Making American Foreign Policy

Ole R. Holsti
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To Alex George, Jim Rosenau,
and the memory of Bob North
and
all my students
## Contents

Preface vii  
Acknowledgments ix  

### Part I  Foreign Policy Leaders: Beliefs and Cognitive Processes

1 Introduction: Beliefs, Perceptions, and Opinions in Policy Making  
   [2005]  

2 The Belief System and National Images: A Case Study  
   [1962]  

3 Cognitive Process Approaches to Decision-Making: Foreign Policy Actors Viewed Psychologically  
   [1976]  

### Part II  Opinion Leaders, Public Opinion, and American Foreign Policy

4 Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: Challenges to the Almond–Lippmann Consensus  
   [1992]  

5 The Three-Headed Eagle: The United States and System Change  
   [1979]  

6 Vietnam, Consensus, and the Belief Systems of American Leaders  
   with James N. Rosenau  
   [1979]  

v
vi • Contents

7 Liberals, Populists, Libertarians, and Conservatives: The Link between Domestic and International Affairs with James N. Rosenau [1996] 151
8 Promotion of Democracy as Popular Demand? [2000] 179
10 Public Opinion and Foreign Policy [2001] 237

Part III Conclusion: Theories of International Relations and Foreign Policy Analysis
12 Theories of International Relations [2004] 313
13 Concluding Thoughts on American Foreign Policy [2005] 345

Notes 361
Index 383
Preface

The chapters in this book touch upon interests that developed during graduate school at Stanford University: American foreign policy and the role of ideas in policy making. The first result of those interests was a dissertation on John Foster Dulles’s images of the Soviet Union. Although several research projects during the intervening years have taken me in somewhat different directions, like the swallows at San Juan Capistrano, in one way or another I keep returning to those enduring core interests.

In the course of that journey of well over four decades, I have had more than my share of good fortune in a great many respects. As a faculty member at Stanford (1962–67), the University of British Columbia (1967–74), and Duke (since 1974), three world class institutions, I have enjoyed the support, stimulation, and friendship of many exceptionally congenial colleagues. Those faculty positions have also brought me into contact with almost two generations of outstanding students, some of whom are now among my most cherished friends. As the introductory chapter makes clear, several of my research projects have developed directly from pondering how best to stimulate student analysis of some concepts and topics. I continue to teach well past the usual retirement time in order to benefit from contact with such first-rate students. In the light of my many debts to them, it is wholly appropriate that all of my students collectively appear on the dedication page.

I have also been exceptionally fortunate in having collaborated in research with three giants among scholars of international relations and foreign policy. The late Bob North, my dissertation mentor, later became a collaborator on a study of the pre-World War I crisis. Although Alex George joined the Stanford faculty after my departure, we worked together on projects focusing on the effects of stress on decision making and on the “operational code” approach to foreign policy making. Jim Rosenau, who appears as the coauthor of two chapters in this
book, has been a close “colleague at a distance” for more than three decades. Bob, Alex, and Jim have contributed to my education in more ways than I can describe. They have also proved that Leo Durocher, the feisty, acid-tongued major league baseball player and manager, was absolutely wrong when he asserted, “nice guys finish last.” In light of my many debts to Bob, Alex, and Jim, I am delighted to include them on the dedication page.


Robert Tempio of Routledge who initiated this project, provided some exceptionally useful advice in shaping it, and has been an ideal editor in all respects. Working with Lynn Goeller and her team at EvS Communications was a wonderful experience. The entire process of turning a manuscript into a book was exceptionally pleasant because of their skills and dedication to the project.

Anne Marie Boyd, my part-time research secretary, has worked with me on this and several other projects during the past five years. She has consistently demonstrated outstanding skills and enthusiastic dedication far beyond the call of duty. She is also an exceptionally pleasant and cheerful person with whom it is always a pleasure to work.

All of the above have my everlasting gratitude.
Acknowledgments

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Acknowledgments


“A Return to Isolationism and Unilateralism?” Paper prepared for the 2003 Meeting of APSA. Permission to reproduce granted by the American Political Science Association.

Friends who know that our father was a political scientist and Finnish diplomat sometimes say that my brother Kal and I must have been predestined to become political scientists. My earliest recollection of political activity was standing in front of the German Legation in Geneva, next door to our residence in the Finnish Legation, singing a popular song of the time: “We’ll hang our washing on the Siegfried Line” (the German fortifications on the Western front). However, this was hardly the kind of undiplomatic behavior that received parental approval, even though father despised the Nazis. Moreover, we were only ten and eleven years old when father died and, at least in my own case, the path leading to an academic career in political science was highly circuitous.

Virtually everyone who attended Mr. Fuller’s wonderful chemistry class at Palo Alto High School went on to college with the intention of becoming a chemist. I was no exception, but a general chemistry curriculum at Stanford that included only a single elective over four years gradually raised doubts about my commitment to that discipline. A year-long required freshman course on the history of Western civilization had whetted by appetite for more history, but a chemistry major would not have allowed that. A poorly taught quantitative analysis course during my sophomore year that included four-hour laboratories six days a week—in those prehistoric days Stanford still had Saturday classes—encouraged me to look for another major.

Two majors later I enrolled in a comparative government class taught by a vivacious visiting lecturer whose anecdotes were enough to keep even the sleepiest student awake. Faced with a deadline to declare a major, I thus elected
political science on the basis of rather limited evidence and with little genuine understanding of the discipline. My last two years at Stanford were heavily focused on political science, combined with as many history courses as could be crammed into my schedule. Stanford's history department featured a number of distinguished scholars, including Thomas A. Bailey, Claude Buss, Gordon Wright, and H. Stuart Hughes, who were also noted for their eloquent lectures. A senior seminar with Martin Travis introduced me to Hans Morgenthau, Quincy Wright, and others, and for the first time gave me some sense of what international relations theory was all about.

During my senior year I happened to see a brochure about a new Master of Arts in Teaching program at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut. A two-year program that included full-time teaching at a local high school during the second year, this appeared to be an ideal way to prepare for a teaching career. A fellowship award made it an easy choice. The first year at Wesleyan included courses in political science and history, along with seminars in educational philosophy and psychology.

Full-time teaching during the second year at Wethersfield High School was both enjoyable and discouraging. Despite four daily preparations for classes in history and government, the experience reinforced my interest in a teaching career. However, I was also discouraged by the low morale of many on the faculty. They seemed to be spending too much time on virtually meaningless paperwork and bureaucratic requirements, and their enthusiasm for the classroom appeared to be inversely correlated to age. Although I understood that the material rewards of teaching were, at best, modest, it was still a shock to learn that every male teacher save one at Wethersfield, part of a school district with the fifth highest per-capita income in the country, held another part-time job in order to make ends meet.

Upon leaving Wesleyan with an M.A.T. degree, I preempted my draft board by volunteering for a two-year stint in the army. I had joined the army reserves while in Middletown, rising to the exalted rank of sergeant. The enlistment promise that I could also select my branch of service was overridden by the urgent need of the infantry for my services even though the infantry competed with the artillery for last place on my list of preferences. Two years at Fort Lewis gave me more than ample time to think about my post-military career. Having decided that teaching in a college would be preferable to doing so in a high school, I naively applied to only a single graduate school, and was subsequently admitted to the Ph.D. program at Stanford.

By this time Kal was starting his third year of graduate work at Stanford and getting ready to take his comprehensive examinations. It was immensely helpful to have his wise counsel on how to survive in graduate school. At that time the Stanford political science department was a long way from the nationally renowned department that it was to become. Much of the curriculum consisted
Introduction

• 3

of undergraduate courses with added reading or writing assignments for graduate students.

A remarkable feature of the political science department during that time was the immensely talented and congenial pool of graduate students. Those with a primary interest in international relations included Kal Holsti, Dick Fagen, George Zaninovich, Dina Zinnes, Howard Koch, David Clarke, and Dave Finlay, and those in other fields also contributed to an atmosphere that was highly conducive to learning. Three of the international relations students of that period, 1958–62, later served as presidents of the International Studies Association.

The choice of a dissertation was a turning point in my own developing interest in foreign policy decision making. It is often difficult to recall the stimulus that ultimately led to a specific research project, but I have a clear recollection of the circumstances that first awakened a persisting interest in the beliefs, perceptions, and images of decision makers. As a second-year graduate student I was awarded a teaching assistantship for Political Science 1, American public policy. The last two weeks of the quarter were devoted to foreign and defense policy issues, including the doctrine of “massive retaliation” that had been made public by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in 1954. I had known of the doctrine and the controversies it had generated, and I had some familiarity with critiques by Henry Kissinger and others. But the process of preparing for discussion sections drove home how significantly the concept of massive retaliation was based not only on considerations of geopolitics, weapons characteristics, and the like but, even more importantly, on assumptions about the nature of international politics, as well as images of the Soviet Union and its leaders, their motivations, and decision processes. This raised a central question: What if those assumptions and images were only partially valid? More generally, in a world of nuclear weapons it seemed increasingly likely that the dangers of war arise less from clearly calculated decisions to launch a war—for example, Hitler’s invasion of Poland in September 1939 or the Pearl Harbor attack two years later—and more from decisions and processes that cannot wholly be understood through the unitary rational actor model that seemed to underlie massive retaliation.

During my graduate school years, fears of crises spiraling out of control were not merely the stuff of science fiction or such movies as “Dr. Strangelove.” The Soviet Union successfully tested a hydrogen bomb in 1957 and later that year it leaped ahead of the U.S. in the “space race” by placing a small satellite into earth orbit. Sputnik shattered some stereotypes about Soviet science but mostly it raised exaggerated military fears—the so-called missile gap—arising from a combination of Soviet atomic weapons and long range missiles with accurate guidance systems. A brief détente in 1955–56 had given way to a resumption of periodic crises arising, for example, from the Soviet invasion of Hungary, the status of Berlin, the downing of an American U-2 spy plane inside the USSR,
Making American Foreign Policy

In October 1962, U-2 flights over Cuba confirmed rumors that the Soviet Union was erecting missile bases in Cuba, thereby triggering the most serious Cold War crisis. For almost two weeks the possibility of nuclear exchanges between the U.S. and USSR could not be ruled out.

This teaching experience was the immediate stimulus that pointed my interests in a particular direction, but other factors also sustained them. A number of books and articles published during the preceding half decade seemed to offer fruitful new ways of thinking about foreign policy and international politics. The Snyder-Bruck-Sapin monograph on decision making, although not yet available in book form was widely read and discussed by graduate students. Of special relevance was its core premise that foreign policy choices could usefully be analyzed from the decision makers’ perspectives and their “definitions of the situation;” these might or might not conform to reality but they had a powerful impact on decision processes. More generally, the decision-making approach forced analysts to consider the domestic political arena as well as external factors. Kenneth Boulding’s *The Image*, followed by an article that stressed the importance of images in international politics, was another important influence, as were the works of Herbert Simon and James March on the cognitive limits on rationality and organizational decision making. A lively new interdisciplinary publication, the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, provided an outlet for articles by a broad range of social scientists whose work in various ways seemed to challenge the assumption, widespread in traditional realist theories as well as in foreign offices and defense ministries, that foreign and defense policies could best be understood through reference to the prevailing realist theories.

**Belief Systems and Foreign Policy**

These interests led to a dissertation on John Foster Dulles that analyzed his belief system and his images of the Soviet Union, and the manner in which these served as filters through which he processed and interpreted new information about the USSR. The sudden departure from Stanford of my original dissertation chairman led me to ask Robert C. North, who had recently joined the department following reorganization of the Hoover Institution, to serve on my committee. I was also fortunate to have enlisted the distinguished diplomatic historian Thomas A. Bailey. Whereas North left his students on a long leash, Bailey was an exacting taskmaster. Careless choice of a word or a poorly constructed paragraph would also result in a firm but friendly reminder that loose writing has no place in scholarship. Bailey could not transfer his immense gifts for written and oral eloquence, but he did leave an indelible impression about the importance of repeated rewriting in the quest for clarity and precision. Another of his aphorisms—“Write a page a day and you’ll have a book a year”—was also easier said than done.
Upon Dulles's death in 1959, his papers were donated to his alma mater, Princeton University, but they would not be available in time for my dissertation project. In any case even when they were opened for research, more senior scholars would, quite properly, be given first access to them. A seemingly workable alternative research strategy involved a quantitative content analysis of every publicly available word from Dulles during his years as Secretary of State, including speeches, press conferences, congressional testimony, and other such materials. Two books, several articles and many speeches from his pre-1953 years provided useful background information, but they were not included in the content analysis.

I also sent a questionnaire to the State Department and other officials who worked with Dulles. Although the questionnaire has all the earmarks of a novice effort, some of the responses, including accompanying letters, revealed useful information. One point that came through from several of them, including Eleanor Lansing Dulles, his sister and herself a State Department official, was that Dulles wrote all his own speeches with great care. Thus, a careful reading of those speeches would provide the best guides to his thinking about world affairs in general and specifically about the Soviet Union.

My central hypothesis was that Dulles would interpret information about the Soviet Union in a way that reinforced rather than challenged preexisting theories. The period in question (1953–59) encompassed substantial changes, beginning with Josef Stalin's death less than five weeks after the Eisenhower administration took office. Dulles had come to the State Department with an exceptional background in foreign affairs, beginning with attendance at the Versailles Peace Conference with his uncle, Secretary of State Robert Lansing. His work as a lawyer for the venerable firm of Cromwell and Sullivan involved extensive international travel and contacts. In addition, he had served as chief foreign policy adviser to Republican presidential candidate Thomas Dewey in 1948, headed the team that negotiated the Japanese Peace Treaty, and had written two books on foreign affairs.

Dulles's reading of works by Lenin and strongly held beliefs about the nature of the Soviet system convinced him that he also possessed unique insight into Moscow's international behavior. This conviction, combined with a distaste for any bureaucratic competition, may account for his decision to force the dean of America's Russian experts, George F. Kennan, into retirement. Kennan, widely acknowledged as the intellectual father of the postwar policy of containing the Soviet Union, developed his deep interest in Russia as a Princeton undergraduate and had spent several tours of duty in the Soviet Union as a diplomat.

Dulles was especially fearful that the Western alliance might misinterpret such events as the death of Stalin, some reductions of armed forces, and the Austrian Peace Treaty of 1955 as signs of a permanent change in long-term Soviet goals for global domination rather than as tactical maneuvers designed to lull...
the West into a false sense of complacency. Chapter 2, a very brief summary of some findings from my study, reveals how Dulles interpreted Moscow’s actions in ways that sustained his theory. In fairness, it should also be pointed out that in such actions as the invasion of Hungary in 1956, the Soviet Union often acted in ways that reinforced an “inherent bad faith” theory.4

As a graduate student I had known of the existence of a path-breaking project at Stanford—unofficially known as the “conflict project”—directed by Bob North. Its focus was on conflict dynamics, with considerable attention to the role of perceptions in conflict processes. Among the project’s varied activities was an intensive study of the processes by which the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand on 28 June 1914, led to outbreak of a general European war within six weeks.

Having already started my research on Dulles’s images of the Soviet Union, I was not among the graduate students who had been associated with the 1914 study since its inception, but I joined this project upon completion of my dissertation. This was a magnificent opportunity to extend my own education well beyond the bounds of my graduate program, to pursue my interest in the role of beliefs and perceptions in decision making within the context of a data-based project, and to share in the reformulation of important parts of the 1914 project. Most importantly, it gave me a chance to work closely with Bob North, a gentle and wise scholar who always encouraged his colleagues and students to pursue new ideas.5

Research on my dissertation and the 1914 crisis permitted me to combine interests in three disciplines: political science, history, and psychology. It also forced me to fill yawning gaps in areas that were largely neglected in most courses and seminars at that time at Stanford, including systematic research methods such as content analysis, statistics, and the like. The joys and challenges of research reached a peak in projects that combined the materials of history, theories aduced from political science and psychology, and systematic evidence, some of which could be expressed quantitatively. “Playing” with the data in various ways, searching for patterns and unexpected results, trying out alternative hypotheses and theories, and similar processes constituted the most interesting and enjoyable parts of the endeavor. The textbook research paradigm—hypotheses aduced from theories, tests, and reassessment of theories in light of the findings—doesn’t begin to describe fully the iterative process of working back and forth between theories and data.

The Dulles and 1914 studies on decision making led to several invitations to review and assess the strengths and limitations of “cognitive process” approaches to foreign policy, one of which appears as chapter 3 here.6 By the mid-1960s there were a number of important challenges to the prevailing realist theories that typically depicted the nation state as a unitary rational actor. They argued the need to look within “the black box” of the state in order to understand foreign
policy making. The previously mentioned Snyder-Bruck-Sapin monograph was an important stimulus in this respect. Another landmark study emerged from the “May Group” at Harvard University. Graham Allison analyzed the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 from three theoretical perspectives: the unitary rational actor (Model I), bureaucratic politics (Model II), and organizational processes (Model III). The cognitive process approach, analyzed in chapter 3 of this volume, could be considered as a Model IV. Studies by Robert Jervis, Alexander George, John Steinbruner, Robert Axelrod and others made important contributions to the cognitive process approach.  

Public Opinion, Opinion Leaders, and Foreign Policy

My interest in public opinion developed despite never having taken a course on public opinion as an undergraduate or graduate student. For students of international relations and foreign policy, in contrast to those who were studying voting behavior, there did not seem to be compelling reasons for doing so. The dominant realist approach depicted a poorly informed public that could rarely make a constructive contribution to the quality of American foreign policy. Political scientist Gabriel Almond, syndicated columnist Walter Lippmann, historian Thomas A. Bailey, and diplomat-historian George F. Kennan were among the most influential authors on American diplomacy during the early Cold War years. Whatever their differences, they fully agreed with the conclusion of the distinguished realist, Hans Morgenthau: “The rational requirements of good foreign policy cannot from the outset count upon the support of a public opinion whose preferences are emotional rather than rational.”10 The task of effective leaders was to thus overcome the constraints that public opinion might present. A few years later a study of the State Department indicated that public opinion was not really an important factor in the foreign policy making. As one official told Bernard Cohen, “To hell with public opinion. We should lead, not follow.”10

Young academics are often told that they must excel in both the classroom and in research, but it is also made clear that tenure decisions and promotions will depend far more heavily on excellence in the latter; that is, that they can be expected to face an uneven trade-off between teaching and research. My own experience has been that the two activities are complementary. As noted earlier, my choice of dissertation topic arose very directly from trying to figure out how to stimulate students in an introductory class to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the “massive retaliation” policy announced by Secretary of State Dulles in 1954. The direct link between teaching and research also emerged many years later after having been engaged in public opinion research for almost two decades. While teaching a large lecture course on American foreign policy, the specific challenge was how best to summarize the enormous normative literature on the role that public opinion should play, and the empirical findings
on the nature and impact of public opinion on foreign policy. The result was a pair of lectures, the first of which examined the foundations of the realist view that dominated some of the classic works during the decade following World War II—“the Almond-Lippmann consensus.” The second lecture focused on the growing research literature, partly stimulated by controversies surrounding the Vietnam War, which raised some fundamental questions about the doleful realist view of public opinion as volatile, unstructured, but in the final analysis, irrelevant to the conduct of American foreign affairs.

With further work, those lectures eventually led to a long review article on public opinion and American foreign policy (chapter 4 of this volume). My colleague John Aldrich kindly shared his expertise on public opinion by providing useful comments on an earlier draft. He also suggested that it should be expanded into a book in order to deal with the topic in much fuller depth.11

My path to public opinion research had developed somewhat indirectly. It was an outgrowth of a long interest the role and beliefs; specifically in how policy makers use—or misuse—history as a source of lessons to guide their decision making. World War I, arguably the most consequential and disastrous war of the past several centuries, clearly cast a deep shadow on policy making in many countries during the 1930s, including Germany, France, and Great Britain. “Neutrality legislation” in the United States was an effort to apply the putative lessons of World War I so that the country would not again be dragged into a war to save the interests of bankers, holders of British bonds, arms merchants, and others who had been identified as culprits by the Nye Committee and various isolationist individuals and groups.

The outbreak of World War II brought forth a quite different set of lessons. During the ensuing Cold War, “the lessons of Munich,” which emphasized the importance of standing up to rather than appeasing such aggressive dictatorships as Nazi Germany, came to play an important role in defining American policy toward the Soviet Union and its allies. The “domino theory,” a variant of the Munich analogy according to which a failure to protect all one’s allies would result in challenges to and loss of others, was frequently invoked by supporters of American policy in Vietnam.

The failed American intervention in Vietnam, climaxed by the collapse of the South Vietnamese regime in the face of an invasion by North Vietnam, came to dominate increasingly bitter debates about the proper U.S. role in the world, the nature of threats that the country faced, and the appropriate tactics and strategies for dealing with them. It appeared possible that the Vietnam experience might well dominate future debates about American foreign policy. Thus, just as the two world wars had given rise to lessons about the appropriate conduct of foreign affairs, the traumatic failure in Vietnam seemed likely to live on as a set of cautionary guidelines long after evacuation of the last Americans from Saigon.

The strident postwar debates about Vietnam in Washington, on editorial
pages, and elsewhere suggested that almost all participants believed that the United States should look back at the war in Southeast Asia in order to learn how to avoid such a debacle in the future, but there were some exceptions. As the South Vietnamese regime was collapsing before a full-scale invasion by North Vietnam in the spring of 1975, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger asserted: “The Vietnam debate has now run its course.”12 A few weeks later, at a news conference, President Gerald Ford was asked about the lessons that Americans should draw from the experience in Vietnam. He replied that there was little point in pursuing the matter in detail because: “The lessons of the past in Vietnam have been learned—learned by Presidents, learned by Congress, learned by the American people.” At other times the President stated that the war “is finished as far as America is concerned,” and that the final withdrawal from the besieged city of Saigon “closes a chapter in the American experience.”13

These assertions may have seemed startling in the light of many earlier predictions by the president and secretary of state that American acquiescence in the conquest of South Vietnam would give rise to disastrous consequences, both abroad, in accordance with predictions of the domino theory, and at home, in the form of a right-wing backlash against all who were deemed responsible. Also evident in these assertions were some premises about the impact of the past on the present and future; for example, that Americans would feel no compulsion to look back at the Vietnam War—the longest in the nation’s history and the most divisive since the Civil War—to ask some basic questions: “How did we become involved?” “Why?” “What went wrong?” “How can we avoid such disasters in the future?” Alternatively, they were assuming that those who could not resist the temptation to conduct postmortems on the war would find that the answers to such questions were sufficiently self-evident to promote agreement rather than to prolong dissent. Thus, both Ford and Kissinger seemed to be predicting that, after a decade of deep domestic divisions, a new foreign policy consensus would emerge, either from collective amnesia about the war, or from a broadly shared understanding of the “lessons of Vietnam.”

Were these realistic premises? Is it possible to wipe the slate clean on a long and traumatic experience, or is there a powerful tendency to look back at it, sifting through the evidence with a view to averting a repetition of its mistakes? Do complex events so readily yield lessons that most reasonable persons will agree on their substance and scope, or is history a grab-bag in which one may readily find evidence to buttress virtually any preferred policy?

Even a casual survey of the postwar debates suggested that President Ford was excessively optimistic in suggesting that a new foreign policy consensus would emerge from the Vietnam War. There was indeed a strong propensity to believe that the United States should look back at the Vietnam experience in order to avoid repeating it, but the substance of those lessons seemed to range across a very wide spectrum, from “use all-out force, perhaps even nuclear weapons, to
win a quick, decisive victory” to “never again undertake interventions in the
Third World.” If such divergent views were also linked to other fundamental
questions about U.S. foreign policy, it suggested that the manner in which
Americans framed the Vietnam experience might well create deep and possibly
enduring cleavages on fundamental questions about the country’s proper role
in the world.

One way to test hypotheses about the possible impact of the Vietnam War
was to undertake a survey study focusing on opinion leaders rather than the
general public. Opinion leaders were by definition more likely to be influen-
tial than members of the general public, and such a study could be undertaken with
limited resources. Moreover, in one of the apparent anomalies of public opinion
research, opinion leaders had rarely been studied as a group by such established
polling organizations as Gallup or Harris, and thus the existing leadership surveys
had provided only a scattered smattering of systematic evidence.14

In a chance conversation with a longtime friend, Jim Rosenau, I mentioned
the project and, because he had had experience in undertaking surveys, I asked
what advice he might have to offer a neophyte. Our conversation led to a con-
tinuing collaboration of some three decades that has been both professionally
and personally satisfying.

The first of our Foreign Policy Leadership Project (FPLP) surveys went into
the mail in 1976 and we were pleasantly surprised with a response rate of over
50 percent, yielding well over two thousand responses to a rather long question-
naire. Drawing upon the heated postwar debates about the Vietnam debacle, the
questionnaire included clusters of items on three central questions: Why did the
United States fail in Vietnam? What are the likely consequences of that failure?
What lessons should the United States learn from the Vietnam undertaking?

My International Studies Association presidential address, chapter 5 in this
volume, provided an opportunity to identify some of the major cleavages among
American opinion leaders that had developed in the wake of the Vietnam War.
The metaphor of the “three headed eagle” described and explored how the Cold
War consensus on foreign affairs had fractured and given rise to three quite dif-
ferent visions of the appropriate American international role. The post-Vietnam
debates had seriously eroded key elements in the Cold War consensus that had
emerged from World War II and had more or less served as the underpinnings of
American foreign policy during both Democratic (Truman, Kennedy, Johnson)
and Republican (Eisenhower, Nixon) administrations.

Demonstrating that there were important differences among groups of
opinion leaders in 1976 did not, however, necessarily indicate that the cleav-
ages could be attributed to the Vietnam War. After all, consensus on foreign
policy is not the normal state of affairs in the United States. Strong partisan
differences have reemerged after every war in which the country had taken
part. The sole exception was World War II, when postwar Soviet international
behavior in Eastern Europe and elsewhere stimulated centrist elements in both political parties to agree on an active U.S. role in world affairs, containment of the Soviet Union, abandonment of the traditional opposition to participation in permanent entangling alliances, leadership in creating many international organizations, and the like.

In an effort to tease out the effects of Vietnam, we developed a typology in which leaders were classified into seven categories (Supporters, Converted Supporters, Ambivalent Supporters, Ambivalents, Ambivalent Critics, Converted Critics, and Critics), based on their answers to two questions: Where did they stand on Vietnam when the war first became an issue? Where did they stand toward the end of U.S. involvement? The Vietnam classification scheme, described in chapter 6, proved to be a potent predictor of responses to a wide array of questions, not only on Vietnam (Why did the U.S. fail in Vietnam? What are the likely consequences of that failure? What are the "lessons of Vietnam"?), but also on other foreign policy issues.

Encouraged by the results of the 1976 survey, which had been funded by our universities—Duke and the University of Southern California—we applied for a National Science Foundation grant for a follow up study in 1980. With generous NSF support that later included additional leadership surveys in 1984, 1988, 1992, and 1996, we developed the largest data set of American opinion leaders, ultimately encompassing almost fourteen thousand respondents.15

Still another question about belief structures concerns the relationship between attitudes on domestic and foreign policy issues. Are preferences on domestic issues systematically linked to those international ones, or are the two areas largely independent of each other? As on many questions relating to public opinion, the evidence was mixed. Much of it was derived from analyses generated either by panel studies of the electorate or Gallup and other surveys of the general public. Comparable data about opinion leaders were in much shorter supply.

In order to explore this question, we developed typologies of foreign and domestic policy beliefs. The former was patterned on important parallel research by Eugene Wittkopf on what he called "the faces of internationalism": militant (MI) and cooperative (CI) internationalism.16 Respondents were classified as Internationalists (support both MI and CI), Hard-liners (support MI, oppose CI), Accommodationists (oppose MI, support CI), Isolationists (oppose both MI and CI).

The first two FPLP surveys unfortunately included few questions on domestic policy, but that omission was rectified in the 1984 and later studies. Just as foreign policy questions enabled us to develop the MI/CI typology, we used the answers to fourteen domestic policy questions to develop a four-fold typology of Conservatives (conservative on both social and economic issues), Libertarians (social liberals, economic conservatives), Populists (social conservatives, economic liberals), and Liberals (liberal on both clusters of issues).17
These two typologies enabled us to explore an important issue on which the literature included divergent findings: To what extent do foreign policy and domestic issues create cross-cutting cleavages? Overlapping ones? Cross-cutting cleavages indicate that even those with strong ideological and/or partisan convictions on foreign affairs will often need to reach out across party or ideological lines in order to create effective coalitions to achieve domestic policy goals, and vice versa. In contrast, overlapping cleavages are likely to result in groupings of like-minded persons on both domestic and foreign policy issues. When both clusters of issues give rise to virtually identical coalitions, the nature of political discourse is likely to take on a much harsher tone.

The 1984, 1988, and 1992 FPLP data provided an opportunity to explore questions about cross-cutting and overlapping cleavages. As indicated in chapter 7, the evidence revealed a high correlation between views on the two clusters of issues; for example, foreign policy Hard-liners also had a strong tendency to be domestic Conservatives, whereas Accommodationists were most likely to be Liberals. Moreover, these views were closely linked to party identification. The results provided at least some insight into the strident character of American political debates, even as the Cold War was winding down. A later analysis of the issue included the 1996 FPLP data. Although by that time the Berlin Wall had come down and the Soviet Union had disintegrated, the strong links between opinions on domestic and foreign policy persisted.

The first Bush and Clinton administrations placed expanding the “zone of democracy” high on their foreign policy agendas. In several of their State of the Union addresses during the 1990s, both presidents stated that expansion of democracy would serve as one of the foundations of American policy for the post-Cold War era. While the number of democratic countries increased during the period, most of the changes were the result of local efforts, especially as the Soviet empire crumbled in Eastern Europe. Controversial interventions in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo and elsewhere yielded both successes and failures.

During the 2000 presidential election campaign, Republican candidate George W. Bush and his closest advisers made it clear that, if elected, they would enact a fundamental transformation of American policy as it had developed under President Clinton. Military power would be used to defend and promote vital national interests rather than what one critic derisively called “international social work.” The military would no longer be used to escort little Bosnian girls to school. Indeed, Condoleezza Rice, perhaps Bush’s closest foreign policy adviser, suggested that American forces in Bosnia would be withdrawn.

The administration that came to office in January 2001 had thus emitted clear signals that promotion of democracy abroad was, at best, far down on its foreign policy agenda. There is no reason to believe that, in their disdain of democracy promotion, President Bush and his advisers were responding to public opinion polls, but their views in fact coincided with overwhelming evidence that both
opinion leaders and the general public had consistently maintained very skeptical opinions about that goal. As summarized in chapter 8, surveys by various organizations over a period of a quarter century revealed that the goal of “bringing a democratic form of government to other nations” repeatedly ranked at or near the bottom of public priorities—at least through the end of the 1990s.

