democracies. Although financial aid would not be immediate, several measures were instituted to aid Soviet economic reform already under way, including

- "Special association" status with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank
- Cooperation with all international economic institutions
- Restoration of trade between the Soviet Union and its Central European neighbors
- Closer contacts with leaders of the industrial democracies⁴³

Although these actions may not have gone as far as the Soviet Union had initially hoped, they represented an extraordinary change in its economic relationships among the United States, the West, and the Soviet Union.

In the aftermath of the August coup in the Soviet Union and with the movement to a more confederative state in late 1991, the Bush administration faced calls to initiate new and wider economic and political ties with the constituent republics and the newly independent Baltic states. Diplomatic recognition for Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia proceeded, albeit after it was granted by several European states and the European Community,⁴⁴ and the administration promised to supply humanitarian aid as needed—that is, to the constituent republics, not the central government of the Soviet Union.⁴⁵ Yet there were limits as to how far it would go in providing massive economic assistance. In general, the Bush administration did not deviate from its policy, announced after the London summit, that in effect withheld economic aid until significant and sustained policy reforms were carried out.

THE SEARCH FOR A NEW WORLD ORDER?

With the international politics of the post–World War II period forever altered by the collapse of the Soviet Empire and the Soviet Union, the Bush administration now sought to devise a new rationale and direction for U.S. foreign policy. Change was first hinted at in an address that President Bush gave to the UN General Assembly in September 1989, but it was more fully outlined in speeches to a joint session of Congress in September 1990 and in the State of the Union address in January 1991, after Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait.⁴⁶ That future direction, President Bush said, was to build “**a new world order.**”⁴⁷

Bush described the new world order as “a new era—freer from the threat of terror, stronger in the pursuit of justice, and more secure in the quest for peace, an era in which the nations of the world, East and West, North and South, can prosper and live in harmony.” Such a world would be different from the one that had existed over the past 45 years. It would be “a world where the rule of law supplants the rule of the jungle, a world in which nations recognize the shared responsibility for freedom and justice, a world where the strong respect the rights of the weak.”⁴⁸ In his State of the Union address, Bush summarized this new world order as one in which “diverse nations are drawn together in common cause to achieve the universal aspirations of mankind: peace and security, freedom, and the rule of law.”⁴⁹

The president was quick to add, however, that the United States had a special role to play in creating this new world:

For two centuries, America has served the world as an inspiring example of freedom and democracy. For generations, America has led the struggle to preserve and extend the blessings of liberty. . . . American leadership is indispensable. . . . We have a unique responsibility to the hard work of freedom.⁵⁰

Thus, Bush’s new world order, in effect, represented a reaffirmation of the values that had shaped the birth of the nation and its foreign policy actions in its

earliest years (see Chapter 1). Unlike the foreign policy at the beginning of the republic, however, this emphasis was coupled with a commitment to sustained American involvement. In both tone and emphasis, moreover, the new world order of the Bush administration had the ring of **Wilsonian idealism**, which emphasized the League of Nations and collective security at the end of World War I. With the demise of the old order—that of the Cold War—the new order was grounded in the cooperation of all states and based on greater involvement of the United Nations. To be sure, Bush did not convey Wilson’s fervor, and he continued to embrace political realism from time to time. Nonetheless, he did see his approach as an important departure from America’s Cold War behavior.

Bush’s new world order faced at least three major challenges: the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, U.S. policy toward a post-Communist Russia, and the global disorder in Bosnia, Somalia, and Haiti.

The Persian Gulf War

The event that contributed to the idea of a new world order was Iraqi president Saddam Hussein’s invasion of **Kuwait** on August 2, 1990. This action raised the question of whether the initial cooperation between the United States and the (then) Soviet Union could be sustained in a different arena and whether the global community could rally around a common emergency. As events were to unfold, this first challenge succeeded: Soviet–American cooperation held up; the global community was largely supportive of the war effort; and aggression was reversed.

In some respects, the vigorous response of the Bush administration to Iraq’s action may have been unexpected. On the one hand, the Reagan Administration had sought better relations with Iraq during the 1980s: Diplomatic relations were restored in 1984 after having being ruptured in 1967, and the United States had “tilted” toward Iraq during the **Iran–Iraq War** from 1980 to 1988. On the other hand, Reagan had had his quarrels with Iraq: He had been displeased over Iraq’s apparently mistaken attack upon the **USS Stark** in the Persian Gulf in May 1987, resulting in the death of 37 American sailors; and he had protested Iraq’s use of chemical weapons against its Kurdish ethnic minority in 1988.⁵¹

In keeping with its realist principles, however, the Bush administration decided early on to try for better relations with Saddam Hussein for both strategic and economic reasons. Iraq’s location in the Persian Gulf area was important to achieving stability in the region (see Map 5.1), and its considerable oil reserves made it crucial in global energy concerns. When Congress sought in early 1990 to enact economic sanctions against the Iraqi government over its abysmal human rights policy and its apparent effort to develop weapons of mass destruction, the administration argued against such an option.⁵² Later, in the summer of 1990, when Iraq complained that Kuwait was responsible for keeping oil prices low (and hence hurting the Iraqi economy) by overproducing its oil quota, called for an OPEC meeting to raise oil prices, and threatened an invasion, the Bush administration’s policy did not really change. Furthermore, in testimony on Capitol Hill only days before the U.S. intervention, the administration



MAP 5.1 The Persian Gulf and Southwest Asia

issued no warning when asked whether an Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was being considered.⁵³

Despite the administration's equivocation in the summer of 1990, its response to the Iraqi invasion was immediate condemnation. It demanded Iraq's withdrawal, froze all Iraqi and Kuwaiti assets in the United States, and imposed a trade embargo. The European Community and the Arab League condemned the invasion as well. Most important, the Soviet Union joined the United States in signing a joint statement issued by Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze.⁵⁴ A few weeks later, presidents Bush and Gorbachev met in Helsinki, Finland, to deal with this crisis, jointly stating that "Iraq's aggression must not be tolerated."⁵⁵ Within a few weeks, about 100 nations had condemned the invasion.

On August 8, 1990, the Bush administration announced that it was sending about 150,000 American forces into Saudi Arabia and the surrounding region to help the Saudis defend themselves against possible Iraqi aggression. President Bush outlined four policy goals that the United States sought to achieve in taking this action against Iraq:

- The "immediate, unconditional, and complete withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait"
- The "restoration of Kuwait's legitimate government"
- The protection of American citizens in Iraq and Kuwait
- The achievement of "security and stability" in the Persian Gulf⁵⁶

Two days later, the Arab League also voted to send forces to Saudi Arabia,⁵⁷ and within a matter of weeks, at least 28 nations from virtually every continent had sent forces there. Other nations (e.g., Germany and Japan) pledged financial assistance.⁵⁸

The **UN Security Council** also took concerted action within hours of the invasion, condemning it and demanding Iraq's immediate withdrawal. In all, it passed 10 resolutions over the next several months to tighten the economic and political noose around Iraq to force it to leave Kuwait. It imposed mandatory economic sanctions, invalidated Iraq's annexation of Kuwait, and condemned its holding of foreign nationals and diplomats. The UN resolutions also expanded the trade embargo to include sea and air as well. What was remarkable about these actions was not only their rapidity but the unanimity among the Security Council's permanent members (the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, China, and France), a phenomenon rarely evident during the Cold War years.

On November 29, 1990, the Security Council passed its most significant resolution, authorizing member states "to use all necessary means to uphold and implement" its earlier resolutions unless Iraq left Kuwait by January 15, 1991.⁵⁹ This, in effect, authorized the use of force and was only the second time the UN Security Council had authorized collective security action (the other was its response to the North Korean invasion of South Korea in 1950). When Iraq failed to leave Kuwait by the January 15 deadline and after Congress had given the

president the authority to use American forces to implement the UN resolution, the anti-Iraq coalition, now totaling over a half million troops, initiated a massive bombing attack.

The attack initially failed to budge the Iraqis. However, in mid-February, Iraq agreed to withdraw, albeit with conditions. The anti-Iraq coalition rejected that plan and imposed a 24-hour ultimatum on February 22, 1991, for the Iraqis to begin pulling out. When the deadline passed unanswered, the allied coalition mounted a massive ground, air, and sea assault. On February 27, 1991, President Bush declared, “Kuwait is liberated” and announced the suspension of hostilities beginning at midnight on February 28, officially ending the **Hundred Hours War**.

