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Towards a 'Balance of Power that Favors Freedom' – U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era

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Abstract

American 'exceptionalism' imbues U.S. foreign policy with a sense of idealism. This idealism was in the ascendant following the end of the Cold War, but the experience of the ensuing decade showed that a foreign policy based solely on ideals lacks the commitment produced by the presence of national self-interest. The American administration increasingly recognized that an idealist view of the world incurred results that conflicted with, and often ran contrary to, the successful pursuit of national interests. Failed foreign policy initiatives, domestic pressures, and the opposing national interests of other powers forced America to seek a balance of ideals and interests. But the idealist underpinnings of American exceptionalism remains strong, even in the aggressive National Security Strategy of President George W. Bush, "building a balance of power that favors freedom."[1] The struggle to reconcile ideals and interests will continue to play a key role in defining U.S. foreign policy.

[1] The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America.* September 2002 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002), 1.

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Introduction

Several weeks after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center, correspondent and author Robert Kaplan reflected on the event's significance from a foreign affairs perspective:

> The post cold war era will be seen in future decades as a 12 year interregnum – from the collapse of the Berlin Wall to the collapse of the World Trade Center – in which the United States, basking in its victory over communism and with a seemingly unstoppable economy, tried to impose its moral vision on the rest of the world….But following the most deadly terrorist attack in history, the American people have learned that to influence the world morally requires first the preservation of their own security, as well as their reputation for power…[2]

Kaplan's remark captured and summarized the painful dissolution of the unbridled optimism of the preceding decade. In surveying the rubble, Americans regained a focus on foreign policy that had been lacking in the 1990s. An era in which a moral perspective had dominated international affairs had abruptly ended, replaced with a concern, first and foremost, for the security of the nation and its people. "At no time since Pearl Harbour," wrote one pundit, " have we seen such a convergence between national interest and public opinion."[3] Combined with a renewed focus and determination was a growing realization that the position in which America now found itself could be traced back to the failure, in the post-Cold War era, to achieve an effective balance between a moralist view of the world and the cold realities of *Realpolitik.*

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[2] Robert D. Kaplan, "U.S. Foreign Policy, Brought Back Home," *The Washington Post,* 23 September 2001.

[3] Quee-Young Kim, *The 'New Realism' and American Foreign Policy.* American Political Science Association Post 9/11 Series. Available from wysiwyg://21/http://wwwapsanet.org/PS/post911/kimcfm; Internet; accessed 11 November 2002.

The September 2002 National Security Strategy of the United States called for a "balance of power that favours freedom."[4] Throughout the document one can see an effort to establish a balance between ideals and self-interest in U.S. foreign policy. This paper will show that this struggle has been a focus of debate since the end of the Cold War, and that its outcome plays a key role in defining U.S. foreign policy. It will show how the surge of optimism at the end of the Cold War led to an idealist view of the world, and an administration that neglected the imperatives of interests and power in foreign policy. Gradually, through failed efforts at humanitarian intervention, domestic political influences, and the recognition of growing opposition from other nations to American hegemony, the U.S. administration was forced to temper its application of ideals with consideration of its national self-interest.

Why is an understanding of U.S. foreign policy a topic of military significance? The significance of diplomacy and foreign affairs to the military officer has been expounded upon repeatedly. In *The Art of War*, first published in 1838, Baron Antoine Henri de Jomini wrote that an understanding of diplomacy is "indispensable" to a commanding general.[5] Others have more recently stressed the importance to senior officers of an understanding of political science, stressing that an appreciation of political objectives, and the forces that drive them, is critical to successfully translating strategic objectives into operational plans.[6] Lieutenant-General Robert Morton has written that,

> While the issues of art and science of defence are complex in their own right, generals and admirals need a thorough grasp of the wider determinants of the

[4] United States, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America: September 2002* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002).

[5] Baron Antoine Henri de Jomini, *The Art of War* (London: Greenhill Books, 1996), 2.

[6] David J. Bercuson, "A Man (or Woman) for All Seasons", in *Generalship and the Art of the Admiral: Perspectives on Canadian Senior Military Leadership,* ed. Bern Horne and Stephen J. Harris (St Catherines: Vanwell Publishing Limited, 2001), 418.

> state's security – the social, economic, political, trade, religious and cultural circumstances that pertain at home and abroad.[7]

Why, then, should U.S. foreign policy, in particular, be the subject of examination? The United States is both the world power, and a country with which Canada has a unique relationship. Former Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson recognized the "heavy burden of international responsibility borne by the United States," and cautioned Canadians that criticism of U.S. foreign policy should be made carefully and with a full understanding of this context.[8] With 87 percent of Canada's exports and 64 percent of its imports being exchanged with America, Canadians can ill afford to ignore the relationship between the two countries.[9] Well prior to the events of 9/11, the U.S. Ambassador to Canada called the relationship between the two countries "the world's most unique security partnership."[10] Since then, there has been an unprecedented level of debate within Canada as to how the nature of this security relationship should be changed. In recent months, relations between the two countries have been strained as the United States has abandoned attempts to gain consensus within the United Nations and led a limited coalition to depose the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq.[11] A good

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[7] Lieutenant-General Robert Morton, "Contemporary Canadian Generalship and the Art of the Admiral," in *Generalship and the Art of the Admiral…*, 489.

[8] Lester B. Pearson, *Mike: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, PC,CC,OM,OBE,MA,LLD*, Vol. 3 (1957-1968), ed. John A. Munro and Alex I. Inglis (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 115.

[9] Trade figures for 2001, available from Statistics Canada, Trade and Economic Analysis Division, online at www.dfait-maeci.gc.cs/eet/

[10] Quoted in Joel J. Sokolsky, *Entering the Arena: The Canadian Forces and Parliament.* Address given to the Conference of Defence Associations 16th Annual Seminar, 27 January 2000. Available online from http://www.cda.ca/seminars/2000/sokolski.htm. Accessed 14 October 2002.

[11] Canada has also been uncertain as to how it can share responsibilities for security of the Northa American continent. For a good synopsis of the issues relating to Canada's relationship with the global superpower, see Thomas S. Axworthy, *"A Choice not an Echo: Sharing North America with the Hyperpower,"* Paper presented to the conference on Searching for the New Liberalism, Toronto, September 27th-29th, 2002. Available from http://www.nationalpost.com/axworthy/ Accessed 11 October 2002.

understanding of how American policy has evolved since the Cold War is therefore of considerable importance to those whose profession requires an understanding of national and international security.

American government administrations have consistently recognized that their country has a leadership role to play in world affairs, and this recognition has continued since the end of the Cold War.[12] But the manner in which that leadership should be exercised has been subject to intense debate. Henry Kissinger has remarked: "The ultimate dilemma of the statesman is to strike a balance between values and interests…"[13] Due to the idealism inherent in its founding, and its role as the world leader, this dilemma is particularly acute for the United States.

Since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, the state has been accepted as the principal actor in world affairs. The Peace recognized the state's complete authority over what occurred within its borders. While the purpose of the Peace was to stop the religion-based slaughter of the 30 Years' War (Kissinger called it the 'human rights slogan of the period'), it also established the notion of sovereignty, non-intervention in another state's internal affairs, and set the legal framework for states' relations with each other.[14] With the Peace, the state replaced the Catholic Church as the principal authority over its people, and *Raison d'etat* became the point of reference for international affairs. The principal guide for relations between states was the national interest.[15]

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[12] See for example the National Security Strategies of the United States of America of August 1991, February 1995, May 1997, December 2000, and September 2002.

[13] Henry Kissinger, Does America Need a Foreign Policy? Toward a Diplomacy for the 21st Century (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), 286.

[14] Kissinger *Does America Need a Foreign Policy*...235-236.

[15] Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 56-59.

Early American foreign policy had its grounding in an idealistic sense of the United States as a beacon for all mankind, and rejected the self-interested politics which had led to frequent war in Europe. During the Napoleonic wars between Britain and France, America represented its neutrality as a policy of disengagement in what it saw as a conflict between two tyrants. While the European model of a struggle for a balance of power viewed states as amoral, Thomas Jefferson argued that states should act with the same moral code that applied to individuals. America, as the shining example of democratic virtue, would show the world how foreign policy could be based on a rejection of purely selfish interest and a new emphasis on cooperation.[16] This notion of exceptionalism, that America is unique among states, remains deeply embedded, even today, in American foreign policy.[17]

American exceptionalism places it in a dilemma: the American mission of expanding liberty overseas requires the exercise of power. The exercise of liberty domestically places restraints on the use of power. A consequent rise in moralism in foreign policy coincides with a decline in influence; this in turn leads to the decline of liberal democracy and freedom overseas. Samuel P. Huntington calls this *The Dilemma of American Ideals and Institutions in Foreign Policy.*[18] In the 20th century, the problem of balance in American policy has frequently been acute. In 1984, the U.S Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Mrs. Jeane J. Kirkpatrick remarked:

> In the cool reassuring plans of our founding fathers, informed by history and inspired by a passion for freedom, idealism and realism were closely interwoven. Together they made for a sturdy constitutional fabric. But in our times, views

[16] Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 30-33.
[17] Kissinger, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy…*, 20, 29.
[18] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Dilemma of American Ideals and Institutions in Foreign Policy.* AEI Special Analysis No. 81-3 (Washington : The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1981), 13.

> about the proper relationship between idealism and realism have lost their old sense of perspective. Often idealism and realism are treated as mutually exclusive rather than mutually reinforcing principles.[19]

After the Cold War's end, a tide of both optimism and uncertainty swept the globe. There was cause for optimism in the sense that the demise of the Cold War would make way for a new period of reconciliation, global cooperation and prosperity, leading to resolution of the pressing problems that faced the global community. Some had the sense that history had effectively ended; the last remaining great ideological conflict had been resolved in victory for the Western democratic and economic model. The future therefore held an increasingly rapid adoption by the rest of the world of this model as the standard for global peace and prosperity.[20] The global integration of economic activity and the apparent trend towards democratization were both seen as great stabilizers, promising a reduction in potential for future conflict.[21]

There was optimism, but there was also great uncertainty in the sense that the old Cold War model for international relations no longer held true; what would be the world paradigm on which to base an effective foreign policy? The search for a new model of global politics led to a number of proposals. Some posited that the pressing issue was the conflict between world integration (globalization) and the disintegration of failing states.[22] Others identified the environment and resource scarcity as the "national security

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[19] Mrs. Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, *Idealism, Realism, and the Myth of Appeasement.* Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies Occasional Paper No. 9 (London: Alliance Publishers Ltd, 1984), 18.

[20] Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

[21] For a good discussion on the notion that liberal and democratic liberalization promote peace, see Fareed Zakaria, "Is Realism Finished?" *The National Interest* Winter 1992/1993, 21-32. A critic of these assertions, Zakaria points out that the same claims were made about Europe in 1913.

[22] Benjamin R. Barber, Jihad vs McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism are Reshaping the World (New York: Ballantine Books, 1999).

issue of the 21st century."[23] In a particularly controversial article, the political scientist Samuel P. Huntington argued that the most significant factor in the next world order would be conflict between major civilizations.[24]

Added to the uncertainty as to the how the world order would manifest itself was a growing belief that it was not just the end of the Cold War which was making the old model irrelevant. Some argued that the traditional role of states was increasingly obsolete. The Westphalian era of states, both as principle players in international affairs, and as sovereign entities whose internal affairs were not to be interfered with, seemed to be ending. The UN Secretary wrote: "it is undeniable that the centuries old doctrine of absolute and exclusive sovereignty no longer applies. A major intellectual requirement of our time is to rethink the question of sovereignty."[25] Increasingly, the forces of 'globalization' were assailing the concept of states as distinct and independent political entities.[26] As well, there was a growing acceptance that the international community could legitimately intervene in a state's internal affairs.[27] While the political system still divided the world into independent states, the economic system was increasingly global and independent of states; this represented a fundamental conflict between these two world systems.[28]

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[23] Robert D. Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy," *The Atlantic Monthly* 273, No.2 (February 1994): 44-76. See also Michael T. Klare, "The New Geography of Conflict," *Foreign Affairs* 80, No. 3, (September/October 2001).

[24] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). Huntington originally published his premise in a similarly titled article in the summer 1993 edition of *Foreign Affairs,* and was widely criticized. Since 9/11 some have said that he has been fully vindicated.

[25] Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "Empowering the United Nations," *Foreign Affairs* No. 71 (winter 1992/93), 98.

[26] See for example, Barber, *Jihad Vs McWorld…*, 295.

[27] Henry Kissinger, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy…,* 21-22.

[28] *Ibid,* 217.

It was in this context that the United States made, not for the first time in their history, the "journey from idealism to pragmatism."[29] From the bright perspective of post-Cold War optimism, values un-tempered by reconciliation with "the compelling ends of national self interest" led to disillusionment and a search for the appropriate balance between the two.