According to some analysts, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks “changed everything” with respect to American foreign affairs. Did it also do so with respect to democracy promotion? The American invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq were initially framed as responses to al Qaeda and the terrorist attacks. The case was clear-cut in the case of Afghanistan and increasingly less so with respect to Iraq. Claims that the Saddam Hussein regime in Baghdad possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and was linked to the September 11 attacks by virtue of its ties to al Qaeda, never persuasive in the eyes of much of the world, proved to be wholly lacking in supporting evidence. As report after report discounted the WMD and al Qaeda claims, Washington’s stated war aims increasingly came to emphasize the goal of creating a democratic regime in Iraq, with the expectation that success in that respect would have a transforming impact on the entire Middle East region.20 Its earlier derisive rhetoric notwithstanding, the Bush administration had thus come to place democracy promotion at the very pinnacle of its foreign policy agenda.

Because Saddam Hussein had long been the enemy that virtually all Americans loved to hate, few tears were shed when he was overthrown and, later, captured. Nevertheless, public enthusiasm for promoting democratic governments abroad remained tepid at best. Chicago Council on Foreign Relations’ surveys conducted after the data summarized in chapter 8 revealed that “bringing a democratic form of government to other nations” ranked next to last among eighteen goals in 2002—only “helping to improve the standard of living of less developed nations” ranked lower—and in 2004 the democracy promotion goal was last among the fourteen that respondents were asked to rate, as only 14 percent of them judged it as “very important.”21 More recent surveys about the developing situation in Iraq reflect similar skepticism about America’s ability to effect a lasting regime change in there. A Gallup poll in July 2005 found that only 37 percent of the respondents believed that the United States will “be able to establish a stable democratic government in Iraq.”

A Civil-Military Gap?

Analyses of the six FPLP surveys tended to focus on the sources of divisions among American opinion leaders. Most of them revealed that the “Vietnam policy position” variable (described in chapter 6), the “militant internationalism/cooperative internationalism” classification scheme (described in chapter 7), political party and ideology were closely linked and that they defined the deepest
cleavages. Other studies also examined two “gaps” that had achieved some prominence—the “gender gap” and the “generation gap.” Some gender differences did in fact emerge from the FPLP data, but they tended to weaken when subjected to multivariate analyses, and generational cleavages were generally less potent than suggested by depictions of the political landscape as dominated by “the Munich generation versus the Vietnam generation.”

Lest this narrative makes it appear that this research has all been part of a well-laid out plan, it is important to acknowledge the role of chance. A gift subscription to the *Atlantic Monthly* from my brother led me to an essay by a Washington journalist which described another significant cleavage in American society—between the professional military and the society that it is trained and pledged to protect. In that seminal article Wall Street Journal defense reporter Thomas Ricks warned, “The military appears to be becoming politically less representative of society” in a number of important respects, including its open identification with the right wing of the Republican Party. In his article, and subsequently in a generally sympathetic book on Marine Corps training, Ricks described the growing sense among the military that their culture and values are far superior to those of the society they have pledged to defend. The evidence was largely anecdotal and confined to the U.S. Marines. Because each of the six FPLP surveys included military leaders at the Pentagon and the National War College, those data provided an opportunity to test some of the concerns expressed by Ricks. When I contacted him for reactions to the preliminary results of my analyses, he summarized the findings in a long *Wall Street Journal* article. The full analysis of the 1976–96 FPLP surveys appears here in chapter 9.

The data provided strong confirmation for two core concerns in the Ricks studies: significant partisan and ideological gaps appeared in the 1976, and they grew apace through the 1996 study, to the point that liberals and Democrats were virtually endangered species among military leaders. As might be expected, the *Wall Street Journal* and *International Security* articles brought forth a flurry of vigorous responses, both favorable and unfavorable. Some critics quite appropriately pointed to the obvious limitations of a study that was limited to senior officers. Moreover, the FPLP questionnaires were not designed for a fuller probe of civilian and military cultures.

The findings and limitations of the FPLP study stimulated a grant application by my Triangle Institute of Strategic Studies (TISS) colleagues Peter Feaver and Richard Kohn to undertake a more extensive study of civil-military relations in the United States, including an expanded survey of military officers. The TISS survey replicated the sampling design of the FPLP surveys for civilian leaders, but the military sample was expanded to included younger officers at various stages of their careers.

Despite differences in the military sample, the TISS survey conducted in 1998–99 reinforced those that had emerged from the FPLP data, not only on
significant partisan and ideological differences between civilian and military leaders, but also on many other values. For example, the TISS survey included several items that asked respondents to make some judgments on civilian and military culture. Table 1.1 summarizes the results.

It is not especially surprising that military respondents judged their own institution and culture in exceptionally favorable terms; we would also expect physicians, lawyers, educators, journalists and the like to provide laudatory descriptions of their own professions. As revealed in the left hand column of Table 1.1, overwhelming majorities of military respondents viewed military culture as disciplined, loyal, honest, and emphasizing hard work. They also judged it to be free of materialism, corruption, and self-indulgent tendencies. Somewhat smaller numbers also rated it as tolerant, generous, and appropriately cautious. Only on creativity and rigidity did a majority of the military seem to harbor some doubts. However, it is not clear in this context whether “rigid” is an unfavorable trait (as in knowing only a single way to tackle a wide range of complex problems) or a favorable one (as in a unwillingness to compromise one’s core values and beliefs for personal gain).

In sharp contrast, the military view of civilian culture ranged from moderately favorable to abysmal. The officers taking part in the survey conceded that Americans work hard, are creative, and are not overly cautious. They denied that Americans are intolerant or rigid. Military responses to the remaining list of traits painted a very dismal picture indeed. Civilian culture was viewed as materialistic, self-indulgent, undisciplined, dishonest, for the most part ungenerous and, worst of all from the perspective of core military values, disloyal. That only about one military officer in eight regarded civilian culture as loyal is a stunning

Table 1.1 Assessments by Military Officers of Military Culture and Civilian Culture in the TISS Surveys, 1998–99

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of military officers checking each term</th>
<th>Military culture</th>
<th>Civilian culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disciplined</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyal</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard-working</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generous</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigid</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overly cautious</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intolerant</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materialistic</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-indulgent</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrupt</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
indictment that, perhaps more than any of the other responses, indicates that there is indeed a serious gap between the two cultures.25

In the light of broader controversies about the Iraq war, expectations that the civil-military gap issue would at least temporarily be eclipsed have not materialized. Captain Russell Burgos, a returned Iraq veteran, described a military culture that echoed the Ricks thesis of a “private loathing for public America.”26 The issue also resurfaced when a military chaplain at the Air Force Academy was dismissed for revealing that cadets are targets of extensive proselytizing by Evangelical Protestants. They were, for example, provided materials from James Dobson’s highly partisan organization, Focus on the Family. Evangelicals, who generally take a very dim view of contemporary civilian society and are overwhelmingly Republican, constitute an increasing proportion of the chaplain corps as the number of mainline Protestants and Catholics has declined.27 The fullest airing of the topic emerged in a brilliant appraisal of contemporary civil-military relations and a host of related issues by Andrew J. Bacevich, a former career military officer and self-described conservative Republican. He painted a sobering picture in which basic American values and institutions are at risk because the country is moving toward a state of perpetual war.28

What might be done to bridge the civil-military gap? One obvious answer—to restore the draft or at least to invoke a national service requirement including military service among several options—could provide more Americans with an opportunity to experience and perhaps better appreciate both civilian and military cultures. Suffice it to say that although the postwar chaos in Iraq and a growing sense that the American military are stretched too thinly have generated a few calls to rethink the issue, legislation to institute conscription or national service has the same chance of enactment as a bill to eliminate Thanksgiving, Mother’s Day, and Valentine’s Day.

The Impact of the End of the Cold War and September 11

Scientific public opinion polling was in its infancy when carrier-based Japanese aircraft struck at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, destroying much of the U.S. Pacific fleet. It is nevertheless clear that the deeply divided public of December 6 had been transformed into a united one. As Arthur Vandenberg, a leading isolationist senator, summarized his epiphany, “In my own mind, my convictions regarding international cooperation and collective security took form on the afternoon of the Pearl Harbor attack. That day ended isolationism for any realist.”29 The question that had the greatest potential to divide Americans was whether to concentrate initial military efforts to defeat Imperial Japan or Nazi Germany. By declaring war on the United States just days after Pearl Harbor, Adolf Hitler largely spared Washington and the country a potentially divisive debate.

The end of the Cold War and the September 11 terrorist attacks constituted
dramatic events with the potential to elicit a sea change in American public opinion comparable to that of Pearl Harbor. A few years after the disintegration of the Soviet Union removed all doubts about the end of the Cold War, the distinguished historian and former presidential adviser, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., wrote an obituary for American internationalism and “the magnificent dream” of collective security. Based on his reading of some public opinion polls and other harbingers of change, he foresaw the return to a pre-World War II isolationism under the new guise of unilateralism.30

In a detailed analysis of surveys involving both opinion leaders and the general public, chapter 10 concludes that a decade after the Cold War ended there are many more signs of continuity than change in opinions about the country’s proper role in the world, important foreign policy goals, and strategies for pursuing national interests. To be sure, the general public expressed skepticism about exporting American institutions abroad, some aspects of globalization, and immigration policy, but these opinions represented continuity of views that had existed before the Berlin Wall came down and the USSR disintegrated.31 The overall findings largely reinforce the conclusion that those who believe in the resurgence of a “new isolationism” are in fact “misreading the public.”32

Chapter 10 was completed shortly after the Bush administration came to office in 2001 and thus it did not assess the impact of the September 11 terrorist attacks. The concluding chapter on public opinion addresses briefly one aspect of the claim that “September 11 changed everything”: Did the terrorist attacks and the subsequent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq fundamentally alter public preferences about America’s proper role in the world? Did they serve to bring Americans together in the same manner as the Pearl Harbor attack six decades earlier and, more specifically, did they bridge the deep partisan chasms that have characterized the American political landscape since the bitter Vietnam experience?

Chapter 11 reveals that, whatever the other consequences of the September 11 terrorist attacks, they had only a limited impact on the core tenets of American public opinion. Just as the end of the Cold War did not confirm Arthur Schlesinger’s fears of a mindless public retreat into isolationism and unilateralism (chapter 10), public preferences for an active international role, conditioned upon burden sharing with NATO allies and others, survived the terrorist attack. The evidence also indicates that, as of late 2005, the Iraq war has widened rather than narrowed partisan cleavages. Those differences also extend to many domestic issues, not only on such hot button questions as abortion, school prayer, gun control and the like, but also to Social Security, tax policy and others on which economic self-interests might be expected to be dominant. Moreover, the overlapping cleavages on domestic and foreign policy, described in chapter 7, have persisted, thus contributing to the incendiary tone of political discourse in recent years.
Chapter 12, "Theories of International Relations," attempts to place the study of foreign policy within a broader context. An earlier version of the essay was commissioned by Michael Hogan, then editor of *Diplomatic History*, in order to provide historians with an overview of how their political science brethren were approaching the large terrain of international affairs. Practitioners of the two neighboring disciplines share a great many overlapping concerns but intellectual cooperation between them has been sporadic at best, at least in part because most universities are organized in ways that impede rather than facilitate scholarly collaboration across departmental lines. After an analysis of several prominent systems level theories, the essay examines some of foreign policy decision-making approaches, including those that focus on bureaucratic politics, small group dynamics, and individual decision makers.

Although the book in which chapter 12 originally appeared had a 2004 copyright date, it actually went to press prior to September 11, 2001. Consequently it does not consider the implications of those attacks for theories of international relations. It is too early to offer definitive judgments barely past the fourth anniversary of those events, but it may nevertheless be worth at least a preliminary effort. Aside from a firm sense that the approaches labeled “Global Society, Interdependence, Institutionalism” and “Foreign Policy Analysis” will grow rather than diminish in importance, several observations may be useful at least to generate further debate.33

- Idea, beliefs, perceptions, and opinions—a central theme of many preceding chapters—are likely to take on heightened importance. Osama bin Laden’s many pronouncements exhorting his followers and justifying the *jihad* against the West, and most especially against the American “crusaders,” provide only the most dramatic recent example of ideas driving action. The world has witnessed a resurgence of various fundamentalist groups, not only within Islam but within other faiths as well, some of which invoke theological justifications for violence against “infidels” or other enemies. Samuel Huntington’s thesis of a “clash of civilizations” has aroused criticism on several grounds, most notably because some of the bloodiest recent wars have taken place within civilizations—for example, the eight-year war triggered by Iraq’s invasion of Iran.34 Nevertheless, the core concept that ideas, including those rooted in religion, can have an important role in shaping global relations seems valid. More generally, an increasing role for ideas and beliefs also suggests that “constructivist” approaches to global politics are likely to prove increasingly fruitful.

- Structural realism, a theory grounded in power relations among major state actors, seems less likely to be helpful in explaining global politics in the post-September 11 era. The point is *not* that globalization, whether of trade, finance, culture, or terrorism, has eroded the importance of the
state as the central actor in the global system. Traditional great powers such as nuclear-armed United States, China, Russia, France, and Great Britain, non-nuclear Japan, and as well as emerging great powers such as India (also nuclear) and Brazil, will certainly persist as the major actors, but the September 11 terrorist attacks also highlighted the impact of two other types of actors that tend to get short shrift in theories focused on traditional power structures. Terrorist groups such as al Qaeda possess only very limited capabilities but they are clearly capable of inflicting immense destruction. Even should Osama bin Laden and his associates be captured or killed, the use of terror by the politically disaffected is unfortunately not likely to disappear. “Failed states” are unable even to maintain order within their borders but they may provide inviting havens for terrorist groups, drug lords, and the like. Failed states may also be targets for interventions from abroad. Kenneth Waltz, the most important and articulate proponent of structural realism, has argued that it cannot be combined with a theory of foreign policy. If that is the case, it is not likely to strengthen the case for structural realism as the theory of international politics. System structures are and will remain important, but that core insight needs to be combined and synthesized with those of other theoretical approaches.

- Traditional realism seems likely to enjoy at least a modest bull market in coming years. Versions of the theory that are firmly rooted in a conception of human nature—for example, man’s sinfulness or power-lust—will continue to face the difficulty that, if human nature is used to explaining everything, it ends up explaining nothing. The limitations of human nature as an explanation for political behavior can be illustrated by the careers of Nelson Mandela and Robert Mugabe, African leaders of the same generation who came of age successfully fighting white racist regimes in neighboring countries. The former deservedly won the Nobel Peace Prize for his enlightened leadership of post-apartheid South Africa, whereas the latter became a brutal tyrant who has victimized his own people in order to maintain power in Zimbabwe. But even if it is less than fully satisfying as a full-blown analytic theory, traditional realism appears increasingly attractive as a prescriptive theory because of its insistence on a sound balance between goals and capabilities, its opposition to international crusades, and its thesis that caution and humility are virtues in realist statecraft. According to Hans Morgenthau, dean of American realist theorist, “Political realism refuses to identify the moral aspirations of a particular nation with the moral laws that govern the universe…. There is a world of difference between the belief that all nations stand under the judgment of God, inscrutable to the human mind, and the blasphemous conviction that God is always on one’s side and that what one wills oneself cannot fail to be willed by God also.” Morgenthau’s words are a welcome reminder
at a time when leaders of some terrorist groups, as well as of some major national actors, directly or indirectly invoke God to justify their policies.

• Although a few post-modern critiques of existing international relations theories may have some validity, the strongly anti-empirical foundations of most post-modern approaches render their contributions to understanding global politics highly suspect in either the pre- or post-September 11 worlds. A passionate disdain for generally accepted rules of evidence and inference, even if driven by noble purposes, is unlikely to move us closer to understanding and dealing with the most important issues of global relations—peace and justice—any more than a creationist approach to biology is likely to prove useful in finding a cure for cancer.

The concluding chapter (chapter 13), a very brief appraisal of American foreign relations in late 2005, takes its theme from the opening words of Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*, “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.” The United States is universally recognized as the world's only superpower but, paradoxically, even some of its closest allies are increasingly unwilling to follow Washington's lead on foreign policy issues. The difficulties arise not from a dearth of "hard power"—military and economic resources—but from deficits in "soft power." The problems are compounded by striking partisan differences on the foreign policy. In line with the central themes of this book—the importance of ideas in foreign affairs—the essay suggests that many of this country's current difficulties stem from an almost obsessive adherence to beliefs about the Iraq war and its aftermath that have proved, at best, to be highly questionable.
I

Foreign Policy Leaders
Beliefs and Cognitive Processes
The Belief System and National Images

A Case Study

[1962]

I. The Belief System and National Images

Even a cursory survey of the relevant literature reveals that in recent years—particularly in the decade and a half since the end of World War II—students of international politics have taken a growing interest in psycho-attitudinal approaches to the study of the international system. It has been proposed, in fact, that psychology belongs at the "core" of the discipline (Wright, 1955, p. 506). Two related problems within this area have become particular foci of attention.

1. A number of studies have shown that the relationship between "belief system," perceptions, and decision-making is a vital one (Rokeach, 1960; Smith et al., 1956; Snyder et al., 1954). A decision-maker acts upon his "image" of the situation rather than upon "objective" reality, and it has been demonstrated that the belief system—its structure as well as its content—plays an integral role in the cognitive process (Boulding, 1956; Festinger, 1957; Ray, 1961).

2. Within the broader scope of the belief-system-perception-decision-making relationship there has been a heightened concern for the problem of stereotyped national images as a significant factor in the dynamics of the international system (Bauer, 1961; Boulding, 1959; Osgood, 1959b; Wheeler, 1960; Wright, 1957). Kenneth Boulding, for example, has written that, "The national image, however, is the last great stronghold of unsophistication…. Nations are divided into 'good' and 'bad'—the enemy is all bad, one's own nation is of spotless virtue" (Boulding, 1959, p. 130).

The relationship of national images to international conflict is clear: decision-makers act upon their definition of the situation and their images of states—others
as well as their own. These images are in turn dependent upon the decision-maker's belief system, and these may or may not be accurate representations of "reality." Thus it has been suggested that international conflict frequently is not between states, but rather between distorted images of states (Wright, 1957, p. 266).

The purpose of this paper is to report the findings of a case study dealing with the relationship between the belief system, national images, and decision-making. The study centers upon one decision-maker of unquestioned influence, John Foster Dulles, and the connection between his belief system and his perceptions of the Soviet Union.

The analytical framework for this study can be stated briefly. The belief system, composed of a number of "images" of the past, present, and future, includes "all the accumulated, organized knowledge that the organism has about itself and the world" (Miller et al., 1960, p. 16). It may be thought of as the set of lenses through which information concerning the physical and social environment is received. It orients the individual to his environment, defining it for him and identifying for him its salient characteristics. National images may be denoted as subparts of the belief system. Like the belief system itself, these are "models" which order for the observer what will otherwise be an unmanageable amount of information (Bauer, 1961).

In addition to organizing perceptions into a meaningful guide for behavior, the belief system has the function of the establishment of goals and the ordering of preferences. Thus it actually has a dual connection with decision-making. The direct relationship is found in that aspect of the belief system which tells us "what ought to be," acting as a direct guide in the establishment of goals. The indirect link—the role that the belief system plays in the process of "scanning, selecting, filtering, linking, reordering, organizing, and reporting" (McClelland, 1962, p. 456)—arises from the tendency of the individual to assimilate new perceptions to familiar ones, and to distort what is seen in such a way as to minimize the clash with previous expectations (Bronfenbrenner, 1961; Ray, 1961; Rokeach, 1960). Like the blind men, each describing the elephant on the basis of the part he touches, different individuals may describe the same object or situation in terms of what they have been conditioned to see. This may be particularly true in a crisis situation: "Controversial issues tend to be polarized not only because commitments have been made but also because certain perceptions are actively excluded from consciousness if they do not fit the chosen world image" (Rapport, 1960, p. 258). These relationships are presented in figure 2.1.

The belief system and its component images are, however, dynamic rather than static; they are in continual interaction with new information. The impact of this information depends upon the degree to which the structure of the belief system is "open" or "closed." According to Rokeach,
At the closed extreme, it is new information that must be tampered with—by narrowing it out, altering it, or constraining it within isolated bounds. In this way, the belief-disbelief system is left intact. At the open extreme, it is the other way around: New information is assimilated as is… thereby producing “genuine” (as contrasted with “party-line”) changes in the whole belief-disbelief system [Rokeach, 1960, p. 50].

Thus while national images perform an important function in the cognitive process, they may also become dysfunctional. Unless they coincide in some way with commonly-perceived reality, decisions based on these images are not likely to fulfill expectations. Erroneous images may also prove to have a distorting effect by encouraging the reinterpretation of information that does not fit the image; this is most probable with rigid “models” such as “totalitarian communism” or “monopolistic capitalism” which exclude the very types of information that might lead to a modification of the models themselves (Bauer, 1961; Wheeler, 1960).

II. John Foster Dulles and the Soviet Union

The selection of John Foster Dulles as the central figure for my study fulfilled a number of historical and research requirements for the testing of hypotheses concerning the relationship between the belief system and perceptions of other nations. He was acknowledged as a decision-maker of first-rate importance, and he held office during a period of dramatic changes in Soviet elites, capabilities, and tactics. In addition, he left voluminous public pronouncements and writings on both the Soviet Union and on the theoretical aspects of international politics,
thus facilitating a reconstruction of salient aspects of both his belief system and his perceptions of the Soviet Union.

The sources used in this study included all of Dulles’ publicly available statements concerning the Soviet Union during the 1953–1959 period, derived from a content analysis of 434 documents, including Congressional testimony, press conferences, and addresses. These statements were transcribed, masked, and quantified according to the “evaluative assertion analysis” technique devised by Charles E. Osgood and his associates (Osgood et al., 1956; Osgood, 1959a).4

All of Dulles’ statements concerning the Soviet Union were translated into 3,584 “evaluative assertions” and placed into one of four categories:

1. **Soviet Policy**: assessed on a friendship-hostility continuum (2,246 statements).
2. **Soviet Capabilities**: assessed on a strength-weakness continuum (732 statements).
3. **Soviet Success**: assessed on a satisfaction-frustration continuum (290 statements).
4. **General Evaluation of the Soviet Union**: assessed on a good-bad continuum (316 statements).

The resulting figures, when aggregated into time periods, provide a record of the way in which Dulles’ perceptions of each dimension varied. From this record inferences can be made of the perceived relationship between the dimensions.

Dulles’ image of the Soviet Union was built on the trinity of atheism, totalitarianism, and communism, capped by a deep belief that no enduring social order could be erected upon such foundations.5 He had written in 1950, for example, that: “Soviet Communism starts with an atheistic, Godless premise. Everything else flows from that premise” (Dulles, 1950, p. 8). Upon these characteristics—the negation of values at or near the core of his belief system—he superimposed three dichotomies.

1. The “good” Russian people versus the “bad” Soviet leaders.6
2. The “good” Russian national interest versus “bad” international communism.7
3. The “good” Russian state versus the “bad” Communist Party.8

That image of the Soviet Union—which has been called the “inherent bad faith of the Communists” model (Kissinger, 1962, p. 201)—was sustained in large part by his heavy reliance on the study of classical Marxist writings, particularly those of Lenin, to find the keys to all Soviet policies (Dulles, 1958b).

In order to test the general hypothesis that information concerning the Soviet Union tended to be perceived and interpreted in a manner consistent with the belief system, the analysis was focused upon the relationship Dulles perceived between Soviet hostility and Soviet success, capabilities, and general evaluation
of the Soviet Union. Specifically, it was hypothesized that Dulles' image of the Soviet Union would be preserved by associating decreases in perceived hostility with:

1. Increasing Soviet frustration in the conduct of its foreign policy.
2. Decreasing Soviet capabilities.
3. No significant change in the general evaluation of the Soviet Union.

Similarly, it was hypothesized that increasing Soviet hostility would be correlated with success and strength.

The results derived through the content analysis of Dulles' statements bear out the validity of the hypotheses. These strongly suggest that he attributed decreasing Soviet hostility to the necessity of adversity rather than to any genuine change of character.

In a short paper it is impossible to include all of the evidence and illustrative material found in the full-length study from which this paper is derived. A few examples may, however, illuminate the perceived relationship presented in Table 2.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Hostility</th>
<th>Success</th>
<th>Capabilities</th>
<th>General Evaluation</th>
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<tr>
<td>1953:</td>
<td>Jan-Jun</td>
<td>+2.01</td>
<td>-1.06</td>
<td>+0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jul-Dec</td>
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<td>+0.46</td>
<td>+2.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jul-Dec</td>
<td>+1.85</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>+1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Jan-Jun</td>
<td>+0.74</td>
<td>-1.81</td>
<td>-0.80</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jul-Dec</td>
<td>+0.96</td>
<td>-1.91</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>1956:</td>
<td>Jan-Jun</td>
<td>+1.05</td>
<td>-1.68</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jul-Dec</td>
<td>+1.72</td>
<td>-2.11</td>
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<td>1957:</td>
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<td>+1.71</td>
<td>-2.10</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jul-Dec</td>
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<td>+0.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>1958–</td>
<td>Jan-Jun</td>
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<td>+0.02</td>
<td>+1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Jul-Feb</td>
<td>+2.10</td>
<td>-1.20</td>
<td>+1.71</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hostility–Success (Friendship-Failure):</td>
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<td>6 Month Periods (Table Above)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>+0.71</td>
<td>0.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 Month Periods</td>
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<td>3 Month Periods</td>
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<td>Hostility–Strength (Friendship-Weakness):</td>
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<td>Hostility–Bad (Friendship-Good):</td>
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The 1955–1956 period, beginning with the signing of the Austrian State Treaty and ending with the dual crises in Egypt and Hungary, is of particular interest. As shown in Figure 2.2, Dulles clearly perceived Soviet hostility to be declining. At the same time, he regarded that decline to be symptomatic of a regime whose foreign policy had been an abysmal failure and whose declining strength was forcing Soviet decision-makers to seek a respite in the Cold War. That he felt there was a causal connection between these factors can be suggested by numerous statements made during the period.10

The process of how Soviet actions were reinterpreted so as to preserve the model of "the inherent bad faith of the Communists" can also be illustrated by specific examples. Dulles clearly attributed Soviet actions which led up to the Geneva “Summit” Conference—notably the signing of the Austrian State Treaty—to factors other than good faith. He proclaimed that a thaw in the Cold War had come about because, “the policy of the Soviet Union with reference to Western Europe has failed” (U.S. Senate, 1955, p. 15), subsequently adding that, “it has been their [Soviet] system that is on the point of collapsing” (U.S. House of Representatives, 1955, p. 10).

A year later, when questioned about the Soviet plan to reduce their armed forces by 1,200,000 men, he quickly invoked the theme of the bad faith of the Soviet leadership. After several rounds of questions, in which each reply increasingly deprecated the value of the Soviet move in lowering world tensions, he was asked, “Isn’t it a fair conclusion from what you have said this morning that you would prefer to have the Soviet Union keep these men in their armed forces?” He replied, “Well, it’s a fair conclusion that I would rather have them standing around doing guard duty than making atomic bombs.” In any case, he claimed, the reduction was forced by industrial and agricultural weakness: “I think, however,
that what is happening can be explained primarily by economic factors rather than by a shift in foreign policy intentions” (Dulles, 1956, pp. 884–5).

There is strong evidence, then, that Dulles “interpreted the very data which would lead one to change one’s model in such a way as to preserve that model” (Bauer, 1961, p. 227). Contrary information (a general decrease in Soviet hostility, specific non-hostile acts) were reinterpreted in a manner which did not do violence to the original image. In the case of the Soviet manpower cuts, these were attributed to necessity (particularly economic weakness), and bad faith (the assumption that the released men would be put to work on more lethal weapons). In the case of the Austrian State Treaty, he explained the Soviet agreement in terms of frustration (the failure of its policy in Europe), and weakness (the system was on the point of collapse).

The extent to which Dulles’ image of the Soviet Union affected American decision-making during the period cannot be stated with certainty. There is considerable evidence, however, that he was the primary, if not the sole architect of American policy vis à vis the Soviet bloc (Adams, 1961; Morgenthau, 1961; Davis, 1961). Moreover, as Sidney Verba has pointed out, the more ambiguous the cognitive and evaluative aspects of a decision-making situation, and the less a group context is used in decision-making, the more likely are personality variables to assert themselves (Verba, 1961, pp. 102–3). Both the ambiguity of information concerning Soviet intentions and Dulles’ modus operandi appear to have increased the importance of his image of the Soviet Union.11

III. Conclusion

These findings have somewhat sobering implications for the general problem of resolving international conflict. They suggest the fallacy of thinking that peaceful settlement of outstanding international issues is simply a problem of
devising "good plans." Clearly as long as decision-makers on either side of the Cold War adhere to rigid images of the other party, there is little likelihood that even genuine "bids" (North et al., 1960, p. 357) to decrease tensions will have the desired effect. Like Dulles, the Soviet decision-makers possess a relatively all-encompassing set of lenses through which they perceive their environment. Owing to their image of "monopoly capitalism," they are also pre-conditioned to view the actions of the West within a framework of "inherent bad faith."

To the extent that each side undeviatingly interprets new information, even friendly bids, in a manner calculated to preserve the original image, the two-nation system is a closed one with small prospect for achieving even a desired reduction of tensions. If decreasing hostility is assumed to arise from weakness and frustration, and the other party is defined as inherently evil, there is little cause to reciprocate. Rather, there is every reason to press further, believing that added pressure will at least insure the continued good conduct of the adversary, and perhaps even cause its collapse. As a result, perceptions of low hostility are self-liquidating and perceptions of high hostility are self-fulfilling. The former, being associated with weakness and frustration, do not invite reciprocation; the latter, assumed to derive from strength and success, are likely to result in reactions which will increase rather than decrease tensions.

There is also another danger: to assume that the decreasing hostility of an adversary is caused by weakness (rather than, for example, the sense of confidence that often attends growing strength), may be to invite a wholly unrealistic sense of complacency about the other state's capabilities.

In such a closed system—dominated by what has been called the "mirror image"—misperceptions and erroneous interpretations of the other party's intentions feed back into the system, confirming the original error (Ray, 1961).12

If this accurately represents the interaction between two hostile states, it appears that the probability of making effective bids to break the cycle would depend upon at least two variables:

1. The degree to which the decision-makers on both sides approach the "open" end of Rokeach's scale of personality types (Rokeach, 1960).
2. The degree to which the social systems approach the "pluralistic" end of the pluralistic-monolithic continuum. The closer the systems come to the monolithic end, the more they appear to require the institutionalization of an "external enemy" in order to maintain internal cohesion (North, 1962, p. 41; Wheeler, 1960).

The testing of these and other hypotheses concerning the function of belief systems in international politics must, however, await further research. Certainly this looms as a high priority task given the current state of the international system. As Charles E. Osgood has so cogently said,
Surely, it would be a tragedy, a cause for cosmic irony, if two of the most civilized nations on this earth were to drive each other to their mutual destruction because of their mutually threatening conceptions of each other—without ever testing the validity of those conceptions [Osgood, 1959b, p. 318].

This is no idle warning. It has been shown empirically in this paper that the characteristics of the reciprocal mirror image operated between the two most powerful nations in the international system during a crucial decade of world history.