On March 3, 1991, the Security Council passed a resolution ending the hostilities and placing responsibility with the Iraqis for the invasion; on the same day, military commanders met in southern Iraq to formalize the terms of the cease-fire and work out arrangements for the exchange of prisoners.⁶⁰ Finally, on April 3, 1991, the Security Council passed a resolution formally ending the war and requiring Iraq to

- Destroy all of its chemical and biological weapons and ballistic missile systems with a range of more than 150 kilometers
- Pay reparations to Kuwait
- Abandon its support for international terrorism
- Not to “acquire or develop nuclear weapons
- Respect the sovereignty of Kuwait⁶¹

Ensuring a lasting peace ultimately proved more difficult than winning a short war. Almost immediately after the coalition victory, rebellions broke out in the north and south of Iraq.⁶² In the north, the Kurds, an ethnic minority, rebelled against the Iraqi government but failed. In the south, the Shiites, a religious Muslim majority, rebelled, but failed as well. The victors, particularly the United States and NATO forces, imposed “no-fly zones” in the north and south of Iraq to ensure the safety of the Kurds and the Shiites. They also sent UN inspectors to investigate Iraq’s alleged production of nuclear materials, albeit with limited success (as succeeding American administrations would discover).

Still, despite these problems, the Gulf War, in essence the first test of creating a new world order, produced a unified international coalition that freed Kuwait from Iraqi intervention quickly and served as an important symbol of how international disorder might be addressed in the future.

Relations with a Post-Communist Russia

A second test of the new order was the devising of appropriate **policies toward Russia** and the other successor states of the old Soviet Union. In keeping with the instincts of the Bush administration, these policies were cautionary and pragmatic economically, politically, and militarily, but significant commitments were made. By April 1992, the administration had decided on a greater commitment to

Document Summary 5.2 Key Components of the START II Treaty

	START II Phase One	START II Phase Two
Total Strategic Warheads	3,800–4,250	3,000–3,500
MIRVed land-based missile warheads	1,200	0
Submarine-launched ballistic missile warheads	2,160	1,700–1,750
Heavy land-based missile warheads	650	0
Total strategic nuclear delivery vehicles	1,600	1,600

Source: Abstracted from *U.S. Department of State Dispatch*, Vol. 4, no. 1, January 4, 1993, p. 6.

economic assistance to Russia and Ukraine, prodded on by its **Group of Seven (G-7)** partners, and, by the end of its term, another dramatic nuclear arms reduction agreement with Russia, **START II**, had been completed.

On the diplomatic front, the Bush administration moved quickly to establish diplomatic ties with the new republics and to foster closer ties with Russian president Boris Yeltsin. In February 1992, Presidents Bush and Yeltsin held discussions at Camp David, on aid and nuclear arms, and in February 1992 Secretary of State James Baker visited Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan to begin normalization of relations with these new republics.⁶³ The highlight of these diplomatic efforts was the June 16–17, 1992, summit conference between Bush and Yeltsin in Washington, which laid the groundwork for a further reduction in nuclear weapons (what was to become the START II Treaty), enabled President Yeltsin to deliver a request to Congress for American assistance for Russia, and allowed for the development of various bilateral agreements dealing with cooperation in outer space, curbs on weapons of mass destruction, and American business activities in Russia.⁶⁴

In the military area, two important actions were completed in 1992 and early 1993. In May 1992, a protocol to the START treaty was signed in Lisbon, Portugal, to recognize that the Soviet Union, as the original signatory of the treaty, had been dissolved and that the new republics were to be incorporated into the pact.⁶⁵ After the June summit, too, final negotiations on START II were completed (although they took longer than perhaps anticipated), with the final document officially signed on January 3, 1993, about two weeks before President Bush left office. Under START II, the United States and Russia would reduce the number of their strategic nuclear warheads by at least 3,500, in two phases, by 2003.⁶⁶ In addition, all multiple (or MIRVed) warheads on land-based missiles would be eliminated, warheads on either country's "heavy" (or largest) land-based missiles prohibited, and the total number of "strategic nuclear delivery vehicles" (or launchers) maintained at 1,600. In an important stipulation, START had to be fully implemented before START II could come into effect. (See Document Summary 5.2.)

There was progress as well in the economic area. In 1991 and early 1992, President Bush had been criticized for his failure to be more responsive to Soviet (and then Russian) requests for assistance.⁶⁷ Undoubtedly prodded in part by that criticism, President Bush announced on April 1, 1992, that the United States would participate in a \$24 billion Russian aid program developed by the G-7. The plan was characterized “as a way for the United States and its allies to prevent economic collapse in Russia and thus prevent the rise of a new authoritarianism out of the rubble of the Soviet empire.”⁶⁸ It was eventually written into law with the passage of the **Freedom Support Act** in October 1992, by which the United States committed itself to provide \$410 million in aid, authorized a \$12.3 billion increase in its support of the International Monetary Fund to aid Russia and the other former Soviet republics, supported a \$3 billion multilateral effort to stabilize the Russian currency, and offered various ways of increasing American cooperation and support. A unique feature of the act authorized \$800 million from the U.S. defense budget to help the former Soviet republics dismantle nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.⁶⁹ In sum, the Freedom Support Act reflected how far economic and political cooperation between the former Soviet Union and the United States had progressed in less than a year.

New Global Disorders: Bosnia, Haiti, and Somalia

The third major test for the new world order was the American policy response toward new global disorders. Three problems captured the attention of the Bush administration and epitomized the difficulty confronting American foreign policy after the Cold War: the **outbreak of ethnic fighting in Bosnia**, the **overthrow of democracy in Haiti**, and the **starvation in Somalia**. The response was different in each case, and as a result, no clear direction appeared in U.S. foreign policy. This raised questions about the role of the United States in the new world order.

Bosnia Ethnic fighting in the former Yugoslavia erupted quickly after the end of the Cold War. (See Map 5.2 for new countries created from the former Yugoslavia.) With the declaration of independence by several of its constituent populations (e.g., Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1991 and 1992) and the determination of Serbia to maintain control of the former Yugoslav government and much of its territory, fighting among the ethnic and religious factions within Croatia and Bosnia quickly broke out. By early 1992, an uneasy truce was in place in Croatia, but by April 1992, an ethnic war erupted in Bosnia that would become the focus of American administrations for the next several years. The fighting was among three major groups: Bosnian Serbs, Bosnian Muslims, and Bosnian Croats. There was also fighting between the Serbian government and the newly created Bosnian government, with the former seeking to extend greater Serbia and the latter seeking to maintain its independence.

The initial impulse of the Bush administration was to hold Yugoslavia together. It was reluctant to grant diplomatic recognition to the newly independent states and instead sought a negotiated outcome. As acting Secretary of State Lawrence



MAP 5.2 The Former Yugoslavia

Eagleburger said, “The [Yugoslav] republics’ unilateral and uncoordinated declarations of independence, which we unsuccessfully opposed, led inexorably to civil war.”⁷⁰ The preferred policy was to have the parties negotiate a settlement with help from the Europeans (through the European Union, for example) and the United Nations. Although the United States eventually supported **UN sanctions on Yugoslavia** and the imposition of a NATO-run “no-fly zone” over Bosnia to stop the fighting, it was unwilling to do much more. Indeed, Secretary of State James Baker declared, “we don’t have a dog in that fight.” With that assessment, the United States would limit its help in restoring peace and stability in the new era.⁷¹

Haiti In Haiti, the Bush administration faced another kind of post-Cold War problem, the promotion and maintenance of democracy, and here it adopted a

somewhat different response. In September 1991, the democratically elected government of President **Jean-Bertrand Aristide** was overthrown in a military-led coup.⁷² The United States was committed to Aristide's restoration, but the Bush administration primarily limited its response to diplomatic and economic measures—for example, cutting off economic assistance and freezing Haitian government assets in the United States. In turn, it joined in a trade embargo against Haiti enacted by the **Organization of American States (OAS)**. Despite these and other efforts, no progress was made in restoring democracy, and the Bush administration, once again was disinclined to do more.