[29] William Hyland, *Clinton's World: Remaking American Foreign Policy* (Westport, CT.: Praeger Publishers, 1999), 152.

Two Models for International Relations

Any model for such a complex system as international relations will inevitably fail to constitute an exhaustive and precise description of every potential outcome, but models are both useful and necessary in gaining a broad understanding.[30] In his book, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace,* Hans J. Morgenthau noted that "[t]he history of modern political thought is the story of a contest between two schools that differ fundamentally in their conception of the nature of man, society, and politics."[31] These opposing views are represented in the terms *realism* and *idealism;* interests and values based models, respectively, for the forces that drive international relations.

Realism

Realism has its basis in the philosophy of Thomas Hobbes, according to whom Mankind is naturally rapacious and self-serving. Altruism is not a natural condition; competition is.[32] Of the realist philosophy, Morgenthau wrote:

> [it holds] that the world, imperfect as it is from the rational point of view, is the result of forces inherent in human nature. To improve the world, one must work with those forces, not against them. This being inherently a world of opposing interests, and of conflict among them, moral principles can never be fully realized, but must at least be approximated through the ever temporary balancing of interests and the ever precarious settlement of conflicts. This school then, sees in a system of checks and balances a universal principle for all pluralistic societies. It appeals to historic precedent rather than to abstract principles, and aims at the realization of the lesser evil rather than the absolute good.[33]

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[30] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order…*, 29-30.

[31] Hans J. Morgenthau, quoted in Robert J. Myers, *U.S. Foreign Policy in the 21st Century: The Relevance of Realism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1999), 11.

[32] Robert D. Kaplan, *Warrior Politics: Why Leadership Demands a Pagan Ethos* (New York: Random House, 2002), 81.

[33] Hans J. Morgenthau, quoted in Robert J. Myers, *U.S. Foreign Policy in the 21st Century…*, 11-12.

Realism, stemming from the German *Realpolitik* - "foreign policy based on calculations of power and the national interest" - is an application of this philosophical view to international relations.[34] The key elements of realism are:

- the self-interest of states is the principle motivation for action;
- states exist in a unregulated system of competition (anarchy). Since the unit of political will and military power is the state, there is no effective higher authority to regulate their actions;
- the assumption that all other states will ultimately follow these two principles will best enable a state to determine its own best policy; and
- War is the natural outcome of the competition between states – military power is thus a principle currency of international politics.[35]

Idealism

Idealism is borne out of the 18th century Enlightenment, when philosophers such as Emanuel Kant (1724-1804) proposed a series of limits on states' actions, and emphasized that states should be subject to the same moral code as humans.[36] Of this values-based approach to foreign policy, Morgenthau wrote:

> [it] believes that a rational and moral political order, derived from universally valid abstract principles, can be achieved here and now. It assumes the essential goodness and infinite malleability of human nature, and blames the failure of the social order to measure up to rational standards on lack of knowledge and understanding, obsolescent social institutions, or the depravity of certain isolated individuals or groups. It trusts on education, reform, and the sporadic use of force to remedy these defects.[37]

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[34] Kissinger, *Diplomacy,* 137.

[35] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1979) 117.

[36] Will and Ariel Durant, *The Story of Civilization Vol. X: Rousseau and Revolution* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1967), 547-548.

[37] Hans J. Morgenthau, quoted in Robert J. Myers, *U.S. Foreign Policy in the 21st Century*.., 11.

Principal idealist concepts are:

- while states are the principal actors in international relations, their actions are governed by internal factors. They have a moral characteristic; they can be 'good' or 'bad';[38]
- considerations about power are not generally significant in defining a state's motivation to act. Nations can conduct themselves according to "idealistic ends and motives that transcend their selfish interests;"[39]
- war, and the struggle for power, are aberrations, a failure of states to act reasonably. [40] War is *caused* by something: religion, monarchies, capitalism, communism, nationalism, etc. War is not simply the result of a quest for power for its own sake – to believe so would be to deny the essential goodness of man;[41]
- security can be enhanced by the spread of democracy. This is often called the theory of democratic or liberal peace: democracies do not fight each other;[42] and
- peace can therefore be maintained by the subscription of democratic nations to collective security and the rule of international law.[43]

Realism is perhaps the more objective of the two models because it is founded more on careful analysis of the way mankind does behave as opposed to how he ought

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[38] Fareed Zakaria, "Is Realism Finished?" *The National Interest,* Winter 1992/1993, 21-32.

[39] Osgood, *Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations…*, 8.

[40] John J. Mearhsheimer, "Liberal Talk, Realist Thinking". *University of Chicago Magazine* 94, no. 3 (February 2002) [journal on line] available from http://magazine.uchicago.edu/0202/features/. Accessed 11 November 2002.

[41] Zakaria, "Is Realism Finished?" 21-32.

[42] For opposing views of the validity of the Democratic peace see John M. Owen, "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace." *International Security* Vol. 19, No. 2 (Fall 1994), 87-125; and in the same issue, Christopher Layne, "Kant or Cant: The Myth of the Democratic Peace," 5-49.

[43] *Ibid.*

to.[44] Realists tend to concern themselves not so much with how states say they will act, as with their potential to act.[45] Kissinger reflected this outlook in noting the shock of the appeasement camp at the outbreak of the Second World War: "those who relied on [Germany's] intentions suddenly found themselves face-to-face with its capabilities."[46] Realists do not advocate an amoral view of the world; they simply observe that their model for international relations has historically proven more accurate. They reject the idealist view that a state can act within the same moral framework that is imposed upon humans, particularly if this implies action contrary to the national interest. Will and Ariel Durant, in *The Lessons of History,* the summation of their 11-volume study, *The Story of Civilization,* were forced to conclude, "the state has our instincts without our restraints."[47]

Realism and idealism do not offer "normative guides" for conducting foreign policy, but simply differing explanations for "how the world works."[48] But since these models do represent opposing views of the world, they are reflected in the choices that a government makes in determining foreign policy. The application of either realist or idealist views in their purest sense pose significant problems for American leadership. With its moralist and idealist underpinnings, America has traditionally eschewed a purely realist approach to foreign policy.[49] America has had its greatest success abroad when its foreign policy has contained strong idealist motives - participation in World War II, the creation of the United Nations and the Marshall Plan were all based in great part on

[44] Kaplan *Warrior Politics…,* 110.
[45] Osgood, *Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations…,* 9.
[46] Kissinger, *Diplomacy,* 818.
[47] Will and Ariel Durant, *The Lessons of History* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1968), 81.
[48] Zakaria, "Is Realism Finished?" *The National Interest* (Winter 1992/1993) 21-32.
[49] *Ibid*.

idealist goals.[50] But a purely idealist approach to foreign policy has also led to a depressing cycle: "intense hope and activity abroad followed by morose withdrawal once it became apparent that hope and activity were unlikely to remake the world."[51] Kissinger has described the relationship between moral principle and foreign policy: "Moral principles are universal and timeless. Foreign policy is bounded by circumstance; it is as Bismark noted, 'the art of the possible,' or 'the science of the relative.'"[52]

It is useful to consider realism and idealism as two extremes of a continuum; on the left, excessive idealism leads to disillusionment and isolationism, while on the right, realism leads to unilateralism and a competition for world hegemony, which leads to 'stagnation.'[53] Most authoritative writers on foreign policy agree that the most effective foreign policy will always take some appropriate balance between idealism and realism, between "values and necessity."[54]

In his book, *Ideals and Self Interest in America's Foreign relations,* Robert E. Osgood noted that Americans have too frequently overestimated the importance of idealism and underestimated that of realism in determining foreign policy. He concluded: "The pursuit of ideals is, in the long run, contingent upon their compatibility with the most compelling ends of national self interest."[55] In its effort to implement the 'New World Order,' the U.S. administration, particularly under President Clinton, would have done well to consider this admonition carefully.

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[50] James S. Sutterlin, *The Imperative of Idealism,* The 1997 John W. Holmes Memorial Lecture (Academic Council of the United Nations System, 1997). ISBN 1-880660-13-X.

[51] Robert D. Kaplan, *The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the Post Cold War* (New York: Random House, 2000),137-138.

[52] Kissinger, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy…*, 258.

[53] See for example Stanley R. Sloan, *The U.S. Role in the 21st Century World: Toward a New Consensus?* Headline Series 314 (New York: Foreign Policy Association, Inc., 1997)50. Also Kissinger, *Does America Need A Foreign Policy…,*286.

[54] Kissinger, *Diplomacy,* 812.

[55] Osgood, *Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations,*16.

The New World Order

The end of the Cold War became a reality with the collapse of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989. The Wall's collapse was part of a process that had commenced some years earlier and ended with the formal dissolution of the Soviet Union on December 8, 1991. The victory of the West over the Soviet Union inspired both an outburst of optimism, and a fundamental change in direction for American foreign policy. In March 1990, Secretary of State James Baker addressed the World Affairs Council:

> Beyond containment lies democracy. The time of sweeping away the old dictators is passing fast; the time of building up the new democracies has arrived. That is why President Bush has defined our new mission to be the promotion and consolidation of democracy. It is a task that fulfills both American ideals and American interests…America's ideals are the conscience of our actions. Our power is the instrument to turn those ideals into reality. Our foreign policy, our understanding of other nations, is the blueprint for the job. As we enter a new era of democracy, the old arguments of idealism versus realism must be replaced by idealism plus realism.[56]

Idealism plus realism yes, but where should the balance lie? While the Secretary of State was talking of a new mission to promote democracy worldwide, the U.S. Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney commissioned a group of his advisors to come up with a grand strategy for American foreign policy. This group, consisting of the Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, Cheney's Chief of Staff Lewis Libby, and foreign policy advisor Eric Edelman, produced a briefing for Cheney which was to define the 'hawkish' extreme of the debate on future American policy. They outlined a 'one power' view of American hegemony and unilateralism - the primary goal for American foreign policy would be to prevent the challenge to U.S. hegemony by any other nation. General Colin Powell, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, presented a competing and far

[56] James Baker, United States Secretary of State. *Democracy and Foreign Policy.* Address to World Affairs Council, Dallas, March 1990. Transcript available online from http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/facts/democrac/61.htm. Accessed 12 January 2003.

more restrained view of American engagement. Their briefings were received by Cheney and subsequently presented in condensed form to President George H.W. Bush. Bush had planned to give a major foreign policy address on 2 August 1990, but it was superseded by the Iraqi attack on Kuwait.[57]

Bush's decisiveness in acting forcefully to repel the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait galvanized the international community. Bush had been considered a 'status quo' president, a realist, highly experienced in foreign affairs, but lacking the inspiration of his predecessor, Ronald Reagan.[58] But in the aftermath of victory, his address to a joint session of Congress on 6 March 1991, clearly reflected an idealist perspective:

> Now we can see a new world coming into view. A world in which there is a very real prospect of a new world order. In the words of Winston Churchill, a world in which 'the principles of justice and fair play protect the weak against the strong…' A world where the United Nations, freed from cold war stalemate, is poised to fulfill the historic vision of its founders. A world in which freedom and respect for human rights find a home among all nations.[59]

Bush's 'New World Order' was subsequently subjected to the same criticism that had attended the original expression of the Truman Doctrine of Containment in 1947: it was accused of being vague, abstract, and lacking specifics.[60] But Bush had made, inherent in the 'New World Order' speech, an idealist commitment: who, if not America, was going to enforce the "principles of justice and fair play?" In August 1991, Bush's release of his first National Security Strategy seemed to answer the question explicitly: America would accept the "pivotal and inescapable" responsibility to lead the New

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[57] Nicholas Lemann, "The Next World Order." *The New Yorker,* April, 2002.

[58] William Schneider, "The In-Box President," *The Atlantic Monthly,* January 1990. Available online at www.theatlantic.com/issues/90jan/bush1.htm . Accessed 11 March 2003. See also Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson, *The Imperial Temptation: The New World Order and America's Purpose* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1992) 22.

[59] President George Bush, *The World After the Persian Gulf War.* Address given before a joint session of congress, 6 March, 1991. Available online at http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/papers/1991/91030600.html. Accessed April 5 2003.

[60] Tucker and Hendrikson, *The Imperial Temptation,* 32.