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Cognitive Process Approaches to Decision-Making

Foreign Policy Actors Viewed Psychologically

Decision-making analysis in political science, especially its foreign policy component, has often been dominated by approaches that conceptualize the acting unit as a “unitary rational actor,” but many of the more interesting studies of the past few years have pointed to several limitations and inadequacies of such models. Norms and interactions within the decision-making group may serve certain needs (emotional support, feelings of solidarity, and the like) of group members. However, group dynamics may also have some dysfunctional consequences for the quality of decisions by inhibiting search or cutting it off prematurely, ruling out the legitimacy of some options, curtailing independent analysis, and suppressing some forms of intragroup conflict that might serve to clarify goals, values, and options. Organizational norms, routines, and standard operating procedures may shape and perhaps distort the structuring of problems, channeling of information, utilization of expertise, and implementation of executive decisions. The consequences of bureaucratic politics may significantly constrain the manner in which issues are defined, the range of options that may be considered, and the manner in which executive decisions are implemented by subordinates.

Although these studies of decision processes have identified important limitations of rational choice models, there are also other constraints on decision-making that may warrant investigation. The existence of “cognitive constraints on rationality” is well established in the decision-making literature, with implications that may be especially relevant for foreign policy analysis. Because the decision-maker’s orientation to interpretation of the political environment is mediated by
his beliefs about social life, his psychological environment may only imperfectly correspond to the “real” or operational political environment.

Nor is it always fruitful to adopt the assumption of homogeneous beliefs among decision-makers (i.e., the premise that for purposes of foreign policy analysis the nation may be conceptualized as a unitary actor). Some beliefs may be widely shared by top officials within the polity, but even in an authoritarian state with a highly structured official ideology (e.g., China or the USSR) there may be significant variations within the elite group with respect to others.

Beliefs, Cognitive Processes, and Foreign Policy

It is generally recognized that an individual’s behavior is in large part shaped by the manner in which he perceives, diagnoses, and evaluates his physical and social environment. Similarly, it is recognized that in order to experience and cope with the complex, confusing reality of the environment, individuals have to form simplified, structured beliefs about the nature of their world. An individual’s perceptions, in turn, are filtered through clusters of beliefs or “cognitive maps” of different parts of his social and physical environment. The beliefs that comprise these maps provide the individual with a more or less coherent way of organizing and making sense out of what would otherwise be a confusing array of signals picked up from the environment by his senses. Political leaders are no different in this respect. Because policy situations are often characterized by “structural uncertainty,” the cognitive maps of decision-makers may be expected to be of more than passing interest.

The central role of cognitive factors in decision-making has long been recognized (Simon, 1947; Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin, 1954, 1962; March and Simon, 1958). Nevertheless, progress toward incorporating them into empirical research has been relatively slow and uneven; students of international politics and foreign policy, for example, have not achieved consensus about the central relevance or utility of research on the belief systems and cognitive processes of foreign policy leaders. Analysts who take the affirmative side on this issue—in the sense that their research designs either focus upon or at least leave room for the possible importance of the cognitive aspects of decision-making—have been in a minority. Although there are some indications of a change in this respect, to date there has been a relative neglect of systematic research focusing on the relationship between: belief systems; the manner in which such complex cognitive tasks as diagnosis of the situation, search for policy options, and evaluations are undertaken; choice behavior; and coping with feedback resulting from the selected policy.

Limited systematic investigation of the linkages between beliefs and decision-making characterizes not only the discipline as a whole, but also the research of those who have found a congenial intellectual home in the interstices between
political science and psychology. A perusal of two reviews of the foreign policy-international politics literature, undertaken from a social-psychological perspective (Kelman, 1965; Etzioni, 1969; see also the extensive bibliography in Knutson, 1972: 283–325), reveals that public attitudes, images, and stereotypes; the effects of travel or personal contacts; and other forms of cross-national interaction have received considerable attention. The impact of such variables on decision-making and policy outputs, however, may be somewhat limited and difficult to trace. Research on foreign policy leaders and their beliefs, perceptions, styles of information-processing, strategies for coping with uncertainty, and the like have been a secondary area of concern, even among those whose investigations are informed by theories, concepts, and data of a psychological nature.

Although in recent years a cognitive approach to foreign policy analysis has emerged as a vital area of inquiry, it is nevertheless useful to consider the basic arguments against this approach, for they may identify a number of genuine difficulties that stand in the way of developing rigorous theories and a cumulative body of empirical findings.

Critical Reactions to Earlier Approaches

Possibly contributing to the relative neglect of research on foreign policy officials and their cognitions and perceptions is the continuing influence of critical reactions against previous efforts to deal with the individual and his psychological traits as the central focus of analysis. Four examples illustrate this observation.

1. The “war begins in the minds of men” approach achieved some following after World War II, especially among behavioral scientists who sought to apply the insights of their own disciplines toward the eradication or amelioration of international conflict. The optimistic vision of an almost infinitely malleable human nature and the tendency to ascribe conflict largely to misunderstanding, lack of communication, inadequate knowledge, or misperception were inviting targets for critical reaction (Waltz, 1959).

2. Some approaches focused on the manner in which psychological aberrations or pathological needs of decision-makers were projected into the international arena. The examples of Hitler and Stalin seemed to provide special relevance to this perspective. But, without denying that attention to nonlogical aspects of personality may provide some insight into the behavior of individual leaders, critics (Verba, 1961) questioned whether such explanations were either sufficient or necessary for understanding important international phenomena.

3. The “power school,” which reached a position of dominance following World War II, was also rooted in psychological theories of political man. It portrayed him as ambitious and egoistic or, in some versions, as touched with original sin. This is not the place to evaluate these visions of homo politicus. Suffice it to
say that global psychological properties such as those posited by the “first image pessimists,” to use Kenneth Waltz’ term, did not lend themselves very well to rigorous empirical research. As in the case of the “war begins in the minds of men” school, the “realist” approach was subject to trenchant critiques (Waltz, 1959; Hoffmann, 1960) that cast doubt not only on the specific theories, but also on the more basic propositions that our understanding of international politics and foreign policy could significantly be enhanced by including the decision-maker, his belief system, and his cognitive processes at the core of our analyses.

4. Decision-making approaches (Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin, 1954, 1962; Frankel, 1963) were in part a reaction to deficiencies of earlier theories. The most prominent of these, the framework developed by Snyder and his colleagues, placed the individual decision-maker—and his values, attitudes, information, perceptions, and definition of the situation—at the center of a complex network of organizational and other influences. After an initially enthusiastic reception, this approach came under considerable criticism. There is no need to rehash here the by now familiar arguments of the critics (McClosky, 1956; Hoffmann, 1960; Rosenau, 1967), but one point is perhaps worth noting. The major empirical application of the framework—the American decision to resist the invasion of South Korea (Snyder and Paige, 1958; Paige, 1968)—made fairly extensive use of the organizational and information variables of the scheme. It also explored in some detail the internal and external setting of the decision. But less attention was devoted to the belief systems and cognitive processes of those involved in making the decisions.

The Relevance of Psychology

It is no secret that many political scientists consider the analyses of foreign policy and international politics undertaken by some psychologists to be well-intentioned, but often of dubious realism and relevance. Questions have also been raised about the value of introducing the premise, theories, concepts, and to some extent the methodologies of other disciplines into the core of foreign policy analysis (Hoffmann, 1960: 172). These objections take several forms. One is that the relevant literature in psychology has emerged from the artificial setting of the laboratory, using subjects who are in some important respects quite unlike foreign policy officials. Moreover, the laboratory subjects have usually been engaged in problem-solving activities that bear only a faint likeness to the complex cognitive tasks that occupy political leaders, especially when they are faced with awesome crisis decisions.

Some critics also question the wisdom of borrowing theories and concepts from another discipline when psychologists themselves have failed to achieve consensus on important questions about belief systems, attitude change, and related concerns. Even prominent formulations such as various “cognitive
consistency theories”—approaches which share the premise that man seeks congruence between his behavior, beliefs, and attitudes—have been the source of vigorous debate among advocates of competing explanations (Abelson et al., 1968; Insko, 1967). Why, then, should students of foreign policy, rarely trained to deal critically with the results of experimental research, add to their own burdens by introducing the controversies of other disciplines into their work? Doing so may render them no less vulnerable than the psychologist who assumes that the world of international politics is merely his research laboratory writ large.

Although these criticisms may overstate the difficulties, they are quite correct in suggesting that indiscriminate borrowing from psychology is no panacea. The starting point and the criterion of relevance should be the substantive concerns of the foreign policy analyst rather than those of the experimental psychologist. It is probably no accident that among the most insightful studies of foreign policy by psychologists (de Rivera, 1968; Janis, 1972) are those that have started with problems that emerge in a foreign policy setting and then worked back toward the psychological literature, rather than vice versa.

Parsimony

Perhaps the most widely articulated arguments against cognitive approaches to foreign policy decision-making center on theoretical parsimony and research economy. One can, it is asserted, account for more of the variance in international behavior by starting at—and perhaps limiting oneself to—other levels of analysis. Individual decision-maker analyses are often deemed superfluous for one or more of several reasons. One view is that role, institutional, and other constraints limit the area within which a leader's traits can affect policy. Another is that there is little variance among leaders with respect to their decision-making behavior in any given circumstances. The following selectively illustrate the thesis that explanations centering on the cognitions and perceptions of even the highest-ranking leaders are unlikely to extend our understanding significantly.

1. Foreign policy decisions are made within complex bureaucratic organizations that place severe constraints on the individual decision-maker. Organizational memory, prior policy commitments, parochial vested interests, standard operating procedures, normal bureaucratic inertia, and conflict resolution by bargaining serve to restrict the impact on the policy output of the leader's beliefs or other cognitive traits and processes. It should perhaps be noted, however, that a focus on bureaucratic politics need not exclude a concern for belief systems. That is, conflict and bargaining may develop as a result of divergent diagnoses and prescriptions which derive, in turn, from different beliefs about the nature of politics, the character of opponents, and the like—and these differences may not be correlated perfectly with bureaucratic position. Furthermore, a bureaucratic
politics focus may be especially useful for understanding the slippage between an executive decision and foreign policy outputs which emerge from the process of implementing decisions, but it may be less valuable for explaining the decision itself.

2. Foreign policy is the external manifestation of domestic institutions, ideologies, and other attributes of the polity. The notion that political, economic, and other internal institutions determine the nature of foreign policy is an old one, and contemporary advocates of this position include “hard line” analysts who attribute all Soviet or Chinese foreign policy behavior to the imperatives of Marxism-Leninism and communist totalitarianism. Many revisionist American historians adhere to a comparable position—that the institutional requirements of capitalism are not only a necessary but are also a sufficient explanation for the nature of American foreign policy. Names and faces may change, interests and policies do not, because they are rooted in more or less permanent structural features of the polity (for a critique, see Holsti, 1974). It is assumed that there is a homogeneity of beliefs not only within but also between organizations, because the processes of political recruitment and political socialization effectively suppress or eliminate all but the most trivial differences in politically relevant beliefs.

3. Structural and other attributes of the international system shape and constrain policy choices to such an extent that this is the logical starting point for most analyses (Singer, 1961). Many who adhere to this position would concede that in order to explore the dynamics of the system it may be desirable and necessary to conduct supplementary analyses of political processes within the nation or possibly within its major institutions; few would extend the argument to the point of analyzing cognitive processes of even the highest-ranking leaders (see Singer, 1971: 19–20).

In summary, the argument is that by the time one has taken into account systemic, societal, governmental, and bureaucratic constraints on decision-makers, much of the variance in foreign policy-making has been accounted for; attributes of the individual decision-maker are thus often regarded as a residual category which may be said to account for the unexplained variance. It is not wholly unfair to suggest that these arguments are often the initial premises that guide, rather than the considered conclusion that emerge from, systematic research. We are short of comparative studies that might reveal the circumstances under which alternative premises—for example, that “beliefs of foreign policy decision-makers are central to the study of decision outputs and probably account for more of the variance than any other single factor” (Shapiro and Bonham, 1973: 161)—might be applicable.

However, there is a growing body of empirical research which indicates that doing so may prove rewarding in circumstances when one or more of the following conditions exists:
Cognitive Process Approaches to Decision-Making

(1) Nonroutine situations that require more than merely the application of standard operating procedures and decision rules; for example, decisions to initiate or terminate major international undertakings, including wars, interventions, alliances, aid programs, and the like.

(2) Decisions made at the pinnacle of the government hierarchy by leaders who are relatively free from organizational and other constraints—or who may at least define their roles in ways that enhance their latitude for choice.

(3) Long-range policy planning, a task that inherently involves considerable uncertainty and in which conceptions of “what is,” “what is important or likely or desirable,” and “what is related to what” are likely to be at the core of the political process.

(4) When the situation itself is highly ambiguous and is thus open to a variety of interpretations. Uncertainty may result from a scarcity of information; from information of low quality or questionable authenticity; or from information that is contradictory or is consistent with two or more significantly different interpretations, coupled with the absence of reliable means of choosing between them.

(5) Circumstances of information overload in which decision-makers are forced to use a variety of strategies (e.g., queuing, filtering, omission, reducing categories of discrimination to cope with the problem).

(6) Unanticipated events in which initial reactions are likely to reflect cognitive “sets.”

(7) Circumstances in which complex cognitive tasks associated with decision-making may be impaired or otherwise significantly affected by the various types of stresses that impinge on top-ranking executives.

These categories are not mutually exclusive or exhaustive; nor is it suggested that they are of relevance only for foreign policy decisions. It has been noted, however, that “structural uncertainty” often characterizes important foreign policy choice situations (Steinbruner, 1968: 215–216; cf. Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin, 1962: 104). To the extent that this is more frequently the case in international than in domestic situations, we might expect that cognitive approaches would more often be applicable in issues of the former type.

Allison (1969, 1971) has persuasively demonstrated that any given levels and units of analysis serve as beacons that guide and sensitize the investigator to some bodies of data and potential explanations; they may also be conceptual blinders, desensitizing him to evidence that might support competing explanations. It is not altogether satisfactory to assert that the choice of levels and units of analysis is merely a matter of taste or theoretical preference. Nor is it always sufficient to assume that the higher (systemic) levels of explanation establish the limits within which choices are made, whereas lower ones serve to fill in the finer details; the different foci may lead to significantly different explanations. What is needed is
rigorous comparative research that addresses itself to the issue, not in the spirit of evangelism on behalf of one theoretical position or the other, but rather in response to the question: for what range of research and policy problems is any given perspective or combination of them likely to prove necessary? Sufficient? What is the relative potency of various clusters of independent variables on not only the decision-making process (Rosenau, 1966), but also on the substance and quality of the policy output?

We have relatively few such studies, but of the examples that come to mind a number seem to provide support for greater attention to the beliefs systems of policy-makers. (1) Rosenau’s (1968) research on the behavior of U.S. senators toward Secretaries of State Acheson and Dulles indicated that it was governed largely by role rather than personal or idiosyncratic attributes. An imaginative reanalysis of the data revealed, however, that preferences and “belief-sets” of the senators in fact yielded a more powerful explanation for their behavior than did role (Stassen, 1972). (2) Allison’s study of the Cuban missile crisis did not extend the analysis to a consideration of a cognitive process model, but the potential value of doing so was suggested in the conclusion (1971: 277). It seems a reasonable hypothesis that such a study would have illuminated further several aspects of the decision-making process in Washington—for example, the early consensus that the Soviet missiles must be removed, the line-up of “hawks” and “doves” on the most appropriate and effective means of doing so, or the shifting of policy positions as new information became available and new interpretations were adduced. Furthermore, whether or not a leader (such as McNamara) defines a situation as a “crisis” depends at least in part on basic beliefs about the political universe, and these will not always correspond to or be predictable from his role. (3) Steinbruner’s study of the proposed multilateral force (MLF) for NATO tested several alternative conceptions of decision-making, and concluded that “it was the cognitive process model which provided the best fit with the phenomena observed” (Steinbruner, 1968: 538). As multiple objectives and uncertainty characterize many occasions for foreign policy decisions, the implications of the Steinbruner study would appear to extend well beyond the MLF case (see Trotter, 1971; Lowenthal, 1972; Art, 1973).

Relating Beliefs, Decisions, and Foreign Policy Actions

Some studies have been criticized for a failure to distinguish between official and operational ideologies, and for being vulnerable to the charge of having made unwarranted assumptions about direct linkages between official ideologies and foreign policy actions (Singer, 1968: 145). These criticisms are appropriately addressed to the danger that a cognitive perspective will be employed in a somewhat simplistic manner—assuming, for example, that beliefs constitute a
set of decision rules that are mechanically applied by policy-makers in a choice situation. The concern is not wholly misguided because some analysts do in fact tend to assume a one-to-one relationship between belief systems or operational codes and foreign policy actions (cf. Strausz-Hupe et al., 1959).

The actual relationship is considerably more complex. First, in any political system there will be a set of shared beliefs or “shared images” (Halperin, 1974: 11–16). But especially in a pluralistic polity there may also be variations in beliefs, and these differences may take on considerable importance as they are operative in any given decision-making situation. This is precisely the reason for focusing on the individual policy-maker, rather than assuming a homogeneity of beliefs among them. It is thus possible to determine empirically the range of core beliefs that are widely shared, as well as those on which there may be substantial variation.

Second, it is not very fruitful to assume direct linkages between beliefs and foreign policy actions, because the role beliefs play in policy-making is likely to be a much subtler and less direct one. Rather than providing direct guides to action, they are one of several clusters of intervening variables that may shape and constrain decision-making behavior. They may serve the policy-maker as a means of orienting him to the environment; as a lens or prism through which information is processed and given meaning; as a diagnostic scheme; as one means of coping with the cognitive constraints on rationality; as a source of guidelines that may guide or bound—but not necessarily determine—policy prescriptions and choices. Thus, attention should be directed to the linkages between beliefs and, certain decision-making tasks that precede a decision—definition of the situation, analysis, prescription, and the like. The manner in which these tasks are performed is likely to establish the boundaries, within which the decision is made.

Third, it is important to recognize the distinction between decisions and foreign policy actions. The bureaucratic politics literature has illustrated the many potential sources of slippage between executive decisions and the implementation of policy in the form of foreign policy actions.

Research Difficulties

Finally, not the least potent constraint has been the very real and persistent problems of undertaking systematic empirical research. At a time when the discipline itself was becoming more self-consciously scientific, applying more stringent standards of theoretical rigor and methodological sophistication, these problems have become increasingly visible. One obvious difficulty is access to data. Unlike the analyst who can index his variables with such measures as GNP per capita, arms budgets, trade figures, votes in the UN General Assembly, or
public opinion polls, those interested in the beliefs of decision-makers have no yearbook to which they can turn for comparable evidence, much less quantitative data presented in standard units. One result is relatively limited agreement on the appropriate categories into which to code whatever data are available. A no less potent difficulty concerns transformation of available biographical, documentary, and other evidence into data that are both replicable and directly relevant to the theoretical question at hand. Unlike figures on budgets, trade, or voting, each data set developed for a cognitive process study is likely to be used only once.

Although these arguments against expending considerable research resources on the cognitive attributes and process of decision-makers are not without some merit, the tentative conclusion is that their universal validity is open to serious question. The existing literature is insufficient to provide a definitive and compelling assessment, but there appears to be a reasonable case in support of the following proposition: for important classes of decisions, a cognitive process perspective is necessary—and not just as a way of filling in details—although probably not sufficient. Put somewhat differently, the proposition is that for some decisions a cognitive process perspective is fundamental and should be at the starting point of the analysis, rather than a luxury to be indulged in order to reduce some of the variance unexplained by the other, more powerful approaches.

Cognitive Process Research

Existing studies are characterized by diversity in conceptualization, sources of theory, research site, subject, and “data-making” (categories, coding rules, data analysis procedures) operations. They range from rather traditional single-case analyses of specific leaders to efforts aimed at developing computer simulations of cognitive processes (Abelson, 1971). Research on belief systems and cognitive processes is suggestive and eclectic rather than focused and cumulative. For an enterprise that is of relatively recent interest within the discipline, and is still essentially in the “pre-takeoff” stage, diversity is probably desirable, and, in any case, inevitable. To expect anything other than a broad range of approaches is to imply nothing less than the existence of a paradigmatic theory of cognition and choice.

Underlying the variety, however, are two shared premises. First, there is a general suspicion that simple S-R or “black box” formulations are insufficient bases for understanding decision outputs, either of individuals or nation-states. Second, it is assumed that the content and structure of belief systems, information-processing styles, strategies for coping with stress, and the like are systematically related to the manner in which leaders perceive, diagnose, prescribe, and make choices, especially in situations of uncertainty. Both shared and idiosyncratic attributes and processes are of interest. For example, the premise that most, if not
Cognitive Process Approaches to Decision-Making

all, persons experience predecisional and postdecisional pressures for cognitive consistency, and for congruence between beliefs and behavior, informs many studies. But the propensity to favor one or another strategy for coping with discrepancies between elements of the belief system, attitudes, and behavior can vary widely across individuals, with potentially important implications for decision-making behavior.

Diversity in the existing foreign policy literature can be described briefly along several dimensions.

Theory. There is a wide range of “models” which, in turn, are informed by different theoretical literatures and even different disciplines. These include, but are not limited to, various “cognitive consistency” theories, personality theory, communication theory, decision theory, as well as many others.

Scope. Much of the existing research is focused on a single leader, but some of it also deals with relatively large samples of elites (Burgess, 1967; Putnam, 1973; Mennis, 1972; Semmel, 1972; Garnham, 1971); see also the studies described in Raser’s (1966) review article. Moreover, some studies are concerned with a single concept, cognitive task, or stage in policy-making, whereas others can be described as efforts at developing or exploring the entire decision-making process, encompassing various types of cognitive activities (Axelrod, 1972a, 1973; Shapiro and Bonham, 1973; Holsti and George, 1975; Jervis, forthcoming).

Categories and concepts. Not only do analytical concepts vary widely; even the language for describing them ranges from ordinary prose through the formal notation of set theory.

Data. The studies draw upon vastly different empirical domains for data and illustrations. At one end of the spectrum are detailed analyses of a single decision-maker, based on interviews and/or content analyses of primary documents and supplementary secondary sources. Jervis (forthcoming) draws on the voluminous record of diplomatic history, as well as reports of experimental research, to illustrate the relevance of existing hypotheses, to generate new ones, and to demonstrate the limitations or inapplicability of other explanations. Still other studies combine data from real decision-makers with those from surrogates, including men and machine simulations (Hermann and Hermann, 1967; Zinnes, 1966; Bonham and Shapiro, 1973, forthcoming b).

A somewhat oversimplified summary of some existing studies appears in Table 3.1. Although it is illustrative rather than comprehensive, the table may serve some useful purpose in illustrating the relationship between conceptions of the decision-maker (see Axelrod, 1972a), stages or tasks in the decision-making process (see Brim et al., 1962: 1), theories, and concepts. It also suggests that
Table 3.1 Some “Cognitive Process” Approaches to Decision-Making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision-Maker as ...</th>
<th>Stage of Decision-Making</th>
<th>Theoretical Literature</th>
<th>Illustrative Constructs and Concepts</th>
<th>Illustrative Studies of Political Leaders*</th>
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<tr>
<td>Believer</td>
<td>Sources of belief system</td>
<td>Political socialization</td>
<td>First independent political success</td>
<td>Barber (1972)</td>
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<td>Stupak (1971)</td>
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<td>Predecision: conceptual baggage that DM brings to decision-making tasks</td>
<td>Content of belief system</td>
<td>Personality and politics</td>
<td>Mind Set</td>
<td>Axlerod (1972b)</td>
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<td>Political philosophy</td>
<td>Image</td>
<td>M. Hermann (1974)</td>
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<td>Operational code</td>
<td>Osgood (1959a)</td>
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<td>Decisional premises</td>
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<td>Cognitive psychology</td>
<td>Cognitive balance/congruity</td>
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<td>Cognitive complexity</td>
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<td>Cognitive “maps/style”</td>
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<td>Cognitive psychology</td>
<td>Perception/misperception</td>
<td>Zinnes (1966)</td>
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<td>Cognitive “set”</td>
<td>Zinnes et al. (1972)</td>
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<td>Selective perception</td>
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<td>Stereotyping</td>
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<td>Information Processor</td>
<td>Obtain information</td>
<td>Cognitive consistency theories</td>
<td>Search capacity</td>
<td>Abelson (1971)</td>
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<td>Production of solutions</td>
<td>Theories of attitude change</td>
<td>Selective exposure</td>
<td>Holsti (1967, 1972)</td>
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<td>Evaluation of solutions</td>
<td>Information theory</td>
<td>Psycho-logic</td>
<td>Jervis (forthcoming: chs. 4 and 6)</td>
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<td>Tolerance of ambiguity</td>
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Communication theory

Strategies for coping with
discrepant information (various)
Information overload
Information-processing capacity
Satisficing/maximizing
Tolerance of inconsistency

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<tr>
<th>Decision-Maker/Strategist</th>
<th>Selection of a strategy</th>
<th>Game theory</th>
<th>Utility</th>
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<th>Learner</th>
<th>Coping with negative feedback</th>
<th>Learning theory</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
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<td>Learning (postdecision)</td>
<td>Cognitive dissonance theory</td>
<td>“Lessons of history”</td>
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*Illustrative studies treating more than a single stage of decision-making include Axelrod (1972a, 1972b); Bonham and Shapiro (forthcoming b); Shapiro and Bonham (1973); Steinbruner (1966, 1974).
(1) decision-making, encompassing several stages or tasks, is a shorthand label for a number of different cognitive activities; (2) the literature abounds with a plethora of concepts which, taken together, are marked by considerable overlap and something less than complete consistency in usage; and (3) there is a small but growing empirical literature (especially since 1965) that provides some basis for optimism about research of this genre.

Conclusion
Aside from developing precise, communicable concepts and methods of inquiry that ultimately lead to a cumulative literature, there remains the longer-term task of integrating research on cognitive processes with other conceptualizations of decision-making. Exaggerated claims on behalf of these models are likely to be even less convincing than those made on behalf of competing frameworks. It will not suffice to assume that foreign policy decisions merely reflect the beliefs of any given leader or even group of leaders. Hence, research on belief systems must ultimately be embedded in a broader context, and the problems of linking and interrelating theories and concepts that are oriented to the individual decision-maker—as are most of those in columns 3 and 4 of Table 3.1—to the behavior of groups and organizations need to be addressed directly. Even those who focus on crisis decisions that are made by a small and relatively autonomous group of top-ranking leaders are likely to profit by exploring possible linkages with models of group dynamics (Janis, 1972; George, 1974), and bureaucratic organizations (Allison, 1971; George, 1972; Allison and Halperin, 1972; Halperin, 1974). Some of the more theoretically oriented approaches to comparative foreign policy also suggest a broader context within which relative potency of leadership variables—including the cognitions of decision-makers—can be assessed systematically (Rosenau, 1966, 1970; M. Hermann, 1972, 1974).

Integration across levels is not an end in itself, however; nor is it likely to occur unless we can identify specific questions, the answers to which will require the analyst to focus directly on the linkages between processes in various decision-making contexts. For example: (1) How does the decision-maker define his cognitive tasks and needs; and how are these satisfied, modified, or constrained by the small group or bureaucratic organization? (2) What tensions exist between the decision-maker's cognitive style and role requirements; and how does he attempt to cope with them? (3) What are cognitive concomitants of organizational differences (Steinbruner, 1968: 500)? (4) What group processes are associated with a premature bolstering of shared beliefs? With systematic examination of decisional premises?

Similar questions may also be couched in normative or prescriptive terms. Given an executive's cognitive style, for example, what types of interventions at the group or organizational level will increase the probability that his cognitive
needs are met? Will it increase the likelihood that beliefs and decisional premises are subjected to critical analysis?

This list is by no means an exhaustive one. It merely illustrates a few of the questions that relate to cognitive processes in decision-making, but which can only be answered by considering also the broader context within which policies are made.

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48 • Making American Foreign Policy


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Acknowledgment

I am grateful to Hayward Alker, Robert Axelrod, and Matthew Bonham for useful comments and suggestions on a previous version of this paper, and to the Ford Foundation and the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences for support during the period that early drafts were written.
II

Opinion Leaders, Public Opinion, and American Foreign Policy
Public Opinion and Foreign Policy

Challenges to the Almond–Lippmann Consensus

This article surveys and assesses theories and research on public opinion and foreign policy. Most of the evidence is drawn from the literature on the United States. Three twentieth-century wars have had a significant impact on theory and scholarship. World War I—the first public relations war—and postwar efforts to create a new international order directed much attention to the nature of public opinion and its impact on foreign affairs, issues on which realists and liberals came to quite different conclusions. The period surrounding World War II coincided with the development of scientific polling. Much of the attention during and immediately after the war focused on the extent to which the public might support or oppose an internationalist American role. Extensive research during the first two decades after World War II yielded a broad agreement (the “Almond-Lippmann consensus”) on three propositions about public opinion: (1) it is volatile and thus provides inadequate foundations for stable and effective foreign policies, (2) it lacks coherence or structure, but (3) in the final analysis, it has little if any impact on foreign policy. The Vietnam War and its aftermath stimulated a new outburst of research activity on public opinion and foreign policy, much of which has challenged each of these three propositions. The article concludes with suggestions for further research efforts, including: (1) case studies employing archival sources to assess more directly the impact of public opinion, (2) cross-national studies, (3) development of standard questions in order to encourage better cumulation of survey results, and (4) research that will enable us to distinguish findings that are time- and context-bound from those that transcend the Cold War period.
Introduction

Many questions about the role of public opinion in foreign policy are at the center of persisting debates between the liberal-democratic and realist approaches to foreign affairs. Is public opinion a force for enlightenment—indeed, a necessary if not sufficient condition for sound foreign policy—as celebrated by the Wilsonians and other liberals? There is a long, liberal-democratic tradition, dating back at least to Kant and Bentham, that foreign policies of democracies are more peaceful, at least in part because the public can play a constructive role in constraining policy makers; only accountability to the public can restrain the war-making proclivities of leaders.1

Alternatively, are Hans Morgenthau and others of the realist school correct in describing public opinion as a barrier to thoughtful and coherent diplomacy, hindering efforts to promote national interests that transcend the moods and passions of the moment? The realist tradition is intensely skeptical of the public’s contribution to effective foreign policy. At the very minimum, most realists would distinguish between foreign policy and other public policy issues; the public might be sufficiently informed to deal with local issues that impinge on their daily lives, but foreign affairs are too remote from their experience, and in any case they have little inclination to become more informed about such complex and remote issues. Finally, the effective conduct of diplomacy requires secrecy, flexibility, and other qualities that would be seriously jeopardized were the public to have a significant impact on foreign policy. Thus, to permit the public a strong voice in policy would be to place the democracies, if not the stability of the international system itself, at a distinct disadvantage. Moreover, it would permit the emotional to govern the rational. Hans Morgenthau summarized the case against an active role for public opinion in words that would gain the support of most if not all realists: “The rational requirements of good foreign policy cannot from the outset count upon the support of a public opinion whose preferences are emotional rather than rational” (Morgenthau, 1978:558).