By early 1992, another, and more complicating, problem arose. Haitian refugees, seeking to flee Haiti's failing economy and brutal regime, took to a variety of boats and vessels and headed for America seeking asylum. Despite its other efforts to help the Haitians, the Bush administration ultimately ordered the U.S. Coast Guard to stop the vessels and return their passengers to Haiti. By the end of the Bush administration, democracy had not been restored and the refugees had become a presidential campaign issue. The United States and the Bush administration were clearly limiting their actions in promoting and maintaining democracy after the Cold War.

Somalia The unrest in Somalia raised a third type of post-Cold War issue for the United States and a third type of response.⁷³ With the breakdown of the Somali government, starvation was running rampant by 1992, with estimates of death by starvation ranging up to 350,000. Moreover, relief convoys were systematically hijacked by rival "clans," defeating the efforts of international aid providers, so that several cities and outlying villages simply were not receiving food aid. In July 1992, the United Nations authorized the sending of UN peacekeepers to Somalia and the use of American military transport aircraft to aid the relief efforts. However, the situation continued to deteriorate.

By early December 1992, the UN Security Council passed a resolution authorizing the United States to lead a humanitarian assistance mission to Somalia. In an action dubbed "**Operation Restore Hope,**" the Bush administration decided to intervene militarily, dispatching 28,000 American troops to make certain that humanitarian assistance reached the neediest people. Although this mission was carefully limited to providing food assistance and was successful initially, the Clinton administration would later expand it, and problems would develop.

CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES TO THE NEW WORLD ORDER

Somalia evoked a markedly different reaction by the Bush administration to global disorders than had occurred in Bosnia and Haiti. Was Somalia, then, the emerging model for establishing a new global order, or was the Bush administration's basic pragmatism operating in all of these instances after the Cold War? To many critics, of course, the answer was the latter. Instead of a coherent post-Cold War

foreign policy, an ad hoc foreign policy was in place. Former Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, as he was leaving office, defended the efforts of the Bush administration.⁷⁴ Indeed, he argued that the administration had done much more than it was credited with in pointing the way to a future course. Moreover, he argued that the administration's alleged "ad hocism" in foreign policy was "a virtue, not a vice."

In particular, Eagleburger contended that the administration had successfully met three challenges. It had ended the Cold War peacefully by dealing successfully with several major crises—from the democratic revolution in Eastern Europe to the reunification of Germany to the collapse of the Soviet Union. It had dealt with the "instabilities generated by the Cold War's demise" (e.g., the Persian Gulf War and Yugoslavia), and, something critics overlooked, it had started the process of reform in global institutions, paving the way for the future. In particular, Eagleburger had in mind the development of **NAFTA** (the North American Free Trade Agreement), which created a trade organization consisting of the United States, Canada, and Mexico; the creation of the **Group of 24** [G-24] developed countries to aid Central and Eastern Europe; and the emergence of **APEC** (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation), an organization of 18 nations initially stretching across the Pacific from China and Japan to Australia and New Zealand and to the United States and Canada. In the future, these largely economic organizations would be pivotal. In short, Eagleburger argued, "There was a strategy behind the President's conduct of foreign policy" and "a certain degree of 'ad hocery' is a virtue, not a vice, when you are dealing with a world in crisis and chaos. . . ."

THE VALUES AND BELIEFS OF THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

Unlike the ad hoc foreign policy pursued by the Bush administration, the Clinton administration's policy was determined to be rooted in a clear set of principles derived from America's past, guided by a coherent and workable strategy, and appropriate to the end of the Cold War. Domestic policy and foreign policy would be tied together because only by shoring up America's economic and social strength at home would the United States have an effective economic and security policy abroad. Indeed, candidate Clinton summarized his unified policy approach in this way: "We must tear down the wall in our thinking between domestic and foreign policy."⁷⁵

Although American administrations often come to office with a commitment to a particular foreign policy approach, most have had to alter that approach during their years in power. This shift has occurred in some administrations from the first to the second term; for others, in response to dramatic domestic and international events; and, for still others, in response to the electoral cycle or the rhythms of domestic politics. In this respect, the Clinton administration was no different and the changes in emphasis over its two terms are especially important for understanding the direction of America's foreign policy after the Cold War and at

the end of the twentieth century. Part of the explanation for these changes derive from Clinton's evolving interest in foreign policy and the replacement of some of his advisors, but part also comes from changes in the domestic and international environments that his administration faced. In the following sections, we discuss these factors as they relate to foreign policy during the Clinton years.

Clinton, His Foreign Policy, and His Foreign Policy Advisors

Unlike President Bush, who came to office with a broad background and interest in international affairs, President Clinton, by virtually all accounts, was largely uninterested in foreign policy making. Indeed, his background prior to assuming office was primarily confined to his two years at Oxford University, some travels in Western and Eastern Europe, and his personal anguish over American involvement in the Vietnam War. By contrast, his interest and involvement in a variety of domestic issues (educational reform and economic development, among others) as the governor of Arkansas were considerable. Thus, whereas Clinton may have justifiably been described as a **policy wonk** domestically, that label was surely less accurate globally. Indeed, his initial attitude toward foreign policy was perhaps best summarized by what the political writer Elizabeth Drew identified as the task given to Anthony Lake, Clinton's campaign foreign policy advisor and later his first national security advisor: "Keep foreign policy from becoming a problem—keep it off the screen and spare Clinton from getting embroiled as he went about his domestic business." One senior administration official acknowledged the accuracy of this assessment in 1993: "**We had hoped to keep foreign policy submerged.**"⁷⁶

Given President Clinton's limited interest and his apparent desire to keep foreign policy "submerged," the composition of his first foreign affairs team became crucial in the development and implementation of his foreign policy agenda. Although he had committed himself to appointing a cabinet that would "look like America" and did give some consideration to this idea, the top foreign policy posts of his first cabinet seemed more narrowly drawn: a very large number were filled by those who had served in the Carter administration (e.g., Warren Christopher as secretary of state, Anthony Lake as national security advisor, and William Perry as second secretary of defense), a few with Capitol Hill experience (most notably Les Aspin as secretary of defense and Madeleine Albright as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations), and some personal and campaign friends (Mickey Kantor as trade representative, Ron Brown as secretary of commerce, Samuel [Sandy] Berger as deputy national security advisor, and Strobe Talbott, first as ambassador at large for Russia and later as deputy secretary of state).

By virtually all assessments, this team, at least through the first two years of Clinton's initial term, had considerable difficulty developing policy, explaining it to the American people, and dealing with pressing global issues. After the appointment of William Perry to replace Les Aspin, a biting commentary in the British weekly *The Economist* noted that this appointment had produced a "**stealth**" **foreign policy team**, comprising "the little-known Mr. Perry, the camera-shy

Anthony Lake, and the low-profile Warren Christopher as secretary of state.” Each one seemingly competed, the analysts claimed, “for invisibility.” Yet “all too visible . . . are the global troubles they will have to cope with.”⁷⁷

Although this description is surely overdrawn, it conveys the nagging personnel problem that the Clinton administration confronted in the foreign policy arena, especially early in its first term. “The whole national security apparatus of the President was in terrible disarray,” in 1993 and 1994, as one later assessment put it. “There was poor central direction from the White House and a weak N.S.C. [National Security Council] staff—the worst since the first Reagan administration. They didn’t know what they didn’t know.”⁷⁸ American foreign policy was being developed by a cacophony of voices without a strong leader or a strong spokesperson, resulting in a seemingly incoherent policy for addressing the post-Cold War world. This difficulty was compounded somewhat by a president who appeared too detached to make foreign policy work effectively and by global events such as Bosnia, Haiti, Somalia, and Russia that would not let the Clinton administration isolate foreign from domestic policy.⁷⁹

The performance of Christopher, Lake, and Perry improved from 1995 onward, and they enjoyed some foreign policy successes in Bosnia, Haiti, and the Middle East. However, the direction of American foreign policy remained unsteady and a target of criticism. One frequent critic, Senator John McCain (R-Arizona), faulted the Clinton administration for its lack of “strategic coherence,” its “self-doubt,” and its failure to identify key American interests.⁸⁰