World Order through an invigorated and effective United Nations.[61] One admirer wrote that Bush had effectively balanced realist and idealist traditions:

> Bush's vision of foreign policy embraces universal aspirations and military force. It is an authentic offspring of both traditions, but one from which each parent would have recoiled. It offends the Hamilton-Lodge tradition by virtue of its universalism; it offends the Jefferson-Wilson tradition by virtue of its reliance on force. Bush's vision combines the outlook and institutions necessitated by a global challenge to the nation's security and purpose with circumstances altogether different from those which justified the initial response.[62]

But would the pursuit of this universal aspiration, in the long run, be compatible with the "most compelling ends of national self interest?"[63] Some pined for a situation where America could become a "normal country in normal times." The London-based Economist predicted an American return to isolationism.[64]

The Presidential Election of 1992

In the run up to the presidential election of 1992, the Bush administration found its foreign policy challenged both from all sides. Isolationists such as Patrick Buchanan argued against American involvement in multilateralism.[65] The idealists, led by Clinton, strenuously criticized the Bush administration's inaction over the deepening crisis in Yugoslavia: "Once again the administration is turning its back on violations of basic human rights and our own democratic values."[66] Others trumpeted the realist view: "the outcome of the fighting (in Yugoslavia) will not have a significant impact on the

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[61] The White House, The National Security Strategy of the United States. August 1991 (Washington D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991).

[62] Tucker and Hendrikson, *The Imperial Temptation,* 191.

[63] Osgood, *Ideals and Self Interest in America's Foreign Relations,* 16.

[64] Hyland, *Clinton's World…,* 3.

[65] *Ibid,* 17. See also Lemann, *The Next World Order.*

[66] William Shawcross, Deliver Us from Evil: Peacekeepers, Warlords, and a World of Endless Conflict (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 83-84.

European, much less the global balance of power, and therefore, does not warrant U.S. action."[67] Emboldened by the success of the Gulf War, Cheney's hawks (Wolfowitz, Libby, Edelman) put forward their 1990 brief in the frame of a draft Policy Directive, specifying a new world order based explicitly on global hegemony. Germany and Japan, in particular, were to be blocked from competing with American power.[68] Commenting on the challenge to find a balance, one observer commented that America needed to "thread its way between an overly brutal *realpolitik* and an unworkable idealism."[69] Notwithstanding the aspirations spelled out in the 1991 National Security Strategy, Bush was very wary of the dangers of intervention abroad, but also warned against isolationism.[70] Defending his New World Order a year earlier, Bush had said:

> I'm not talking here of a blueprint that will govern the conduct of nations or some supernatural structure or institution. The New World Order does not mean surrendering our national sovereignty or forfeiting our interests. It really describes a responsibility imposed by our successes…We also recognized that the Cold War's end didn't deliver us into an era of perpetual peace. As old threats recede, new threats emerge. The quest for the New World Order is, in part, a challenge to keep the dangers of disorder at bay.[71]

In the end it was Governor Clinton's stand on domestic issues that won him the presidency. But his remarks on foreign policy had been, with few exceptions, pure idealism. On 1 April 1992, in his remarks to the Foreign Policy Association, Clinton had

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[67] Ted Galen Carpenter, "Foreign Policy Masochism: The Campaign for U.S. Intervention in Yugoslavia." Cato Institute Foreign Policy Briefing No 19, 1 July 1992. Available online at http://www.cato.org/pubs/fpbriefs/fpb-019es.html . Accessed 12 March 2003.

[68] Hyland, *Clinton's World…,*10-11.

[69] Francis Fukuyama, "The Beginning of Foreign Policy," *The New Republic,* August 17 1992. Quoted in Hyland, *Clinton's World…,* 4.

[70] In a speech Texas A&M, Bush warned against a retreat to isolationism. See note 22 to Jonathan G. Clarke, *Present at the Re-Creation: The Need for a Rebirth of American Foreign Policy,* Cato Institute Policy Analysis 191, 31 March 1993. Available online at http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa-191.html Accessed 12 March 2003.

[71] George Bush, Remarks at Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery Alabama, April 13, 1991. Available online at http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/papers/1991/91041300.html Accessed 12 march 2003.

said: "I believe it is time for America to lead a global alliance for democracy as united and steadfast as the global alliance that defeated communism."[72] In one of his last remarks on foreign policy as President, Bush sounded a note of caution, addressing the issue of balancing interests and idealism:

> We need not respond by ourselves to each and every outrage of violence. The fact that America can act does not mean that it must. A nation's sense of idealism need not be at odds with its interests. Nor does principle displace prudence.[73]

In Yugoslavia, Radovan Karadzic was promising a "new Vietnam" to those who would intervene. Somalia seemed to have the potential to vindicate the New World Order at greatly reduced risk.[74] On December 4, 1992, just over a month before handing the reins to Clinton, Bush officially announced the U.S intervention in Somalia, promising a short engagement.[75] Bush had handed Clinton his first trial.

The Clinton Team

In terms of foreign policy, Clinton's inaugural address was unabashedly idealist, multilateralist, and globalist. In it, he stated that,

> [t]oday, a generation raised in the shadows of the Cold War assumes new responsibilities in a world warmed by the sunshine of freedom but threatened still by ancient hatreds and new plagues…There is no longer a clear division between what is foreign and what is domestic. The world economy, the world environment, the world AIDS crises, the world arms race: they affect us all…When our vital interests are challenged or the will and conscience of the international community is defied, we will act with peaceful diplomacy whenever possible, with force when necessary…But our greatest strength is the power of our ideas, which are still new in many lands. Across the world we see them embraced, and we rejoice. Our hopes, our hearts our hands are with those on

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[72] Hyland, *Clinton's World…,*4

[73] Hyland, *Clinton's World…,*9.

[74] Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil..,*84-85. See also Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 285-286.

[75] Ted Galen Carpenter, *Setting a Dangerous Precedent in Somalia.* Cato Institute Policy Briefing No. 20, December 18, 1992. Available online at http://www.cato.org/pubs/fpbriefs/fpb-020.html. Accessed 12 March 2003.

> every continent who are building democracy and freedom. Their cause is America's cause.[76]

Clinton was the first president of the post cold war era; the first president whose "formative political experience had occurred as an activist in the Vietnam protest movement."[77] He was openly disdainful of the role of power and its place in international relations, remarking in 1992, that "the cynical calculus of pure power politics is ill suited to a new era."[78] Clinton even went so far as to make regular apologies for America's *Realpolitik* during the Cold War.[79] But the degree to which, over the course of his tenure, he turned from a pure idealist to something which at times approached pure realism has been called "the central irony" of his foreign policy record.[80]

Clinton brought to the administration a team of committed idealists. Warren Christopher, the new Secretary of State, who had served as Deputy under Cyrus Vance for President Carter, was a strong believer in the 'democratic peace' and multilateralism through a reformed United Nations.[81] Strobe Talbott, Special Ambassador, and Anthony Lake, National Security Advisor, were self-professed 'Neo-Wilsonians.' Both advocated a foreign policy based on the promotion of democracy and human rights. Each agreed that American foreign policy need not confine itself to relations between nations, but could legitimately concern itself with a nation's internal affairs and character. "A major challenge to our thinking, our policies and our international institutions in this era,"

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[76] William J. Clinton, Inaugural Address of the United States President, January 20 1993. Available on line at http://www.law.ou.edu/hist/clinton.html. Accessed 15 March 2003.

[77] Kissinger, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy…*,251.

[78] Stephen M. Walt, "Two Cheers for Clinton's Foreign Policy." *Foreign Affairs* 79, No. 2 (March/April 2000): 63-79.

[79] Kissinger, *Does America need a Foreign Policy…*,251.

[80] Stephen M. Walt, "Two Cheers for Clinton's Foreign Policy." *Foreign Affairs* 79, No. 2 (March/April 2000): 63-79.

[81] Warren Christopher, "America's Leadership, America's Opportunity." *Foreign Policy* No. 98 (Spring 1995): 7-26.

remarked Lake, "is the fact that most conflicts are taking place *within* rather than *among* nations (original emphasis)"[82] Talbott blamed the hawks for extending the cold war and mused openly about cutting back on NATO. Madeleine Albright, as the new U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations preached "assertive multilateralism" and nation building. The Clinton team thus placed a heavy moral component on foreign policy. The spreading of democracy, promotion of human rights, and the determination to act within a multilateral framework, albeit as the leader, were key components of their philosophy. Talbott called it "moralpolitik"[83]

The foreign policy of the Clinton administration was based on three 'pillars': building American prosperity, modernizing America's armed services, and promoting democracy and human rights abroad. The first, 'building American prosperity', was a reflection of the administration's fundamental premise that 'foreign and domestic policy are inseparable.' The second reflected not only a requirement to rethink the U.S. military for something other than a cataclysmic war against the Soviet Union, but also the administration's commitment to working through the UN to "contain and, more important, to prevent" ethnic conflicts. The third pillar, promoting democracy and human rights, was portrayed both in terms of America's "deepest ideals," and in terms of enhanced security following the theory of democratic peace: "history has shown that a world of more democracies is a safer world." [84]

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[82] Anthony Lake, "From Containment to Enlargement," Remarks to the John Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, Washington D.C., 21 September 1993. Available on line at http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/lakedoc.html Accessed 15 March, 2003.

[83] Strobe Talbott, "Post Victory Blues," *Foreign Affairs: America and the World 1991/1992* Vol. 71, No. 1, 53-69.

[84] Warren Christopher, *Securing U.S. Interests While Supporting Russian Reform,* Address before the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, March 22, 1993. Available on line at http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dossec/1993/9303/930322dossec.html Accessed 17 March 2003.

As the first truly post-Cold War administration took power, the idealists were in the ascendant. The realists (or neo-conservatives; Lake called them 'Neo-Know-Nothings') were blamed for America's dalliance with a return to isolationism, and accused of betraying America's "underlying purpose."[85] But the idealists were soon to come face to face with the challenges of the period. In the run-up to the election, the political scientist Joseph S. Nye Junior had made a prescient warning: "[T]he new world order has begun. It is messy, evolving, and not susceptible to simple formulation or manipulation…. The United States will have to combine both traditional power and liberal institutional approaches if it is to pursue effectively its national interest."[86]

Somalia and the Beginning of Disillusionment

In *The Democratic Peace and Contemporary U.S. Military Interventions,* Mark Peceny has highlighted the dilemma which liberal democratic governments face in responding on humanitarian grounds where no direct interests are involved. The very same liberal culture which rushes governments to 'do something' about the evils of the world also recoil from the cost of such action.[87] During the 1990's the United States struggled to define where it should intervene on humanitarian grounds. It entered Somalia where no direct interests were concerned, found its commitment wanting, and withdrew, bloodied and embarrassed internationally. It avoided involvement in Rwanda with determination, citing a lack of direct interest, and was condemned for failing to stop a

[85] See Anthony Lake, "From Containment to Enlargement;" Strobe Talbott, "Post Victory Blues;" and David C. Hendrickson, "The Renovation of American Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 71 No. 2 Spring 1992, 48-63.

[86] Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "What New World Order?" *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 71 No. 2, Spring 1992, 83-96.

[87] Peceny, Mark. *The Democratic Peace and Contemporary U.S. Military Interventions.* Conference Proceedings of the International Studies Association's 41st Annual Convention, 2000. Available on line at http://www.ciaonet.org/isa/perm01. Accessed March 22, 2003.

preventable genocide. In Bosnia, the U.S. avoided action until moral outrage, domestically and internationally, combined with, and indeed led to, a direct threat to U.S. interests. For America, the problem of humanitarian intervention demonstrated, perhaps better than any other issue, both the imperative and danger of idealism.

Somalia had not originally been intended to be the first test of Albright's new assertive multilateralism. Bush had reluctantly agreed to the intervention of U.S. forces to halt a famine, and had expressly indicated American intentions to withdraw as soon as practical.[88] Under Clinton, and through Albright's encouragement, both the UN mandate and the degree of U.S. involvement became greatly expanded. On March 26, 1993, UN Security Council Resolution 814 was adopted, calling for "the rehabilitation of the political institutions and economy of Somalia." Albright remarked "with this resolution we will embark on an unprecedented enterprise aimed at nothing less than the restoration of an entire country as a proud, functioning and viable member of the community of nations."[89] The U.S. had gone from a limited response to a famine, to a full-blown effort at nation building. But events were to reveal that, in the absence of significant national interests, the political will to support this effort, particularly with American lives, was simply not there.

In retrospect, the degree to which the Clinton administration seemed to be willing to embrace the United Nations is nothing short of remarkable. Early in the mandate, the administration set out new proposed guidelines for U.S. involvement in UN peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations. Presidential Review Document Thirteen (PRD 13), a

[88] Jane Boulden, *Peace Enforcement: The United Nations Experience in Congo, Somalia, and Bosnia* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2001), 58.