The long-standing debate between liberals and realists was intensified by World War I, which might be described as the first public relations war. From its inception both the Allied and Central Powers tried to win over “world opinion” in various ways, including publication by many governments of highly selective document collections—the so-called color books—all of which were intended to absolve them and to place the blame for the war on their adversaries. The propaganda war during the conflict was almost as intense as that on the battlefield.

President Wilson’s hopes for a new postwar world order depended significantly on democratizing foreign affairs and diplomacy. Elihu Root, a distinguished Republican and former Secretary of State, effectively summarized the position of those who welcomed an increasing role for the public in the conduct of foreign affairs.
When foreign offices were ruled by autocracies or oligarchies the danger of war was in sinister purpose. When foreign affairs are ruled by democracies the danger of war will be in mistaken beliefs. The world will be gainer by the change, for, while there is no human way to prevent a king from having a bad heart, there is a human way to prevent a people from having an erroneous opinion. (Root, 1922:5)

By more effective international education, “the people themselves will have the means to test misinformation and appeals to prejudice and passion based on error” (Root, 1922:5).

But not all observers joined Wilson and Root in applauding the prospect of popular diplomacy. During the postwar era, the journalist Walter Lippmann published two trenchant critiques of the central premises of classical liberalism (Lippmann, 1922, 1925). According to Lippmann, the common man is too fully engaged in the requirements of earning a living and otherwise attending to his most immediate needs to have the time or inclination to satisfy the heroic, but clearly unrealistic, assumptions about the informed and engaged citizen celebrated in classical democratic theory. The chasm between theory and reality is especially wide on foreign affairs, which are typically far removed from the direct experiences of the mass public. Consequently, the “pictures in the head” of the average citizen are unlikely to have much correspondence with the real world of international affairs. Moreover, journalist Lippmann became increasingly skeptical about the ability of his own profession effectively to fill in the gap between the real world and the average citizen’s stereotypes. His study of the Russian revolution, as depicted in the pages of the *New York Times* during the period 1917–20, did nothing to assuage his pessimism about the ability of the media to serve as a source of valid information about the world for the public (Lippmann and Metz, 1920). The events of the 1930s and the outbreak of World War II, which seemed to raise serious questions about Wilsonian assumptions while apparently providing compelling empirical confirmation for the realist approach to international relations, further tipped the balance of the debate on public opinion and foreign policy in favor of the skeptics.

The period encompassing World War II and its immediate aftermath coincided with the inception of scientific public opinion polling. Despite the wounds to the reputation of polling and pollsters inflicted by the *Literary Digest* debacle in the Roosevelt-Landon election, we can date the era of scientific surveys from the establishment of the Gallup poll in 1936 or of the *Public Opinion Quarterly* two years later. It may be worth noting that President Roosevelt was a pioneer in the use of a public opinion consultant—Hadley Cantril, one of the founding fathers of the new science—for guidance on policy.

Policy makers and many others who felt that an irresponsible American isolationism after 1919 had contributed to the outbreak of World War II worried
that the public mood might trace out a pattern resembling the experience of the period after World War I: wartime idealism and internationalism, followed soon thereafter by cynicism and disenchantment with active American leadership in efforts to create a more stable international order. This concern was reflected in the frequency with which polling organizations during World War II asked respondents general questions about the United States taking an active role in, or staying out of, world affairs, and specific queries about support for or opposition to American membership in the United Nations.

These two features—an empirical approach that relied heavily on systematic polling data and a normative concern that an isolationist public might lead the United States to repeat the failed isolationist policies of the interwar period—may be found in two of the pioneering works on public opinion and foreign policy: Thomas Bailey’s *The Man in the Street* (1948) and Gabriel Almond’s *The American People and Foreign Policy* (1950).

**The Post–World War II Consensus**

The availability after World War II of growing sets of polling data and the institution of systematic studies of voting behavior, combined with the assumption of a leadership role in world affairs by the United States, served to stimulate a growth industry in analyses of public opinion. The consensus view that developed during this period of some fifteen or twenty years after the end of World War II and just prior to the Vietnam escalation centered on three major propositions:

- **Public opinion is highly volatile and thus it provides very dubious foundations for a sound foreign policy.**
- **Public attitudes on foreign affairs are so lacking in structure and coherence that they might best be described as “non-attitudes.”**
- **At the end of the day, however, public opinion has a very limited impact on the conduct of foreign policy.**

Let us examine each of these propositions, and the evidence upon which they rested, in more detail.

**Public Opinion Is Volatile**

As noted earlier, Walter Lippmann’s books of the interwar period described the mass public as neither sufficiently interested nor informed to play the pivotal role assigned to it by classical democratic theory. At the height of the Cold War thirty years later, Lippmann had become even more alarmed, depicting the mass public as not merely uninterested and uninformed, but as a powerful force that
was so out of synch with reality as to constitute a massive and potentially fatal threat to effective government and policies.

The unhappy truth is that the prevailing public opinion has been destructively wrong at the critical junctures. The people have impressed a critical veto upon the judgments of informed and responsible officials. They have compelled the government, which usually knew what would have been wiser, or was necessary, or what was more expedient, to be too late with too little, or too long with too much, too pacifist in peace and too bellicose in war, too neutralist or appeasing in negotiations or too intransigent. Mass opinion has acquired mounting power in this country. It has shown itself to be a dangerous master of decision when the stakes are life and death. (Lippmann, 1955:20)

Similarly pessimistic conclusions and dire warnings were emerging from disparate other quarters as well. Drawing on a growing body of polling data and fearing that the American public might relapse into a mindless isolationism, because only a thin veneer of postwar internationalism covered a thick bedrock of indifference to the world, Gabriel Almond depicted public opinion as a volatile and mood-driven constraint upon foreign policy: “The undertow of withdrawal is still very powerful. Deeply ingrained habits do not die easy deaths. The world outside is still very remote for most Americans; and the tragic lessons of the last decades have not been fully digested” (Almond, 1950:85). Consequently, “Perhaps the gravest general problem confronting policy-makers is that of the instability of mass moods, the cyclical fluctuations which stand in the way of policy stability” (Almond, 1950:239). Six years later, Almond restated his thesis in Lippmannesque language, citing not only the instability of public moods, but other deficiencies as well. He told an audience at the National War College, “For persons responsible for the making of security policy these mood impacts of the public have a highly irrational effect. Often the public is apathetic when it should be concerned, and panicky when it should be calm” (Almond, 1956:372, 376).

Others whose writings provided support for the main outlines of the pessimistic Almond-Lippmann thesis included a distinguished list: the dean of American diplomatic historians (Thomas A. Bailey); the foremost proponent of a realist approach to international affairs (Hans J. Morgenthau); and the diplomat-historian who has often been depicted as the intellectual father of the American policy of containment, George F. Kennan. For the latter, the metaphor of a dinosaur vividly depicted the problems of democratic foreign policy.

But I sometimes wonder whether in this respect a democracy is not uncomfortably similar to one of those prehistoric monsters with a body as long as this room and a brain the size of a pin: he lies there in his comfortable
primeval mud and pays little attention to his environment; he is slow to wrath—in fact, you practically have to whack his tail off to make him aware that his interests are being disturbed; but, once he grasps this, he lay's about him with such blind determination that he not only destroys his adversary but largely wrecks his native habitat. (Kennan, 1951:59)

Further support for the critics and skeptics emerged from the growing body of polling data which yielded ample evidence of the public's limited store of factual knowledge about foreign affairs. Innumerable surveys revealed such stunning gaps in information as: X percent of the American public are unaware that there is a communist government in China, Y percent believe that the Soviet Union is a member of NATO, or Z percent cannot identify a single nation bordering on the Pacific Ocean. Such data reinforced the case of the critics and led some of them to propose measures to reduce the influence of the public. Thus, Lippmann (1955) called for stronger executive prerogatives in foreign affairs, and Bailey (1948:13) wondered whether the requirements of an effective foreign policy might make it necessary for the executive deliberately to mislead the public.

Public Opinion Lacks Structure and Coherence

A growing volume of data on public opinion and voting behavior, as well as increasingly sophisticated methodologies, enabled analysts not only to describe aggregate results and trends, but also to delve into the structure of political beliefs. Owing to immediate policy concerns about the U.S. role in the postwar era, many of the early studies were largely descriptive, focusing on such issues as participation in international organizations and alliances, the deployment of troops abroad, security commitments, foreign aid, trade and protectionism, and the like. The underlying premise was that a single internationalist-isolationist dimension would serve to structure foreign policy beliefs, much in the way that a liberal-conservative dimension was assumed to provide coherence to preferences on domestic issues.

In a classic study based on data from the late 1950s and early 1960s, Philip Converse (1964) concluded that the political beliefs of the mass public lack a real structure or coherence. Comparing responses across several domestic and foreign policy issues, he found little if any “constraint” or underlying ideological structure that might provide some coherence to political thinking. In contrast, his analyses of elites—congressional candidates—revealed substantially higher correlations among responses to various issues. Moreover, Converse found that both mass and elite attitudes on a given issue had a short half-life. Responses in 1956 only modestly predicted responses two years later, much less in 1960. These findings led him to conclude that mass political beliefs are best described as “non-attitudes.” Although Converse's findings were later to become the cen-
ter of an active debate, it should be emphasized that his was not a lone voice in
the wilderness. His data were drawn from the National Election Studies at the
University of Michigan, and his findings were only the most widely quoted of
a series of studies from the NES that came to essentially the same conclusion
about the absence of structure, coherence, or persistence in the political beliefs
of the mass public—especially on foreign affairs (Campbell, Converse, Miller,

Public Opinion Has Limited Impact on Foreign Policy

A significant reason for interest in public opinion on foreign affairs arises from
the assumption that in some ways and at least some of the time it has an impact,
for better or worse, on the conduct of the nation’s external policy. Certainly it
is easy to find public expressions by policy makers avowing the importance of
public opinion. During his debates with Stephen Douglas, Abraham Lincoln as-
ertered that, “with public sentiment on its side, everything succeeds; with public
sentiment against it, nothing succeeds”; and in 1936 Secretary of State Cordell
Hull stated that, “since the time when Thomas Jefferson insisted upon a ‘decent
respect to the opinions of mankind,’ public opinion has controlled foreign policy
in all democracies” (New York Times, Dec. 6, 1936).

Although such hyperbolic statements are unlikely to withstand serious empiri-
cal scrutiny, the driving force behind much of the post-World War II attention
to public opinion on foreign policy issues was the fear that an ill-informed and
emotional mass public would serve as a powerful constraint on the conduct
of American diplomacy, establishing unwise limits on policy makers, creating
unrealistic expectations about what was feasible in foreign affairs, otherwise
doing serious mischief to American diplomacy and, given the American role
in the world, perhaps even to international stability. As Bernard Cohen (1973)
demonstrated in a critical survey of the literature, however, the constraining
role of public opinion was often asserted but rarely demonstrated—or even put
to a systematic test.

By the middle of the 1960s a consensus in fact seemed to emerge on a third
point: Public opinion has little if any real impact on policy. Or, as the point was
made most pithily by one State Department official: “To hell with public opin-
ion…. We should lead, and not follow” (quoted in Cohen, 1973:62). The weight
of research evidence cast doubt on the potency of public opinion as a driving
force behind, or even a significant constraint upon, foreign policy-making. For
example, a classic study of the public-legislator relationship revealed that con-
stituents’ attitudes on foreign policy had less impact on members of the House
of Representatives than did their views on domestic issues (Miller and Stokes,
1963). Cohen’s research on the foreign policy bureaucracy indicated that State
Department officials had a rather modest interest in public opinion, and to the
extent that they even thought about the public, it was as an entity to be “educated” rather than a lodestar by which to be guided (Cohen, 1973). The proposition that the president has “almost a free hand” in the conduct of foreign affairs received support from other analysts, including Lipset (1966), LaFeber (1977), Levering (1978), Paterson (1979), and Graebner (1983).

This period also witnessed a proliferation of case studies of key foreign policy decisions; with rare exceptions, however, they make no reference to public opinion. But it is not always clear whether that is because: (1) public opinion was irrelevant as an explanation to the decisions under consideration, (2) decision-makers quietly anticipate public opinion without consciously doing so, (3) it was excluded from the research design and thus no effort was made to assess its impact, or (4) disproportionate research attention to international crises—events that are usually characterized by short decision time—tended to exclude episodes in which decisions are the culmination of a long political process; all other things being equal, the more protracted the decision process, the more likely are policy makers to be subjected to the impact of public opinion through the activities of Congress, pressure groups, the media, and opinion leaders.

Although these studies did not answer all questions about the impact of the public—for example, the realities of research access required Cohen to focus on precisely those persons who are most sheltered from the effects of elections—the weight of the evidence would at least have assuaged those who shared fears that mass public opinion “has shown itself to be a dangerous master of decision when the stakes are life and death” (Lippmann, 1955:20).

The Renaissance of Interest in Public Opinion and Foreign Policy

Just as World War II and fears of postwar isolationism among the mass public gave rise to concern about public opinion and its impact on foreign policy, the war in Vietnam was the impetus for a renewed interest in the subject. It was a major catalyst in stimulating a reexamination of the consensus that had emerged during the two decades after World War II. The Vietnam War had at least two direct effects. Most broadly, many of those who had believed that a stronger executive hand on the tiller of public policy, relatively free from the whims and vagaries of public moods, best serves both national interests and global stability, came to reexamine their views in the light of the Vietnam War. Indeed, the widely read columnist Walter Lippmann, who only a little more than a decade earlier had despaired of the tyranny of a feckless public and had called for a stronger executive to counteract the mass public, became a leading critic of the Johnson administration’s Vietnam policy; eventually he came to regard the public, which had become increasingly skeptical of the war effort, as more enlightened than the administration.

At a narrower level, some critics of the war became increasingly persuaded that
the Gallup, Harris, and other commercial polls distorted public attitudes toward
the war by posing excessively restrictive and simplistic questions. For example,
among the most widely asked questions was whether respondents supported or
opposed current American policy in Vietnam; deeper probes that might have
offered respondents an opportunity to express their views about other policy
options were far less commonly employed by these polling organizations. Thus,
in addition to secondary analyses of survey data relating to the war (e.g., Mueller,
1973), the conflict in Southeast Asia also stimulated independent surveys
designed specifically to assess foreign policy in greater depth and breadth than the
typical survey conducted by Gallup and the other major polling organizations.

The first of these studies, the Verba-Stanford surveys, focused on American
policy in Vietnam (Verba, Brody, Parker, Nie, Polsby, Ekman, and Black, 1967;
Verba and Brody, 1970). Verba and his colleagues in fact found support for the
administration’s Vietnam policy, but they also unearthed approval for such
alternative policies as negotiating an end to the conflict. The period following
the Verba-Stanford polls has witnessed a proliferation of studies with a foreign
affairs focus, including surveys of both the mass public (Rielly, 1975, 1979, 1983,
Americans Talk Issues, 1991) and of opinion leaders (Barton, 1974–75, 1980; Ri-
elly, 1975, 1979, 1983, 1987, 1991; Russett and Hanson, 1975; Holsti and Rosenau,
1984, 1988, 1990; Chittick and Billingsley, 1989; Koopman, Snyder, and Jervis,
1990a, 1990b, 1991). As a consequence, we are no longer totally dependent on
evidence generated by the major polling organizations. Moreover, these inde-
pendent surveys are often designed with policy and/or theoretical concerns that
can only imperfectly be probed by secondary analyses of the Gallup and other,
more general public opinion polls.

Thus, armed with growing central archives of data generated by the major
polling organizations as well as evidence produced by the independent surveys,
during the past two decades analysts have begun to challenge important aspects
of the consensus described above.

**Challenge #1: Is Public Opinion Really So Volatile?**

William Caspary presented the first systematic challenge to the Almond thesis
that public opinion on foreign affairs is best characterized by volatile moods.4 He
took issue with Almond’s heavy reliance on a single question in which re-
spondents were asked to identify “the most important issue today.” Caspary’s
analysis of a broader set of questions led him to conclude that “American public
opinion is characterized by a strong and stable permissive mood” toward active
international involvement (Caspary, 1970:546).

Mueller’s (1973) study of public opinion toward the Korean and Vietnam wars
posed another challenge to the thesis of mindless changes in public attitudes. To
be sure, public support for the U.S. war effort in both conflicts eventually changed, but in ways that seemed explicable and rational, rather than random and mindless. More specifically, he found that increasing public opposition to the conflicts traced out a pattern that fit a curve of rising battle deaths, suggesting that the public used an understandable, if simple, heuristic to assess American policy.

The most comprehensive challenge to the Almond-Lippmann thesis has emerged from studies conducted by Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro. Their evidence includes all questions that have been posed by major polling organizations since the inception of systematic surveys in the 1930s. Of the more than 6000 questions, almost 20 percent have been asked at least twice, providing Page and Shapiro with a large data set to assess the degree of stability and change in mass public attitudes. Employing a cutoff point of a difference of 6 percent from one survey to another to distinguish between continuity and change, they found that mass opinion in the aggregate is in fact characterized by a good deal of stability, and that this is no less true of foreign policy than on domestic issues (Page and Shapiro, 1988). More important, when attitude shifts take place, they seem to be neither random nor 180 degrees removed from the true state of world affairs. Rather, changes appear to be “reasonable, event driven” reactions to the real world, even if the information upon which they are based is marginally adequate at best. They concluded that,

virtually all the rapid shifts [in public opinion] we found were related to political and economic circumstances or to significant events which sensible citizens would take into account. In particular, most abrupt foreign policy changes took place in connection with wars, confrontations, or crises in which major changes in the actions of the United States or other nations quite naturally affect preferences about what policies to pursue.

Because their analyses are based on aggregate responses rather than on panel studies in which the same respondents are interviewed repeatedly, Page and Shapiro cannot address definitively one aspect of the volatility question: Precisely what proportion of individuals have in fact changed their minds? For an issue on which the public divided 50 percent–50 percent in each of two time periods, it is theoretically possible that all respondents did so. However, volatility approaching this magnitude seems highly unlikely because, as Page and Shapiro have shown, opinion changes tend to be in directions that “make sense” in terms of events.

The volatility thesis can be tested most directly by individual-level rather than aggregate analysis of opinion data. Using different methods for correcting for measurement error, several studies have shown convincingly that at the individual level mass foreign policy attitudes are every bit as stable as domestic attitudes (Achen, 1975; Peffley and Hurwitz, 1992a). These studies revealed an impressive level of stability during times of constancy in the international environment.
panel study by Peffley and Hurwitz (1992a) also found very substantial stability in policy attitudes and international images even during a period—the late 1980s—that witnessed rapid and dramatic changes in Soviet–American relations and other aspects of international affairs.

Similar conclusions, supporting Page and Shapiro and casting doubt on the Almond-Lippmann thesis, have also emerged from other studies. Jentleson (1992) found that during the post-Vietnam era, variations in public support for the use of force are best explained by differences between force to coerce foreign policy restraint by others, and force to influence or impose internal political changes within another state; the former goal has received much stronger support than the latter.7

An interesting variant of the “rational public” thesis stipulates that the public attempts to moderate American behavior toward the USSR by expressing preferences for a conciliatory stance from hawkish administrations while supporting more assertive policies from dovish ones (Nincic, 1988). To the extent that one can generalize from this study focusing on the Carter and Reagan administrations to other periods or other aspects of foreign policy, it further challenges the Almond-Lippmann thesis—indeed, it turns that proposition on its head—for it identifies the public as a source of moderation and continuity rather than of instability and unpredictability.

It is important to emphasize that none of these challenges to the Almond-Lippmann thesis is based on some newly found evidence that the public is in fact well informed about foreign affairs. Not only do polls repeatedly reveal that the mass public has a very thin veneer of factual knowledge about politics, economics, and geography; they also reveal that it is poorly informed about the specifics of conflicts, treaties, negotiations with other nations, characteristics of weapons systems, foreign leaders, and the like. Because the modest factual basis upon which the mass public reacts to international affairs remains an unchallenged—and unchallengeable—fact, we are faced with a puzzle: If a generally poorly informed mass public does indeed react to international affairs in an events-driven, rational manner, what are the means that permit it to do so? Recall that a not-insignificant body of research evidence indicated that mass public attitudes lack the kind of ideological structure that would provide some coherence across specific issues and persistence through time.

Challenge #2: Do Public Attitudes Lack Structure and Coherence?

Philip Converse’s (1964) chapter on mass belief systems is one of the most widely cited studies in the American political science literature. In recent years it has also spawned a vast literature which has, on the one hand, vigorously challenged his findings and, on the other, supported the main thrust of Converse’s conclusions that mass public attitudes lack ideological structure, whereas those of leaders
are characterized by far greater coherence. Part of the debate is methodological, centering on the manner in which questions are framed, the clarity of questions, the degree to which the unsure are prodded to state a position, and similar issues of research procedures. Did the evidentiary base include enough questions to support the conclusions? Did the analytical methods deal adequately with problems of measurement error? Does an analysis that examines correlations across specific public policy issues exhaust the possible structures that might be used to lend coherence to political thinking? Studies that have raised significant methodological questions about the Converse findings include Achen (1975) and Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus (1978).

Another part of the controversy focuses on trends, specifically on the durability of findings that, to a large degree, drew from evidence generated during the 1950s. This was a period of American economic, political, and military dominance in foreign affairs—the shock of Sputnik in 1957 notwithstanding—with the 1956 and 1960 elections taking place after the Korean War and before escalation of the Vietnam conflict. Domestically, the Eisenhower years were marked by relatively low inflation and unemployment and, despite the Montgomery bus boycott and Greensboro sit-ins, the full impact of the civil rights movement had yet to be felt. According to the critics, this period, both celebrated and criticized for marking “the end of ideology,” is insufficiently representative for assessing the degree of ideological consistency among the general public. In support of that view, a number of analysts found that, beginning with the Johnson-Goldwater election campaign of 1964, ideological consistency among the public did in fact increase (Nie and Anderson, 1974; Nie, Verba, and Petrocik, 1976). Some corroborating evidence also appeared to emerge from Hero’s (1969) assessment of public opinion polls on domestic and foreign policy issues from the late 1930s to 1967. In general, he found a very weak relationship between the two, with some indications of a strengthening during the post-Eisenhower years.

Those who claim to have found a greater ideological consistency among the general public during the turbulent era of the 1960s and 1970s have also encountered criticism. Are the claims of greater issue consistency rooted in increasing ideological consciousness? Alternatively, are they merely the result of parroting of ideological rhetoric, or of some methodological artifact? This is not the place to provide a blow-by-blow account of the many and varied answers to these and other questions on the issue; for excellent and detailed summaries of the vast literature, see Kinder (1983), Kinder and Sears (1985), and Sniderman and Tetlock (1986). It will suffice to say that there appears to be an emerging consensus that public responses to issues are not adequately captured by the most familiar bipolar dimensions: liberal-to-conservative or internationalist-to-isolationist. If these dimensions constitute the standard, then mass public attitudes do indeed appear to lack structure. Given that tentative conclusion, does the literature on
foreign policy attitudes reveal anything else about organizing concepts that might lend some coherence to mass public attitudes on international affairs?

Although the more recent research literature has yet to create a consensus on all aspects of the question, there does appear to be a considerable convergence of findings on two general points relating to belief structures:

1. Even though the general public may be rather poorly informed, attitudes about foreign affairs are in fact structured in at least moderately coherent ways. Indeed, low information and an ambiguous foreign policy environment are actually likely to motivate rather than preclude some type of attitude structure.

2. A single isolationist-to-internationalist dimension inadequately describes the main dimensions of public opinion on international affairs.

An early study, based on the first of the quadrennial Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (CCFR) surveys, employed factor analysis and other methods to uncover three foreign policy outlooks: “liberal internationalism,” “conservative internationalism,” and “non-internationalism” (Mandelbaum and Schneider, 1979). A comparable trichotomy (“three-headed eagle”) emerged from early analyses of the data on opinion leaders generated by the Foreign Policy Leadership Project (FPLP) (Holsti, 1979; Holsti and Rosenau, 1979, 1984).

Others have questioned the division of foreign policy attitudes into three types rather than dimensions, and they have offered compelling evidence in support of their critiques. Chittick and Billingsley (1989) have undertaken both original and secondary analyses which indicated the need for three dimensions, including one that taps unilateralist-multilateralist sentiments, not three types, to describe adequately the foreign policy beliefs of both the mass public and leaders. (See also Bardes and Oldendick, 1978; Chittick, Billingsley, and Travis, 1990).

A major set of contributions to the debate about how best to describe foreign policy attitudes has come from Wittkopf’s exemplary secondary analyses of the CCFR surveys of both the general public and leaders (Wittkopf, 1986, 1990). His results, developed inductively from the first four CCFR surveys, revealed that with a single exception, two dimensions are necessary to describe foreign policy attitudes: “support-oppose militant internationalism” (MI) and “support-oppose cooperative internationalism” (CI). Dichotomizing and crossing these dimensions yields four types, with the quadrants labeled as hard-liners (support MI, oppose CI), internationalists (support MI, support CI), isolationists (oppose MI, oppose CI), and accommodationists (oppose MI, support CI).

Support for Wittkopf’s MI/CI scheme also emerges from a reanalysis of the FPLP data on American opinion leaders (Holsti and Rosenau, 1990). That study put the MI/CI scheme to a demanding test because of three major differences in
the data sets: (1) The CCFR surveys were undertaken in 1974, 1978, 1982, and 1986, whereas the four FPLP studies followed two years later in each case; (2) the two sets of surveys have only a few questionnaire items in common; and (3) the MI/CI scheme was developed largely from data on the mass public, whereas the FPLP surveys focused solely on opinion leaders.

It may be worth noting that although the origins of the MI/CI scheme are strictly inductive, the militant internationalism and cooperative internationalism dimensions correspond closely to the most venerable approaches to international relations: realism and liberalism. Realism views conflict between nations as a natural state of affairs rather than an aberration that is subject to permanent amelioration. Such realist concepts as security dilemma, relative capabilities, and "zero sum" view of conflict are also basic to the MI dimension. There are similarly intimate links between liberalism and the cooperative internationalism dimension. Liberalism denies that conflict is an immutable element of relations between nations. It defines security in terms that are broader than the geopolitical-military dimensions, and it emphasizes the cooperative aspects of relations between nations. Institution building, improved international education and communication, and trade are but a few of the ways in which nations may jointly gain and thus mitigate, if not eliminate, the harshest features of international relations in an anarchic system. In short, the CI dimension shares important elements with the liberal school of international relations theory. These MI and CI dimensions also seem clearly related to other conceptualizations of American thought on foreign affairs. For example, Hughes's (1980:50) distinction between the "security culture" and "equity culture" in American foreign policy, or Billington's (1987:632) categories of "realist-conservatives" and "idealist-liberals" appear to parallel, if not match exactly, the MI and CI dimensions.

Even if one accepts the necessity of tapping attitudes on both militant and cooperative internationalism, however, there is also some evidence that they are not sufficient to describe all contours of contemporary foreign policy attitudes. A further distinction between unilateralism and multilateralism has been suggested by a number of studies (Wittkopf, 1986; Hinckley, 1988, 1992; Chittick and Billingsley, 1989; Russett, 1990). It is not reasonable to demand that any belief structure should encompass all possible aspects of foreign affairs, and there is indeed rather persuasive evidence that attitudes toward some rather important issues cut across the main dimensions identified above. Trade and protectionism, an issue that is likely to become more rather than less contentious during the 1990s, is one such example; questions revolving around Israel and American policy toward that nation appear to form another cluster of attitudes that does not fit neatly into the MI/CI scheme.

A somewhat different approach toward attitude structures emerges from several important studies of the mass public conducted by Jon Hurwitz and Mark Peffley (1987, 1990; Peffley and Hurwitz, 1985, 1992a, 1992b). In con-
Contrast to Converse’s search for “horizontal” coherence that relies on correlations among attitudes toward various issues, Hurwitz and Peffley proposed and tested a hierarchically organized foreign policy belief structure in which specific policy preferences are derived from *postures* (militarism, anticommunism, and isolationism) that, in turn, are assumed to be constrained by a set of *core values* (morality of warfare, ethnocentrism) about the international community. They found that such structures did in fact exist among respondents to their surveys. Thus, a few rather general beliefs—for example, attitudes toward militarism, or a general preference toward a “tough-minded” approach toward foreign affairs—appear to serve as heuristics which enable one to respond in a reasonably coherent manner to a broad range of issues, including defense spending, nuclear arms policy, military involvement abroad, Soviet policy, and international trade (Hurwitz and Peffley, 1987).

It is important to state once again that none of these studies challenges the overwhelming evidence that the American public is poorly informed about international affairs; indeed, even the Persian Gulf War, the first conflict to be telecast in real time, increased the normally low level of information among the general public by only a very modest amount (Bennett, 1992). Rather, these studies appear to suggest that, even in the absence of much factual knowledge, members of the mass public use some simple—perhaps even simplistic—heuristics in order to make some sense of an increasingly complex world; a few salient criteria rather than complete information may serve as the bases of judgment. Stated differently, although lacking a deep reservoir of factual information, members of the mass public may operate as “cognitive misers,” employing a few superordinate beliefs to guide their thinking on a broad range of issues. For further evidence that people organize their political worlds in richer and more diverse ways than indicated by Converse and his colleagues, see Conover and Feldman (1984).

Clearly the recent research has yet to produce a consensus on many important issues relating to the structure and foreign policy beliefs among the mass public. Nevertheless, it is evident that the earlier consensus depicting public attitudes as lacking any real coherence has been challenged from various quarters. As a result of substantial empirical research, there is now a good deal of credible evidence suggesting that the public does use various heuristics—although not necessarily the traditional liberal-to-conservative or internationalist-isolationist blueprints—for organizing political thinking.

**Challenge #3: Is Public Opinion Really Impotent?**

Among the most important questions about public opinion are: To what extent, on what kinds of issues, under what circumstances, and in what types of political systems, if any, does it have an impact on public policy? If it has an influence, what are the means by which public attitudes make their impact felt by
decision-makers? These are also the most difficult questions, for our ability to
answer them is not materially enhanced by the many technical improvements
that have characterized public opinion research during the past half century:
better sampling designs, greater attention to construction of questions, more
sophisticated statistical models to analyze the data, and the like. Not surpris-
ingly, then, we have a good deal more systematic evidence describing the state
of, or trends in, public opinion than on how it has affected the actual conduct
of foreign affairs.

As noted earlier, most of the evidence through the 1960s pointed toward
the conclusion of public impotence in the foreign policy-making process. Even
when there appeared to be some correspondence between public sentiments
and foreign policy, not all analysts were prepared to accept the inference that
the former had any independent impact on the latter. According to several of
them, including revisionist historians, any evidence of a correlation between
public opinion and foreign policy merely serves to underscore the effectiveness
of efforts by policy makers, aided and abetted by pliant print and electronic
media, to manipulate the mass public into acceptance of the ruling elites’ class-
based interests.