For the second term, some changes were made. First, Clinton had by then become more fully engaged in foreign policy and increasingly looked to it as a way to leave his mark. Indeed, some critics charged that his administration used foreign policy to deflect criticism from the domestic turmoil over the Lewinsky sex scandal and the impeachment that surrounded Clinton in 1997 and 1998. Second, Clinton’s foreign policy team changed. Although it continued to draw on veterans of the Carter administration and close friends, it now included several individuals with experience from the first term and with broader views and backgrounds than those involved initially. To replace the relatively taciturn Warren Christopher as secretary of state, President Clinton chose Madeleine Albright, who had served as American ambassador to the United Nations during his first term. His new CIA director was George J. Tenet, deputy director of the CIA at the time and a former National Security Council staffer and staff director of the Senate Intelligence Committee. Anthony Lake’s deputy and Clinton’s longtime personal friend, Sandy Berger, assumed the national security advisor post. To replace Secretary of Defense William Perry, President Clinton chose retiring Republican senator William Cohen, a longtime student of defense and intelligence. Cohen’s appointment was an attempt to shape a bipartisan foreign and defense policy with Congress, especially as he had been a frequent defender of congressional prerogatives in foreign affairs.⁸¹

This new team was characterized as solid (rather than distinguished) in its credentials. Yet it too had its bumps along the road in creating a consistent and coherent foreign policy, and it **increasingly turned away from the idealism of the early Clinton years and toward greater reliance on political**

realism as a foreign policy guide. To be sure, Madeleine Albright, the first woman secretary of state in American history, was more articulate and outspoken than Christopher had been. In this way, she was better able to explain the direction of foreign policy to Congress and the American public. Furthermore, she was seemingly able to rally more international support for the direction to be pursued by the United States. The new national security advisor, Sandy Berger, for the most part accommodated Albright, but, like all recent national security advisors, he came to dominate the foreign policy decision apparatus.⁸² In some ways, the success of this team in forging a coherent and consistent policy hinged on the relationship between Berger and Albright, which often proved to be an admixture of competition and cooperation.

THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION'S EVOLVING APPROACH TO FOREIGN POLICY

Clinton's foreign policy over two terms was marked by shifting priorities and strategies, shaped not only by his advisors but by changes in the political and international environment. It can be seen as evolving in three phases:

- Phase one: economic engagement
- Phase two: democratic engagement (also referred to as the “strategy of enlargement,” a term taken from a speech by National Security Advisor Anthony Lake)
- Phase three: selective engagement

Phase One: Economic Engagement

Initially, the Clinton administration focused on economic ties as the driving force in its dealings with the global community. At his Senate confirmation hearings as secretary of state in January 1993, Warren Christopher outlined three principles that would guide American foreign policy for the new administration: **achieving economic security, reshaping defense, and promoting democracy.** The administration's first priority was to use the international system to foster greater economic prosperity for the American people.⁸³ Indeed, Christopher declared that the Clinton administration would “advance America's economic security with the same energy and resourcefulness . . . devoted to waging the Cold War.” This emphasis on foreign economic policy nicely wedded foreign and domestic politics—a theme that candidate Clinton had struck during this campaign when he declared that “our first foreign priority and our first domestic priority are one and the same: reviving our economy.”⁸⁴

To achieve this economic security, the Clinton administration initially committed itself to several key initiatives at home and abroad. On the domestic level, it

Document Summary 5.3 Key Components of the North American Free Trade Agreement among Canada, Mexico, and the United States, Effective January 1, 1994

Tariffs—All tariffs on goods produced by the three countries and sold among them would be eliminated. These tariff reductions would occur over a five- to fifteen-year period. Strict “rules of origin” of goods would be observed.

Investments—All investments by the other agreement partners would be provided with “national treatment.” Some restrictions were included, however, on national security grounds and, for example, on the oil and petrochemical industries for Mexico.

Services—Several areas, including banking, telecommunications, transportation, and government procurement, were to be opened to the agreement partners. Some restrictions still remained, however,

in shipping, films, publishing, and oil and gas for the signatories.

Intellectual Property—Copyrights, industrial designs, trademarks, and other areas were provided protection under the pact.

Safeguards and Side Agreements—Under defined circumstances, temporary tariffs could be reimposed to protect some local industries. Side agreements were also completed to address environmental concerns and working condition issues among the participants.

Source: Abstracted from “NAFTA Provisions,” *Congressional Quarterly Almanac 1993* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, 1994), pp. 180–181.

sought to develop a program to revive the American economy and make American workers and companies more productive and competitive in the global marketplace. Included in this plan were actions to reduce budget deficits and ensure that America was a more reliable trading partner. It also sought to infuse more economic components into foreign policy making with the creation of the **National Economic Council (NEC)** as the functional economic equivalent of the National Security Council (NSC) and as a mechanism to ensure that economic matters, foreign and domestic, received a full hearing in the executive branch. Economic advisors became formal members of the national security committee structure, and several economic officials and agencies gained greater authority. The **United States Trade Representative (USTR)** assumed a central role in trade policy; the State Department created a new **Office of the Coordinator for Business Affairs**; and the Treasury and Commerce departments assumed more foreign policy responsibilities.⁸⁵

On the international level, the Clinton administration moved quickly to complete two free trade agreements and to initiate several other multilateral and bilateral efforts to liberalize trade. Regarding NAFTA, the administration began negotiations on important “side agreements” to protect worker rights and preserve environmental standards. When these agreements were secured, it set up an elaborate lobbying effort to gain support in Congress. By November 1993, the House and the Senate had passed NAFTA, although President Clinton in the end relied more on votes from Republicans than from Democrats to gain its final passage. Still, the congressional victory was hailed as an important foreign policy success of the Clinton administration—and it remains so to this day. (See Document Summary 5.3.)

Document Summary 5.4 Key Components of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Changes That Created the World Trade Organization (WTO), Fully in Force by July 1, 1995

Tariffs—Tariffs worldwide would be cut on approximately 85 percent of all world trade. These tariffs would be reduced from an average of 5 percent on industrial products currently to 3 percent at the end of this process. Cuts would be made over a five- to ten-year period.

Agriculture—For the first time, agriculture would be covered under this pact. On average, agricultural subsidies would be cut by 36 percent worldwide, and agricultural products exported with the help of governmental subsidies would drop by 21 percent. Quotas in agriculture would be converted to tariffs.

Textiles—Quotas placed on textiles imported from developing countries to developed countries would be eliminated over a ten-year period.

Services—Service transactions would now be covered by the GATT accord.

Subsidies, Intellectual Property—Government subsidies for particular industries would be lowered and international protection would be accorded intellectual property such as semiconductor chip designs, books, films, and music.

World Trade Organization—As this round of GATT entered into effect, a new and expanded trading organization would be established to regulate global trade for the future.

Sources: Abstracted from “Highlights of GATT Accord,” *Congressional Quarterly Almanac 1993* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1994), p. 183; and “The Shape of the Accord,” *New York Times*, December 15, 1993, C18.

By November 1994, the Clinton administration had achieved another important victory with the completion and approval of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the creation of GATT’s successor, the **World Trade Organization (WTO)**. This agreement, too, required substantial lobbying on Capitol Hill, but it was ultimately approved by about two-thirds of the House and exactly three-quarters of the Senate. Along with NAFTA, the WTO signaled the centrality of economics for Clinton’s foreign policy. (See Document Summary 5.4.)

With these agreements in place, President Clinton moved on to two other multilateral trading pacts. In November 1994, the administration lent its support to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in its effort to establish a free trade area among its developed nation members by 2010 and to increase its total membership by 2020. A month later, Clinton proposed the establishment of a free trade area by 2005 to the thirty-four Western Hemisphere countries that were meeting at the Summit of the Americas in Miami.

Phase Two: Democratic Engagement and Enlargement

Although an economic focus dominated Clinton’s foreign policy agenda during its early months (and years), changing international conditions quickly drew the administration’s attention elsewhere and led to an effort to define its foreign policy more broadly. The pivotal international events were the deteriorating situation in Bosnia, the unsettled conditions in Somalia and Haiti, and the changing political landscapes in Russia and the Middle East.

In Bosnia, ethnic cleansing continued, and the administration was unable to settle on a policy that its Western European allies could support. In Somalia, the effort to transform the humanitarian mission of late 1992 into a peace- and nation-building mission in early 1993 met with strong resistance. In Haiti, the Governors Island Accord had been completed in the summer of 1993, but by fall, it had yet to be implemented. In Russia, the Boris Yeltsin regime was meeting resistance, and the administration was forced to decide whether or not to support it. The one bright spot in foreign affairs, the Israeli–PLO Accord of September 1993, took effort to be put into effect. In short, the international landscape called for more than economic engagement.