[89] John R. Bolton, "Wrong Turn in Somalia," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 73 No. 1 (January/February 1994), 56-66.

draft only, called for a robust U.N operational headquarters, intelligence sharing, and even lifted the traditional prohibition on placing U.S. troops under UN command. The policy outlined conditions in which the United States would support peacekeeping missions. The list included humanitarian disasters whether through civil strife or natural disaster, and threats to democratically elected governments. Albright commented that, "the time has come to commit the political, intellectual and financial capital that UN peace keeping and our security deserve."[90]

As the summer of 1993 progressed, American involvement in Somalia came under increasing domestic criticism. After an attack on peacekeepers left 23 Pakistani soldiers dead on June 5, and following a UNSCR authorizing the arrest of those responsible, U.S. forces became closely involved in the search. This was heavily criticized at home, where Congress recalled the previous president's commitment to a short-term mission for humanitarian assistance, and demanded a report from the President on the status of the intervention. Republican Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia called on July 14 for the Americans to come home.[91] The Secretary of Defense, Les Aspin, defended the policy on purely idealist grounds: "we went there to save a people and we succeeded. We are staying there now to help those same people rebuild their nation." On 22 September, with the U.S governments encouragement, the UN committed to a "nation building" presence until 1995.[92]

[90]R. Jeffrey Smith and Julia Preston, "United States Plans Wider Role in UN Peace Keeping," *Washington Post*, June 18 1993.

[91] See Hyland, *Clinton's World…,* 56.

[92] Bolton, "Wrong Turn in Somalia," 64.

Three Americans were killed when a Black Hawk helicopter was shot down on 25 September.[93] One week later, On October 3, 1993, eighteen U.S. soldiers were killed the capital city of Mogadishu during an abortive attempt to arrest General Aideed, a factional leader in the split United Somali Congress, wanted with respect to the attacks of 5 June. Media and Congress responded with prolonged recrimination and calls for withdrawal. One Senator remarked: "Americans by the dozen are paying with their lives and limbs for a misplaced policy on the altar of some fuzzy multilateralism."[94] Days later, President Clinton announced that all U.S. troops would withdraw by the end of March 1994.[95]

The experiment with nation building in Somalia had come to an abrupt end. It was later said that "any small growth of idealism was trampled on the streets of Mogadishu."[96] So far as humanitarian intervention and nation building was concerned, it seemed that the limit of idealism had been defined: idealist goals abroad were worth some economic sacrifice, but they did not merit the loss of American soldiers.[97]

The effect of Somalia was a wholesale and immediate retreat on the part of the Clinton administration from further ventures in humanitarian intervention by military means. But the idealist views of the Clinton administration would continue to be reflected in Rwanda and Bosnia. In both cases they saw the cause of the conflict as ethnic hatred. Certainly this element was there in large measure, but the idealists saw the source of conflict as something that could be dealt with through reason and negotiation, a 'bringing together' of both sides. This view failed to appreciate that, fundamentally, political leaders in both regions were exploiting hatred as a means to gain power.

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[93] *Ibid,*65.
[94] Hyland, *Clinton's World,* 58.
[95] Boulden, *Peace enforcement…*, 71-72
[96] Sutterlin, *The Imperative of Idealism*.
[97] Kissinger, *Does America need a Foreign Policy…,* 258.

Tragically, the collapse of American resolve in Somalia ruled out the only measure to which these leaders would respond: the credible threat of military force.

PDD 25 and Rwanda

One of the first direct policy results of Somalia was the rejection of the 'aggressive multilateralism' posture of PDD 13, in favour of a more cautious approach to multilateralism: 'stringent conditionality'.[98] The new approach, issued in Presidential Decision Directive 25 (PDD 25) in May 1994, placed so many prohibitions on intervention so as to effectively prevent action. Factors to be considered before supporting peace operations in the UN Security Council included a requirement to determine whether UN involvement advanced U.S. interests. Before U.S. troops could be committed, a list of additional factors had to be considered included, among others:

- are risks to America personnel acceptable;
- is U.S. participation necessary for the success of the mission; and
- is intervention supported both domestically and in Congress?[99]

The first real test of PDD 25 began on October 5, 1993, with the authorization of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR).[100] Although PDD 25 was not signed until after that decision, the sentiment which went into its drafting was evident in an American decision not to deploy troops; the U.S. government concluded that

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[98]Stanley R. Sloan, *The U.S. Role in the 21st Century World: Toward a New Consensus?* Headline Series 314 (New York: Foreign Policy Association, Inc., 1997), 28.

[99]Power, *A Problem from Hell…*,342. Power writes that an opponent to the restrictive policy remarked that it aimed for "zero degree of involvement, zero degree of risk, and zero degree of pain and confusion."

[100] Bruce D. Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda: the Dynamics of Failure* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Reiner Publishers, 2001), 109. See also Sloan, *The U.S. Role in the 21st Century World…*,29.

Rwanda simply did not involve any direct U.S. interests.[101] In fact, the process alone by which a UN mission was approved for Rwanda reflected the application of national interests, and not ideals, within the UN Security Council. It was France, who had long-standing interests in the region, which argued for a peacekeeping mission. Russia, pre-occupied with its own problems, was concerned with Georgia. The U.S was concerned with Haiti. In a straightforward case of barter, these three powers supported each other in obtaining their individual ends.[102] The very means by which UNAMIR was authorized thus reflected realism in action at the UN.

On January 11, 1994, a fax from Major General Romeo Dallaire, commander of UNAMIR forces in Rwanda, warned of explicit plans for genocide, including a plan to kill peacekeepers to cause their withdrawal.[103] But while the experience of Somalia played an important part in the American decision to refrain from committing military forces to UNAMIR, idealist sentiment also contributed to the failure to appreciate that the threat of genocide was real. The administration saw it as a dispute to be resolved by reason, a misunderstanding, something to be worked out by 'both sides'. It didn't see the dispute as a political tool for gaining power – it had to be 'ancient tribal hatreds.' The U.S. Ambassador later recalled: "We were naïve policy optimists I suppose. The fact that negotiations can't work is almost not one of the options open to people who care about peace. We were looking for the hopeful signs, not the dark signs…"[104]

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[101] Power, *A Problem from Hell…*,342.

[102] Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda…,*109.

[103] Fax from Major General Romeo Dallaire, Force Commander, UNAMIR, to MGEN Maurice Baril, "Request for Protection for Informant" 11 Jan 94. Available on line at http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/rw011194.pdf. Accessed April 25, 2003. Later a participant in the Rwandan government's organized assault on the majority Tutsi population would remark that the plan to kill peacekeepers was a direct result of Somalia, adding "we watch CNN to, you know." See Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda…,*120.

[104] Powers, *A Problem from Hell…*,356.

When, in April 1994, the genocide began, the U.S. administration, along with most other members of the international community, worked strenuously to avoid getting dragged into another overseas intervention that did not serve its interests, even going so far as to prohibit its diplomats from using the word 'genocide.'[105] The Secretary of State continued to seek "reconciliation among the parties."[106]

The U.S. did eventually send 200 soldiers to the region, some months after the genocide had run its course. But the administration was careful to point out that this was strictly for humanitarian delivery of aid, not for intervention. "Let me be clear about this," stated the President, "any deployment of U.S. troops in Rwanda would be for the immediate and sole purpose of humanitarian relief, not peacekeeping."[107] It is clear that the fear of entrapment contributed significantly to the failure to act early in Rwanda. But this alone did not explain why the Americans had not understood the significance of the warnings they and others had been given. True to their idealist view of the world, those in the administration charged with the problem simply did not understand the true nature of the danger. The result was a humanitarian disaster that could have been prevented with a very moderate commitment of military force.[108] Clinton subsequently apologized somewhat abjectly to the Rwandans for the U.S. failure to intervene. But in the apparent

[105] Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda…,*123.

[106] Secretary of State Warren Christopher instructions to U.S. Missions, "Talking Points on UNAMIR Withdrawal," April 15, 1994. SECSTATE 150428Z APR 94 Available on line at http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/rw041594.pdf. Accessed 25 April 2003.

[107] Powers, *A Problem from Hell…*, 381

[108] The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict determined that 5000 troops properly mandated and deployed into Rwanda could have prevented the slaughter of half a million people. See Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, *Preventing Deadly Conflict: Final Report* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, 1997), 6.

absence of involved interests, and with the memories of the debacle in Somalia still fresh, a moral argument for intervention had been insufficient to spur America to action.[109]

Problems with Congress

Clinton had frequently claimed that the "line between domestic and foreign policy [had] evaporated;" ironically, in some areas he was proved correct in ways which he could not have wished for.[110] The accession to Congress of a Republican majority in 1994 made any attempts by Clinton to further an idealist agenda extremely difficult.[111] The new members of Congress brought with them a disdain for foreign policy which one observer called "almost gleeful."[112] The election brought to power some of the most vehement opponents of multilateralism; Senator Jesse Helms was an avowed unilateralist who came to chair the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Republican Congressional leader Newt Gingrich proposed a "Contract with America;" although mainly focussed on domestic issues, it called for a National Security Restoration Act. Implicit in the foreign policy aspects of the Contract with America was a strong antipathy to the UN and what Gingrich called the "feckless multi-lateralism" of the Clinton administration.[113] The proposed act would "restrict deployment of United States troops

[109] This is one of the central theme of Powers book. See also John J. Mearsheimer, "Through the Realist Lens." Interviewed 8 April 2002 by Harry Kreisler for "Conversations with History," Institute of International Studies, UC Berkely. Available online from http://globetrotter.berkely.edu.people2/mearsheimer/mearsheimer-con2.html. Accessed January 12, 2003.

[110] See for example, Lake, "From Containment to Enlargement."

[111] Chibli Mallat, *Clinton's Foreign Policy in Perspective.* "A View from the Edge," Series on the American Presidential Elections, No. 9, 5 September 2000. Available online from http://www.mallat.com/articles/foreign/20in/20perspective.htm. Accessed January 13, 2003.

[112] Stephen M. Walt, "Two Cheers for Clinton's Foreign Policy." *Foreign Affairs* 79, no. 2 (March/April 2000): 63-79.

[113] Art Pine, "GOP Bill to Change Defense, Foreign Policy Passes House." *The Tech,* February 17 1995. http://the-tech.mit.edu/V115/N4.gop/04w.html. Accessed March 28, 2003.

to missions that are in the national interest of the United States."[114] But the idealists had never argued that U.S. troops should be deployed in a fashion that was *contrary* to U.S. interests. They had argued, instead, that multi-lateral action to secure democracy and peace abroad *was* a national U.S. interest.[115] The unilateralists agreed that these were American interests; but they did not believe that they were *vital* interests, justifying American lives, and they did not want America to be the world's policeman. They were deeply distrustful of intervention of the type represented by Somalia, fearing that excessive humanitarian ventures would overextend the American military and dilute its purpose.[116] The National Security Revitalization Act, which passed the house in February 16, 1995, forbid the placing of U.S. troops under UN command, and reduced U.S funding to the organization.[117]

The act also pushed for NATO expansion into Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic.[118] The process on NATO enlargement that ensued reflected an interesting bipartisan congruence of ideals and interests. The idealists saw the accession to the organization of old Soviet satellites as a means to cement democratic gains in Eastern Europe. The realists, while supporting this goal, were interested more in strengthening the strategic position of NATO with respect to Russia.[119]

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[114] Newt Gingrich, Republican Party, "Contract with America" and accompanying "National Security Restoration Act", Available on line at http://www.house.gov/house/Contract/CONTRACT.html and http://www.house.gov/house/Contract/defenseb.txt , respectively. Accessed 24 March 2003.

[115] See for example Lake, "From Containment to Enlargement;" *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 71 No. 2 Spring 1992, 48-63.

[116] Deibel, *Clinton and Congress…*,43-47.

[117] Pine, "GOP Bill to Change Defense…"

[118] *Ibid*.

[119] Peter W. Rodman, "U.S. leadership and the Reform of western Security Institutions: NATO Enlargement and EDSP." Conference of the German Foreign Policy Association (DGAP) Berlin, 11 December, 2000. http://www.nixoncenter.org/publications/articles/12-11-00Berlin.pdf. Accessed March 17, 2003.

The failures of intervention, and the pressures from an increasingly obstreperous and difficult Congress led Clinton towards a far more pragmatic approach as his first term ended.[120] The Republicans in Congress made it their policy to impede administration initiatives, to win victories against multilateralism by whatever means possible. Efforts to tear down foreign aid programmes and other foreign policy agencies were labelled by Clinton "the most isolationist proposals to come before Congress in the last 50 years."[121]

Bosnia

It was in the context of the fallout from Somalia, and ongoing battles with Congress, that the administration faced the challenges posed by the conflict in Bosnia. How was America to respond effectively and within the constraints of its own domestic political support? The administration first attempted to deny the moral imperatives for action t 12 12had llodely prcla a lia,foallwoingae col of itsainwersts.h thig we2had to12 12fl d

Senator Bob Dole, after paying an official visit to the region in 1990, was appalled by the conditions already evident, and called for U.S. intervention, declaring: "The United States cannot sit this out on the sidelines, we have a moral obligation to take a strong stand in defence of the individual rights of Albanians and all the people of Yugoslavia."[123]

Proponents of U.S. intervention had high hopes of the new Clinton administration. They were soon to be disappointed. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's first statement on the question of Bosnia action again revealed a classic weakness of the idealist view; it assumed that parties to the conflict would respond to reason alone, and excluded the use of force. After a vivid description of the atrocities taking place, and the "crucial test" they represented to the New World Order, Christopher declared: "The United States will engage actively and directly…bringing the full weight of American diplomacy to bear…the only way to end this conflict is through negotiation."[124] The Clinton administration was going to 'talk' Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic into seeing reason. Christopher's statement was a grave disappointment to experts on the region, who believed that Milosevic would see it as a licence to continue without American interference.[125]

In fact, junior members of the State Department had been arguing strenuously for a more realist view of the situation. In an open forum the night before Christopher's speech, a foreign service veteran of the region had declared: "the conflict is a driven by a Serb bid for racial and national supremacy. As such, it can be halted, reversed and

[123] Power, *A Problem from Hell…*,253, 281-283.