There is no shortage of evidence that most post-World War II presidents
have followed Theodore Roosevelt in thinking that die White House is a “bully
pulpit,” whether it is used to “scare the hell out of them” in order to gain sup-
port for aid to Greece and Turkey, to warn against the dangers of “unwarranted
influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex,” or
to drum up support for assistance to the contras in Nicaragua. It is also evident
that such efforts have not been equally successful. At least one noted public
opinion analyst has asserted that the relationship between leaders and the
public has changed—“farewell to ‘the President knows best,’” as he put it—but
it remains to be demonstrated that the equation has been permanently changed
(Yankelovich, 1979).

The more difficult question concerns the influence in the other direction. How
much did public impatience lead the Carter administration to embark on the
ill-fated effort to free American hostages in Iran, or the Reagan administration to
withdraw U.S. Marines from Lebanon? Did President Kennedy genuinely believe
that he would be impeached should he fail to force removal of Soviet missiles
from Cuba, as he told his brother, or was he merely seeking to bolster decisions
arrived at for reasons that had nothing to do with public opinion? Perhaps a
more telling example from the Caribbean confrontation emerges from recently
published transcripts of a crucial White House meeting on October 27, the day
before the crisis was resolved peacefully. It appears that Kennedy was prepared
to accept a compromise solution—withdrawal of Soviet missiles in Cuba in
exchange for removal of American missiles in Turkey—rather than initiate a
further escalation of the confrontation, and that he would have done so in large
part because it would have been hard to explain to the public why such a seemingly equitable arrangement had been rejected (Bundy and Blight, 1987).

Some other anecdotal evidence may also be suggestive, but it hardly offers irrefutable answers to this question. Franklin D. Roosevelt was the first president to make extensive use of public opinion data, but during recent decades every administration has employed public opinion professionals. We have relatively few detailed accounts from these analysts about how their expertise and data were used in the policy process, but those that exist (e.g., Cantril, 1967; Beal and Hinckley, 1984; Hinckley, 1992) suggest that the mass public is not viewed merely as an essentially shapeless, malleable lump that can readily be molded through public relations activities and compliant media to meet the immediate needs of the administration. Hadley Cantril, who undertook public opinion analyses for Presidents Roosevelt, Eisenhower, and Kennedy, summarized his experience in this manner: "I want to emphasize that no claim is made here that the [public opinion] data and suggestions Lambert and I provided the President [Roosevelt] were crucial to his decisions. But actions taken were certainly very often completely consistent with our recommendations" (Cantril, 1967:42).

Although it bears repeating that the evidence describing public opinion still far outstrips, both in quantity and quality, that on the causal links between public opinion and foreign policy, research in recent years has begun to cast doubt on the earlier consensus about public impotence. In addition to anecdotal evidence, two classes of studies have contributed to challenging the thesis that foreign policy processes are impervious to impact from the public: quantitative/correlational analyses and case studies.

Several recent quantitative studies have challenged some important foundations of the theory that, at least on foreign and defense issues, the public is virtually impotent. One element of that thesis is that policy makers are relatively free agents on foreign policy questions because these issues pose few dangers of electoral retribution by voters; elections are said to be decided by domestic questions, especially those sometimes described as "pocketbook" or "bread and butter" issues. However, a systematic study of presidential campaigns between 1952 and 1984 revealed that in five of the nine elections during the period, foreign policy issues had "large effects." Or, as the authors put it, when presidential candidates devote campaign time and other resources to foreign policy issues, they are not merely "waltzing before a blind audience" (Aldrich, Sullivan, and Borgida, 1989).

Recent research on voting behavior has also emphasized the importance of retrospective evaluations on performance on voter choice among candidates, especially when one of them is an incumbent (Fiorina, 1981; Abramson, Aldrich, and Rhode, 1990). Because voters are perceived as punishing incumbent candidates or parties for foreign policy failures (for example, the Iran hostage episode) or rewarding them for successes (for example, the invasion of Panama
to capture General Noriega), decisions by foreign policy leaders may be made in anticipation of public reactions and the probabilities of success or failure.

The electoral retribution hypothesis received a different kind of test in a study of American policy toward China during the three decades following establishment of Mao Tse-tung’s government in 1949. Kusnitz found that, with few exceptions, the correspondence between public preferences and U.S. policy was remarkably high. At times policy led opinion and at other times opinion led policy, but on the whole the two remained in harmony. These findings are explained by issue visibility, partisan differences, and the nonrandom changes of opinion, which combined to create the belief among leaders that the possibility of electoral retribution required them to pay close attention to public opinion on the China issue (Kusnitz, 1984:173,176).

Another recent study seems to cast some doubt on the universal validity of the classic Miller-Stokes (1963) finding that, compared to domestic issues, public attitudes on foreign policy questions have far less impact on members of Congress. A careful analysis of voting on Pentagon appropriations at the beginning of the Reagan administration’s defense buildup revealed that “…public opinion was a powerful force for policy change in the realm of defense spending in the first year of the Reagan administration. Moreover, the impact of constituency opinion appears to have been remarkably broad-based, influencing all sorts of representatives across a wide spectrum of specific defense spending issues” (Bartels, 1991:467).

Finally, two major studies have measured the congruence between changes in public preferences and a broad range of policies over extended periods. The first, a study of public opinion and policy outcomes spanning the years 1960–1974, revealed that in almost two thirds of 222 cases, policy outcomes corresponded to public preferences. The consistency was especially high (92%) on foreign policy issues. Monroe (1979:11) offers three possible explanations for his findings: Foreign policy issues permit more decision-making by the executive, are likely to be the object of relatively less interest and influence by organized interest groups, and are especially susceptible to elite manipulation. The second study covered an even longer span—1935 to 1979—which included 357 significant changes of public preferences (Page and Shapiro, 1983). Of the 231 instances of subsequent policy changes, 153 (66%) were congruent with changes in public preferences. There was little difference in the level of congruence for domestic (70%) and foreign policy (62%) issues.

Although anecdotal evidence and correlational analyses can make useful contributions toward understanding the opinion–policy relationship, they are not an entirely satisfactory substitute for intensive case studies that could shed more direct light on how, if at all, public opinion influences foreign policy-making. It is not wholly sufficient to describe the state of or trends in public opinion on an issue immediately preceding or during foreign policy decisions. A finding that
major decisions seemed to be correlated with public preferences does not, by itself, establish a causal link; for example, policy-makers might be responding to pressures and constraints from the international system—as realist theorists insist that they should—without any significant attention to public sentiments on the issue, even if those attitudes are highly congruent with those of the decision-makers. Alternatively, the actual direction of causality might run from policymakers to the public rather than vice versa, as depicted by critics who describe the public as the malleable targets of public relations efforts by American elites (Ginsburg, 1988; Margolis and Mauser, 1989). When opinion change precedes policy change, this interpretation loses potency. However, we could not rule out still another possibility: the administration manipulates events; the events, now part of the information available to the public, result in opinion change, followed by policy changes that are congruent with opinions. A somewhat related variant of this sequence is the “rally ’round the president” hypothesis, according to which the executive may manipulate the public indirectly by undertaking external initiatives and responding to events abroad in a manner calculated to increase his popularity with domestic constituents (Brody and Shapiro, 1989; Marra, Ostrom, and Simon, 1990).

Among the more difficult cases are those dealing with public opinion as a possible constraint on action. During the 1980s, the Reagan administration undertook a massive public relations campaign of dubious legality to generate public support for assistance to the “contra” rebels in Nicaragua (Parry and Kornbluth, 1988), but a careful analysis of surveys on the issue revealed that a majority of the public opposed American military involvement in Central America (Sobel, 1989; see also Hinckley, 1992). Would the Reagan administration have intervened more directly or massively in Nicaragua or El Salvador in the absence of such attitudes? Solid evidence about contemporary non-events is, to understate the case, rather hard to come by. Case studies seem to be the only way to address such questions, although even this approach is not wholly free of potential problems. Does an absence of documentary references to public opinion indicate a lack of interest by decision-makers? Alternatively, was attention to public attitudes so deeply ingrained in their working habits that it was unnecessary to make constant references to it? Are frequent references to public opinion an indication of a significant impact on decisions—or of a desire on the part of officials to be “on record” as having paid attention to public sentiments?

These examples do not imply that we are limited to simple one-directional models of the links between the public and policy makers; examples of more complex alternatives may be found in Rosenau (1961), Graber (1968), Russett (1990), Hughes (1978), and Hinckley (1992). Moreover, a full analysis of the opinion–policy links would often require explorations into many aspects of the domestic political process, including the role of parties and candidates in raising issues, the impact of interest groups, the role of the media, the level of elite
competition on specific issues, and the like. The literature on each of these topics,
even if strictly limited to foreign policy issues in the United States, is enormous,
and space limitations preclude their inclusion in this essay; Bauer, Pool, and
Dexter (1963) and Hughes (1978) are useful in this respect.

In order to select between competing hypotheses about opinion–policy
linkages, there are no satisfactory alternatives to carefully crafted case studies
employing interviews and/or archival research designed to uncover how, if
at all, decision-makers perceive public opinion; feel themselves motivated or
constrained by it; factor it into their analyses of policy options; and otherwise
take it into account when selecting a course of action, including a decision not
to take external action.

Although the literature addressing these questions is not large, especially when
compared to the number of studies that describe the state of public opinion,
several examples illustrate this type of research. The availability of substantial
collections of documents relating to the 1914 European crisis enabled Richard
Fagen (1960) to study the uses and assessments of public opinion during the
weeks leading up to World War I. Doris Graber undertook an intensive study of
four decisions during the early period of American history—Adams’s decision
to renew negotiations with France in 1800, the Louisiana Purchase, Madison’s
policies leading up to the War of 1812, and enunciation of the Monroe Doc-
trine. Despite personality, ideological, and other differences among the four
presidents, she found that in each case public opinion was “an important factor
in decision making, but by no means the most important single factor” (Graber,

A study of foreign policy-making about a century later came to a rather differ-
cent conclusion. Robert Hilderbrand was unable to discover that public opinion
had a significant impact on foreign policy-making during the quarter century
(1897–1921) encompassing the McKinley, Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson admin-
istrations; to the extent that public opinion entered into executive discussions,
it was only after policy decisions had been made (Hilderbrand, 1981:202). Still
different findings emerged from a study of public opinion and foreign policy
from the period leading up to World War II through President Truman’s 1947
speech requesting aid to Greece and Turkey. Michael Leigh (1976) tested two
approaches to the foreign policy process: the traditional model that the public
constrains American policy makers, versus the radical model that manipulation
of the public in favor of predetermined policy choices not only takes place but
also invariably succeeds. His findings validated neither model.

Striking evidence that public opinion has a significant impact on policy
emerges from a study of four cases of American arms control policy—interna-
tional control of atomic energy, the Limited Test Ban Treaty, the SALT I/ABM
Treaty, and SALT II—spanning every administration between Presidents Truman
and Reagan. Graham (1989) used a research design that included an analysis of
over 500 public opinion surveys and an examination of primary source materials to determine if correlations between public opinion and policy decisions were causal or spurious. The evidence revealed that public opinion had an important impact on decisions at all stages of the policy process, from getting on the agenda through negotiation, ratification, and implementation. Moreover, its impact varied, depending on whether public support for a policy reached the level of majority (50–59%), consensus (60–69%), preponderant (70–79%) or virtually unanimous (80%+).

Studies of the opinion–policy links are not limited to cases in which sufficient time has passed to permit full examination of the relevant archives. Philip Powlick's analysis of the role of public opinion in U.S. decisions on the Lebanon intervention during the first Reagan administration relied almost wholly on interviews with policy makers. Whereas public opinion influenced many mid-level officials and a few higher ones—for example, Caspar Weinberger8—it had little impact on others, including Ronald Reagan, Robert McFarlane, and George Shultz. Foreign policy officials tended to regard congressional moods as the relevant manifestation of public opinion.9 Powlick concluded that public opinion formed the basis of several recommendations to pull the Marines out of Lebanon; it helped ensure that the decision to withdraw would be warmly received by most officials and members of Congress. However, President Reagan's decision to withdraw was apparently less influenced by public opinion than by the kinds of external sources that realists would advocate following. Public opinion was thus only one of several factors that came together to bring about the evacuation from Beirut in February, 1984 (Powlick, forthcoming).

Taken as a whole, these case studies would seem to suggest that the impact of public opinion has increased during recent decades. This tentative conclusion also receives some support from interviews of foreign policy officials. Although the bureaucrats interviewed by Powlick (1991) were not notably more sanguine about the public than were those taking part in similar research by Cohen (1973) two decades earlier, they were more inclined to accept the legitimacy of a public contribution to the policy process. Consequently, these officials tended to avoid policies that were seen as likely to engender public opposition. In contrast, Graham (1989) found little change over time because the public opinion has played an important role in arms control decisions since the Truman years. This, then, is one of the areas in which the need for additional research is most apparent.

**Other Recent Research Developments**

**Opinion Leaders**

Until recently, one of the glaring gaps in public opinion research has been the neglect of opinion leaders. Virtually all approaches to government—from theories
that view the United States as a pluralist democracy to those that depict it as pseudo-democracy ruled by self-perpetuating elites who seek to use foreign policy as an instrument of narrow, class-based interests—recognize the disproportionate influence of some citizens (Devine, 1970). Moreover, at least since Almond’s seminal study of *The American People and Foreign Policy* (1950), it has been customary to distinguish between various strata of the public. Typically a distinction has been drawn between opinion leaders, the informed public, and the mass or uninformed public, although the precise terms and the shape of the distribution among strata may vary from study to study (compare Kreisberg, 1949; Almond, 1950; Rosenau, 1961; Genco, 1984; and Neuman, 1986). But only rarely have systematic studies of respondents in the top strata been undertaken. On occasion the Gallup Organization has surveyed samples of persons listed in *Who’s Who in America*—for example, a July 1953 poll on tariffs—but not frequently enough to be of value in assessing trends. Until the first of the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations surveys in 1974 (Rielly, 1975)—followed by similar studies in 1978, 1982, 1986, and 1990 (Rielly, 1979, 1983, 1987, 1991)—and the Foreign Policy Leadership surveys instituted two years later (1976, 1980, 1984, 1988, and 1992), there was relatively little systematic information about leadership views on foreign affairs. In addition to the CCFR and FPLP surveys, during recent years there have also been a number of one-time studies of opinion leaders (Barton, 1974–75, 1980; Russett and Hanson, 1975; Sussman, 1976; Chittick and Billingsley, 1989). A continuing series of surveys, focused on national security experts, has also been initiated recently (Koopman, Snyder, and Jervis, 1990a, 1990b, 1991).

The prior question of identifying “opinion leaders” is among the possible barriers and sources of controversy in studies of this type. There is, of course, an extensive debate on the precise definition of opinion leaders in the United States, and if consensus on that question were a prerequisite to elite surveys, they would never be undertaken. Those designing leadership studies have typically bypassed the broader question and selected subjects in one of two ways: (1) identifying key roles and then surveying a sample of those filling them, or (2) identifying groups thought to be logical sources of opinion leaders and then drawing samples from directories or rosters of such persons—for example, biographies in *Who’s Who in America, Who’s Who in American Politics*, and similar sources; subscribers to the journal *International Security*; or students at the National War College.

A somewhat narrower area of disagreement revolves around the ability to use data from national probability samples for studying elites. To oversimplify somewhat, the contending views can be reduced to two positions on the adequacy of respondents’ education levels as a surrogate measure of leadership status. The affirmative view was presented in a prognosis of how public opinion research is likely to develop during the next half century.
The mathematics and economics of surveys make them most cost-effective for assessing large undifferentiated populations, i.e., mass publics. And until you get to a handful of individuals at the very top, you don’t learn very much from studying “elites”—they seem to be just like better educated people in the general population. These two generalizations suggest no major shift in our attention. The same is true in totalitarian countries (and, I suspect, poor countries). (Davis, 1987:S178–S179)

Although the question is far from settled, at this point the proponents of the opposite viewpoint would appear to have at least a plausible case. A number of studies have found that, by itself, the level of educational attainment is an inadequate yardstick for identifying opinion leaders. Extensive analyses of the 1968, 1980, and 1984 National Election Studies and the first three Chicago Council surveys by Krosnick and Carnot (1988) indicate that education is an insufficient indicator of the attentive foreign policy public, much less of foreign policy opinion leadership. Their findings reveal little support for the hypothesis that the “foreign policy attentive public” is composed simply of highly educated persons who are concerned with all aspects of public policy. An earlier study also cast doubt on the sufficiency of education as a measure of leadership (Rogers, Stuhler, and Koenig, 1967).

Several studies have compared the views of opinion leaders and the general public (Luttbeg, 1968; Rielly, 1975, 1979, 1983, 1987, 1991; Holsti, 1987, 1991; Chittick et al., 1990; Wittkopf, 1990; Schneider, 1992). Much of the evidence indicates greater similarities than differences in the ways that respondents in the two groups structure their political beliefs (Luttbeg, 1968; Wittkopf, 1990), but Chittick and his colleagues (1990) found some differences when foreign policy belief structures are traced over time. On the other hand, there exist some rather substantial differences in the substance of their policy opinions. A few examples from the most recent (1990) Chicago Council survey will be sufficient to illustrate some of the more persistent gaps between opinion leaders and the general public (Rielly, 1991). Leaders overwhelmingly (97%) supported an active U.S. role in world affairs, whereas the general public was more tepid in its enthusiasm (59%). Both groups have shown little variation in this respect over a period of nearly two decades. Almost three fourths of the leaders agreed that the Cold War has ended, but only about a third of the general public expressed that view. Whereas 90 percent of the leaders favored foreign economic aid, especially to Eastern Europe, only half that proportion of the general public did so; moreover, among the latter, fighting drugs in Latin America was a favorite target of assistance programs. When asked to identify the most important foreign policy problems, the top three items for leaders included issues with an overwhelmingly international character: spread of nuclear weapons, arms control, and improvement of the international
environment. The comparable list for the general public included issues with a significant domestic dimension: protection of American jobs, protection of U.S. business interests abroad, and adequate energy supplies.

The momentous changes in the former Soviet Union and elsewhere that have characterized the period since 1988 suggest the possibility—but certainly not the inevitability—of a "great debate" on the appropriate values, goals, roles, and strategies that the United States should pursue in the post-Cold War era. If one assumes that top officials and opinion leaders will have overwhelming influence, whereas the general public will have little or none, then the evidence suggests that the United States will continue to pursue an internationalist foreign policy, broadly defined. In that case, the debates are likely to center on how the United States participates (hard-liners vs. accommodationists). If, on the other hand, public preferences play a significant role in shaping at least the broad contours of American foreign policy, then the policy debates are likely to focus on whether the United States should play an active international role or focus more on issues that have a direct domestic impact (internationalists vs. isolationists).

The Sources of Foreign Policy Opinions

During the early post-World War II years, bipartisan cooperation between the White House and Congress made possible such initiatives as aid to Greece and Turkey, the Marshall Plan, and NATO. Each of these striking departures from traditional foreign policies had rather solid public support; for further evidence on these and other undertakings, see Levering (1978), Foster (1983), and Wittkopf (1990:166–193). Agreement among prominent leaders of the two major parties no doubt contributed to the fact that, among the general public, Democrats and Republicans differed little with respect to these and other internationalist foreign policy undertakings. A 1946 Gallup Poll revealed that 72 percent of respondents in both political parties favored an "active" international role for the United States, and the 1947 program of aid to Greece and Turkey received approval from 56 percent of both Democrats and Republicans. Nor were there notable partisan differences in opposition to sending U.S. troops to Indo-China in 1953 and 1954.

Since the Vietnam War, sharp partisan differences, reinforced by even deeper ideological cleavages, have characterized the foreign policy beliefs of both opinion leaders and the general public (Wittkopf, 1990; Holsti and Rosenau, 1984, 1990). These differences have persisted into the 1990s, although President Reagan's second-term turnaround on such issues as arms control and conciliation of the Soviet Union did tend to reduce Republican and conservative opposition to such policies, thereby closing somewhat the partisan and ideological gaps (Holsti, 1991).

The ideological-partisan cleavages on domestic issues tend to reinforce those
Public Opinion and Foreign Policy

on foreign policy. This was distinctly not the case during the period between the end of World War II and escalation of the conflict in Vietnam. In their study of the 1948 election, Berelson and his colleagues (1954) found a limited correlation between domestic economic issues and either civil rights or international issues. "To know, for example, that someone supported the New Deal on economic issues provided no indication of his international or civil rights position" (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee, 1954:197–198). For further evidence of the lack of correlation between domestic and foreign policy issues during the decade and a half after World War II, see Campbell et al. (1964:113) and Key (1961:158).

During the past two decades the lines of cleavage on domestic and foreign policy issues have increasingly come to overlap (Russett and Hanson, 1975; Wittkopf, 1990). The evidence is especially strong at the level of opinion leadership (Holsti and Rosenau, 1988). Consequently, the putative, moderating influence of cross-cutting cleavages has often been absent in the strident politics of the 1970s and 1980s.

Two other "gaps" have received considerable attention from opinion analysts. The Vietnam War era spawned interest in generational theories of politics. The writing of distinguished social scientists, from Karl Mannheim to Sam Huntington, seemed to offer cogent hypotheses to explain the divisions of American society during the Vietnam trauma, pitting, according to some, the "Munich generation," which had witnessed the bitter consequences of efforts to appease expansionist dictators, against the "Vietnam generation," which argued that it was experiencing the poisoned legacy of an ill-informed effort to apply the "lessons of Munich" to the jungles of Southeast Asia (Allison, 1970–71; Roskin, 1974). This explanation has encountered mixed success when confronted with hard evidence. Wittkopf (1990) found evidence of generational differences among the general public. However, at the level of opinion leaders the primary lines of cleavage appear to lie within rather than between generations (Holsti and Rosenau, 1980, 1990). The generational hypothesis appears to fare best when applied to specific groups such as political activists (Converse, 1987) or protesters (Jennings, 1987).

The term "gender gap" has also become a prominent part of our political vocabulary. There is some evidence of a systematic gender gap. For example, Converse (1987:61) found substantial gender differences and that "Rambo" themes come very disproportionately from males." According to Baxter and Lansing (1983), war/peace concerns are an exception to the general rule that men and women agree on most issues. Wittkopf (1990) also found gender-based differences along both the militant internationalist and cooperative internationalist dimensions, and another study identified gender as among the most important demographic predictors of foreign policy attitudes (Fite, Genest, and Wilcox, 1990). A broad examination of survey data led Shapiro and Mahajan (1986) to the conclusion that systematic gender differences also emerge from "compassion"
issues and those involving regulation and protection. However, Conover (1988) argues that “feminism,” an ideological predisposition toward a certain stance on women’s issues, overshadows gender in explaining beliefs and values. A number of recent Americans Talk Security surveys also cast some doubt on stereotypical views of gender differences. Women consistently expressed more skeptical opinions about the USSR than did men. Although women were more inclined to describe themselves as doves (ATS–9:119), men offered more support on all five arms control items by an average margin of 6 percent; expressed more trust in the USSR on six of seven items (6 percent); assessed Gorbachev more favorably on eight items (9 percent); had more benign views of Soviet motives on six of nine items (3 percent); assessed relations between the superpowers more favorably on ten of thirteen items (5 percent); and expressed a more optimistic view on the likelihood of nuclear war (10 percent). In the only exception to this pattern, women were more critical on three items relating to the impact of defense spending (6 percent).

At the level of opinion leaders, evidence of systematic gender differences is harder to come by, except on such issues as trade and the environment; women are more protectionist and pro-environment. Four FPLP surveys spanning a dozen years indicate that women in leadership positions hold attitudes, including on war/peace issues, that are generally quite similar to those of men in comparable roles. Moreover, in their political attitudes, liberal women are likely to resemble liberal men, Republican women tend to resemble Republican men, and so on.

Survey researchers have also produced evidence on other background factors, including occupation, education, military service, travel abroad, region, and so on, but the mutually reinforcing partisan and ideological cleavages have clearly been dominant in recent years. The public opinion data generally support the conclusion of three perceptive observers: “For two decades, the making of American foreign policy has been growing far more political—or more precisely, far more partisan and ideological” (Destler, Gelb, and Lake, 1984:13). Whether the end of the Cold War will contribute to softening and blurring the partisan-ideological chasm remains to be demonstrated.

Conclusion

The consensus of the mid-1960s on the nature, structure, and impact of public opinion has clearly come under vigorous challenge during the past quarter century. The Vietnam War, while not the sole causal factor in the reexamination of the conventional wisdom, was certainly a catalyst. If a new consensus has yet to emerge on all of the issues discussed above, at least it seems safe to state that the field is marked by innovative research and active debates on the implications of the results. Nevertheless, there are at least four areas that seem to call for additional effort: case studies employing archival sources that will provide the
Public Opinion and Foreign Policy

the most directly relevant evidence on the impact of public opinion, cross-national research, development of standard questions in order to encourage cumulation of survey results, and research that will enable us to distinguish results that are time- and context-bound from those that transcend the Cold War period.

As indicated earlier, by far the least well developed of the areas discussed in this essay has been the opinion–policy link. We have impressive correlational evidence that policy changes are in fact predominantly in the direction favored by the public, but our confidence would be enhanced by more substantial evidence of a causal nature. The type of research design employed in the previously cited study by Thomas Graham (1989), combining analyses of survey data with archival research in order to assess the causal impact of public opinion on decision making, is a good model for future studies. More research of this type should go a long way toward answering some of the most important questions about the opinion-policy relationship. It should also provide further insight into other important questions: What are the relevant indicators of public opinion? How much do polls matter? What about expressions of congressional preferences? What about the impact of the media or interest groups? How and why do policy makers (and administrations) differ in their sensitivity to different indicators of public sentiments?

It will no doubt have occurred to readers by now that this essay is almost wholly confined to evidence of American public opinion. But questions about public opinion and foreign policy are obviously of much broader concern, especially in an era of expanding democracy, and a good deal of future effort should be directed toward comparative analysis. Some examples of innovative comparative research include Eichenberg (1989) and Risse-Kappen (1991). The latter found that although public opinion was important in each of four countries—France, Japan, West Germany, and the United States—its impact was significantly affected by domestic structures and coalition-building processes among elites. Distinctions of this kind clearly take us a long way toward a fuller understanding of opinion–policy linkages. Dramatic changes in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union should open up possibilities for a range of comparative studies that would have been quite impossible just a few years ago.

Mueller (1973:265) has appropriately pointed to an important limitation on opinion surveys arising from the fact that “the poll interview is a rather primitive stimulus-response social situation in which poorly thought out answers are casually fitted to questions that are overly ingenuous.” At minimum, that warning reminds us to be cautious about making inferences from a single datum on public opinion. It is permissible to be more venturesome in drawing trends from longitudinal data, but doing so assumes that the questions posed have remained constant. Whereas commercial polling organizations ask certain standard questions at quite regular intervals—for example, on rating presidential performance—there is nothing comparable with a strictly foreign policy focus.
During and immediately after World War II, respondents were regularly asked about the desirability of an active U.S. role in the world, but interest in that question appears to have died in the mid-1950s; it was only revived in the wake of the war in Vietnam when global activism came under increasing criticism. In other cases, longitudinal analyses may be rendered suspect, as in 1956 when Gallup made a “minor” alteration to its standard question on foreign aid by adding the phrase, “to prevent their [the recipients of aid] going communistic” at the end of the question.

Among the useful features of the Chicago Council quadrennial studies (Rielly, 1975–1991) has been a carryover of certain questions from survey to survey. Their question asking respondents to rate the importance of a series of foreign policy goals has been especially useful for those with an interest in trend analyses. With a few exceptions, however, the independent surveys that have been undertaken in recent years appear to have taken little note of questions in other studies that might provide the basis for comparative analysis. In one sense this is understandable; the whole rationale for an independent survey is to undertake probes that have been overlooked by others. But it is also regrettable that there appears to be rather limited communication at the planning stage between those who are designing surveys. The development of even a handful of standard foreign policy questions that would be included in all such surveys would go a long way toward improving a less-than-outstanding record of cumulative findings.

Finally, so much of the evidence cited above has emerged from a four-decade-long period in which foreign affairs were dominated by the Cold War that we need to address questions about whether and how the end of that confrontation may affect or even render obsolete what we have learned about public opinion and foreign policy. At the most obvious level, there has been a sea change in public attitudes toward virtually all of the issues that dominated the Cold War era. Indeed, one could make a plausible case that in many respects changing public attitudes preceded rather than followed those at the pinnacles of government on such issues as the appropriate level of defense spending, the primary threats to American national security, assessments of Mikhail Gorbachev’s goals, and the motivations underlying Soviet foreign policy (ATS surveys; Holsti, 1991). For example, well before the demolition of the Berlin Wall or the final collapse of the USSR, the public ranked the danger to American national security from the Soviet Union in seventh place, just behind the greenhouse effect (ATS–9:51–54).

The end of the Cold War also raises some questions about the structuring of foreign policy attitudes. Substantial evidence indicates that assessments of the Soviet Union have played a key role in foreign policy belief structures; for example, it is a central element in the hierarchical model developed by Hurwitz and Peffley (1990) as well as in Wittkopf’s (1986, 1990) militant internationalism dimension. Some interesting research questions emerge from the collapse of the Soviet Union. Will it result for many in a loss of structure and consequent
disorientation about foreign affairs? In a replacement of the Soviets by another adversary such as Japan? Are there persons who, if deprived of one enemy, must search for another? Alternatively, are the key concepts that structure beliefs about foreign affairs sufficiently generic that they will survive the dramatic international changes of the past few years? It is my guess that such dimensions as militant internationalism, cooperative internationalism, and unilateralism-multilateralism will continue to structure foreign policy attitudes, but the changes we have witnessed since the late 1980s are of such unprecedented magnitude that this must be treated as a hypothesis that requires systematic testing.

At the broadest level, if we are indeed entering into a period of fewer major power confrontations, and greater attention to such nonmilitary issues as trade, immigration, the environment, and the like—there is ample survey data that much of the American public believes this to be the case—it may also be an era in which public opinion plays a more autonomous role. Even those who do not fully accept the “manipulated public” thesis would acknowledge that crises and confrontations abroad provide a setting in which opportunities and temptations for manipulating the public are far greater than on nonstrategic issues. Not only are the latter typically resolved over a longer time period—providing greater opportunities for the public, pressure groups, the media, and Congress to play a significant role—but they also tend to be more resistant to claims that the needs for secrecy, flexibility, and speed of action make it both necessary and legitimate for the executive to have a relatively free hand.

In short, we may be moving into a period in which the relationship between public opinion and foreign policy takes on added rather than diminished significance, but we should also be wary of assumptions that the theories, evidence, and linkages emerging from research during the Cold War era will necessarily travel intact into an era of strikingly different circumstances.

References


86 • Making American Foreign Policy


Making American Foreign Policy


Acknowledgment

For helpful comments and suggestions on an earlier draft of this paper I am grateful to Stephen Earl Bennett, William Chittick, Thomas Graham, Jon Hurwitz, Benjamin Page, Mark Peffley, Philip Powlick, Bruce Russett, Eugene Wittkopf, and two anonymous reviewers for *International Studies Quarterly.*
It is by now a commonplace observation that the “age of consensus” on questions of foreign policy was a casualty of the American involvement in Vietnam. This article focuses on the resulting domestic cleavages relating to foreign policy issues, and on their likely impact on American efforts to undertake basic systemic changes.