At home, too, discussions took another tack. One important question was whether foreign policy beyond economics was something that the United States should embrace. Although isolationism overstates the sentiments of the public and some of its leaders at the time, many Americans did support a reassessment of the breadth of U.S. commitments worldwide. Indeed, in spring 1993, the third-ranking official in the Department of State floated the idea of reducing American commitment around the world. The question of “will and wallet” now appeared in political discussions over the direction of foreign policy.

In effect, American foreign policy needed a clearer and broader road map than the Clinton administration had so far provided. By late September 1993, major foreign policy speeches by President Clinton, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, UN Ambassador Madeleine Albright, and especially National Security Advisor Anthony Lake tried to rectify this.⁸⁶ In their statements, the president and his administration officials set out the fundamental premises of Clinton’s foreign policy and its basic *raison d’être*. Taken as a whole, these speeches indicate that the administration now embraced an even greater commitment to liberal internationalism than it did in its initial approach.

First, the administration committed the United States to global involvement and leadership in the aftermath of the Cold War. Global engagement—not isolationism or neo-isolationism—would be the administration’s policy now. Warren Christopher put it one way (“I want to assure you that the United States chooses engagement”); Madeleine Albright, another (“Our nation will not retreat into a post–Cold War foxhole”). Second, the administration indicated that the United States would act in the world either unilaterally or multilaterally on a case-by-case basis. Acting only unilaterally or only multilaterally, Christopher said, was a “false polarity. It is not an ‘either-or’ proposition.” Anthony Lake laid out the basic criterion of that choice: “[O]nly one overriding factor can determine whether the U.S. should act multilaterally or unilaterally, and this is America’s interests.” Third, the administration committed the United States to use force when necessary. Although “diplomacy will always be America’s first choice,” Albright declared, “when diplomacy fails, we have both the capacity to use force effectively and the will to do so when necessary.”

It was Lake who provided the basic rationale and context for American engagement and leadership: It would be to strengthen and expand market democracies worldwide. This “**strategy of enlargement**,” as he called it, would be **the post–Cold War successor to the policy of containment**. Its primary focus,

Lake stated, would be on “strengthening our democratic core in North America, Europe, and Japan; consolidating and enlarging democracy and markets in key places; and addressing backlash states such as Iran and Iraq” that challenge market democracies. In a real sense, then, the new approach was to combine the creation of liberal democracies with the development of liberal markets around the world.

Put differently, two key concepts now formed the core of the Clinton foreign policy—**free markets and free societies**—and both are essential tenets of idealism or liberal internationalism. Their foundation is the implicit assumption that cooperation, not conflict, primarily motivates the behavior of states. The former concept assumes the pacifying effects of free markets: As states cooperate in more and more so-called low-politics areas (e.g., trading blocs and free market agreements), they become more interested in the absolute gains that their societies can achieve and less interested in their relative gains vis-à-vis neighbors or trading partners. The latter concept assumes the pacifying effects of free societies: Democracies do not fight one another; they have peaceful mechanisms for resolving their disputes, and they respect the rights of their citizens.⁸⁷ Moreover, there was to be a synergistic relationship between the two concepts: Sustained economic gains by democratic states would propel continued peaceful relations, and democratic states would be equipped to peacefully pursue (and construct) more open markets.

An important implication of these two concepts was the centrality of domestic values in shaping American foreign policy. The economic emphasis of the administration’s approach could, of course, have a direct effect on Americans’ lives. The promotion of democracy could as well, especially because it was coupled with the promotion of human rights. In this way, the administration would seemingly appeal to the deeply held values of most Americans and would restore some idealism to America’s role in the world.

Despite the intuitive appeal of the enlargement of market democracies in the world, however, this new approach gained little support at home and never provided much policy guidance abroad—except in the most abstract sense. What it did achieve, however, was to become a ready target for criticism. Unsurprisingly, Henry Kissinger declared Clinton’s strategy to be lacking in “operational terms.”⁸⁸ Another critic noted that it was too general and that the administration approached “foreign policy as if it were on a supermarket shopping spree, grabbing whatever it takes a fancy to. . . .”⁸⁹ Still others viewed it less as a strategy (How would the administration bring about democratic development?) and more as a set of attractive principles (Who could challenge the promotion of democracy?). Disquieting, too, was that the administration appeared to be less focused on American national interests and more on universal global values.⁹⁰

Clinton’s strategy of enlargement and his foreign policy in general, also came in for criticism from within the administration itself, from Republicans on Capitol Hill, and from the American public. Secretary of State Warren Christopher reportedly saw it as “a trade policy masquerading as a foreign policy” and refused to use the *E* (or *enlargement*) word in his policy formulations.⁹¹ Republicans, of course, seized on its perceived failings by including several key foreign policy restrictions in their “Contract with America” during the 1994 congressional elections. Finally,

in a national survey of public opinion on foreign policy conducted in late 1994, the Clinton administration's handling of foreign policy came under fire, with only 31 percent of the public judging it as "good" or "excellent."⁹²

Equally important, the strategy of enlargement proved to be an incomplete guide for responding to the challenges facing the administration in 1993–1994 and beyond. Although the promotion of free markets was already a priority, it provided no instructions for how to promote democracy. It surely served as a general rationale for promoting political liberalization in Haiti or Bosnia and comported with efforts to challenge backlash states, such as Iraq or North Korea, but it did not provide much specificity about actions to be taken prior to democratic development in these states. Furthermore, it was hardly precise regarding American policy toward the Middle East, Russia, or China, or toward Rwanda and the ethnic killings there.

Phase Three: Selective Engagement

As early as January 1995, and after some stinging criticisms, the Clinton administration began to move away from the idealism that the strategy of enlargement conveyed and toward a more substantive policy rooted in realism. In a speech at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, Secretary of State Warren Christopher outlined this change in direction.⁹³ While reaffirming a commitment to American engagement and leadership, Christopher set out a series of concrete policy priorities that, although generally compatible with the liberal internationalism set out earlier, had the ring of traditional American foreign policy goals. The United States, he declared, would seek cooperative ties with other states, build economic and security institutions, and support democracy and human rights. It would do so by liberalizing the trading order, building a new security structure in Europe, working for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East, halting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and combating international crime.

A year later, in another address to the Kennedy School, Christopher outlined a similar set of foreign policy goals, but with a hierarchical ordering that seemed to signal a change in the administration's emphasis.⁹⁴ He reaffirmed the overarching principles of the previous year ("pursuing peace in regions of vital interest," "confronting the new transnational security threats," and "promoting open markets and prospects"), but the **increasing emphasis on the security components of foreign policy** could not be missed. The specific regional threats to peace that Christopher identified were familiar—Bosnia, Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, and such problem states as Northern Ireland, Haiti, Cyprus, Angola, Burundi, Peru, and Ecuador. The new transnational security threats ranged from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism to international criminal activities and environmental damage. Finally, and significantly, promotion of open markets was listed third and mainly reiterated the trade liberalization efforts through NAFTA and APEC, and in the Western Hemisphere. Finally, Christopher called for a continued commitment to seeking fast-track trading authority from Congress. Except in a most generous interpretation, then, the strategy of enlargement was no longer central to the administration's foreign policy actions.

The Clinton administration's altering of its foreign policy course seemed evident by the end of the first term, but change was more fully signaled at the beginning of the second. In his 1997 State of the Union address, for instance, Clinton stated that the first tasks for the United States were to **"build . . . an undivided, democratic Europe"** and to **"shape an Asia-Pacific community of cooperation, not conflict."**⁹⁵ To be sure, he mentioned the need to "expand our exports," but he also noted that the United States must "continue to be an unrelenting force for peace from the Middle East to Haiti, from Northern Ireland to Africa" and "must move strongly against new threats to our security." Further, the United States must strengthen and support its military and its diplomacy. Two months later, the new national security advisor, Samuel (Sandy) Berger, repeated these very same objectives to a Washington audience.⁹⁶

By May 1997, the administration's **"National Security Strategy for a New Century"** report had reinforced the change already under way.⁹⁷ It inverted two of the three key principles that Secretary of State Christopher had identified in 1993. (In fact, this inversion had occurred by 1994, but it can be argued that the 1997 change was much stronger in tone.) The United States' principal objectives were now, in order, "to enhance our security with effective diplomacy and with military forces that are ready to fight and win, to bolster America's economic prosperity [and] to promote democracy abroad." Traditional political-military emphases gained primacy whereas the economic and the democracy goals lost ground. Realism, or perhaps realism "lite," now came to dominate the foreign policy agenda.