[124] Secretary of State Warren Christopher, "New Steps Toward Conflict Resolution in the Former Yugoslavia," Opening Statement at a News Conference in Washington D.C., February 10, 1993 Available on line at http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dossec/1992/930210dossec.html Accessed April 10, 2003.

[125] Powell, *A Problem from Hell…*,296.

defeated *only* by military force."[126] A dissident group of twelve within the State Department wrote Christopher, arguing that the West could not prevent Milosevic by political and economic measures alone. "The result of this course," they wrote, "has been Western capitulation to Serbian aggression."[127]

Facing internal dissent and increasing bi-partisan pressure to act, the administration half-heartedly advanced a 'lift and strike' proposal.[128] The arms embargo, which was principally hurting the Bosnian Muslim cause, would be lifted, and air strikes would be used against the Serbs to slow their advance. The plan had the added appeal that it was action with out risk; it was better than both alternatives: "doing nothing or joining the fighting."[129] But those countries with peacekeepers engaged on the ground rejected such a plan. Having always been reluctant to use force, it was with a sense of relief that the U.S. administration abandoned 'lift and strike' for an alternative proposal advanced by France.[130] United Nations Security Resolution 824 instead declared the safe areas of Srebrenica, Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zepa, Gorazde, and Bihac on May 6, 1993.[131]

Despite the explicit promises made in UNSCR 824 the United States, along with many other countries engaged in the problem, were simply not willing to place at risk the number of resources and military forces which would be necessary to enforce such declarations.[132] When shelling of the city of Sarajevo in July 1993 brought calls for

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[126] Jim Hooper, Deputy Director of the Office of East Europe and Yugoslav Affairs (1989-1991), quoted in Powers, *A Problem from Hell…,* 297.

[127] Powers, *A Problem from Hell..,*301.

[128] Hyland,*Clinton's World,* 33-36.

[129] *Ibid,* 34.

[130] *Ibid,* 37.

[131] UNSCR 824. Available on line at http://www.un.org/Docs/scres/1993/scres93.htm Accessed 22 march 2003.

[132] See for example, Boulden, *Peace Enforcement…,*94-99, and Georgie Anne Geyer, *When Force Fails: Flawed Intervention,* Catigny Conference Series Special Report (Chicago: Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation, 2001), 9.

greater action, Secretary of State Warren Christopher rejected any direct U.S. involvement, adding:

> That's a tragic, tragic situation in Bosnia, make no mistake about that. It's the world's most difficult diplomatic situation, I believe. It defies any simple solution. The United States is doing all that it can consistent with our national interest. [133]

Facing growing criticism over Somalia, the U.S. had reverted to an interests-based approach to intervention. Since humanitarian intervention was, by definition, action for purposes other than a state's selfish interests, direct U.S. involvement seemed increasingly unlikely. The Serbs understood: attacks continued with renewed vigour.[134]

There was considerable protest at the administration's abandonment of its ideals, including a spate of resignations at the State Department.[135] Democratic Congressman Frank McCloskey had been pressing Christopher to recognize the existence of genocide in Bosnia. When Christopher stopped short, allowing that the events were "tantamount to genocide," but refusing to deliver a formal finding, McCloskey called for his resignation. His letter to Christopher read, in part:

> On July 21st, Secretary Christopher said this administration was doing all it could in Bosnia consistent with our national interests. The very next day, consistent with that statement, the Serbs launched one of their largest attacks ever in the 17 month old siege of Sarajevo. Last month, the Serbs resumed their shelling of Sarajevo and killed dozens more innocent civilians. Bosnian Serb terrorist leaders…were quoted in the New York Times as saying that they renewed their bloody attacks because they knew after American fiascos in Haiti and Somalia the Clinton administration would not respond. They were right. Our only response was another warning to Milosevic.[136]

Messages from the U.S. government continued to be confusing. There were allegations that the atrocities were being committed on all sides, that rather than an

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[133] Powers, *A Problem from Hell…,* 310.
[134] *Ibid,* 322.
[135] *Ibid,* 313-315.
[136] *Ibid,* 322.

organized bid for racial and national supremacy, the conflict was another ancient, insoluble problem, best left alone. After shelling of the Sarajevo market place in February 1994 left sixty-eight dead, Clinton warned of NATO bombing unless the shelling stopped. But the warnings soon went unheeded as the practice of taking UN soldiers hostage proved effective in eroding Western resolve.[137]

Srebrenica fell on July 12, 1995, with the attendant massacre of thousands.[138] The Clinton administration was subjected to a storm of outrage and scorn. The Europeans decried the lack of U.S. leadership.[139] The media were scathing. The *New Republic* wrote:

> The United States seems to be taking a sabbatical from historical seriousness, blinding itself to genocide and its consequences, fleeing the moral and practical imperatives of its own power…The choice, gentlemen, is plain. You Americanize the war or you Americanize the genocide….since the United States is the only power in the world that can stop the ethnic cleansing, the United States is responsible if ethnic cleansing continues.[140]

On July 26, under the leadership of Senator Dole, the Senate voted by a large majority to lift the arms embargo. On August 1, the House of Representatives followed suit.[141] For the administration, the possibility of the arms embargo being lifted raised the spectre of U.S. ground troops being required to cover the withdrawal of UN troops. With the Europeans decrying U.S. leadership, the credibility of NATO was at stake. Assailed from all sides, the Clinton administration was compelled to act after another shelling of

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[137] *Ibid,* 324.
[138] Boulden, *Peace Enforcement…*, 108-109.
[139] Powers, *A Problem frm Hell…,* 436.
[140] Leon Weiselter, "Accomplices to Genocide," *The New Republic,* Vol. 213, No. 6, August 7, 1995, 7.
[141] Powers, *A Problem from Hell…,*437.

Sarajevo killed and wounded over one hundred people on August 28, 1995.[142] NATO bombing of the Bosnian Serb Army commenced on August 30, and continued for three weeks. The Serb shelling of civilian enclaves ended abruptly, and a subsequent commitment to contribute 20,000 U.S. troops to a peacekeeping force led to the Dayton Peace Accords on 21 November 1995.[143]

Many painted the NATO intervention as principally a humanitarian success. Kissinger rema

The 'New Pessimism'

One critic wrote that it was "ironic that [Clinton's] performance [in the area of human rights and multilateralism] was weaker than in any other realm of foreign policy."[146] But Clinton, and his staff, had entered into office with views that realists would argue were simply untenable in the harsh realities of domestic and international politics. The experience aptly confirmed Robert Osgood's premise that "there is a fleeting and insubstantial quality of American altruism when [it is not anchored to] the balance wheel of political realism and fundamental national self interest."[147]

The disappointment that many felt with the failure of intervention during this period was reflected in the growing arguments for a more realist view of the world. The term 'new pessimism' was coined to reflect the growing sense that those with a more sombre view of the future were perhaps closer to the truth.[148] Dramatic and frightening alternatives to the New World Order were presented. One offered a convincing argument that democracy and Western liberalization was not a natural result of inevitable and inexorable human progress; it was rather the result of Western power. Worse, this power was on the decline:

> As Western power declines, the ability of the West to impose Western concepts of human rights, liberalism, and democracy on other civilizations also declines and *so does the attractiveness of those values to other societies* (emphasis added).[149]

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[146] Stephen M. Walt, "Two Cheers for Clinton's Foreign Policy." *Foreign Affairs* 79, no. 2 (March/April 2000): 63-79.

[147] Robert E. Osgood, quoted in Mathew S. Klimow, *Moral versus Practical: The Future of US Armed Humanitarian Intervention.* Martello Paper 14 (Kingston, Ontario: Centre for International Relations, Queen's University, 1996), 42.

[148] The term was coined by Charles William Maynes in 1995, quoted in Ken Booth, Ed., *Statecraft and Security: The Cold War and Beyond* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge UP, 1998), 39.

[149] Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order…,* 92.

This proposition is an anathema to American exceptionalism, which takes it for granted that American style democracy will inevitably be adopted around the world, based purely on its own inherent virtue.

Just as America's enthusiasm for multilateralism was being eroded by the lack of domestic support for risk taking where no American interests were involved, other countries around the world were beginning to make clear their objections to American hegemony. A 'multi-polar' world, where countries act in concert to restrain an otherwise dominant power, were traditional realist tactics. Russia and China openly declared such a stance, with a barb at America, after their summits of April and December 1996:

> [T]he world is far from being tranquil. Hegemonism, power politics and repeated imposition of pressure on other countries have continued to occur…a partnership of equal rights and trust between Russia and China aimed at strategic cooperation in the 21st century promotes the formation of a multi-polar world.[150]

In the European Union, there was also explicit recognition of the value of economic and monetary union in counterbalancing the preponderance of American power. While the Americans were experimenting with idealism, they were being faced with some very realist efforts to constrain their action. French Foreign minister Hubert Védrine explained his country's stance in 1997:

> Today there is one sole great power – the United States of America…this power carries in itself, to the extent that there is no counterweight, especially today, a unilateralist temptation…and the risk of hegemony…[Europe's] role is to contribute to the emergence of several poles in the world capable of constituting a factor of balance…Europe is an actor, a means of influence that is absolutely necessary for this multi-polar world to arrive.[151]

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[150] Russian-Chinese Joint statements, April 25 and December 18, 1996. Quoted in Peter W. Rodman, "Multilateralism and its Discontents," Freedom House Annual Survery 1998-99. Available on line at http://freedomhouse.org/survey99/essays/rodman.html. Accessed March 19, 2003.

[151] French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine, quoted in Rodman, "Multilateralism and its Discontents," 4.

Increasingly, China, France and Russia were coming to see the UN, not as a tool for combined action, but as a means by which to restrain America. Americans had begun the decade viewing the UN as a forum in which American leadership could be exercised and its ideals brought to fruition. Now the U.S. was beginning to recognize it as a means by which other powers could work in concert to restrain U.S. action, benevolent or not.[152] Unless America was willing to forfeit its power, sooner or later it was going to have to demonstrate a willingness to act unilaterally. United States foreign policy was going to have to find a more effective balance between ideals and interests.

A National Security Strategy - 1995

Some of the lessons of the preceding three years were evident in Clinton's first National Security Strategy, delivered to Congress in February 1995. Entitled *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement,* it held true, in its general outlook and goals, to the policies announced at the beginning of the administration.[153] But there was a growing reflection of the importance of national interests. "Never has American leadership been more essential," wrote Clinton in the preface, "We can and must make the difference through our engagement, but our involvement must be carefully tailored to serve out interests and priorities….we will therefore send American troops abroad only where our interests and our values are sufficiently at stake." The preface also contained some starkly realist confessions: "Our extraordinary diplomatic leverage to reshape existing security and economic structures and create new ones ultimately relies upon

[152] Rodman, "Multilateralism and its Discontents," 6.

[153] The White House. *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement.* February 1995 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995).

American power."[154] On the question of military forces employment, the Strategy declared that America would remain willing to take *unilateral* and decisive action in defence of its vital interests.[155] While continuing to support the development of a more effective UN operations headquarters, the Strategy indicated intent to reduce payments to the UN, and added that "the United States views peace operations as a means to support our national security strategy, not as a strategy unto itself."[156]

The Election Campaign of 1996

Three years after the debacle in Somalia, and in the midst of preparations for determined action against the Serbs in Bosnia, an August 29, 1996 poll conducted by the New York Times showed 50 percent support for Clinton's foreign policy (up from 34 percent two years previously).[157] The campaign for the Presidential election of 1996 was not, however, heavily focussed on international issues. One author summed up the domestic perception of factors affecting U.S. foreign policy of the period:

- "no threats to vital U.S. interests;
- Cold-War-leadership fatigue;
- limited tolerance for casualties;
- cautious U.S. military leadership;
- domestic pre-occupations;
- President Clinton's approach;
- diminished expectations for the UN, and

[154] The White House, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement…*, ii.
[155] *Ibid,* 12.
[156] *Ibid,* 17
[157] Hyland , *Clinton's World…,* 145, 149.