The “Three-Headed Eagle” serves as a metaphor for a nation marked by three quite distinctive clusters of beliefs—described here as Cold War Internationalism, Post-Cold War Internationalism, and Isolationism—about the nature of the global system, the sources of threats to a just and stable world order, the appropriate international role for the United States, and the goals, strategies, and tactics that should guide American external relations.

Will these cleavages persist? Efforts of the Nixon-Ford and Carter administrations to reestablish a foreign policy consensus, through policies of detente and human rights, have exacerbated rather than healed divisions. Systematic evidence from public opinion and leadership studies also appears to confirm the existence of the cleavages discussed here. Moreover, because the divisions exist within as well as between generations, it is unlikely that the ascendency of a new generation of leadership will automatically create a new foreign policy consensus.

To the casual observer it might appear that the concerns of ornithology and international relations, like two parallel lines in Euclidian geometry, are destined never to meet. But we, members of an organization that prides itself on being multidisciplinary, know better. After all, who among us has not responded to the weighty pronouncement of some foreign policy bureaucrat—or perhaps even to the latest article by a fellow international relationist—with those immortal words, “That is strictly for the birds!”?
Moreover, ever since leaked accounts of the deliberations in Washington during the missile crisis in 1962, our political vocabulary has included the terms “hawk” and “dove” as shorthand labels for describing two entirely different philosophical viewpoints on world politics. There is also a long critical tradition in American thought that depicts Uncle Sam as a naive pigeon who is certain to be plucked clean by more Machiavellian foreigners whenever he ventures into international negotiations. During his recent visit to Washington, Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping likened the United States to an ostrich, with its head buried firmly in the sand while Soviet hegemonism threatens the stability of the international system. And the connection between international relations and ornithology is not limited to real birds. For example, Organski has recently developed the concept “Phoenix factor” (Organski and Kugler, 1977).

But enough of this digression, for it is the eagle that is the topic of the evening. A soon-to-be published book on the foreign policies of the Carter administration is entitled Eagle Entangled (Oye et al., 1979). I would like to develop this proposition: One source of entanglement is that the eagle has three heads and, like the double-headed eagle that symbolized Austria-Hungary, each of them looks in a different direction. That is, I will discuss briefly the fundamental cleavages that divide American society on foreign policy issues today. For that purpose, it is perhaps appropriate to employ the metaphor of the three-headed eagle.

Before proceeding further it may be useful to identify three underlying premises.

First, we are at present in the midst of startling systemic changes, and we can only dimly perceive the full transformations that may emerge by the end of the millennium, a landmark that now stands barely two decades before us. It is no doubt the conceit of every generation that it stands astride a moment of great historical significance, but perhaps in our case it is justified. As sober a scholar as Kattenburg (1978:1) has recently written that by the middle of the next decade, we will perhaps have seen the demise of the nation-state system that emerged from the Peace of Westphalia more than three centuries ago. Even the casual observer must be impressed, although not necessarily elated, by the speed with which the familiar institutions and processes developed during and immediately after World War II are showing signs of wear and tear, if not decay and collapse. The liberal international economic order created at Bretton Woods and elsewhere lies in shambles, attacked by protectionist forces in the first world, shunned since birth by the second world, and challenged by strident demands from the third world for a “New International Economic Order.” The United Nations has declined in importance to the point that the John Birch Society and its allies no longer bother to put up billboards demanding, “Get the United Nations out of the United States, and the United States out of the United Nations.” And to describe the great alliances that formalized the bipolar structure of the international system two decades ago as looking a bit long in the tooth is to engage in understatement.
Second, although it is clear that many of the forces of change are beyond the mastery or control of either or both of the superpowers, the role that the United States plays—or does not play—will, for better or worse, have an important impact on the types of systemic transformations that may take place.

Finally, while we need to avoid ascribing excessive influence to domestic constraints on the formulation of foreign policy, there may nevertheless be a minimal level of leadership consensus necessary—if not sufficient—to enable any American administration to undertake important initiatives toward shaping a preferred international system. Or, to borrow some terminology from George (1978), any administration with such goals must be able to persuade significant elements within American leadership groups about both the feasibility and value of its grand design for a viable and just world order.

During much of the past three decades, leadership opinion in the United States has tended to converge around a series of propositions defining the essential character of the global system and of America's proper role within it. Out of the shattering experiences of the failed Peace of Versailles, the Great Depression, the foreign policy follies of the democracies during the 1930s, World War II, and the collapse of the coalition that defeated the Axis powers emerged a series of foreign policy axioms that gained wide currency—some would say that they became an inflexible dogma—among a large proportion of Americans in leadership positions. The result was a politically effective centrist coalition that supported the main contours of a globalist foreign policy.

Whether this coalition would have died a natural death within a generation or so is of little importance because it did not survive the American intervention in Vietnam. Thus, what Hoffmann (1978) has called the "age of consensus" became just another in the long list of Vietnam casualties.

The point I am making here is not merely the obvious one that such issues as the disposition of the Panama Canal, the SALT treaty, the abrogation of the defense treaty with Taiwan, or the proper allocation of budget dollars between defense and domestic spending have divided Americans. Indeed, the cleavages and controversies surrounding these and other issues are merely the tip of the iceberg, the symptoms rather than the causes of fundamental fissures within American society on foreign policy.

Nor are these observations directed specifically at the performance or nonperformance of the Carter administration in the realm of external affairs. Although his successes in creating a new, post-Vietnam consensus fall far short of the spectacular, it is doubtful that his opponent, had he won the 1976 presidential election, would have been dramatically more successful in this respect.

But let me return now to our metaphorical bird. One head of the eagle—representing those I will identify as the Cold War Internationalists—is oriented toward the state of affairs between East and West, locating along that cleavage the most fundamental challenges to a stable and acceptable international order. The second head may take more than an occasional glance in that direction, if
only out of recognition that therein lies the major danger of nuclear holocaust, but its conceptual map is also strongly oriented toward issues that tend to divide the world along a North-South line. I will refer to this group as the Post-Cold War Internationalists. The third head, accusing both of the other two of acting a bit too much like Chicken Little, with incessant cries that the sky is falling, is concerned primarily with problems in the home nest, arising at least in part from excessive, if not obsessive, concern with both East-West and North-South issues. These are the Isolationists. Let us now turn to examine each of these groups in a little more detail, beginning with the Cold War Internationalists.

The Cold War Internationalists

Without denying that some changes have marked the international system since the 1950s, the Cold War Internationalists nevertheless see a fundamental continuity in the structure of the system, the sources of threats to a stable world order, the appropriate international role for the United States, and the most effective instruments of external policy. They perceive a conflictual world in which the primary cleavages are those dividing the East and the West, and in which most, if not all, of the most salient issues and conflicts are closely linked to each other and to that fault line. As a result of such tight links, disturbances in one region will reverberate throughout the international system. Within that system the United States faces an ambitious, often aggressive, but always patient coalition of adversaries led by Moscow. The Cold War Internationalists depict the Soviet Union as an expansionist power that, under the guise of “peaceful coexistence” or “detente,” is lulling and gulling the United States into policies that bear a disturbing resemblance to those of the western democracies during the 1930s. As Nitze (1978: 120) has recently put it, “to make accommodation the touchstone of our policy is, as Peking never ceases to remind us, the road to appeasement.”

Thus, it is only at the superficial level of slogans—notably “detente”—or of quite peripheral issues, that the nature of international relations has changed. The overarching reality of the global system remains the confrontation between an expansionist Soviet Union and its allies, on the one hand, and the non-Communist nations on the other. And with respect to this fundamental fact of international life, changes during the past two decades are the occasion for neither congratulations nor complacency. Citing trends in Soviet defense spending during the past decade and a half as well as recent adventures in Angola, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Vietnam, Iran, and elsewhere, the Cold War Internationalists argue that the balance of power—or what Soviet theoreticians called the “correlation of forces”—has swung so far in favor of the USSR that at best the international system is unstable, and at worst it may be headed for war. According to the Committee on the Present Danger, for example:
The size, sophistication and rate of growth of Soviet military power far exceeds Soviet requirements for defense. The Soviet military buildup reflects the offensive nature of the Soviet political and military challenge and the Soviet belief that the use of force remains a viable instrument of foreign policy [as cited in Bacon, 1978].

As a consequence, in the words of former Arms Control Director Fred Ikle (as quoted in Middleton, 1978: A10), what has taken place “is a major transformation in the relationship of military strength between the United States and the Soviet Union—the kind of transformation that historically is often found prior to a major war.”

The basic problem for the United States is therefore to maintain the territorial and political integrity of non-Communist parts of the world in the face of a highly armed, expansionist power that harbors an unchanging commitment to achieving a position of global hegemony. Even if the Cold War Internationalists accept the proposition that the contemporary international system is more complex than that facing Metternich or Bismarck, they do not agree that the prudent, time-tested axioms of international intercourse—the realpolitik “rules of the game”—have therefore been rendered obsolete. Some may agree that the game is more complex than dominoes, but few are prepared to dismiss the metaphor of the chessboard, a game with a well-defined hierarchy based on power in which position is a critical factor, and which is basically zero-sum in nature. Citing the rules that “weakness tempts aggression” and “only strength and backbone deter aggression” (Adelman, 1978:10), the Cold War Internationalist prescription is clear and unequivocal: The United States must accept the responsibilities and burdens of its leadership position within the non-Communist sector, and at minimum, it must restore a balance of power sufficient to convince the Soviet leadership that aggrandizement will not pay. To charges that such policies will merely revive the Cold War, they respond by dismissing as false the argument that the hands of the “hawks” in the Kremlin will thereby be strengthened. To the contrary, a convincing demonstration by our national leadership that such a [Soviet] game plan [of aggrandizement] is unacceptable to us—in short, an American policy which is belligerent, innovative and relatively stable—may be more likely to produce the desired result. If President Carter can be faulted at all, it is for his failure to convince the Soviet leadership (shades of Kennedy at Vienna!) that we, like they, have a bottom line in our national interests which is ultimately non-negotiable [Sternheimer, 1978: A16].

Expression of deep concern about recent trends in American foreign and national security policy are not hard to find. To the question posed by Drew Middletton’s recent book, *Can America Win the Next War?,* the optimists among
the Cold War Internationalists answer, “Maybe—but not for long,” whereas the pessimists’ answer is unequivocally negative. But perhaps even more than imbalances in military capabilities, they fear a growing imbalance in resolution and willingness to use power, if necessary, to preserve vital national interests. A typical diagnosis is that there has been a “collapse of Western will.” According to Kristol (1979: 16):

We have for too long lived with the illusion that the prime purpose of our foreign policy should be to restrict and eventually eliminate the use (and abuse) of power in international affairs. The moral intention is splendid—but Utopian, since much of the world does not share it. We know that power may indeed corrupt. We are now learning that, in the world of nations as it exists, powerlessness can be even more corrupting and demoralizing.

The Post-Cold War Internationalists

At the center of the Post-Cold War Internationalist worldview is a series of closely related propositions. First, the growing list of serious threats to a viable and just world order has created an international system of such complexity and interdependence as to render totally obsolete the premises that informed American foreign policy during the two decades following the end of World War II. Whereas the Cold War Internationalists perceive an essentially bipolar structure that dominates most critical issues, the Post-Cold War Internationalists see a far richer and more varied menu of both threats to and opportunities for creation of a viable and just world order. Dangers arising from strategic/military issues remain real, but the roots of future international conflict are to be located not merely in military imbalances—real or perceived—but also in problems arising from poverty, inequitable distribution of resources, unfulfilled demands for self-determination, regional antagonisms, population pressures, technology that outpaces the political means of controlling its consequences, and the like. Whereas the Cold War Internationalists maintain that the chessboard remains a valid metaphor of the global system, the Post-Cold War Internationalists perceive a multidimensional game in which the logic of the situation will ultimately more handsomely reward cooperation and in which outcomes are more often than not non-zero sum.

Not only has the age of the bipolarity passed, but it is both futile and dangerous to believe that it may be replaced by resurrecting a classical balance-of-power system. Put most simply, unprecedented changes relating to actors, objectives, values, and indeed the very nature of power itself, have rendered the balance of power a wholly inadequate model for world order. The primary task, then, is to create, nurture, and sustain new structures and processes for dealing effectively
and equitably with a range of issues that go well beyond traditionally defined security concerns. At the core of this worldview is the premise that one cannot effectively cope with problems arising from “complex interdependence” save by means of international cooperation on an unprecedented scale; a primary lesson of Vietnam is that no nation, not even one as powerful as the United States, can alone shape a world order.

Second, the Post-Cold War Internationalists are less than awed by the Soviet Union. Retiring Senator John Sparkman recently described that nation as militarily strong but as otherwise exhibiting “many of the characteristics of a developing country.” Informed by this perception of the USSR, he proceeded to suggest that in the future American presidents should be as ready to “sit down with the Russians as they have to stand up to them.” Similarly, the New York Times editorialized that: “Like the United States, the Soviet Union is becoming a mostly conservative force in world affairs, restrained by the fear of nuclear war and burdened with defense of far-flung political and economic interests.” As a consequence, “The central axiom of Soviet-American relations today is that the interests of the two nations will periodically coincide and produce collaboration to try to preserve stability in unstable lands and so avert a superpower conflict.” (New York Times, 1979: A20).

Finally, the Post-Cold War Internationalists believe that an active American role in creating an equitable and stable world order is indispensable, not only because mankind is denied the luxury of procrastination in dealing with many world order issues, but also because to do otherwise is to leave the field to those whose goals and values are often far less benign. The United States has both the obligation and the capabilities to contribute toward creation of the institutions and processes necessary to deal effectively and in a timely fashion with the broad agenda of critical international issues that is by no means limited to purely geopolitical and strategic ones. However, a necessary, if not sufficient, condition of success in such an enterprise is a dramatic reorientation of America’s international role. Hoffmann (1978) poses the alternatives in the title of his latest book: Primacy or World Order. To opt for the former assures a future of confrontation, conflict, crises, and chaos—and the certainty of ultimate failure to achieve either goal. To choose the course of world order, on the other hand, requires a significant reexamination of some deeply ingrained American pretensions, premises, patterns of thought, and policies. At minimum, the politics of negotiation, compromise, and cooperation—what Hoffmann calls “moderation plus”—must replace the politics of confrontation and crisis.

The Isolationists

To the Isolationists, the cardinal rules for American foreign policy are, “know thy limits” and “heal thyself first.” George McGovern’s plea, “come home America,”
although clearly not a formula upon which to ride into the White House seven years ago, nevertheless strikes a responsive chord among a not insignificant element in the United States. Kennan’s (1978: 125) recent assertion, “I think I am a semi-isolationist”; George Meany’s proclamation that “Free trade is a sham”; and the appeal of “project independence” to many once confirmed internationalists indicate that isolationism has achieved a degree of respectability and support unknown since before Pearl Harbor.

The Isolationists share with the Post-Cold War Internationalists several key propositions about contemporary international relations. They agree that the period of bipolarity has passed, in large part because the Soviet Union has been transformed from an aggressive, Stalinist totalitarian state into a conservative great power, governed by an aging leadership whose memories of the destruction wrought by World War II far outstrip their zeal for high-risk international adventures. Thus, what the Cold War Internationalists perceive as a military superpower confident that a dramatic change in the “correlation of forces” is opening up an era of unprecedented opportunities for Soviet expansion, the isolationists diagnose as a great power beset with intractable domestic problems—ranging from an inefficient agricultural sector to uncertainties of leadership succession—as well as a full agenda of international difficulties, including, but not confined to, the China problem and the threat of nationalism within its Eastern European empire. And whereas the Cold War Internationalists see in the fast-rising Soviet arms budget a clear index of ultimate Soviet intentions—and thus a mortal threat to Western civilization—the Isolationists are inclined to attribute the Soviet side of the arms race to a mixture of genuine fears of a two-front war, bureaucratic momentum, and strategic irrationalities that are not the monopoly of the leadership in the Kremlin.

But the Isolationists are not inclined to give much greater credence to either the direst fears or the fondest hopes of the Post-Cold War Internationalists. For starters, they tend to regard the term “complex interdependence” as descriptively inaccurate for the most part, and a fact to be deplored rather than celebrated where it does in fact exist. As Kennan (1977: 50) has put it in his most recent book: “To what extent this interdependence really exists and constitutes a commanding reality of our time, I cannot say. I will only say that however much there is of it, as a feature of the situation of the United States, I wish there were less.”

The isolationist diagnosis of the contemporary international scene, or at least its primary elements, may perhaps be summarized with a set of three propositions.

First, the USSR does indeed possess the capabilities to rain great destruction on the United States and the other Western democracies, but it lacks the slightest intention of doing so.

Second, many third world nations do indeed envy and oppose the industrial democracies—often successfully exploiting wholly irrational guilt complexes in the West—but save for a few isolated instances they totally lack the capabilities
for threatening the vital interests of the United States. Where the power to threaten such interests in fact exists—notably with respect to oil—it is largely the consequence of a mad rush to place America's head in the noose by failing to exercise sufficient discipline in the use of resources to avoid becoming the eager hostages of OPEC.

Third, the real sources of threats to a just and humane social order are largely to be found within rather than without. Decaying cities, inflation, unemployment, cultural decadence, illiteracy, environmental depre
dation, and other familiar problems pose, according to the Isolationists, a far greater threat to the quality of American institutions and lives than do the ambitions of the men in the Kremlin or the strident and unjustified demands of third world leaders for a new international order. Indeed, many Isolationists, like their intellectual forebears, question whether an activist foreign policy is compatible with domestic reforms—or even with the very existence of democratic institutions. The Isolationists' argument is thus sustained not only by a pessimistic estimate of Washington's ability to solve pressing international problems. It is perhaps even more fundamentally grounded in a fear that the United States will lose its soul by excessive international involvement, whether to play the realpolitik game prescribed by the Cold War Internationalists, or the "complex interdependence" game of the Post-Cold War Internationalists.

Consistent with these diagnoses, the Isolationist "grand design" for American foreign policy differs sharply with those of both varieties of internationalism. They recognize the existence of conflicts along both a North-South and East-West axis, but they tend to dismiss as a dangerous delusion the notion—widely accepted in the United States during the decades following the end of World War II—that there is any compelling practical or ethical imperative for the United States to be centrally involved in the amelioration of all the world's ills. Especially discriminating selectivity should be exercised in limiting security commitments to the "indispensable minimum," defined, for example, by Kennan as Western Europe, Japan, and Israel. Most importantly, there must be an awareness that just as every international problem cannot claim American paternity, so it does not necessarily have a unique or effective American solution.

More specifically, the Isolationists propose:

First, negotiate outstanding differences with the Soviet Union with the minimal goal of slowing down the arms race and thereby reducing the threat of unintended and unwanted conflict. The Soviets or Chinese may choose to embark upon external adventures in the third world. However, because such actions would rarely infringe upon vital American interests, the proper response should be, "you are heartily welcome to each other; it serves you both right" (Kennan, 1977: 96).

Second, deal with third world nations only on the basis of genuinely shared interests—and those are likely to be quite limited in scope—rather than on the
basis of guilt for conditions not of America's making, or of romantic visions about what those interests might be. The United States should adhere to the dictum that "The first requirement of getting on with most foreign people is to demonstrate that you are quite capable of getting on without them. An overeagerness to please suggests just the opposite" (Kennan, 1977: 70). For the Isolationists, the central lesson of Vietnam is that the United States cannot provide security for those who are incapable or unwilling to make the necessary sacrifices; nor can it provide the means of material, political, or spiritual improvement for those who are indifferent to such problems. In any case, they are likely to be marching to a different drummer. Thus, the United States must shed the illusion that it either can or should export democratic institutions or economic development into areas that possess neither the wish nor the self-discipline necessary to create such conditions for themselves.

Finally, if the United States is to have a salutary influence on the rest of the world, it will come largely through a demonstrated ability to solve its own pressing domestic problems. "One of the first requirements of clear thinking about our part in world affairs is the recognition that we cannot be more to others than we are to ourselves—that we cannot be a source of hope and inspiration to others against a background of resigned failure and deterioration of life here at home" (Kennan, 1977: 25). In a large sense, then, America's ability to contribute to a solution of many global issues—be it human rights or democratic development—is limited to the power of example. And it therefore behooves the United States to achieve a satisfactory resolution of these problems at home before turning its attention and energies to preaching at or materially helping others.

Conclusion

In conclusion, let us consider three possible objections to this analysis: first, that it fails to take into account the conscious efforts by recent administrations to pursue consensus-creating policies; second, that the evidence cited is much too anecdotal; and third, that it has overlooked the healing effect of a new generation coming to positions of leadership in the United States.

Let me turn first to a very brief assessment of recent attempts to create a new, post-Vietnam foreign policy consensus. That efforts of the Nixon and Ford administrations to do so around the concept of "detente" were unsuccessful is a point requiring no comment beyond recalling that President Ford found it expedient to jettison that term from the White House vocabulary as excessive baggage that he could ill afford to carry into his struggle to gain the presidential nomination of his own party.

A brief postmortem on President Carter's human rights policy—an effort clearly calculated to find the basis for a new, post-Vietnam consensus on foreign affairs—further illustrates the point. The Cold War Internationalists rejoiced
during the early months of 1977, a period marked by some dramatic indications of White House concern for the fate of dissidents in the Soviet Union. But when the Carter administration turned its attention to Nicaragua, South Korea, or Rhodesia, the applause was quickly muted and replaced by the criticism that "the human rights campaign, as now conducted, is a weapon aimed primarily at allies and it tends to undermine their domestic structures" (Kissinger, 1978: 62). Charges of a double standard—that the United States employed a high-powered microscope to examine and judge the human rights policies of allies, while wearing blinders when it comes to assessing those of adversaries—were not uncommon.

Conversely, the Post-Cold War Internationalists have shown a much more acute sensitivity to the victims of repression in Santiago, Seoul, or Salisbury than to those in Phnom Penh, Pyongyang, or Prague. Whereas the Cold War Internationalists regard Soviet performance in the realm of human rights as a valid index of their broader foreign policy motivations—and thus, for example, a measure of their trustworthiness as partners to a SALT treaty—the Post-Cold War Internationalists are unprepared to sacrifice opportunities for expanded trade or for arms control measures on the altar of vigilance for human rights in the USSR. And it is perhaps one of the many ironies of international life that they have espoused starkly "realist" arguments against those who suggest that there exists an American responsibility for the human rights of the Taiwanese. As the former senior editorial writer of the New York Times put it, "No mention [is made] of the startling contrast between Mr. Carter's position on human rights and the application of those principles to the pragmatic demands of realpolitik in Asia."

While their internationalist brethren debate the appropriate targets for American attention, the Isolationists take the position that the state of human rights abroad, an internal matter for the countries in question, lies beyond the proper concern of the United States. Without in any way condoning or justifying violations of fundamental rights wherever they may occur, the Isolationists disparage American efforts to rectify the situation as basically counterproductive, whether the goal is to mitigate the obscene policies that characterize the treatment of blacks in South Africa or of Jews in the Soviet Union. The essence of the Isolationist position on human rights may be found in Kennan's observation (1978: 127):

Fine, let us make sure that this country stands as a model for all humanity on human rights. But I do not think that any very useful purpose is served by pressing other governments in other parts of the world on this subject. I don't regard us as very good advisers to them. Very often we achieve just the opposite of what we wanted to achieve when we push them along this line.
Thus, although the human rights issue may have commended itself to Jimmy Carter as useful, both to highlight the alleged amorality of the incumbents during the electoral campaign, and to reestablish a foreign policy consensus within the nation after the election, it would appear that, however helpful it may have been in the former case, it has been less than a total success in the latter. Rather than serving as the tie that binds and brings Americans together after the divisive trauma of Vietnam, the question of human rights, when pursued as policy rather than merely stated as an abstract ideal, has once more exposed, if not exacerbated, existing cleavages.

Assuming that the foregoing describes accurately some of the main fault lines among American leadership thinking on matters of external relations, can we rule out alliances—or at least temporary coalitions—among the contending groups? The Cold War and Post-Cold War Internationalists share a common belief in the practical and moral necessity of an active American foreign policy, in responsibilities arising from power and wealth, and in the disastrous consequences of abdication, leaving it to others to create a new international order. The Post-Cold War Internationalists and Isolationists share a common view of the Soviet Union as a conservative nation beset with sufficient problems to render it at worst an uncooperative adversary, but certainly neither capable nor willing to pose a mortal threat to the United States or to the other industrial democracies. And, finally, the Isolationists and the Cold War Internationalists share a common skepticism about inflated definitions of interdependence, a denial of the thesis that third world problems can be traced back to unjust treatment at the hands of the western industrial nations, and a rejection of the corollary that the United States has either a special responsibility or unique capabilities for assuring the material well-being of those nations.

If this analysis is valid, the prognosis is that, at best, temporary marriages of convenience may be created to cope with this issue or that; for example, the Panama Canal treaties probably drew extensive support from both Post-Cold War Internationalists and Isolationists in sufficient amounts to overcome the opposition of many skeptical Cold War Internationalists. But this analysis lends far less support for the proposition that more enduring alliances may emerge, sustaining ambitious American undertakings to cope with or to direct major international changes. Stated somewhat differently, this analysis suggests a basically reactive American foreign policy, rather than one which can successfully undertake major initiatives directed toward fundamental changes in the international system. Moreover, a society so deeply divided on such fundamental questions is an open target for the efforts of single-issue pressure groups, be they the Greek-Americans determined to use American foreign policy to punish Turkey for its Cyprus policies, or the steel makers determined to protect their fledgling industry from the ravages of international competition.

One may further object that too much significance should not be read into the
discovery that former ambassadors Kennan and Moynihan differ with respect to America’s role on human rights, that the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal can find no common ground for appraising recent Soviet actions in the Near East and Africa, and that Nitze and former Senator Sparkman seem to be talking about two quite different nations in their estimates of Soviet capabilities. So what else is new? But support for the proposition of a tripartite division within the United States is by no means limited to such anecdotal evidence.

A recent nationwide survey of well over two thousand Americans in leadership positions, including persons in the media, government, the military, politics, labor, business, the clergy, law, and universities, provides persuasive systematic evidence for the existence of these cleavages. Moreover, the results yield strong support for the proposition that each of these worldviews constitutes an internally consistent and mutually exclusive belief system (Holsti and Rosenau, forthcoming a, forthcoming b, 1979a, 1979b).

Further supporting evidence also emerges from a study of public rather than leadership opinion. Once again the analysis reveals a clear division between what Mandelbaum and Schneider (1979) call the conservative internationalists, liberal internationalists, and noninternationalists, groups that bear a remarkable resemblance to those discussed earlier. That such strikingly similar findings should emerge from quite disparate sources suggests that the fault lines described here are genuine, and that they run deeply in the terrain of contemporary American politics.

Indeed, one might argue that this brief discussion has in fact understated the case by failing to take into account other clusters of beliefs that do not fit any of the three described here. Are there not, for example, some who espouse foreign policy beliefs that might be labeled “radical internationalist” and “radical isolationist”? Perhaps other coherent worldviews might also be found. Should that be the case, it would buttress rather than erode the basic thesis about the absence of a foreign policy consensus in the United States.

A third objection to this analysis is that it overlooks the essentially generational origin of present divisions. The argument is often articulated—but less often tested systematically—that as persons who came to political maturity during the 1930s and the Cold War pass from the scene, we shall have a consensus reflecting the political sensibilities of a new generation (see Allison, 1971–1972; and Roskin, 1974). This new generation, unencumbered by the memories and ideological baggage accumulated during World War II and the Cold War, is sometimes described as concerned not only with the physical safety of the nation, but also of this fragile spaceship earth; as ready to give up the hidebound political shibboleths of their elders in favor of a more enlightened global worldview; as eager to renounce a lifestyle that eats up a disproportionate share of the world’s resources in favor of simpler pleasures; and as inclined to respond to the sound of falling dominoes with a bored “so what?” To some this is a welcome vision.
and to others, no doubt, it is a threatening one. Perhaps the more important point for our purposes is that the generational hypothesis is not very well supported by the evidence. In fact, the cleavages on matters of foreign policy exist within generations as well as between them (Holsti and Rosenau, 1979b). Thus, the inexorable passing of time will not automatically and by itself become the midwife of a new national consensus.

In response to the rhetorical question, “What is the present danger?” Reston (1978: A29) recently wrote, “The ‘present danger’ may be the failure to debate what it really is.” I would disagree slightly. Barring a Pearl Harbor-like calamity that would instantly unify the country, the prognosis is that during the next few years the United States will be undergoing another “great debate” which is likely to touch upon virtually every facet of the nation’s proper goals and responsibilities, not only for the security of its own citizens, but also toward the broader international community. The real danger lies less in the absence of debate than in the means by which it is conducted. Whatever one’s viewpoint on these weighty questions, one must hope that it will take place in an atmosphere of reasoned discourse rather than in one poisoned by the methods that often characterized foreign policy arguments both during the early 1950s and late 1960s. I have no doubt that the members of this organization, through their research, writing, and other activities, will contribute significantly—and, quite appropriately, from a broad range of perspectives—to the substance and quality of that debate. Whatever our respective citizenships, we all have a stake in the outcomes of the debates that lie ahead.

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Author’s Note

The lessons of history are never simple. Whoever thinks he sees one should probably go on with his reading.

—John K. Fairbanks¹

I. Introduction

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, Senator Arthur Vandenberg wrote, "In my own mind, my convictions regarding international cooperation and collective security for peace took firm form on the afternoon of the Pearl Harbor attack. That day ended isolationism for any realist."² The leading spokesman for American isolationism thus acknowledged that the disaster in Hawaii was of such significance as to reshape his core beliefs about international politics and the proper American response to a rapidly changing world. The impact of such events as Pearl Harbor did not vanish with the destruction of the Pacific Fleet—or even with the end of World War II. It lived on in the minds of Vandenberg and many of his contemporaries as a symbol of the futility of isolationism, and continued to have a deep influence on the conduct of American diplomacy. Indeed, not until a generation later, with the United States mired in a seemingly endless war in Southeast Asia, did some of the "lessons" of Pearl Harbor and other events leading up to World War II come under sustained challenge by informed and thoughtful critics.
This example highlights the question whether the war in Vietnam will shape the world views of American leaders in the coming decades in the same way Pearl Harbor did for Vandenberg and his contemporaries. It is too early to be certain, but there are signs that the impact of Vietnam did not end with the departure of the last American from Saigon in April 1975. If a modern-day Rip Van Winkle had gone to sleep during the height of the war, for example, and had woken up during the winter of 1975–1976, he would have found Washington divided by a vigorous foreign policy debate on the appropriate scope of American involvement in a small, war-torn Third-World nation. Assuming that Rip had taken even a casual interest in the bitter Vietnam dialogue that divided the country for almost a decade, the reasoning and theories he would find in speeches, editorials, congressional debates, news conferences, and press briefings by members of the foreign policy establishment would have had a distinctly familiar ring. Even the words and phrases might lead him to wonder whether his sleep had indeed been of more than a few hours’ duration. “American credibility,” “racial war,” “the first step into a quagmire,” “domino theory,” “regional balance of power,” “executive secrecy,” “covert military operations,” “strategic location,” and “inconsistent with détente” are only a few of the more prominent examples that might lead him to think that the policy battles on Vietnam were still in full bloom. And, in a sense, he would be correct, for the parallels between the substance and terminology of the Vietnam debates of the 1960s and the arguments on U.S. policy in Angola were no mere coincidence. Near the core of policy differences on Angola were two questions that linked it to the conflict in Southeast Asia: What are the lessons that should have been learned from the long and unsuccessful American involvement in Vietnam? Which, if any, of these lessons are applicable in Angola?