Defining Selective Engagement On a substantive level, **selective engagement implied different assumptions** from those outlined when the strategy of enlargement was announced in 1993. First, although the United States would remain engaged and lead in world affairs, it would now act (and justify its actions) on more narrowly drawn national, rather than global, interests. Its agenda, too, as the statements by Christopher, Clinton, and Berger implied, would be more specific and more narrowly chosen. Second, although the United States would not wholly eschew multilateral actions in global affairs, the administration would be more amenable to unilateral actions and would undertake them only if necessary. Third, the United States would be willing to use military force, but would do so more carefully, probably more sparingly, and only after clear criteria were met. Finally, the context and goals for American engagement and leadership would focus less on remaking the international system through the expansion of market democracies and more on stabilizing relations among key states. In other words, conflict, rather than cooperation, was still a motivating force.

Thus, the United States would seek to dampen and manage conflicts rather than eliminate them quickly (i.e., peacekeeping versus peace building). Put differently, and more in line with realist premises, the new emphasis would be on stabilizing the international order rather than on restructuring it. However, it was important that elements of democracy and human rights promotion continue to be commingled in the process at various points. Once again, *realism lite* is perhaps a more accurate theoretical descriptor of the administration's evolving approach.

Several types of action taken by the administration reflect this security-based attitude toward foreign policy—regarding interventions, efforts in building or rebuilding alliances, strictures on peacekeeping, the emphasis on nonproliferation, and the focus on a few key powerful states in the international system. Moreover, the actions and nonactions in Kosovo and the administration's approach to East Timor illustrate the continuance of selective engagement up to the very end of Clinton's time in office. They also reveal how the administration grappled with "humanitarian interventions" in trying to devise a workable "**Clinton Doctrine.**"

Implementing Selective Engagement Shortly after the events in Somalia, the Clinton administration made perhaps its first move in the direction of selective engagement by deciding not to take action over Rwanda but rather to step up its actions in the Balkans. Thus, in April 1994, it refused to become deeply involved in the Rwandan genocide. Instead, it issued **Presidential Decision Directive-25 (PDD-25)** a month later, which specified several decision criteria for American involvement in UN operations under Chapter VI and VII of the UN Charter. At about the same time, it began taking more vigorous actions (including selective bombing), in an effort to stabilize the Balkan situation. Those actions reached their height in the summer and fall of 1995, both with renewed support for the Bosnian government against Serbian forces and with a strong diplomatic offensive. They eventually resulted in the Dayton Accords and the use of the NATO alliance to implement them, along with the use of American troops to stabilize the fragile peace, albeit within strict rules of engagement. In short, a more vigorous but selective effort to stabilize global politics was being put into place by the Clinton administration by acting in Europe but not in Africa.

Second, the administration's actions toward its allies reflected this renewed interest in security. By late 1994, the president had endorsed the decision to go forward with NATO expansion, despite the objection of Russian leaders and despite its possible impact on Russian domestic politics. The aim of **building a stable and secure Europe** trumped assuaging Russian fears over Western encirclement and the possibility of a divided Europe. (Anomalously of course, the decision to support NATO expansion had the side benefit of fostering European democratic development.) Similarly, the Clinton administration initiated efforts to **refurbish the Japanese-American alliance** and **strengthen alliance ties with South Korea. It also initiated and pursued the policy of "dual containment" toward Iran and Iraq**, although the administration was rather unsuccessful in obtaining the continued support of other nations in that endeavor. The Clinton administration was now willing to go it alone, however, especially with Iraq. Thus, American military forces were rapidly dispatched to Kuwait in late 1994, and the United States periodically used American air power for selective sorties against Iraq over its violations of the no-fly zones.

Third, the Clinton administration started (or enhanced) several peace initiatives to address traditional security concerns. For example, it stepped up its efforts to seek peace in the Middle East after the 1993 Israeli-PLO Accords, inaugurated a mediating role in Northern Ireland that eventually resulted in the **Good**

Friday Accords, and initiated a four-power effort to obtain peace on the Korean peninsula. For a time, too, it employed a special advisor to seek movement on the Cyprus question between Greece and Turkey.

Fourth, the administration undertook at least three important actions to address the new dangers posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). It completed work on the **Chemical Weapons Convention** and succeeded in persuading the Senate to provide its advice and consent. Also, President Clinton signed the **Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty**, but, in a stinging defeat, was unable to win Senate approval for it. Furthermore, in a switch in policy for the administration, he signed the **National Missile Defense Act** in 1999. Although the decision on the extent of deployment was ultimately left to Clinton's successor, the administration, with considerable congressional prodding, was moving the nation in the direction of missile defense. In a related action in 1995, working with many other nations, the Clinton administration succeeded in making permanent the strictures in the **Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT)**.

Fifth, a few key states now became the focal point of policy attention—even if domestically they did not practice democracy or respect human rights. For instance, the administration supported the Yeltsin (and later Putin) regime in Russia despite human rights violations by the its military in Chechnya and despite increasing concern over its growing authoritarianism. Clinton never wavered in his policy toward China, despite its widespread human rights abuse. Fostering U.S.–China trade and maintaining stability in East Asia were greater priorities.

Finally, the Clinton administration's actions over **Kosovo** and **East Timor** reflect the selective nature of its policy approach—both where human rights were abused and where democracy was restricted. The air campaign against Serbia over Kosovo in 1999 was strongly justified both on national interest grounds (peace in Europe, the stability of NATO) and on humanitarian values (protecting innocent lives).⁹⁸ Yet the president restricted this campaign by explicitly excluding the use of American ground forces. Administration policy toward the atrocities in East Timor also more fully reflects this selective involvement principle. Although the United States would provide logistical supplies for a multilateral operation, the Australians would largely be responsible for action on the ground.

Both President Clinton and his national security advisor, Sandy Berger, reaffirmed the administration's selective engagement approach late in the second term. In a major foreign policy address in February 1999, the president identified five major challenges confronting the United States.⁹⁹ Significantly, the list—and its structure—emphasized traditional political/military interests over economic/social concerns. The first two challenges called for renewing alliances—whether through the expansion of NATO or through refurbishing ties with Japan and Korea—and bringing Russia and China, America's principal adversaries during the Cold War, into the international system as “open, prosperous, stable nations.” The third challenge also emphasized security by focusing on new international threats and dangers: drug trafficking, terrorism, proliferation, and so forth. Only the fourth and fifth challenges—creating workable trading and financial order and promoting global freedom—had any hint of the “economic engagement” or “democratic enlargement” emphases of 1993 and 1994. Indeed, the message was

clear: The United States should be engaged, it could do some good in the world, and its actions were ultimately more in the traditional political/military realm than in any other.

Berger did likewise in his summation of Clinton's foreign policy only a month or two before the administration left office.¹⁰⁰ In discussing the five principles that guided the administration, Berger listed four (reliance on allies in Europe and Asia, constructive relations with former adversaries, global consequences of local disputes, and new security dangers posed by technology and permeable borders) that fully fit this "selective engagement" approach and had the ring of realism. Only one (the use of economic integration to reduce economic differences) hardened back to the early Clinton years and its liberal internationalist beginnings.

THE LINGERING LEGACIES OF CLINTON'S FOREIGN POLICY

What are the principal legacies of the Clinton administration's foreign policy across its three phases? How did it affect the United States and the rest of the world? I have provided a more detailed assessment of the major policy-making and policy legacies of the Clinton administration in another analysis,¹⁰¹ which I draw on to suggest several general and specific foreign policy legacies of the Clinton years and to outline the degree of continuity with and change from earlier administrations.

General Legacies

The first and most important general legacy for American foreign policy was the Clinton's administration's commitment to **maintaining American involvement and leadership in global affairs** after the Cold War. As the extent of its international dealings expanded and contracted from economic to democratic engagement and from enlargement to selective engagement, the president and his administration never wavered in their basic commitment to maintaining a central role for the United States in the international system. Virtually every pronouncement spoke of this. Early on, when Peter Tarnoff, undersecretary of state for political affairs, hinted at a reduced global role, his trial balloon was promptly shot down by Secretary of State Warren Christopher.¹⁰² In this sense, continuity, rather than change, describes the Clinton administration's approach.