- Congressional qualms."[158]

While the general picture may have been one of disinterest with world events and the

"its fair share with others"(12 percent favoured "withdrawal from world affairs", 13 percent want to "be the pre-eminent world leader").[159] With respect to foreign policy, it was in this general context that the presidential election took place.

between "drastic neo-isolationists and hyperactive global crusaders."[160] But the most prominent Republican isolationist, Patrick Buchanan, was defeated in the primaries, and

significantly.[161] The remainder of the Republican leadership were far more internationalist in their approach.[162] The foreign policy question was more one of exactly

America's foreign policy was still values-based: America was the "indispensable nation...leading the march for peace and democracy throughout the world."[163]

Some critics said the foreign policy platform of the leading Republican contender, Robert Dole, did not present any substantive alternative to the pragmatism displayed during the latter half of Clinton's first term.[164] One view of foreign policy that did differ significantly from the approach of the Clinton administration was that of 'benevolent global hegemony.' Proposed for Dole as a Republican alternative to the administration's foreign policy, it called for a bold assertion of American power: "In a world in which peace and American security depend on American power and the will to use it, the main threat the United states faces now and in the future is its own weakness."[165] 'Benevolent Global Hegemony' drew sharp criticism: it relied too heavily on military power, it was too expensive, and perhaps most significantly, "every hegemony produces its equal and opposite reaction."[166] "Benevolent hegemony," one critic argued, "is a contradiction in terms. Such a self-conscious, self-righteous bid for global hegemony is bound to drive foreign rivals into open hostility to the U.S. and make our allies resentful and nervous."[167]

Each side worked to define the basic tenets of their proposed foreign policy. For the idealists, the national interest *was* democracy - what Strobe Talbott referred to as '*idealpolitik' as realpolitik*:

> In an increasingly interdependent world Americans have a growing stake in how other countries govern, or misgovern themselves. The larger and more close-knit the community as of nations that choose democratic forms of government, the safer and more prosperous Americans will be, since democracies are

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http://clinton6.nara.gov/1996/08/1996-08-05-president-remarks-at-gerorge-washington-university.html. Accessed March 31 2003.

[164] Hyland, *Clinton's World…,* 148.

[165] William Kristol and Robert Kagan, "Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs,* July/August 1996. http://www.ceip.org/people/kagfaff.htm. Accessed March 31, 2003.

[166] Historian Ronald Steel, quoted in Sloan, *The U.S. Role in the 21st Century world…*, 49-50.

[167] Walter A. McDougall, "Why Some Neo-Cons Are Wrong About U.S. Foreign Policy," *Foreign Policy Research Institute E-Note,* December 1997. http://www.fpri.org/nightthoughts.199712.mcdougall.neoconswrong.html Accessed March 31, 2003.

> demonstrably more likely to maintain their international commitments, less likely to engage in terrorism or wreak environmental damage, and less likely to make war on each other.[168]

On behalf of the conservatives, the Commission on America's National Interests defined national interests in four hierarchical levels of interest, in descending order from 'vital' down through 'less important, or secondary.' There were only four vital interests:

- preventing the emergence of a hostile hegemon in Europe or Asia;
- protecting allies and major global systems of trade and finance;
- preventing the presence of a hostile power on its borders or in control of the seas; and
- curbing the spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction.[169]

The Commission placed interests such as "creating or maintaining democratic governance in other states," and "enlarging democracy elsewhere or for its own sake" in the lowest priority, giving them equal priority with "balancing bilateral trade deficits."[170]

The debate on fundamental approaches to foreign policy did not extend deep into the consciousness of the American electorate. Generally, the American public perceived the U.S. as unthreatened, and interest in foreign affairs was low.[171] But when asked, people generally approved of Clinton's foreign policy. On November 5, 1996, exit polls on Clinton's election to a second term showed a 54 percent approval rating of the administration's foreign policy.

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[168] Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, "Democracy and the National Interest, *Foreign Affairs,* Vol 75 No. 1, November/December 1996, 47-63.

[169] The Commission on America's National Interests, *America's National Interests,* July 1996. http://bcsia.ksg.harvard.edu/BCSIA_content/documents/Americas_Interests.PDF Accessed March 17, 2003.

[170] *Ibid*.

[171] Clinton understood this well; for him pragmatism was mainly a matter of not getting hurt in the polls, rather than a pragmatic appreciation of the international factors of foreign policy. See Hyland, *Clinton's World*...145, 150. Also Kaplan, *Warrior Politics,* 124.

Clinton's approval rating on foreign policy had increased as he moved further away from taking risks for purely idealist ends and had become more pragmatic. With re-election, he made changes within his administration to reflect this movement. Madeleine Albright and Sandy Berger replaced secretary of State Warren Christopher and National Security Advisor Anthony Lake, respectively. Albright, moving from the UN to the State Department, abandoned "assertive multilateralism" for the "doability doctrine."[172]

A New National Security Strategy - 1997

As Clinton moved into his second term, a second National Security Strategy was produced. Entitled *A National Security Strategy for a New Century,* 'enlargement' of democracy was still one of the core objectives, after enhancing security and promoting prosperity. The strategy remained committed to engagement through multilateralism where possible, and strongly supported the work of the UN Human Rights Commission, the UN High Commission for Refugees, and the establishment of an International Criminal Court. But there were changes in the tone. There was far less emphasis on the UN role as a collective security organization or on its role in peace operations. In contrast, the strategy instead contemplated the potential requirement to lead "an ad hoc coalition that may form around a specific objective." In a classically realist statement, the Strategy added: "In general we seek a world where no critical region is dominated by a power hostile to the United States and regions of greatest importance to the U.S. are stable and at peace."[173]

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[172] Deibel, *Clinton and Congress…,* 28.

[173] The White House. *A National Security Strategy for a New Century.* May 1997. Available on line at http://www.dean.usma.edu.socs/ECON/ens/nss.html Accessed November 2002.

During the second Clinton administration, the pre-eminence of idealism would continue, albeit increasingly counterbalanced by realist views. But in Kosovo, the successful humanitarian intervention by a military alliance never conceived for such a purpose would alarm China and hasten the development of a multi-polar world of balancing powers. In Iraq, the conflicting interests of other powers would cause the U.S. to become isolated and the UN fragmented. The 'New World Order' would end where it began, in Iraq.

China

The U.S. must manage a myriad of relationships with other major and lesser powers. To look at all of them would be beyond the scope of this paper. But regarding the U.S.-China relationship alone is instructive for several reasons. The U.S-China relationship is without doubt one of the four most significant (the others being with Europe, Japan and Russia). This relationship has significant potential to affect other important U.S. relations, specifically with Japan and Russia. Finally, China is the fastest growing of the four powers, and has evoked dramatically conflicting American appreciations of its future. Following the Soviet Union's demise, some have seen China as the next great threat to the U.S. To others, it is a thriving, economic miracle moving, slowly but inevitably, towards political emancipation.[174]

The Clinton administration took the latter view of China. One of the issues on which the Clinton campaign team had attacked George Bush during the election campaign of 1992 was his reaction to human rights abuses in China. Writing on the

[174] For a good description of the general nature of the U.S. China relationship, see Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Living with China," *The National Interest,* Spring 2000, 5-21.

subject of American dealings with China, Strobe Talbott accused the administration of cynical realism:

> [Bush's] administration operated from the principle that the stability of relations among states was the ultimate international good; and, as a corollary, that change within states, even if fuelled by the yearning for democracy, can be dangerous insofar as it threatens stability.[175]

The granting of Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to China had been a subject of controversy since the massacre in Tiananmen Square in 1989. In December 1991, Governor Clinton had pledged to link the continuance of this status, subject to review annually, to improved human rights within China. He argued that the old balance of power arrangements of the Cold War (when China had been an important strategic counter to Soviet influence) was gone, and with it, any impediment to pressuring China for reform.[176] In 1993, he signed an executive order making further renewal of MFN contingent upon significant internal human rights reform, including release of "citizens imprisoned for the non-violent expression of their political beliefs."[177] Some democratic members of Congress waxed enthusiastically about the prospects of prodding the reluctant China towards a free press.[178]

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[175] Strobe Talbott, "Post Victory Blues," *Foreign Affairs: America and the World 1991/1992* Vol 71, No. 1, 66. It is interesting to note that this statement by Strobe could be seen as a compliment or an insult, depending on one's perspective. The realist would nod his head approvingly at the wisdom of such an approach; the idealist would nod his head in agreement at Strobe's condemnation of the realist's cynically amoral stance.

[176] Hyland, *Clinton's World…,* 110.

[177] Statement by the President On Most Favored Nation Status for China, May 28, 1993. Available on line at http://www.ibiblio.org/pub/archives/whitehouse-papers/1993/May/Presidents-Statement-on-MFN-for-China

In the ensuing year, it became clear, however, that pressuring China on reform would come at a cost, and was unlikely to be successful in any event. The Secretary of State was rebuffed during a visit to China in March 1994, and the Chinese Premier bluntly stated that America would suffer more from the withdrawal of MFN than China would.[179] With exports to China valued at eight billion dollars, which in turn sustained some 150,000 U.S. jobs, American business interests lobbied Clinton and Congress hard to maintain China's MFN status. Scarcely a year later, on May 26, 1994, Clinton de-linked human rights and MFN. Explaining that the link between human rights and trade was simply not tenable, Clinton added "This decision offers us the best opportunity to lay the basis for long term sustainable progress on human rights and for the advancement of our other interests with China."[180]

The apparent about-face on coercion of China was a huge disappointment for many liberal democrats within Congress, and debate over MFN would continue as it came up for renewal annually. But in the National Security Strategy of 1995, the administration explicitly portrayed the decision to de-link MFN and human rights as a positive step to maintaining a strong strategic relationship with China.[181]

Despite the administration's move to a more pragmatic approach, relations with China continued to be very rocky throughout the 1990s. A growing sense of strength, both economically and militarily, brought on a sense of increasing confidence in confrontation with America. Aggravated by what it saw as America's attempts at

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[179] Hyland, *Clinton's World..,* 114.

[180] Ann Devroy, "Clinton Grants China MFN, Reversin Campaign Pledge," *Washington Post,* 27 May 1994. See also Human Rights Watch, "President Clinton's Visit To China In Context" Available on line at http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/china-98/visit.htm. 26 March 26, 2003.

[181] The White House, *A National Security Strategy…* February 1995, 29.

containment, China became increasingly intransigent.[182] Inevitably, American policy towards China gravitated towards a pragmatic balance between idealist pressures to modify its internal behaviour and realist recognition of its potential as an adversary. A growing sense of China's hegemonic aspirations in the region was brought to the fore when China claimed large regions of the South China Sea to be sovereign territory, and gave an oil concession to a U.S. company for development off the Spratley Islands (claimed by the Philippines), pledging to defend its interests there with force.[183] When, in 1996, the Chinese attempted to sway the outcome of elections in Taiwan through a series of intimidating military exercises, the United States responded by deploying two carrier battle groups to the region. One observer remarked: "[the] administration's liberalism is hardly absolute…[t]he liberal glove contains a realist fist -- even in the hand of Bill Clinton."[184] In 1998, the administration bowed to the reality that it could not dictate China's internal affairs, and dropped its hitherto annual attempt to sponsor a UN Human Rights Commission resolution condemning China's human rights record. So far as the idealist goals of enlarging human rights and democracy, lamented one critic, "they've caved."[185]

The American view of China was skewed by thinking that the same debate on general approaches to foreign policy, between idealist and realists, existed in China as it did in America. This represented a predominance of idealism in American foreign

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[182] Steve Mufson, "Beijing's Leadership Seeks Closer Relations, but not if it Means Interference by U.S." *Washington Post,* November 19, 1996.

[183] Michael Cox, "New China, New Cold War?" in *Statecraft and Security: The Cold War and Beyond,* ed. Kenneth Booth Ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), 237.

[184] Joe Barnes, "Slaying the China Dragon: The New China Threat School." Center for International Political Economy and the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy. Undated. Available online at http://www.rice.edu/projects/baker/Pubs/workingpapers/efac/barnes.html

[185] The Washington Director of Human Rights Watch, to the New York Times, March 14, 1998. Quoted in Hyland, *Clinton's World…,*121.

policy; the theory that disagreements with China were simply the result of 'hard-line factions' within the Chinese government. In fact, as far as the national interest is concerned, the Chinese have been very focused and consistent.[186]

Chinese foreign policy is traditionally linked to realist geopolitical power calculations. Chinese analysts in the 1990s saw a multi-polar world developing involv

very focused4and consistent.

hegemony."[191] In March 1996, Russia recognized Taiwan and Tibet as "inseparable" and "inalienable" parts of China. In turn, China supported Russian action in Chechnya and Moscow's opposition to NATO expansion.[192] The Clinton administration's idealism was being met with classically realist counter-balancing.