The Vietnam experience thus set the terms of the debate. Many of those taking part in it were drawing parallels between past events and a contemporary situation, and they were arguing that the lessons of the Vietnam experience should govern American policy toward Angola. More importantly, the policy outcome might well have been different had it not been for the Vietnam experience. It seems likely, for example, that congressional action prohibiting further use of American funds in Angola was significantly influenced by both the perceived parallels between the civil war in that African nation and the initial steps leading to military intervention in Vietnam, and the premise that the “lessons” of the latter should be applied in the case of Angola.

Angola is not an isolated case. Others could be cited, indicating that while the physical presence of the United States in Vietnam may have ended in 1975, it is unlikely that the legacy of Vietnam can—or necessarily should—be easily escaped. If it is true that some cataclysmic events can traumatize and shape the beliefs and world views of an entire generation, then perhaps the Vietnam War will continue to have a significant impact on American foreign policy well beyond the end of the present decade, if not the end of the 20th century. Those
who reached political maturity during the decade 1965–1975, and whose political world views may have been galvanized by the Vietnam issue, will be assuming positions of leadership well into the next century. For them, the inclination to adduce lessons for the future conduct of American foreign policy may prove very strong. Put somewhat differently, there is no reason to believe that the war in Southeast Asia will have less of an effect on those who passed through it than did such events as the outbreak of World War I, American rejection of membership in the League of Nations, the Great Depression, the effort to forestall World War II by meeting Hitler’s demands at the Munich Conference, or the invasion of South Korea in 1950.

For present purposes, the possible impact of history on policy making can be summarized in four points:

1. The propensity to rely upon history as a strategy for coping with complexities and uncertainties in decision making is rather widespread;
2. An inadequate understanding of history can result in costly policy errors, but it does not follow that the introduction of historical thinking into policy deliberations will necessarily improve the quality of either the decision-making process or the resulting choices;
3. Some types of historical episodes, such as traumatic events that have been experienced first-hand, are especially likely to live on in “the reality world of the mind”;
4. A particularly dramatic (or traumatic) episode may indeed be the crucial formative event for those who experience it, but they will not necessarily interpret its significance in an identical manner.

These considerations led us to initiate a project intended to gather systematic evidence about the reactions of American leaders (both within and outside government) to the Vietnam War—beliefs about why the U.S. effort failed, the consequences that may flow from the failure, and the lessons to be derived from it. Many former officials of the Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, and Ford Administrations have made their views known on these matters. Other prominent Americans have expressed themselves in articles, speeches, editorials, letters to the editor, and at least two substantial collections of essays. These materials may be useful for gaining some insight into the beliefs of prominent Americans about what should be learned from America’s longest war; but they are not a wholly adequate substitute for more systematic evidence drawn from a broader spectrum of leaders. To obtain such evidence, we undertook a large-scale survey using a mailed questionnaire. After a brief description of the methods used to generate the data and the hypotheses that have guided our inquiry, we will analyze the results of one major dimension of the survey.
The Questionnaire and the Sample

Over 150 articles, speeches, editorials, interviews, and press conferences served as a major source of 221 substantive items used in the questionnaire. Besides asking the respondents to assess the lessons of Vietnam and the sources and consequences of American failure in Southeast Asia, we sought to elicit their general orientations toward foreign policy and domestic politics, as well as data about their personal backgrounds. To permit some cross-survey comparisons, we included several questions that were also used in other recent surveys of American leaders.

The sample consists of three parts. The first is a random sample of 2,000 persons listed in the most recent edition of *Who's Who in America*. The second part was constructed on the basis of quotas for leaders from each of seven groups whose inclusion we wanted to ensure: Foreign Service officers, labor leaders, politicians, clergy, foreign affairs experts outside government, media persons, and women. Finally, one of the largest occupational groups in our sample consisted of military personnel, including senior officers then serving in the Pentagon and junior officers attending a service school. Since we purposely set out to survey particular types of persons, our sample is hardly a random one; however, it can reasonably be said to include most, if not all, of the major components of the nation's leadership structure.

The questionnaires were sent out in February 1976, with a follow-up mailing two months later. Assuming that all of them were either delivered to the addressees or returned to us (that is, none were lost or destroyed in transit), we calculated the number of potential respondents to be 4,290; over 53 percent (2,282) completed and returned the questionnaire.

Underlying Propositions and Specific Hypotheses

Much of the analysis that follows derives from a series of hypotheses that have their roots in three concepts: *consensus*, *Vietnam*, and *belief system*. More specifically, our hypotheses and data analyses are guided by three central propositions. The first two of these are:

(1) The broad consensus among American leaders that marked the period following World War II has been shattered.

(2) The Vietnam War was a watershed event in the sense that it has given rise to sharply divergent views on the nature of the international system and the appropriate international role for the United States.

Observations of a shattered consensus among American leaders on foreign policy issues have not been in short supply during recent years. Even a casual
reader of newspaper headlines could hardly miss some of the more overt symptoms of deep cleavage: the Congress and the White House have clashed sharply not only on a number of major foreign policy questions, but also on the proper division of labor between them; the 1976 electoral campaign revealed clearly that both major political parties are split on a broad spectrum of issues, ranging from the Panama Canal to SALT negotiations; and concepts such as “détente” have failed to generate a broad consensus in the way that “containment” did a generation ago. It has certainly not escaped notice that the American intervention in Vietnam was a divisive rather than unifying experience.

If all this is the case, why undertake an extensive study of American leaders merely to document the obvious? There are several reasons for doing so. Our propositions suggest that the cleavages among Americans go far deeper than disagreements over specific policy issues, reaching into such basic questions as the nature of the international system, the proper role for the United States within it, and the ends and means that should constitute the core of the nation’s external relations.

Moreover, the mere acknowledgement that Vietnam divided American society for a decade is not an answer to all the significant questions that can be raised about the impact of that conflict. It is not an answer, for example, to such questions as: What do Americans believe they should learn from the war for the future conduct of American foreign policy? Do these lessons continue to reflect the deep divisions that marked the decade-long war? Or, was former President Ford correct in asserting that the lessons of Vietnam are so obvious that they have been learned by all Americans, and that, accordingly, they may now serve as the foundations on which to build a new consensus as to the proper role of the United States in the world?

Finally, if American leaders in fact disagree about the continuing meaning of the Vietnam experience, are the lessons they have drawn relatively isolated ones, and therefore probably evanescent ideas in their cognitive maps? Our third basic proposition asserts, to the contrary, that:

(3) The divergent sets of beliefs about foreign policy are sufficiently coherent to be properly described as competing belief systems.

This proposition extends the first two by predicting not only the existence of deep, Vietnam-related cleavages among American leaders, but it also suggests that these divisions are rooted in and sustained by internally consistent clusters of foreign policy beliefs that reinforce each other. In adopting Converse’s familiar definition of a belief system as “a configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint or functional interdependence,” we outline below a series of specific hypotheses linking four clusters of beliefs that may be “bound together.”
In order to undertake a plausible test of these propositions, it is necessary to demonstrate not only the existence of cleavages on fundamental foreign policy issues and the existence of coherent, internally consistent belief systems; it is also necessary to demonstrate the central role of the Vietnam issue. We seek to satisfy the latter requirement by using the respondents’ views (Table 6.1) on the Vietnam War (what we shall henceforth refer to as their policy preferences) as the sole criterion for classifying them (Table 6.2). In doing so, we set aside until future analyses of our data such interesting questions as: Why did some respondents oppose the effort in Vietnam from the beginning, whereas others supported it? What are the generational, occupational, political, ideological, educational, and other attributes of the respondents associated with a persistent preference for withdrawal from Vietnam; with persistent support for the goal of military victory; with shifts in one direction or the other during the course of the war?

Table 6.1 describes our respondents’ policy preferences during the early and late stages of the Vietnam War. Retrospective statements about positions on controversial issues must be used with some caution; in view of the subsequent failure of the American undertaking in Vietnam, the number of respondents asserting that they originally favored a complete military victory may be understated. But even if we disregard the possible operation of selective memory, a comparison of the two columns in Table 6.1 makes clear that American leaders underwent a profound change on this issue, approaching and perhaps even exceeding that experienced by the population as a whole. Indeed, the only comparable change, since the advent of regular opinion polling, would appear to have taken place during 1945–1947, when expectations about Soviet cooperation in the postwar world underwent a precipitous decline.

Table 6.1 does not, however, reveal how many respondents maintained their positions throughout the course of the war and how many changed their views, nor does it indicate the exact pattern of changes. This deficiency is remedied in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When the war first became an issue</th>
<th>Toward the end of U.S. involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I tended to favor a complete military victory</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I tended to favor a complete withdrawal</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I tended to feel in between these two</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100 100
Table 6.2, which depicts every combination of policy preferences during the two periods. The resulting seven groups have been given designations that deliberately avoid labels burdened with pejorative meanings such as “hawks” and “doves.”

Having identified seven groups of respondents on the basis of their policy preferences, we are now able to outline a series of hypotheses linking the groups to diagnoses, prognoses, and prescriptions pertaining to the Vietnam experience.

A. Diagnosis: Sources of failure in Vietnam (Table 6.3)*

1. Compared to the Critics, the Supporters will, in diagnosing the sources of failure, attribute greater significance to:
   a. Constraints imposed on the war effort by domestic groups and institutions;
   b. Self-imposed restraints on the employment of U.S. military capabilities (means);
   c. Actions and inactions of other parties, including those of North Vietnam’s allies as well as those of the alliance partners of the United States;
   d. A lack of clear American goals.

---

Table 6.2 The 2,282 Respondents Classified into Seven Groups by Positions on Vietnam during Early and Late Stages of the War*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When the war first became an issue</th>
<th>I tended to favor a complete military victory</th>
<th>I tended to feel in between these two</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>I tended to favor a complete withdrawal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I tended to favor a complete military victory</td>
<td>SUPPORTERS ( n = 363, 15.9% )</td>
<td>AMBIVALENT SUPPORTERS ( n = 346, 15.2% )</td>
<td>CONVERTED CRITICS ( n = 867, 38.0% )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I tended to feel in-between these two</td>
<td>CONVERTED SUPPORTERS ( n = 128, 5.6% )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td></td>
<td>AMBIVALENTS ( n = 128, 5.6% )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I tended to favor a complete withdrawal</td>
<td>AMBIVALENT CRITICS ( n = 63, 2.8% )</td>
<td>CRITICS ( n = 378, 16.6% )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Nine respondents did not indicate their position on Vietnam in either the early or late stages of the war.
2. Compared to the Supporters, the Critics will, in diagnosing the sources of failure, attribute greater significance to:
   a. A lack of knowledge and understanding of the Third World, of Southeast Asia and, more specifically, of the peoples of Vietnam;
   b. The fundamentally unsound nature of the U.S. undertaking in Vietnam (ends);
   c. Inadequate intelligence about the situation in Vietnam;
   d. Excessive reliance on air power in the conduct of military operations;
   e. Opposition of world opinion to U.S. goals and policies in Vietnam.

3. Compared to the Supporters and Critics, respondents in the other five groups (Converted Supporters, Ambivalent Supporters, Ambivalents, Ambivalent Critics, and Converted Critics) will take intermediate positions in diagnosing the sources of American failure in Vietnam. More precisely, the responses of these five groups will be arrayed in the order given.

B. Prognosis; Consequences arising from the Vietnam experience (Table 6.5)
1. Compared to the Critics, the Supporters will, in predicting the consequences of the Vietnam War, place greater emphasis on:
   a. Adverse effects on structures and processes in the international system;
   b. Encouragement to America’s adversaries to pursue policies contrary to the interests of the United States;
   c. Constraints on future U.S. policy under a more limited conception of vital national interests;
   d. Certain types of future U.S. undertakings.

2. Compared to the Supporters, the Critics will, in predicting the consequences of the Vietnam War, place greater emphasis on damage to American society and institutions.

3. Compared to the Supporters and Critics, respondents in the other five groups will take intermediate positions in predicting the consequences of the Vietnam War.

C. Prescription: Lessons to be learned from Vietnam (Table 6.7)
1. Compared to the Critics, the Supporters will, in prescribing lessons to be learned from the Vietnam War, give greater emphasis to:
   a. The bipolarity and interconnectedness of the international system;
   b. Threats from communist adversaries to U.S. national interests;
   c. Military power in the pursuit of foreign policy goals;
   d. Unilateral U.S. action as a means of coping with conflict issues;
   e. The negative consequences of domestic constraints on the effective pursuit of foreign policy goals;
Vietnam, Consensus, and the Belief Systems of American Leaders

f. Air power as an effective substitute for ground forces in the conduct of future limited wars.

2. Compared to the Supporters, the Critics will, in prescribing lessons to be learned from the Vietnam War, give greater emphasis to:
   a. The desirability of reducing the scope of U.S. commitments abroad;
   b. The ineffective performance of the U.S. government in conducting a sound foreign policy;
   c. Limiting the nature of U.S. interests;
   d. The declining efficiency of military power as an instrument of foreign policy;
   e. The excessive influence of weak allies on the conduct of U.S. foreign policy.

3. Compared to the Supporters and Critics, respondents in the other five groups will take intermediate positions in prescribing lessons to be learned from the Vietnam War.

4. There will be no significant differences among respondents in the seven groups with respect to the belief that there are important lessons to be learned from the past for the contemporary conduct of foreign relations.9

II. Diagnosis: Sources of Failure in Vietnam

The manner in which a nation's leaders diagnose its failures in foreign policy is sometimes tinged with ominous overtones. At various times during the war in Southeast Asia, senior officials in Washington suggested that their policies should be supported in order to head off a right-wing backlash that would surely follow any defeat in Vietnam. Whether or not these were merely self-serving efforts to garner support for the administration's policies, there are historical examples in which diagnoses of past failures have played a significant role in the politics of the postwar era. Hitler's effective use of the "stab in the back" myth after World War I was one source of his appeal to Germans. The failure of American policy in China after World War II, followed soon thereafter by the stalemated war in Korea, provided the context for Senator Joseph McCarthy's own version of a "stab in the back" explanation, in which the knives were allegedly wielded by State Department officials ranging from the corps of China experts to Secretaries of State Marshall and Acheson.

During the initial postwar debate on Vietnam, few Americans denied that—despite an enormous commitment of manpower and resources—the United States had failed to achieve its goals. But widespread agreement on this point did not imply a broad consensus on the causes of failure. From the wide range of interpretations that have emerged in voluminous postmortems on Vietnam,
we abstracted 21 summary statements on the causes of the American failure for inclusion in our questionnaire. They are listed in Table 6.3; the respondents were asked to rate each statement as “very important,” “moderately important,” “slightly important,” or “not at all important.”

**Actions of Others**

Many of the respondents characterized Soviet and Chinese aid to North Vietnam and to the Vietcong as “very important,” while a substantially smaller number viewed North Vietnamese violations of the 1973 Paris Peace Agreement as a “very important” factor in the outcome of the war; even fewer attributed such importance to the failure of the SEATO allies to provide support. Indeed, more respondents (29 percent) selected the “not at all important” alternative on the last item than was the case for any other item in the questionnaire.

When we disaggregate the data into the seven groups, however, we find some rather sharp distinctions in the diagnoses of the failure in Vietnam (Table 6.3). All of the groups attributed considerable importance to Soviet and Chinese aid to North Vietnam and the Vietcong, but there was a greater tendency to do so for those toward the Supporter end of the spectrum. This pattern is even more evident in case of the items on North Vietnamese violations of the Paris Peace Agreement and the failure of America’s allies to provide support. The differences across the groups for all the items were statistically significant, and they are in the predicted direction. That is, respondents who were most consistently supportive of the goal of military victory in Vietnam were also more likely to attribute importance to the role of other actors in the conflict.

**An Unsound Undertaking**

As a group, the respondents attributed considerable importance to two propositions concerning the nature of the U.S. undertaking in Vietnam. Nearly half of them indicated that lack of popular support for the regime in Saigon was a “very important” cause of the failure in Vietnam; half of the remainder viewed the above as a “moderately important” consideration. An almost identical distribution was recorded in response to the statement that “America’s goals in Vietnam were inherently unrealistic.” In short, a substantial proportion of our 2,282 respondents diagnosed the situation in Vietnam as a basically futile undertaking—if not a totally unwinnable one.

The disaggregated data in Table 6.3, however, confirm our expectations that the Supporters of the goal of a military victory in Vietnam would be less likely to attribute importance to the propositions that Washington’s goals were unrealistic and that the regime in Saigon failed to gain support among the people of South Vietnam, whereas the Critics would diagnose these factors as much more im-
important. Among the latter, 88 percent gave a “very important” rating to the item on the lack of realistic goals; over 76 percent did so on the question concerning support for the regime in Saigon. The comparable figures for the Supporters were 21 and 26 percent, respectively. The differences among the seven groups are significant and in the predicted direction.

**Military Factors**

In the debate over the sources of failure in Vietnam, probably few issues received more attention than the conduct of military operations. At the heart of the matter lie these key questions: Was the Vietnam intervention a doomed undertaking that, because of the very nature of the situation, could not be won at any reasonable price? Or was it a war that could have been won had military operations been conducted differently?

The results summarized in Table 6.3 indicate strong support for the proposition that the United States fought with a “no-win” approach; almost half of the respondents rated this as a “very important” source of failure. Greater ambivalence is evident on the importance of self-imposed restrictions on air power and insufficient attention to advice from military commanders; relatively little importance was attributed to the allegation that American military assistance to Saigon after the 1973 Paris Peace Agreement was inadequate.

The results for each of the seven groups yield dramatic differences; indeed, their views on the role of military factors span virtually the entire scale. Added perspective on the striking differences revealed in this part of Table 6.3 can be gained from the fact that, for the four items listed, 85, 69, 57, and 34 percent, respectively, of the Supporters selected the “very important” rating, whereas the comparable figures for the Critics were 13, 8, 3, and 3 percent. It is hard to imagine more dramatic evidence of a systematic lack of consensus among the nation’s leaders than these results of their efforts to diagnose why the longest war in American history ended in failure. The results also confirm the hypothesis that those who consistently favored military victory in Vietnam believed that the war could and should have been won, but was not because of self-imposed restraints on military forces. On the other hand, those who favored withdrawal from Vietnam not only regarded it as an unwinnable situation, but also one that could not have been salvaged by a different deployment of military capabilities. The differences among the seven groups are statistically significant and in the predicted direction.

**Domestic Constraints**

An important and venerable school of thought maintains that there are basic incompatibilities between democratic institutions and the requirements for
Table 6.3 Sources of Failure in Vietnam (Mean scores for each of seven groups of respondents classified by their positions on Vietnam during the early and late stages of the war)\textsuperscript{a,b}

Observers of American foreign policy have identified several factors that may have prevented the United States from achieving its goals in the Vietnam undertaking. In your judgment, how important were the reasons listed below in America’s inability to achieve all of its goals?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIONS OF OTHERS</th>
<th>All Respondents (n = 2,282\textsuperscript{**})</th>
<th>Supporters (n = 363)</th>
<th>Converted Supporters (n = 128)</th>
<th>Ambivalent Supporters (n = 346)</th>
<th>Ambivalent Critics (n = 63)</th>
<th>Ambivalent Critics (n = 867)</th>
<th>Converted Critics (n = 378)</th>
<th>Critics (n = 867)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Soviets and Chinese provided aid to North Vietnam and the Vietcong ((F = 20.0))</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Vietnam violated the 1973 peace agreement ((F = 62.6))</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America’s allies failed to support us ((F = 25.1))</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AN UNSOUND UNDERTAKING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The regime in Saigon lacked popular support ((F = 90.7))</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America’s goals in Vietnam were inherently unrealistic ((F = 57.1))</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILITARY FACTORS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The United States fought with a “no-win” approach ((F = 109.6))</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a} The sample was limited to those respondents who mentioned at least three of the factors. The names of the factors were random in the questionnaire, and there was no indication that the order of presentation of the factors influenced the respondents’ responses. The sample was limited to those respondents who mentioned at least three of the factors. The names of the factors were random in the questionnaire, and there was no indication that the order of presentation of the factors influenced the respondents’ responses.
Vietnam, Consensus, and the Belief Systems of American Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0.56</th>
<th>0.85</th>
<th>0.79</th>
<th>0.72</th>
<th>0.49</th>
<th>0.30</th>
<th>0.48</th>
<th>0.26</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| "The use of American air power was restricted  
  \((F = 109.7)\)" |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| "Insufficient attention was paid to advice from the military  
  \((F = 123.2)\)" | 0.46 | 0.81 | 0.70 | 0.58 | 0.36 | 0.27 | 0.37 | 0.16 |
| "U.S. military assistance to South Vietnam after the 1973 Peace Agreement was inadequate  
  \((F = 63.8)\)" | 0.38 | 0.60 | 0.49 | 0.52 | 0.44 | 0.20 | 0.30 | 0.16 |

**DOMESTIC CONSTRAINTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0.69</th>
<th>0.83</th>
<th>0.75</th>
<th>0.74</th>
<th>0.69</th>
<th>0.71</th>
<th>0.65</th>
<th>0.57</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| "Reporting by the mass media turned the public against the war  
  \((F = 26.6)\)" |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| "Pressures from domestic dissidents cast doubt on American commitments  
  \((F = 21.8)\)" | 0.66 | 0.76 | 0.73 | 0.73 | 0.72 | 0.65 | 0.62 | 0.53 |
| "Congressional involvement hampered the executive in the conduct of the war  
  \((F = 74.4)\)" | 0.50 | 0.76 | 0.68 | 0.59 | 0.47 | 0.42 | 0.41 | 0.30 |
| "The Watergate scandal paralyzed the American government  
  \((F = 12.8)\)" | 0.46 | 0.57 | 0.55 | 0.51 | 0.43 | 0.48 | 0.42 | 0.35 |
| "The American people lost the spirit which led to greatness  
  \((F = 51.0)\)" | 0.40 | 0.65 | 0.56 | 0.54 | 0.38 | 0.31 | 0.31 | 0.21 |

**LACK OF KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0.80</th>
<th>0.63</th>
<th>0.68</th>
<th>0.78</th>
<th>0.77</th>
<th>0.85</th>
<th>0.85</th>
<th>0.91</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| "Americans underestimated the dedication of the North Vietnamese  
  \((F = 36.8)\)" |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
Table 6.3 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Respondents (n = 2,282**)</th>
<th>Supporters (n = 363)</th>
<th>Converted Supporters (n = 128)</th>
<th>Ambivalent Supporters (n = 346)</th>
<th>Ambivalent Critics (n = 128)</th>
<th>Ambivalent Critics (n = 867)</th>
<th>Converted Critics (n = 378)</th>
<th>Critics (n = 867)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>***The U.S. lacked understanding of nationalism in the “Third World” (F = 48.0)</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***Americans were ignorant of Vietnamese history, culture, and society (F = 22.4)</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHERS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***The U.S. had no clear goals in the Vietnam undertaking (F = 4.74)</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence agencies failed to provide adequate information about the situation in Vietnam (F = 3.46)</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***America relied excessively on air power (F = 10.4)</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***Much of world opinion opposed U.S. goals and policies (F = 4.5)</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Mean scores were computed by scoring a response of “Very Important” as 3.00, “Moderately Important” as 2.00, “Slightly Important as 1.00, and “Not at all Important” as 0.00. The resulting scores were then divided by three to create a scale ranging from 0.00 to 1.00.

** Includes 9 respondents who failed to state their positions on Vietnam and thus could not be classified among the seven groups.

*** Differences among groups significant at the .001 level, whether computed according to parametric (analysis of variance) or non-parametric (chi-square) statistics. F ratios (given in parenthesis immediately following each item) exceeding 3.47 are significant at the .001 level.
success in foreign policy undertakings. Critics of the Wilsonian position that democracy is a necessary and, perhaps, sufficient condition for successful foreign policy include a number of articulate observers, including Alexis de Tocqueville, Walter Lippmann, and George F. Kennan.10

The deep division on the Vietnam War in Congress, among the media, on campuses, and in American society in general suggests the hypothesis that substantial numbers of Americans perceived domestic constraints as a major source of failure in Vietnam. More than two-thirds of the respondents attributed at least moderate importance to the role of the mass media and domestic dissidents as sources of failure in Vietnam. At the same time, less than half regarded either the role of Congress in the conduct of the war or the Watergate scandal to be of at least moderate importance, and most respondents were inclined to dismiss as of little or no importance the diagnosis that "the American people lost the spirit that led to greatness."

The data in Table 6.3 provide strong support for the hypothesis that persons consistently championing the quest for military victory in Vietnam would be more inclined to attribute significance to domestic constraints, whereas those favoring a withdrawal from Southeast Asia would tend to regard such a role of domestic institutions and events as of less importance. For each of the five items, the highest scores are to be found among the Supporters, whereas those of the Critics are in every case the lowest. Not only do the scores follow a pattern consistent with our hypothesis, but differences across the seven groups are statistically significant. Although one might question whether the absence of the Watergate issue would have altered the outcome in Vietnam,11 even differences on this item are highly significant.

Lack of Knowledge and Understanding

A critic of American policy in Southeast Asia once noted that at the start of our involvement in that part of the world, not a single university in the United States offered a course in the Vietnamese language and culture. Other evidence that most Americans knew little of the country into which they poured so much blood and money is not difficult to find. But the fact of ignorance is not the issue here; rather, the question is whether our sample of American leaders attributed importance to the lack of knowledge in their diagnoses of why the war effort failed.

The results summarized in Table 6.3 indicate that a large proportion of the respondents regarded at least three related gaps in knowledge and understanding to be moderately or very important in explaining the outcome in Vietnam: the dedication of the North Vietnamese was underestimated; the nature of nationalism in the Third World was misunderstood; and ignorance prevailed with respect to Vietnamese history, culture, and society.
As was the case with the assessment of the role of domestic constraints, the respondents’ relatively high agreement that lack of knowledge and understanding were important sources of failure in Vietnam conceals rather sharp differences among the seven groups. The data indicate strong agreement with our hypotheses that the Supporters would be much less inclined than the Critics to attribute importance to American ignorance of Vietnam, and that the other five groups would be arrayed between these two groups. For all three items, the differences between the seven groups are statistically significant; the observed differences follow a pattern of ascending scores from Supporters to Critics.

Other Sources of Failure

Our questionnaire included four additional items diagnosing possible sources of American failure in Vietnam. Because none of these explanations fits well into any of the five clusters of items discussed above, results for each of them appear separately in Table 6.3. Our respondents generally agreed that the U.S. lacked clear goals in the Vietnam undertaking: almost three out of every four rated this lack as moderately or very important. The hypothesis that Supporters of the war effort would be more inclined than Critics to attribute importance to the absence of clear goals is not verified, however. Differences among the seven groups are statistically significant, but the results do not form a consistent pattern of increasing or decreasing scores across the seven groups. The most accurate summarizing statement is that all groups tended to attribute moderate importance to the lack of clarity in American goals.

The view that inadequate intelligence contributed to the failure in Vietnam elicited only moderate support from our respondents, and a notably high proportion of them expressed uncertainty. The hypothesis that the Critics would attribute greater significance to intelligence failures rested on the same line of reasoning as that concerning lack of knowledge and understanding of Vietnam. However, the data do not support the hypothesis.

Advocates of air power have tended to attribute North Vietnamese willingness to sign the Paris Peace Agreement in January 1973 to the intense bombing raids conducted by the U.S. Air Force during the previous month. Some of these observers have further argued that had similar air raids been undertaken much earlier, the war could have been brought to a successful conclusion—and much sooner. Others have taken the position that the military value of air power has often been overstated even in conventional wars—for example, in World War II—and that its relevance against guerrilla operations is highly dubious. The data near the end of Table 6.3 indicate considerable ambivalence among our respondents. The hypothesis that the Critics would attribute greater importance to excessive reliance on air power receives moderately strong support. The scores for the three groups of Critics are in fact higher than those for the other four
groups, but the pattern of descending scores from Critics to Supporters is not wholly consistent.

The importance to be attributed to “world opinion” in politics is an issue that American leaders have debated virtually every generation for the past two centuries. The question lies at the heart of the recurrent debate between “realists” and “idealists” in foreign affairs. Sixty percent of our respondents attributed at least moderate importance to the opposition to American goals and policies in Vietnam from much of world opinion. The hypothesis that those toward the critical end of the spectrum would be more inclined to stress world opinion as a source of failure in Vietnam receives some support. Differences among the seven groups are statistically significant, and there is a general—albeit not perfectly consistent—pattern of ascending importance attributed to world opinion across the spectrum from Supporters to Critics.

Sources of Failure: Conclusion

Table 6.4 summarizes the findings on the manner in which the seven groups of respondents diagnosed the failure of the U.S. to achieve its goals in Vietnam by indicating how each group ranked the most important of the 21 alternative explanations of failure. Several points are significant. First, notwithstanding a fairly demanding criterion for inclusion in the rankings (a mean score of 0.67 on a scale of 0.00 to 1.00), respondents in each group tended to diagnose the failure of American policies in multi-causal terms. With the exception of the Ambivalents, no group had fewer than seven explanations that qualify for inclusion in the table. Second, the columns in Table 6.4 confirm in a rather striking way the lack of consensus in the diagnosis of failure. The ranks assigned to various explanations differ from column to column. Moreover, even though the rankings include as many as ten explanations, no one explanation appears in all seven columns, and only three appear in six of the seven.