At the same time, some might well argue that the administration's interest across such a broad array of foreign policy issues—economic, political-military, sociocultural—had the effect of taking America's global role to new heights and making it difficult, if not impossible, for any subsequent administration to significantly reduce it. Consider the initial impulse of the George W. Bush administration to promote a "distinctly American internationalism." That in effect meant a lessening of U.S. involvement in some areas. Candidate Bush suggested, for example, that the presence of American forces in the Balkans and America's central role

in the Middle East peace process should be reduced. Yet his administration had to alter its course on both fronts, even before the devastating events of September 11, 2001. One longtime Washington observer offered a possible explanation for why any policy change by the Bush administration might well be difficult: Clinton's had "occupied so much of the middle ground" across a broad set of foreign policy issues that it had provided little maneuvering room for its successor.¹⁰³

A second general legacy of the Clinton years was an **expanded role for the president in foreign policy**. Despite the initial impulse of the administration to reduce the importance of foreign policy on its agenda, and despite Clinton's apparent aversion to such issues, the administration actually left office with an imperative for a greater, not lesser, executive involvement. The United States could not achieve success in foreign policy without presidential leadership, both domestically and internationally. Whether seeking to pass NAFTA or to obtain fast-track trading authority, President Clinton's participation (or nonparticipation) was crucial to the outcome. Whether negotiating NATO expansion or the refurbishment of the Japanese alliance, presidential involvement was paramount in gaining support both at home and abroad. One reason presidential leadership became necessary was the divided nature of politics in the last six years of the administration (with Republicans controlling both houses of Congress). Another was that there was less support for foreign policy without an overarching strategy such as the Cold War provided.

A third legacy of Clinton's foreign policy was the **extraordinary impact of domestic politics on foreign policy issues**. On one level, of course, it is hardly exceptional to assert that domestic politics shape foreign policy, but what is remarkable about the Clinton years is the extent to which it did so. In the first foreign policy phase, of course, the domestic effect was both by design and definition. Indeed, some of the actions in this phase were crassly calculated in terms of domestic politics. Consider this assessment of the two side agreements to the NAFTA pact negotiated in 1993: "They had to be sufficiently strong to sway domestic environmentalists and, to a lesser extent labor, in order to enable Democrats to vote for the agreement . . . while at the same time not being too strong as to alienate core Republican supporters of NAFTA and their business elites."¹⁰⁴ The continuance of the economic engagement phase was also driven by domestic political considerations, as the failure to gain fast-track trading authority for the president (see Chapter 8) impeded the rapid completion of further economic—particularly multilateral—pacts. Certainly the lack of movement on a trade agreement for the nations of the Western Hemisphere, the expansion of NAFTA, and more progress on an APEC accord derive in part from this failure.

In the second phase, too, the strategy of enlargement was driven by considerations of domestic politics, under the assumption that free markets and free peoples would have considerable domestic appeal. The problem was perhaps that the design was too grandiose and was viewed too skeptically by the public at large and therefore never caught on. In reality, of course, domestic politics compelled the Clinton administration to employ selective engagement after the Republicans gained control of both houses of Congress and as security questions once again (and perhaps inevitably) came to dominate the international agenda.

Finally, the limitations on American actions during the selective engagement phase flowed in large part from domestic politics. Most noteworthy, of course, was the public's aversion to the use of American ground forces abroad and the Clinton administration's policy caution as a result. Similarly, domestic politics were crucial in the NATO expansion decision, the decision to sign legislation that included the Helms-Burton amendment, the administration's changed position on missile defense, and the modification of defense policy.

Specific Legacies

Undoubtedly the Clinton administration's first and most important specific policy legacy—and an important change from earlier administrations—was **the placement of global economic policy at the center of American foreign policy**. NAFTA, WTO, about 300 other trade accords (including congressional approval of permanent normal trading relations with China in late 2000), and the initiation of several multilateral pacts in different areas of the world represent a lasting foreign policy impact. Significantly, too, Clinton's actions in the foreign economic arena made it incumbent on future American presidents to assist in managing the global economy in much the same way they have become responsible for managing the American domestic economy. To be sure, the globalization of economic policy has been a two-edged sword. Although Clinton's efforts transformed and improved the lives of citizens in many countries throughout the world, they also created innumerable dislocations for others. The prolonged and violent protests at the WTO Ministerial meetings in December 1999 (and the violent protests at the Western Hemisphere meeting in Quebec City, the European Union meeting in Göteborg, and the G-8 meeting in Genoa later) illustrate the growing concerns that these global economic transformations have produced.

A second specific policy legacy of the Clinton administration was to **stabilize the relationship between the United States and its principal alliance partners**. NATO's expansion and its prodding to undertake missions "out-of-area" are important legacies of the Clinton years. They have had the effect of moving the allies in the direction of greater security responsibilities, including the incipient development of the European Defense and Security Initiative (EDSI). The refurbishment of alliances in Asia does not appear to have progressed as far as it has in Europe. Nevertheless, the Clinton administration began that process. In this sense, alliance stability represented continuity whereas the nature of some alliance actions (e.g., within NATO) represented change.

A third specific legacy was the effort to **stabilize the relationship with China and Russia** after the Cold War, which portended more continuity than change. By the end of Clinton's second term, neither nation was the strategic partner originally envisioned by the administration, but, once again, stabilization had begun. The granting of permanent normal trading relations (PNTR) to China and the expenditure of significant foreign aid to Russia were important factors in this stabilization. Moreover, they made it difficult for any future administration to turn abruptly in a different policy direction.

A fourth specific legacy was that the United States would **take the lead in conflict resolution**. Although this did not represent a significant change by the United States or Clinton, it was an area where the administration devoted a great deal of time and energy. Its record is largely mixed, but the general conclusion is that these efforts were more positive than negative, leaving important opportunities for the administration's successors.

The Dayton Accords and the Middle East peace discussions top the list of the administration's conflict resolution efforts; the conflicts in Northern Ireland and the Korean peninsula were important as well. Yet by the end of the Clinton presidency, no significant and sustained progress had been made. None of his efforts produced the level of resolution perhaps originally hoped for. In fact, the Middle East negotiations were sharply frayed and in danger of collapse by the end of 2000 (despite the Wye Plantation Accords of 1998 and a last-ditch effort by the administration in 2000), and the situation in Bosnia—even with the Dayton Accords was fragile, with the likelihood of American military presence there for some time to come. The Good Friday Accords for Northern Ireland also yielded initial promise, but, once again, by the end of the Clinton years, they were on the verge of collapse. The Four-Party Talks over Korea were also stalled as a new president assumed office.

At least three other specific policy efforts had similar incomplete outcomes and represent continuity more so than change from past American actions. First, Clinton's attempts at reducing threats to global peace and stability from weapons of mass destruction did not progress far. To be sure, his counter-proliferation initiative, announced early in his first term, signaled the United States' intention to use both prevention and protection measures against WMDs. The successful ratification of the Convention on Chemical Weapons was also an important step for creating an international organization to monitor the use of chemicals and prevent their conversion to weapons of mass destruction. However, the failure to gain Senate approval of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the failure to resolve the issue of missile defense (and the ABM Treaty debate), the ambiguous outcome of the 1994 agreement with North Korea over halting its nuclear weapons program, the remaining dangers from possible weapons development by Iraq, and nuclear weapons testing by India and Pakistan in 1998 all suggest that this legacy was perhaps more negative than positive and represented a real challenge for future administrations.¹⁰⁵

Second, although the administration came to office with a substantial commitment to human rights and the promotion of democracy, its efforts in these areas often were overshadowed by other policy priorities. Its hesitancy to become involved in the Balkans, its reluctance to challenge China over human rights, and its decision not to become involved in Rwanda lend credence to this position. The military interdiction in Haiti, the Bosnian response under the Dayton Accords, and the actions in Kosovo suggest otherwise, but, by most measures, the promotion of democracy and human rights during the Clinton administration cannot be characterized as an unqualified success.