Kosovo – and China's Reaction

A Chinese 1997 strategic review argued that U.S. power was declining rapidly, and that it was the result of effective action by other powers, particularly Russia and Europe, to restrain American hegemony.[193] Ironically, just as it seemed to the Chinese that the imbalance of power was being corrected by strategic counter-balancing of the lesser powers, America's action in Kosovo, hailed by the West as a great victory for humanitarian intervention, would rouse great alarm, and cause China to re-calculate the power balance.

The crisis erupted in Kosovo during the summer of 1998, when Serb forces moved into Kosovo to protect the Serb minority there from persecution by the Muslim Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA).[194] The UN was unable to agree on action. Russian and Chinese vetoes were promised on any resolution for the use of force, a move aimed partly at restraining the U.S. For the Russians, their historical relation with the Serbs was a further, direct, interest.[195] There were urgent calls at home and abroad to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe. Even France set aside its growing opposition to the United

[191] Yang Mingjie, Gan Ailan and Cao Xia, "Groping for a New Transatlantic Partnership," quoted in Pillsbury, *China Debates the Future Security Environment…*, 94.

[192] Hyland, *Clinton's World…*,119

[193] Pillsbury, *China Debates…*16. The report cited in particular Russian and European defiance of U.S. efforts to isolate Iran.

[194] Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil…,*361.

[195] Peter W. Rodman, "The Fallout from Kosovo," *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 78 No. 1, July/August 1999, 45-51.

States. The French Foreign Minister, Hubert Védrine, declared that in such circumstances, "one must not argue in terms of competition between Europe and the United States."[196] The only organization with both the political will and the means to act was NATO. An air bombing campaign commenced March 24, 1999, lasting 78 days. On June 3, realizing that no support was forthcoming from Moscow, Milosevic surrendered and the bombing ended.[197]

The victory was hailed as a great success for humanitarian intervention.[198] In the aftermath, Clinton remarked:

> We can then say to the people of the world, whether 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 is within our power to stop it, we will stop it.[199]

Clinton was particularly sensitive to the accusations of 'fuzzy multilateralism' of the past, and clearly mindful of both Somalia, and the Bosnian experience of 1995. He was thus careful to frame an interest argument as well. "By acting now," he had declared on the night bombing commenced, "we are upholding our values, protecting our interests and advancing the cause of peace." Together with the moral imperative to prevent genocide, it was an "important" national interest to protect the credibility of NATO, whose threats of action Serbia had repeatedly ignored, and to prevent the ethnic conflict spreading into a larger regional war.[200]

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[196] *Ibid*.

[197] Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil…,*358.

[198] Vaclav Havel optimistically declared that the war had shown that "human beings are more important than the state…the condition toward which humanity will…move will probably be characterized by a universal or global respect for human rights, by universal civic equality and by a global civil society." Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil…,*384-385 .

[199] Kissinger, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy…,*254.

[200] President Clinton, Address to the Nation, March 24, 1999. Available on line at www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/europe/jan-jun99/address_3-24.html Accessed 16 April 2003.

The Chinese had watched the war in Kosovo with growing concern and alarm, even before the Chinese Embassy was mistakenly targeted on May 7, 1999. U.S. hegemony was becoming, in their view, a cause of war.[201] One Chinese analyst reflected a common view of the situation: "internationally, the United States had formed a collective hegemonist alliance, turning some international political, economic, and military organizations into U.S. tools for hegemony."[202] The Chinese drew direct parallels between how the United States had acted in partnership to exert influence in Europe, and how Japan and the U.S. might act in concert in the Asian region.[203] For the Chinese, the outcome of the Kosovo war was a recalculation on what had hitherto been perceived as the rapid and inevitable decline of U.S. power.[204] The analysis of these events led China to reconsider the degree to which it could influence events at the United Nations.[205] But China could and would act to diminish American power wherever it could. Another Chinese author wrote that "the true essence and the vital point of the U.S. pursuit of hegemonism is to establish an international order under U.S. dominance, but the developing countries will not allow this…even its allies will not allow it."[206]

Clinton had successfully balanced means with ends, interests and ideals, in Kosovo. But in doing so, the U.S. had also invoked the interests of other states, alarming France and China with its power, and, for the second time, had 'taken sides' against Russian interests in that country's traditional relationship with the Serbs. Kosovo demonstrated how one country's idealist goals might conflict with another's interests.

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[201] Pillsbury, *China Debates…,*44.

[202] Wang Zhuxun, "Effects of Kosovo on Global Security (translation from Chinese)" quoted in Pillsbury, *China Debates…,*27

[203] Pillsbury, *China Debates…,*51

[204] Pillsbury, *China Debates…,*312.

[205] Heer, "A House United…," 23.

[206] "On the New development of U.S. Hegemonism (translation from Chinese), *Remin Ribao,* May 27, 1999. Quoted in Pillsbury, *China Debates…,*28.

Power used with the noblest ends in mind is still power. The perception of growing American hegemony meant that where direct and far more pressing U.S. interests were concerned, America would face growing and more determined opposition. This problem would manifest itself most intensely in Iraq.

Iraq and the End of Multilateralism

A corner stone of idealism is the belief that national sovereignty can be subjugated to a greater interest. In 1993, Morton H. Halperin, an academic who was soon to join the Clinton administration as a consultant and special advisor to the President, wrote:

> The United States should explicitly surrender the right to intervene unilaterally in the internal affairs of other countries…Such self-restraint would bar interventions like those in Grenada and Panama, unless the United States first gained the explicit consent of the international community acting through the Security Council or a regional organization.[207]

One realist observer warned about this newfound enthusiasm for the UN:

> Be cautious about yielding to the temptation of using the UN – and particularly the Security Council – as an instrument of American policy…While doing so might have short-term advantages, it would create precedents that could well come back to haunt you in the future. It would also strengthen misunderstandings in American minds as to how international politics really work – for example, by encouraging the belief that a range of actions can only acquire legitimacy and moral acceptability if they are based on a UN "mandate"; or by creating the illusion of action when in reality problems are being evaded.[208]

These opposing views, realist and idealist, were to be tested in Iraq. The American administration's commitment to multilateralism would be confounded by the realist motives within the Security Council.

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[207] Morton H. Halperin, "Guaranteeing Democracy," *Foreign Policy,* Summer 1993, 115-122.
[208] Owen Harries, "Fourteen Points for Realists," *The National Interest,* Winter 1992/93, 109-112.

Dual containment of Iran and Iraq, a policy of the Clinton administration towards the two countries since 1992, was said to be "unravelling" by 1997.[209] Support for inspections and particularly sanctions, against Iraq, was not universal. Russia was owed some eight billion dollars by Iraq, and had no chance of recovering the money with sanctions ongoing. China opposed intervention generally, given its sensitivity over Tibet, and France, as well as having significant oil interests in the region, opposed US-Anglo cooperation on the issue. All were reluctant to consent to use of the UN as a means to American ends.[210]

Since the establishment of the UN Special Commission on Weapons (UNSCOM) with United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 687, on 3 April 1991, weapons inspections had been proceeding, albeit with significant evasion and intransigence on the part of Iraq. In June 1996, however, Iraq denied UNSCOM entry into "sensitive sites." After making some relatively minor concessions to Iraq on the conduct of inspections and inspectors were allowed re-entry.[211] In June 1997, Iraq again banned inspectors from certain sites. The only action that the UN could muster was a threat to impose "additional measure on those Iraqi officials responsible for the non-compliance."[212] When the Chief Weapons Inspector, Richard Butler, tried to present his report to the UN on October 13, 1997, Russia, China, and France (together with Egypt and Kenya) abstained on a simple vote to accept the document. Seeing the split within

[209] Graham E. Fuller and Ian O. Lesser, "Persian Gulf Myths," *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 76, No. 3, May/June 1997, 42-52.

[210] Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil…,* 259.

[211] Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil…*, 256.

[212] United Nations Security Resolution 1115, 21 June 1997. Available on line from http://www.casi.org.ok/info/scriraq.html Accessed 1 April 2003.

the Security Council, Iraq expelled the U.S. members of UNSCOM. Butler ordered all UNSCOM members to follow, and inspections were at a standstill.[213]

The pusillanimity of the UN at this point in the crisis is indicative of the deep divisions within the Security Council. UNSCR 1134 (23 October, 1997) went so far as to elaborate on the previous threat: intransigent Iraqi officials were warned of impending "travel bans," but no action was taken.[214] Three weeks later, when Iraq remained defiant, a resolution was agreed to that actually implemented the travel bans, but the U.S. and Great Britain, both pushing for firmer action, could get no further support from the other permanent members of the Security Council.[215]

The impasse was temporarily resolved when the US agreed to mediation through the Russians and eased its objections to further oil for food sales. After a Russian promise to work for lifting of the sanctions, Iraq agreed to the re-entry of inspectors on November 21, 1997.[216] But the administration had placed multilateralism and UN consensus ahead of its other interests, and, after two decades of effort to limit their influence in the Gulf, had given the Russians an important diplomatic victory. It was all for nought: Iraq quickly added the caveat that while inspectors might return, the presidential sites were off limits "forever."[217]

The U.S. was compelled to act unilaterally in defence of its own credibility on the issue. A large build up of forces in the region, accompanied by threats of force, met with

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[213] Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil…,* 259.

[214] United Nations Security Resolution 1134, 23 October, 1997. Available on line from http://www.casi.org.ok/info/scriraq.html Accessed 1 April 2003.

[215] United Nations Security Resolution 1137, 12 November, 1997. Available on line from http://www.casi.org.ok/info/scriraq.html Accessed 1 April 2003.

[216] Alfred Prados and Kenneth Katzman, *Iraq-U.S. Confrontation: 1997-1998,* CRS Issue Brief, December 17 1998. Available on Line at http://globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/reports/crs/Crsiraq3.htm Accessed 4 April 2003.

[217] See Hyland, *Clintons World…,* 178, and Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil…,*259.

vocal opposition by France and Russia.[218] Desperate to preserve the consensus within the UN Security Council and stave off American unilateral action, Secretary General Kofi Annan flew to Iraq in February 1998. A further concession was made to Iraq, stipulating that "senior diplomats" would accompany UNSCOM inspections in the sensitive presidential sites.[219]

The Iraqi Foreign Minister hailed the agreement as a "great victory for Iraq." American critics of the administration's foreign policy agreed.[220] Trent Lott (Senate Majority Leader) attacked Secretary of State Albright for subcontracting U.S. policy to the UN, and Annan was denounced for appeasement of the Iraqis.[221]

The relations between the major powers in the Security Council were in disarray. Russian diplomats in subsequent UNSCOM inspections of presidential sites took Iraq's side, and there were accusations that they were actively undercutting the inspections process.[222] In August 1998, Iraq once again reneged on its agreement to allow entry into presidential sites and, on October 31, ordered the cessation of all UNSCOM activities in Iraq. In the face of a credible threat of forceful action from the U.S., made without UN consent, Iraq backed down again on 16 November.[223] But by December 8, Butler was again reporting that UNSCOM inspectors were being impeded. After a damning report

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[218]Shawcross, *Deliver us From Evil…*,262, 273. Yeltsin accuses Clinton of "acting too loudly;" Chirac attributed U.S and Anglo "hard headedness" over Iraq to the difference between Protestants and Catholics!

[219] United Nations, "Memorandum of Understanding Between the United Nations and the Republic of Iraq, February 23, 1998." Available on Line at http://www.un.org/Depts/unscom/s98-166.htm Accessed 6 April 2003.

[220] William Kristol and Robert Kagan, "A 'Great Victory' for Iraq," *Washington Post,* 21 December 1998. http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraq-022698.htm Accessed Aptil 6, 2003.

[221] Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil…*,274.

[222] The Center for Security Policy, "Accept No Substitute: Clinton Address on Iraq Signals Continuing failure to grasp Need for Toppling Sadaam," Decision Brief No. 98-D-29, 17 February, 1998. Available on Line at http://www.security-policy.org/papers/1998/98-D29.html. Accessed April 6, 2003.