By its second term, the Clinton administration was actually taking a different path to the improvement of global human rights. That is, it had seemingly

decided to emphasize *multilateral* and *indirect* means, although with the proviso **that unilateral and direct** means would not be wholly abandoned.¹⁰⁶ Increasingly American actions would be directed at resolving conflicts and disputes and encouraging political institutions and elections as indirect ways to improve human rights, and the United States would work with other state and nonstate actors in pursuing these goals. Finally, and importantly, the negative effects of globalization would need to be incorporated into any policy addressing democracy and human rights by a new administration.

Third, the issue of when and under what conditions the United States would intervene with American force remained unresolved at the end of the Clinton years. The administration took several steps to clarify American policy, but questions continued. In May 1994, and in response to the Somalia fiasco, Clinton issued Presidential Decision Directive 25 (PDD-25), which outlined the specific conditions required for the United States to participate in multilateral peace support operations. In May 1997, the administration issued another directive, **PDD-56**, which outlined the intragovernmental procedures for preparing for, and executing, a humanitarian intervention,¹⁰⁷ and in June 1999, after the Kosovo bombing, President Clinton made a sweeping pledge to assist those endangered around the world: “[W]hether you live in Africa, or Central Europe, or any other place, if somebody comes after innocent civilians and tries to kill them en masse because of their race, their ethnic background or their religion, and it’s within our power to stop it, we will stop it.”¹⁰⁸

This pledge, labeled the **Clinton Doctrine on humanitarian intervention** seemed to represent a new departure for intervention policy.¹⁰⁹ However, it was controversial. Were American policy makers wholly committed to such universal action, especially in light of the limited actions over Rwanda and East Timor? Would the American people support such interventions in light of their limited support for the use of force involving internal conflicts, albeit more so for humanitarian ones?¹¹⁰

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Although the Bush and Clinton administrations saw important changes in and challenges for American foreign policy as the Cold War waned and ended, the political, economic, and social components of the international system were affected by this important global event as well. Before we turn to American foreign policy at the beginning of the new century under the George W. Bush administration, we must take stock of the global landscape at the end of the 1990s and by the year 2000. Across a wide spectrum, the international system had changed dramatically from only a few decades earlier, when the United States first committed itself to a continuous global role after World War II.

By the end of the century, the forces of globalization—those forces that knit together peoples and societies regardless of state boundaries—had accelerated rapidly, with the ending of the Cold War having affected the political, economic, and social makeup of the international community. On the political level,

the number and kinds of intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations had expanded dramatically. The magnitude of these international linkages challenged—and arguably reduced—the sovereignty of the nation-state. Among regional security organizations, for instance, NATO, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) were expanding their memberships, agendas, and activities in global affairs. Much the same was true for regional and global economic organizations. NAFTA had taken off and was rapidly expanding trade relations among the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The continuing efforts of the European Union to unite Europe through expanding its membership and deepen its responsibilities—including the creation of a new currency, the euro—was creating profound economic, political, and social implications. Likewise, APEC continued to expand and intensify its activities. Finally, the growth of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)—people-to-people groups across national boundaries—had accelerated throughout the past century, especially from 1950 to the present. Some NGOs promote global human rights (e.g., Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International) or foster relief efforts (e.g., International Red Cross, Oxfam). Others advance religious beliefs and services (e.g., major religions, World Vision, Catholic Relief Services) or promote political and cultural causes across states (e.g., Socialist International, la Francophonie, al-Qaeda). Still others promote global environmental (Greenpeace) and economic goals (e.g. multinational firms such as ExxonMobil, Toyota, Mitsubishi). In all, estimates of the number of these nongovernmental organizations vary widely from a few thousand to 25,000 and even as many as 100,000 worldwide.¹¹¹ Although the exact number may be in dispute, their growth and significance across national boundaries are not.

We may blithely assume that these globalizing forces are working in a positive way to knit peoples, societies, and states together, but the reality is that each also has its dark side. In the economic realm, the freeing up of global markets has undoubtedly produced cheaper and more abundant goods in some states, but it has also harmed people and societies in states unable to compete in the global marketplace. Many workers in some countries are forced to accept low wages just to keep their jobs and to stay competitive in the global economy; some may be displaced as companies move to cheaper labor markets abroad.

The forces of globalization contribute to new security dangers. With more open and penetrable borders, trafficking in drugs and people may be less detectable. The same is true for the movement of terrorists seeking to raise havoc in the international community. The widespread use of the Internet, the ready availability of cell phones, and the increasing ease of international travel—all create an international system that is more penetrable and less controllable. Finally, new environmental issues arise as global warming and global pollution recognize no national borders.

In sum, the international system at the dawn of the new century was an admixture of integrating and dividing forces that increasingly challenge nation states and their foreign policies. New actors and new issues mark the global environment. Perhaps the most significant shock to the international system in the first months of the new century was represented by the events of September 11, 2001.

NOTES

1. Throughout this chapter, the term *Eastern Europe* refers to those countries that were Communist allies of the Soviet Union (East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria) and formed part of the “Soviet bloc” before the breakup of the Soviet empire in 1989–1990. The term *Central Europe* refers to these countries after the breakup because it is more descriptive of their proper geographical location.
2. “Text of President Bush’s State of the Union Message to Nation,” *New York Times*, January 30, 1991, A8
3. Part of this chapter and its arguments appeared in James M. McCormick, “Assessing Clinton’s Foreign Policy at Midterm,” *Current History* 94 (November 1995): 370–374.
4. Governor Bill Clinton, “A New Covenant for American Security,” address delivered at Georgetown University, December 12, 1991.
5. “Remarks of Governor Bill Clinton,” Los Angeles World Affairs Council, August 13, 1992.
6. These concepts are discussed in and drawn from Charles W. Kegley, Jr., “The Bush Administration and the Future of American Foreign Policy: Pragmatism, or Procrastination?” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 19 (Fall 1989): 717–731, especially p. 717. On the Bush presidency, also see Barbara Kellerman and Ryan J. Barilleaux, *The President as World Leader* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1991), pp. 210–216.
7. See Elaine Sciolino, “Bush Selections Signal Focus on Foreign Policy,” *New York Times*, January 17, 1989, 1, for this depiction of Bush as a problem solver and not as a visionary.
8. Theodore C. Sorensen, “Bush’s Timid 100 Days,” *New York Times*, April 27, 1989, 27.
9. William G. Hyland, “Bush’s Foreign Policy: Pragmatism or Indecision?” *New York Times*, April 26, 1989, 25.
10. Evan Thomas with Thomas M. DeFrank and Ann McDaniel, “Bush and the Generals,” *Newsweek*, February 4, 1991, 27.
11. The description was written by Charles William Maynes and is quoted in Sciolino, “Bush Selections Signal Focus on Foreign Policy,” p. 1.
12. I. M. Destler is quoted in John Felton, “Will Bush–Hill Honeymoon Bring Bipartisanship?” *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, February 18, 1989, 334.
13. Sciolino, “Bush Selections Signal Focus on Foreign Policy,” p. 1; and Thomas, “Bush and the Generals,” p. 27.
14. The National Security Council staff confirmed that there was not a publicly available summary of the “policy review” and that these speeches summarized the essence of the policy positions of the Bush administration at that time. The speeches, which are quoted below, were supplied by the NSC staff and consisted of the following: “Remarks by the President to the Citizens of Hamtramck,” April 17, 1989; “Remarks by the President at Texas A&M University,” May 12, 1989; “Remarks by the President at Boston University Commencement Ceremony,” May 21, 1989; “Remarks by the President at the Coast Guard Academy Graduation Ceremony,” May 24, 1989; and “Remarks by the President at Rheingoldhalle,” Mainz, Germany, May 31, 1989.
15. See Chapter 8 for a complete discussion of the Jackson–Vanik Amendment.
16. Quoted in Maureen Dowd, “Bush Moves to Control War’s Endgame,” *New York Times*, February 23, 1991, 5.
17. John Felton, “Bush, Hill Agree to Provide Contras with New Aid,” *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, March 25, 1989, 655–657.
18. See John Felton, “Hill Gives Contra Package Bipartisan Launching,” *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, April 15, 1989.
19. Steven Erlanger, “Hanoi’s Partial Victory,” *New York Times*, July 20, 1990, A1 and A2.
20. Steven Erlanger, “Ending Talks, All Cambodia Parties Commit Themselves to U.N. Peace Plan,” *New York Times*, September 11, 1990, A3.
21. The following discussion draws on “U.S. Invasion Ousts Panama’s Noriega,” and “From U.S. Canal to Invasion . . .