[223] Alfred Prados and Kenneth Katzman, *Iraq-U.S. Confrontation: 1997-1998,* CRS Issue Brief, December 17 1998. Available on Line at http://globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/reports/crs/Crsiraq3.htm. Accessed April 4, 2003.

from UNSCOM to the Security Council on December 15, the U.S. decided to act. All UNSCOM inspectors were ordered to leave immediately, and the next day 'Operation Desert Fox' commenced, with over 200 cruise missile launches, as well as B-52 and other attacks by U.S. and British forces. There was no warning to other members of the Security Council, who reacted with anger.[224] Russia called it 'outrageous.' Annan called it a "sad day for the United Nations and the World;" the French demanded a "fundamental review" of the Iraq policy.[225]

The inspection process was effectively over, and with it the New World Order that had commenced with the UN action in Iraq in 1991. On April 7, 1999 (two weeks after the bombing of Kosovo commenced), the Russian delegation barred UNSCOM Chief Inspector Richard Butler from even *entering* the UN Security Council Chamber.[226] Hyland wrote: "the Iraq crises brought to an end the post-Cold War era…In the UN, the line-up was the Anglo Americans versus the Russia, China, and France. So too, had the idea of collective security collapsed."[227] The inability of the U.S. to pursue its interests through the Security Council had been made clear. U.S. interests were simply not in common with those of other members of the Security Council, and notwithstanding idealist rhetoric, none was ultimately willing to subjugate important national interests to a supranational organization. For many countries, their national interest lay in *restraining* the United States. The U.S. administration remained committed in principle to the UN,

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[224] Alfred Prados and Kenneth Katzman, *Iraq-U.S. Confrontation: 1997-1998,* Also Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil…,*353.

[225] Steven Erlanger, "What Now? Doubts about the US and UN Policy on Iraq Increase," *New York Times,* December 21, 1998. http://globalpolicy.org/security/sanction/iraq1/iraq/iraq022.htm. Accessed April 6, 2003.

[226]Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil…,*369.

[227] Hyland, *Clinton's World…,*182.

but its experiment with the multilateral pursuit of its national interest had failed.[228] Where important or vital national interests were concerned, it was increasingly clear to the administration that the United States must be prepared to act, with others sharing common interest when possible, but alone if necessary.

In the final National Security Strategy of the Clinton administration, issued in December 2000, there was a far more cool and balanced appraisal of interests and values than had existed in the administration's infancy. The guiding principles of engagement would be the protecting of national interests and advancing of values: America would act, unilaterally if necessary, "when the nexus of our interests and values exists in a compelling combination that demands action." There was very little mention of the UN.[229]

[228] Richard Holbrooke, U.S. representative to the United Nations, on 2 November 1999, called the UN "vital to U.S. national security…For all its faults, if the UN did not exist, we would need to invent it or risk more serious consequences." Richard C. Holbrooke, *A New Realism for a New Era: The U.S. and the UN in the 21st Century.* Address to the National Press Club November 2 1999. USUN Press Release No. 103-99. http://www.un.int/usa/99_103.htm. Accessed April 1, 2003.

[229] The White House. *A National Security Strategy for a Global Age*. December 2000 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2000).

George W. Bush – "Realism in the Service of American Ideals"[230]

On April 15, 2000, The U.S. Commission on National Security (Also referred to as the Hart-Rudman Commission) published a report entitled *A Concert for Preserving Security and Promoting Freedom.* The Commission described the global security problem in terms of a race between two contradictory trends: "a tide of economic, technological and intellectual forces that is integrating a global community, amid powerful forces of social and political fragmentation."[231] The report reflected a growing appreciation for the threat of terrorism, and the asymmetric threat posed by the proliferation Weapons of Mass Destruction. With remarkable prescience, the report warned: "Americans are less secure than they believe themselves to be. The time for re-examination is now, before the American people find themselves shocked by events they never anticipated." But the report also reflected American values, arguing that the integrating trends posed an opportunity for the expansion of democracy and freedom, and recommending that the United States "lead in the construction of a world balanced between the expansion of freedom and the maintenance of underlying stability."[232]

Emphasis on balance between ideals and interests has been very apparent in foreign policy statements of the current Bush administration. As a Republican candidate for the presidential elections of 2000, Texas Governor George W. Bush espoused a clear appreciation of the national interest, but took into account the idealist underpinnings of

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[230] Governor George W. Bush, "A Distinctly American Internationalism," Speech at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, November 19,1999. Available on line at http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/wspeech.htm Accessed April 6, 2003

[231] The United States Commission on National Security/21st Century, *Seeking a National Strategy: A Concert for Preserving Security and Preserving Freedom,* April 15, 2000

[232] *Ibid.*

American exceptionalism. American foreign policy under his Presidency would be "a distinctly American internationalism. Idealism, without illusions. Confidence, without conceit. Realism, in the service of American ideals." Idealism would always be a pillar of American foreign policy, but would have focus derived from "concentrating on enduring interests."[233] Bush rejected isolationism (his speech was entitled "A Distinctly American Internationalism), but made it clear that American engagement in the world would recognize that other countries would also focus on their own interests: "China is a competitor, not a strategic partner…China will find itself respected as a great power…it will be unthreatened, but not unchecked."[234]

Under George W. Bush, there was a clear message that the UN would no longer be able to restrain the U.S. from acting unilaterally where vital U.S. interests were concerned.[235] This was not a rejection of idealism as a component of foreign policy, but rather recognition that the UN Security Council had proved to be a mechanism whereby other major powers served their interests.

Bush's inaugural speech reflected the theme of balance in foreign policy: "America remains engaged in the world by history and choice, shaping a balance of power that favours freedom."[236] But it very quickly became clear that the emphasis was on *power*, and that the Bush administration was prepared to use it liberally and unilaterally in pursuing American interests. Some said that the administration had

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[233] Governor George W. Bush, "A Distinctly American Internationalism," speech at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, November 19,1999. Available on line at http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/wspeech.htm Accessed April 6, 2003.

[234] *Ibid*.

[235] Rice, Condoleeza, "Promoting the National Interest." *Foreign Affairs* 79, No. 1, January/February 2000, 45–62.

[236] Inaugural speech of George W. Bush; January 20, 2001. Available on line at http://yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/presiden/inaug/gbush1.htm Accessed April 6, 2003.

mistaken the meaning of realism for simply "being tough with other countries."[237] Belligerent statements by the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, towards Russia and China, warnings of unilateral abrogation of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty, U.S. rejection of Kyoto, expulsion of fifty Russians accused of intelligence gathering, all were seen as the act of a belligerent superpower, of a new administration almost revelling in having thrown out its timorous predecessor.[238] Bush had surrounded himself by advocates of American hegemony: Vice President Richard Cheney (original proponent of the 'one power' briefing under Bush's father), Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld, his Deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, and others. The only moderating influence was seen to be Colin Powell, as Secretary of State. Through his influence, the more alarming manifestations and rhetoric of unilateralism were supposedly muted.[239]

The attacks of September 11, 2001 focussed and united American domestic opinion on international affairs in a way not seen since Pearl Harbor. For the Bush administration, and in particular the advocates of benevolent hegemony, there was a silver lining. The American public was receptive and eager for a grand design.

view whose acceptance practically requires Invading Iraq."[241] But for Bush, the September 11 attacks also brought about a confluence of American ideals and interests. America's purpose would be the defeat of terrorism and, once again, American leadership of a new world order:

> Our Nation's cause has always been larger than our Nation's defense. We fight, as we always fight, for a just peace – a peace that favors human liberty. We will defend the peace against the threats from terrorists and tyrants. We will preserve the peace by building good relations amongst the great powers. And we will extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies in every continent. Building this peace is America's opportunity, and America's duty…[242]

Bush's first National Security Strategy echoed these themes. "A balance of power that favours freedom" was a recurring line. The U.S. strategy would be based on "a distinctly American internationalism that reflects the union of our values and our national interests." But the strategy added a warning that the U.S. would not hesitate to act alone, even pre-emptively, in its defence when necessary.[243]

On October 7, 2001, America commenced bombing targets in Afghanistan; by December 7, the Taliban regime had fallen. World support for U.S. action had been widespread, with sympathy for the attacks of September 11 still prevalent. But by march 20, 2003, when a U.S.-led coalition entered Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein, any pretence of consensus within the United Nations had evaporated. The United States was isolated from many of its traditional allies, and condemned by much of the rest of the world.[244]

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[241] Lemann, Nicholas. "The Next World Order." *The New Yorker.* April, 2002.

[242] President George W. Bush, Address at WestPoint, June 1, New York, 2002. Available online at http://www.mdtaxes.org/Archives/homeland-defense/bush-westpoint60102.html Accessed 13 April 2003.

[243] The White House. The National Security Strategy of the United States of America. September 2002.

[244] See for example, Paul Kennedy, "The Perils of Empire: This looks like America's Moment. History should Give Us Pause." *Washington Post,* April 20, 2003.

Has the U.S. struck an appropriate balance between ideals and self-interest? It is too early to tell. But if America is to establish a new world order, history would indicate that it is on the right path. In the *Lessons of History*, the philosopher general concludes that "[a] world order will come about not by a gentleman's agreement, but through so decisive a victory by one of the great powers that it will be able to dictate and enforce international law, as Rome did from Augustus and Aurelius."[245]

Rome may not be an apt comparison, but more recent history indicates that American ideals are best acted upon from a position of power. The American mission is the spread of democracy and freedom, borne of the country's exceptionalism. And, as the American Samuel P. Huntington put it, "The power of example works only when it is an example of power….In short, no one copies a loser."[246]

[245] Will and Ariel Durant, *The Lessons of History,* 86.
[246] Huntington, *The Dilemma of American Ideals…*, 13.

Conclusion

Since the end of the Cold War, America has struggled to find an appropriate balance between ideals and self-interest in its foreign policy. At first, America experimented with an almost exclusively idealist outlook. It made commitments to act on its values where no direct interests were concerned, found its resolve wanting, and retreated. Where it tried to influence the internal nature of other countries, to make them conform to American values, it found that to pursue such an approach too often conflicted directly with American interests; again, it retreated.

The experience in Somalia caused America to adopt a more interests-based approach to further interventions. But the idealist philosophy of the Clinton administration remained strong, and caused it to view the source of conflict in Rwanda and Bosnia only as ethnic hatred, while eschewing action. It failed to appreciate, as a realist philosophy would, that local leadership was manipulating hatred in a quest for power. A successful intervention would require, rather than an idealist appeal to reason, a realist's perspective on the politics and nature of power. In Bosnia, U.S. action finally came only when the moral imperative for action directly threatened U.S. interests: the credibility of NATO and U.S. leadership.

The American sense of exceptionalism permeates American foreign policy. As a result, American foreign policy will always be laced with ideals. But in its enthusiasm for the New World Order, America forgot the imperatives and responsibilities of power, and experimented with subjugating its interests to multilateralism through the UN. This proved a utopian dream; the UN would only act when the interests of the permanent members, as a minimum, coincided, a rare event. The U.S. was no different than other

powers in this regard, but the lesson for the Clinton administration was one both of the shortcomings of values, and the significance of interest, in multilateral institutions such as the UN. Members of the Security Council, including the United States, were generally not interested in action based solely on humanitarian or altruistic goals. Nations could and did restrain the world hegemon through recalcitrance at the UN.

The Clinton administration, though driven to pragmatism in its two terms, continued to pursue an idealist agenda. But there was clear evidence that significant portions of the rest of the world simply did not see the world in the same light. China resented American efforts to reform its internal conduct, and saw intervention along humanitarian lines, particularly in Kosovo, as nothing more than the exercise of American power. This alarmed China, and caused it to resist United States hegemony, a classic reflection of realism.

During the latter part of the 1990s, the effort to restrain American power manifested itself directly in the frustration of American efforts to maintain the UNSCOM process in Iraq. Out of this conflict was born a determination to pursue American interests despite the UN, rather than in cooperation with it. American foreign policy became, *prima facie*, unabashedly realist. But the American action since the attacks in the World Trade Center called on both traditions in defining American foreign policy. "A balance of power that favors freedom" is an explicit call to recognize the forces at play in international relations while advancing American values.

What will come next for American foreign policy? Will American power be restrained by the natural tension inherent in the dilemma posed by Huntington, or will the

assertive manifestation of American power enable the spread of American ideals?[247] The events which are unfolding as this paper concludes could hardly have been forecast. Many predicted the failure of idealism as an approach to international relations. But American ideals are deeply embedded in the national conscience, and will always remain a significant component in U.S. foreign policy. Equally, American hegemony will continue to incur opposition, forcing America to act unilaterally where necessary. In fact, since the attacks of September 11, 2001, defining American foreign policy has not been troubled by the quest for a balance *between* values and interests, but has been a manifestation of the concerted focus of both. America, alarmed, righteous, powerful, is a frightening prospect to the other powers, and the cause for warnings of hubris:

> The United States is a dangerous nation while remaining a 'righteous one'…Its vision of reform expresses its conviction of singular virtue and national exception, which by happy coincidence reinforce national economic interest and the extension of national power. The risk to the United States is a classical one: self-destructive hubris, leading to barren tears.[248]

The post-Cold War era - the "12 year interregnum…from the collapse of the Berlin Wall to the collapse of the World Trade Center" – is over. America and the world have embarked on a new, as yet unnamed, era. But the foreign policy of the nation that is likely to determine its style will continue to be defined by a balance between, and periodic confluence of, its ideals and interests.

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[247] See page 5 of this paper.
[248] Pfaff, William. "The Question of Hegemony," *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 80, No. 1, January/February, 2001.

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