III. Prognosis: The Consequences of Vietnam

The discussions of the war in Southeast Asia usually did not focus solely on the fate of South Vietnam; interest in the broader consequences of success or failure was no less intense. Terms such as “domino theory,” “quagmire,” “credibility,” “commitment,” “lessons of Munich,” and many others became central symbols—objects of derision or eternal verities, depending upon one’s orientation—in the often bitter dialogue about the probable consequences of one course of action or another. At the heart of many debates were such questions as: Will the consequences of Vietnam be confined to that country, or will they spill over to other nations or regions? Will the outcome in Vietnam significantly affect the balance of power in the region or, indeed, in the international system? What
### Table 6.4  Ranking of the Most Important Sources of Failure Cited by Each Group*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Supporters</th>
<th>Converted Supporters</th>
<th>Ambivalent Supporters</th>
<th>Ambivalents</th>
<th>Ambivalent Critics</th>
<th>Converted Critics</th>
<th>Critics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restricted air power</td>
<td>Soviet and Chinese aid</td>
<td>American “no-win” approach</td>
<td>N. Vietnamese dedication</td>
<td>Saigon lacked popular support</td>
<td>Saigon lacked popular support</td>
<td>Saigon lacked popular support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet and Chinese aid</td>
<td>Restricted air power</td>
<td>N. Vietnamese dedication</td>
<td>Dissidents hurt U.S. credibility</td>
<td>Misunderstood Third-World nationalism</td>
<td>Unrealistic U.S. goals</td>
<td>N. Vietnamese dedication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media hurt war support in U.S.</td>
<td>U.S. had no clear goals</td>
<td>Media hurt war support in U.S.</td>
<td>Media hurt war support in U.S.</td>
<td>N. Vietnamese dedication</td>
<td>Soviet and Chinese aid</td>
<td>Misunderstood Third-World nationalism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military advice unheeded</td>
<td>Media hurt war support in U.S.</td>
<td>Dissidents hurt U.S. credibility</td>
<td>Saigon lacked popular support</td>
<td>U.S. had no clear goals</td>
<td>Misunderstood Third-World nationalism</td>
<td>U.S. ignorance of Vietnam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissidents hurt U.S. credibility</td>
<td>Dissidents hurt U.S. credibility</td>
<td>N. Vietnam peace violations</td>
<td>N. Vietnam peace violations</td>
<td>U.S. ignorance of Vietnam</td>
<td>U.S. had no clear goals</td>
<td>U.S. had no clear goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Vietnam peace violations</td>
<td>Military advice unheeded</td>
<td>U.S. had no clear goals</td>
<td>Soviet and Chinese aid</td>
<td>U.S. ignorance of Vietnam</td>
<td>Opposition of world opinion</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congressional interference</td>
<td>N. Vietnam peace violations</td>
<td>Restricted air power</td>
<td>Media hurt war support in U.S.</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. had no clear goals</td>
<td>N. Vietnamese dedication</td>
<td>Saigon lacked popular support</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This table lists all the explanations of “failure” that received at least an average rating of 0.67 (Moderately Important) on a scale of 1.00 (Very Important) to 0.00 (Not at All Important). Explanations are listed in order of decreasing importance for each group.*
Impact on the International System

Much of the debate during and since the conclusion of the war in Vietnam has centered on a series of predicted international consequences that might flow from that conflict. At issue have been questions about the impact of the war on the structure of the international system, America’s leadership role in that system, the credibility of American defense commitments, and the future of both allies and adversary nations (especially the Soviet Union and China).

The first three items in Table 6.5 reveal substantial ambivalence among the respondents over the impact of the Vietnam episode on the international system. Nearly three-fourths of them agreed that the credibility of American defense commitments had been seriously eroded as a consequence of the war. However, slight majorities disagreed with two propositions: the general one that the structure of the international system was fundamentally altered by the outcome in Vietnam, and the more specific one that systemic changes representing a swing toward the ascendency of communist influence in world affairs were initiated.

The hypotheses introduced earlier predicted that those toward the support end of the spectrum would be inclined to expect negative international consequences as a result of the Vietnam experience; those toward the criticism end would be likely to focus on the domestic consequences of the war. The data provide substantial support for our hypotheses. For the two items on the shape of the international system and on the tide of influence in world affairs, there is a consistent pattern of agreement, increasing from the Critics’ end of the scale to that of the Supporters. With but a single exception, the same pattern manifests itself on the issue of American credibility.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPACT ON THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM</th>
<th>All Respondents (n = 2,282**)</th>
<th>Supporters (n = 363)</th>
<th>Converted Supporters (n = 128)</th>
<th>Ambivalent Supporters (n = 346)</th>
<th>Ambivalents (n = 128)</th>
<th>Critics (n = 63)</th>
<th>Converted Critics (n = 867)</th>
<th>Critics (n = 378)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>***The Vietnam episode has raised profound doubts about American credibility in the minds of our allies (F = 23.8)</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***The shape of the international system we have known since World War II has been irrevocably altered by America’s inability to prevent the collapse of the Thieu regime in 1975 (F = 12.2)</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
<td>-0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***The tide of influence in world affairs has swung toward communism as a result of the Vietnam War (F = 31.7)</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td>-0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADVERSARIES ENCOURAGED</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***Communist nations have been encouraged to seek triumphs elsewhere as a result of Vietnam (F = 83.9)</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>-0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***The major assumptions of détente have been proven false by the events in Vietnam (F = 45.4)</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 6.5 Consequences of Vietnam (Mean Scores for Each of Seven Groups of Respondents classified by Their Positions on Vietnam during the Early and Late Stages of the War)*

There has been quite a bit of discussion about the consequences of the Vietnam episode. Some of these are listed below. Please indicate your assessment of each statement.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSTRAINTS ON FUTURE U.S. POLICY</th>
<th>0.43</th>
<th>0.46</th>
<th>0.34</th>
<th>0.44</th>
<th>0.47</th>
<th>0.38</th>
<th>0.44</th>
<th>0.37</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The U.S. is likely to operate with a more limited conception of the national interest as a result of the outcome in Vietnam ($F = 2.1$)</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYPES OF FUTURE U.S. UNDERTAKING</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>As a result of the Vietnam experience, the U.S. is likely to keep military assistance to anti-Soviet factions in Angola to a minimum ($F = 6.4$)</strong></td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>As a consequence of the Vietnam episode, American policies toward the “Third World” will emphasize humanitarian rather than military aid ($F = 9.7$)</strong></td>
<td>-0.64</td>
<td>-0.71</td>
<td>-0.59</td>
<td>-0.70</td>
<td>-0.71</td>
<td>-0.53</td>
<td>-0.65</td>
<td>-0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>As a result of events in Vietnam, the U.S. is likely to engage in high risk ventures in order to re-establish its credibility ($F = 7.1$)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.5 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Respondents (n = 2,282**)</th>
<th>Supporters (n = 363)</th>
<th>Converted Supporters (n = 128)</th>
<th>Ambivalent Supporters (n = 346)</th>
<th>Ambivalents (n = 128)</th>
<th>Ambivalent Critics (n = 63)</th>
<th>Converted Critics (n = 867)</th>
<th>Critics (n = 378)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Damage to American Society</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***The real long-term threats to national security—energy shortages, the environment, etc.—have been neglected as a result of our preoccupation with Vietnam (F = 51.5)</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>−0.02</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***The American people have lost faith in the honesty of their government as a result of the Vietnam War (F = 25.9)</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***The foundations of the American economy were seriously damaged by our involvement in Vietnam (F = 27.9)</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>−0.07</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>−0.02</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean scores were computed by scoring a response of “Agree Strongly” as 2.00, “Agree Somewhat” as 1.00,”No Opinion” as 0.00, “Disagree Somewhat” as —1.00, and “Disagree Strongly” as —2.00. The resulting scores were then divided by two to create a scale ranging from 1.00 to —1.00.

** Includes 9 respondents who failed to state their positions on Vietnam and thus could not be classified among the seven groups.

*** Differences among groups significant at the .001 level, whether computed according to parametric (analysis of variance) or non-parametric (chi-square) statistics. F ratios (given in parenthesis immediately following each item) exceeding 3.47 are significant at the .001 level.
Vietnam, Consensus, and the Belief Systems of American Leaders • 127

Adversaries Encouraged

Whatever the merits of the much-debated and often-derided “domino theory,” two-thirds of our respondents predicted that the outcome of the war in Vietnam would in fact encourage communist nations to seek other triumphs. Table 6.5 also reveals that, while many respondents believed that the American defeat in Vietnam would provide an impetus for communist expansion, they were unwilling to regard détente as a policy based on false premises. Perhaps it is useful to speculate why this is so. At least three possible explanations may be offered. First, there may be a good deal of variation (if not confusion) in interpreting the term “détente.” The fact that an unusually high proportion (over 10 percent) of the respondents selected the “no opinion” alternative on this item may be of some significance. Second, perhaps some respondents understood the first item to refer primarily to competition in the Third World, and the second to Soviet-American relations only. A third explanation is closely related: during the Nixon-Ford-Kissinger era, administration spokesmen frequently warned about domino effects arising from certain outcomes in Southeast Asia while at the same time expressing support for a policy of détente.

When the data are disaggregated for the seven groups, substantial support is revealed for the hypothesis that the Supporters would be most likely to predict threatening actions by adversaries in the aftermath of Vietnam. The range of mean scores for both items is exceptionally wide, the differences among the groups are statistically significant, and there is a consistent if not perfect decline in scores from the groups in the columns on the left to those on the right.

Constraints on Future U.S. Policy

“No more Vietnams” may be merely a slogan that summarizes the frustrations of many who opposed American involvement in Southeast Asia as well as those of many others who, while not opposed to the undertaking itself, were critical of the conduct of the war. But the Nixon Doctrine made official that the United States would in the future be very selective in deciding whom it would defend. The era that began with the Truman Doctrine and that reached a peak, at least at the rhetorical level, in John F. Kennedy’s inaugural address, had come to an end. As a consequence of the Vietnam War, debate often focused less on the issue of whether there were limits on America’s vital interests abroad than on the question of whether future administrations would go to excessive lengths—even to the neglect of those vital interests—to avoid “another Vietnam.”

The data in Table 6.5 reflect some ambivalence on this question. Four-fifths of the respondents agreed that in the future the United States would be likely to conduct its foreign relations with a narrower conception of the national interest. At the same time, respondents were almost equally divided over the proposition
that the memory of Vietnam would serve as a constraint against the use of force even when vital American interests were in jeopardy.

Earlier we predicted that those who supported the war effort would be more inclined to perceive the Vietnam experience as constraining the future conduct of American foreign policy. This is only partially the case, however. All seven groups are clustered in a very narrow range, each having recorded agreement with the prediction that the Vietnam episode will result in a more limited conception of the national interest. On the other hand, the data on the future use of force support the hypothesis at a statistically significant level.

*Types of Future U.S. Undertakings*

This section examines the likely consequences of the Vietnam War on specific types of future foreign policy undertakings. The respondents agreed almost unanimously that there would be a limited American role in Angola despite the manifest Soviet-Cuban intervention in the civil war there. This finding is not surprising: the questionnaire was not mailed until after the debate in Washington on the issue had resolved that the Ford Administration would not be able to play an active role in that conflict.16 Far less agreement is evident on the prediction that foreign aid would be redirected from military to humanitarian programs. And our respondents rejected by an overwhelming margin the prediction that the United States would seek to re-establish its lost credibility by engaging in high-risk adventures abroad.

The line of reasoning developed earlier suggested that the more respondents supported the American effort in Vietnam, the more would they be inclined to see (but not applaud) the war as the cause of a weakened and constrained America with a reduced ability to play a leadership role in the international system. The differences among the seven groups of respondents are statistically significant, with a tendency toward support of our hypotheses. That is, fewer Supporters than Critics were inclined to believe that the United States would play an active role in Angola or to re-establish its credibility, and more Supporters predicted a shift away from military aid to Third-World countries. However, the pattern across the other groups is a mixed one, and somewhat inconclusive.

*Damage to American Society*

Three items in our questionnaire dealt with the impact of Vietnam on American society and institutions. The results, presented at the end of Table 6.5, reveal support for the propositions that the war effort resulted in neglect of more serious, non-military threats to national security; in a loss of faith in the honesty of the government; and in structural damage to the economy. At least three-fifths of
the respondents expressed some degree of agreement with each of these three items.

According to our hypotheses, those who consistently favored withdrawal from Vietnam would be more inclined to focus on the negative domestic consequences of the war than those who supported the search for a military victory. The figures in Table 6.5 affirm the hypotheses. All three items yielded a wide range of responses, and the differences among the seven groups are statistically significant.

The Consequences of Vietnam: Conclusion

Table 6.6 summarizes the results for the data pertaining to the perceived consequences of the Vietnam War by ranking the predicted consequences within each group. This procedure highlights several key aspects of our hypotheses. First, the three groups of Supporters all cited damaging international effects as the most important consequences of Vietnam. Indeed, the rankings for these three groups are identical (although the underlying scores on which they are based are not). Second, the Ambivalents cited the same damaging international consequences, but not in the same order as the three groups of supporters. Third, the three groups of Critics perceived the most important consequences of the Vietnam experience as being completely different from those cited by the Supporters; the consequences cited by the Critics are almost uniformly focused on the domestic rather than the international effects of the war.

IV. Prescription: The Lessons of Vietnam

The Vietnam War is not the first event to inspire postmortems aimed at teasing out lessons for the future conduct of policy. But it is doubtful that any previous episode in American history has given rise to such an extensive and conscious effort to learn from the past. Politicians, soldiers, pundits, editorial writers, and many others—as if guided by the dictum that men and nations are capable of learning only from failures—have offered a continuing stream of advice about what Americans should learn, not learn, or unlearn from the Vietnam experience. We sought to capture this variety in 34 items of our questionnaire.

Bipolarity in the International System

A variety of interpretations that were central to the debate during and since the Vietnam War revolved around the following basic question pertaining to the structure of the international system: Is the system essentially bipolar in nature, or have its structure and characteristic patterns of interaction changed in ways
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Converted Supporters</th>
<th>Converted Supporters</th>
<th>Ambivalent Supporters</th>
<th>Ambivalent Critics</th>
<th>Ambivalent Critics</th>
<th>Ambivalent Critics</th>
<th>Converted Critics</th>
<th>Converted Critics</th>
<th>Critics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communists will</td>
<td>Communists will</td>
<td>Communists will</td>
<td></td>
<td>U.S. will limit</td>
<td>U.S. economy</td>
<td>Long-term threats</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seek other triumphs</td>
<td>seek other triumphs</td>
<td>seek other triumphs</td>
<td></td>
<td>conception of</td>
<td>damaged</td>
<td>neglected</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>national interest</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>American</td>
<td></td>
<td>Communists will</td>
<td>Long-term threats</td>
<td>U.S. will limit</td>
<td>Lost faith in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>credibility damaged</td>
<td>credibility damaged</td>
<td>credibility damaged</td>
<td></td>
<td>seek other triumphs</td>
<td>threats neglected</td>
<td>conception of</td>
<td>U.S. government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. will limit</td>
<td>U.S. will limit</td>
<td>U.S. will limit</td>
<td></td>
<td>American</td>
<td>Lost faith in</td>
<td>Lost faith in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conception of</td>
<td>conception of</td>
<td>conception of</td>
<td></td>
<td>credibility</td>
<td>U.S. government</td>
<td>U.S. government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>national interest</td>
<td>national interest</td>
<td>national interest</td>
<td></td>
<td>damaged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>American</td>
<td></td>
<td>U.S. will limit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>credibility</td>
<td></td>
<td>conception of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>national interest</td>
<td></td>
<td>national interest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This table lists all the “consequences of Vietnam” that received at least an average rating of 0.30 on a scale of 1.00 (Agree Strongly) to —1.00 (Disagree Strongly). Consequences are listed in order of decreasing importance for each group. This table does not include data for the item stating: “As a result of the Vietnam experience, the U.S. is likely to keep military assistance to anti-Soviet factions in Angola to a minimum.” Congressional action had settled that issue before some respondents returned their questionnaires.
that challenge the premises of bipolarity? Five items dealt with this question; the aggregate responses to them depict considerable ambivalence (Table 6.7). On the one hand, the respondents indicated very strong support for the validity of the domino theory and for the proposition that failure to honor alliance commitments will result in heavy costs. Moreover, they were decidedly skeptical about the permanence of divisions among communist states. On the other hand, substantial if not overwhelming majorities questioned some core premises of the cold-war period—the assumption of a zero-sum relationship between communist gains and U.S. national interests, and the domination of revolutionary forces in the Third World by Moscow or Peking.

Although the results for the entire sample are somewhat mixed, dis-aggregation of the data into the seven groups yields discernible support for our hypothesis. Respondents who persisted in favoring military victory in Vietnam exhibited strong agreement with items that are consistent with a bipolar international system, and they expressed disagreement with items that seem to challenge the core premises of bipolarity (the third and fifth in Table 6.7). Conversely, those who favored withdrawal from Vietnam responded in ways that call into question the premises of a bipolar international system. The differences among the seven groups are statistically significant for all five lessons, and they form a consistent if not perfect pattern corresponding to the hypothesis.

**Threats from Adversaries**

The war in Vietnam coincided with some highly visible changes in relations between Washington and its most powerful adversaries—at least at the symbolic level. President Nixon’s visit to China in 1972 and the exchange of visits between Nixon and Chairman Brezhnev seemed to indicate that, despite conflicting interests in Southeast Asia, the hostile relationships of the cold-war period were undergoing some basic transformations. But the nature of the changes, if any, are hardly free from controversy.

Beliefs about the international system are closely related to images of the adversaries and their intentions. Table 6.7 reveals some ambivalence about the adversaries and their foreign policy goals. Most interesting are the sharply divergent views of Soviet and Chinese goals. Only a few years ago, American involvement in Vietnam was often justified as an exercise in containing China. The rhetoric of senior officials in the Johnson Administration rarely failed to portray the leadership in Peking as aggressive and not altogether predictable with respect to foreign affairs. Yet less than 30 percent of our sample agreed with the proposition that China is expansionist in its foreign policy goals; less than 7 percent expressed “strong” agreement.
Table 6.7 Lessons of Vietnam (Mean Scores for Each of Seven Groups of Respondents Classified by Their Positions on Vietnam during the Early and Late Stages of the War)*

*This question asks you to indicate your position on certain foreign policy issues. Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Respondents (n = 2,282**)</th>
<th>Supporters (n = 363)</th>
<th>Converted Supporters (n = 128)</th>
<th>Ambivalent Supporters (n = 346)</th>
<th>Ambivalent Critics (n = 63)</th>
<th>Ambivalent Ambivalents (n = 128)</th>
<th>Converted Critics (n = 867)</th>
<th>Critics (n = 378)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THREATS FROM ADVERSARIES</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***The Soviet Union is generally expansionist rather than defensive in its foreign policy goals (F = 29.3)</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***Détente permits the U.S.S.R. to pursue policies that promote rather than restrain conflict (F = 46.6)</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***China is generally expansionist rather than defensive in its foreign policy goals (F = 20.6)</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UTILITY OF MILITARY POWER</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>***If foreign interventions are undertaken, the necessary force should be applied in a short period of time rather than through a policy of graduated escalation (F = 47.0)</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***The U.S. should never try to get by with half-measures; we should apply necessary power if we have it (F = 100.6)</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***Rather than simply countering our opponent's thrusts, it is necessary to strike at the heart of the opponent's power (F = 56.1)</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***When force is used, military rather than political goals should determine its application (F = 52.4)</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
<td>-0.50</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.7 Continued

REDUCING U.S. INVOLVEMENT ABROAD

***The best way to encourage democratic development in the “Third World” is for the U.S. to solve its own problems (F = 4.2)

***Stationing American troops in other countries encourages them to let us do their fighting for those countries (F = 9.0)

***America’s conception of its leadership role in the world must be scaled down (F = 49.5)

***Military aid programs will eventually draw the United States into unnecessary wars (F = 48.5)

***It was a serious mistake to agree to locate American technicians in the Sinai (F = 8.6)

COPING WITH CONFLICT UNILATERALLY

***The U.S. should avoid any involvement in the Angolan civil war (F = 103.4)
**It is vital to enlist the cooperation of the U.N. in settling international disputes**  
\( F = 19.6 \)  

**The U.S. should undertake military intervention in the Middle East in case of another oil embargo**  
\( F = 43.3 \)

### PERFORMANCE OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT

**Americans have relied too much on Presidents to define the national interest**  
\( F = 34.5 \)  

**The press is more likely than the government to report the truth about the conduct of foreign policy**  
\( F = 68.9 \)  

**The conduct of American foreign affairs relies excessively on military advice**  
\( F = 91.3 \)

### DOMESTIC CONSTRAINTS ON FOREIGN POLICY

**An effective foreign policy is impossible when the Executive and Congress are unable to cooperate**  
\( F = 12.7 \)  

**The American people lack the patience for foreign policy undertakings that offer little prospect of success in the short run**  
\( F = 13.4 \)
Table 6.7  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Respondents (n = 2,282**)</th>
<th>Supporters (n = 363)</th>
<th>Converted Supporters (n = 128)</th>
<th>Ambivalent Supporters (n = 346)</th>
<th>Ambivalents (n = 128)</th>
<th>Converted Ambivalents (n = 63)</th>
<th>Critics (n = 867)</th>
<th>Critics (n = 378)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Americans lack an understanding of the role that power plays in world politics ($F = 22.8$)</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited war cannot be conducted successfully because of constraints imposed by the American political system ($F = 29.4$)</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The freedom to dissent at home inhibits the effective conduct of American foreign policy ($F = 32.3$)</td>
<td>-0.43</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
<td>-0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORGETTING THE PAST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>If officials would treat each new crisis on its own merits, rather than relying on past experience, they would usually make better foreign policy decisions ($F = 6.4$)</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is best to forget the foreign policy mistakes of the past as quickly as possible ($F = 4.3$)</td>
<td>-0.57</td>
<td>-0.45</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
<td>-0.65</td>
<td>-0.53</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>-0.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### OTHER "LESSONS" OF VIETNAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
<th>Group 4</th>
<th>Group 5</th>
<th>Group 6</th>
<th>Group 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vital interests of the U.S. are largely confined to Western Europe, Japan,</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>and the Americas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(F = 3.63)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited wars should be fought primarily with air power so as to avoid</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>introducing American ground troops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(F = 3.02)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The efficiency of military power in foreign affairs is declining</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.18</td>
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<tr>
<td>(F = 2.54)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak allies excessively influence U.S. foreign policy</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F = 2.52)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* The mean scores were computed by scoring a response of "Agree Strongly" as 2.00, "Agree Somewhat" as 1.00, "No Opinion" as 0.00, "Disagree Somewhat" as —1.00, and "Disagree Strongly" as —2.00. The resulting scores were then divided by two to create a scale ranging from 1.00 to —1.00.

** Includes 9 respondents who failed to state their positions on Vietnam and thus could not be classified among the seven groups.

*** Differences among groups significant at the .001 level, whether computed according to parametric (analysis of variance) or non-parametric (chi-square) statistics. F ratios (given in parenthesis immediately following each item) exceeding 3.47 are significant at the .001 level.
Perhaps one explanation for the radical shift lies in the political adage that “my enemy’s enemy is my friend.” Certainly an overwhelming majority of the respondents regarded the Soviet Union as an expansionist power. This view of Soviet motives also manifested itself in the decidedly skeptical stand toward détente; a clear majority of the respondents expressed some degree of agreement with the proposition that the U.S.S.R. is using détente to promote rather than to limit conflict.

The hypothesis that the Supporters would be more inclined than the Critics to regard cold-war adversaries as expansionist and threatening is sustained when the data are disaggregated into the seven groups. The differences between the groups are statistically significant, and in the predicted direction, for all three items. All the groups were inclined to agree that the Soviet Union is expansionist and that China is not, but the degree to which they did so ranges rather widely. An even wider range of beliefs is found in assessments of détente: the Supporters expressed agreement with the proposition that détente is abused by the U.S.S.R., whereas the Critics tended to disagree with that appraisal.17

Utility of Military Power

In the search for usable lessons of the Vietnam experience, few topics have generated more attention than those concerning the utility and proper deployment of military forces. Many observers have noted an American tendency to place strong, and perhaps inordinate, faith in the employment of advanced military technology to bring victory. If World War II seemed to provide the ultimate confirmation of that belief, the Vietnam experience has stimulated some serious second thoughts about its applicability to certain types of contemporary conflicts.

The responses to four items centering on the use of military power are summarized in Table 6.7. Of the 34 items appearing in our questionnaire, the lesson that received the strongest support from the entire sample of respondents was that in any future foreign intervention, force should be applied quickly rather than through a policy of graduated escalation.18 Although almost 10 percent of the sample expressed “no opinion” on this subject, more than three-fourths of the respondents agreed, and most did so “strongly.” The next two items—on avoiding half-measures and striking at “the heart of the opponent’s power”—elicited more agreement than disagreement, but by narrow margins and with “no opinion” at a high level on the latter issue. The twelfth item in Table 6.7 focuses on a controversial question that recurs during every war: Should military operations be conducted to maximize military goals or political ones? Most of the respondents favored the latter rather than the former option.

When the data are disaggregated into the seven groups, they reveal a striking range of views. These results provide consistent and substantial support for the hypothesis that the military lessons drawn from the Vietnam War would be
systematically related to positions on the proper course of U.S. action in that conflict: those at or near the Supporter end of the spectrum tended to believe that military power should be used more quickly, with fewer self-imposed restraints, and with greater efficiency; those at the Critic end of the spectrum were less inclined to accept these lessons.

Reducing American Involvement Abroad

In the wake of the Vietnam disaster, many questions have been asked about when, where, and how the United States should become involved in future situations abroad: How active a role should it play in the international system? What lessons, if any, can be learned from Vietnam about opportunities for exerting leadership? What are the constraints against taking on various leadership roles? Five items were addressed to such questions; although the responses to them reveal a general lack of consensus, on the whole they exhibit preferences toward a somewhat reduced global role for the United States. A slight majority of the respondents agreed that the U.S. should scale down its international role, and a somewhat larger majority was in accord with the proposition that America’s ability to influence the course of events in the Third World may be limited to the power of example.

Two other items are of special interest in light of President Carter’s avowed goal of withdrawing American troops from South Korea and reducing arms sales abroad. By a margin of approximately 3 to 2, the respondents agreed that stationing troops abroad encourages the host countries to let the United States do their fighting for them. But by a roughly comparable margin, they rejected the proposition that military assistance programs will draw this country into unnecessary wars. Finally, a very substantial majority disagreed with the view that deployment of American technicians in the Sinai was a mistake.

Mixed results were uncovered with respect to the hypothesis that those toward the Supporter end of the spectrum would adduce lessons from Vietnam that recommended a more active American role in the world, whereas those on the Critic side would draw the opposite lesson. The data on the conception of the American leadership role and on military aid programs are strongly in accord with the hypothesis. The differences among the groups are statistically significant, and generally in the predicted direction. Although the differences among the groups for the other three items are also statistically significant, the distribution of scores across each item follows a somewhat less regular pattern.\(^\text{19}\)

Coping with Conflict Unilaterally

In addition to eliciting views on the appropriate global role for the United States, we also included three items about the wisdom of unilateral responses to conflict
situations abroad. Two of the items focused on issues of current interest at the time the questionnaire was mailed—the appropriate role in the Angolan civil war, and the advisability of intervening militarily in the Middle East in case of another oil embargo. The third dealt with the question of the extent to which the United Nations should be used to deal with international conflicts. The results, as summarized in Table 6.7, indicate a general consensus against unilateral action to cope with conflict issues. Solid majorities indicated a preference for avoiding involvement in Angola and for enlisting the cooperation of the United Nations in settling international disputes, and three-quarters of the respondents rejected the proposition that military intervention would be an appropriate response to any future oil embargo.20 In short, although these three items do not represent the full range of potential conflicts that the United States may face in the years ahead—and it is therefore necessary to be wary of generalizations—the findings appear to reflect at least a mood of caution and skepticism about the use of unilateral action to cope with future conflicts.

The disaggregated data reveal a strong and consistent relationship between positions on U.S. policy in Vietnam and on how best to cope with other conflict issues. Differences among the seven groups are significant, and they are in the direction predicted by our hypotheses. None of the groups, on balance, favored intervention in the Middle East in the event of another oil embargo; the Critics were overwhelmingly opposed to such action, whereas the Supporters were almost evenly divided on the issue and the other five groups were arrayed between them. The responses to the other lessons also reveal a wide range of beliefs across the seven groups. Four of the seven groups favored total abstention from the Angolan civil war, while the other three took the opposite position—albeit by rather narrow margins in two cases. The range between the Supporters and the Critics on the question of Angola is especially large. Only a slightly smaller disagreement marks the responses of the groups to the question of the appropriate role of the United Nations in settling international disputes.

Performance of the American Government in Foreign Policy Making

The process of foreign policy making was a major focus of the lessons to be derived from the Vietnam experience. Indeed, in its reaction to the Watergate scandal as well as to the failure in Vietnam, the public has repeatedly been found to share a widespread skepticism—if not a cynicism—about the performance of the government in Washington. Three items in our questionnaire focused on governmental performance in foreign affairs; they yielded results which reveal that, on balance, members of various leadership groups are rather critical of Washington. More than 60 percent of the respondents agreed that, in defining the national interest, there has been excessive reliance on the President; a clear majority supported the proposition that the press is more likely than the govern-
ment to report the truth about the conduct of foreign affairs. Beliefs were almost evenly divided on the issue of military advice in foreign policy.

But these overall indicators of dissatisfaction with the performance of the American government do not begin to hint at the strong and systematic differences in outlook that emerge when the data are disaggregated. The hypothesis is upheld that those who consistently supported the goals of military victory in Vietnam would be the least critical of the government, whereas those who advocated withdrawal from Southeast Asia would be the most critical. The range of mean scores is high for all three items, especially on the issue of excessive military advice in the conduct of foreign affairs. The differences among the groups are statistically significant and, with a few exceptions among the middle groups, they follow a general pattern of increasing criticism of the government from the left- to right-hand columns of Table 6.7.

### Domestic Constraints on Foreign Policy

The war in Vietnam has been called the most unpopular in American history. Although draft riots, dissident movements, and jailings of protesters have accompanied virtually every previous war, none was accompanied by such widespread disaffection with the government’s policies and its conduct of military operations. In light of the subsequent failure of U.S. policies in Vietnam, what lessons do American leaders believe should be derived from the experience with respect to the impact of domestic constraints on the effective conduct of foreign relations?

Table 6.7 reveals consistent support for a series of propositions about the deleterious effects of various domestic constraints on the quality of foreign policy. The one exception to this generalization is strong disagreement with the proposition that freedom to dissent inhibits the effective conduct of foreign relations. Substantial majorities, however—ranging from over 60 to nearly 80 percent—agreed that lack of cooperation between the White House and Congress negates the possibilities of an effective foreign policy; that the American political system is poorly suited to conduct a limited war; and that the American people are lacking in two important requisites for a sound foreign policy—patience and an understanding of the role of power in world politics.

The absence of an even division of beliefs on any of these issues does not reflect a consensus among the seven groups of respondents. The hypothesis that the Supporters would be more likely than the Critics to find in the Vietnam experience a set of lessons about the damaging consequences of domestic constraints is strongly sustained. On balance, all seven groups agreed with the items on executive-legislative cooperation, on the lack of patience and of appreciation of power realities among Americans; but the strength of agreement varies widely and in the predicted direction. All but the Critics agreed that the American political
system is poorly suited to conduct a limited war, and all seven groups rejected the lesson that freedom to dissent is incompatible with a sound foreign policy. The range of mean scores is the highest for the latter two items.

The Uses of History: Forgetting the Past

Our project is to a large extent founded on the assumption that the propensity to look to the past for guidance and decision rules is spread widely throughout the society’s leadership structure. Some leaders may be more likely than others to seek guidance from specific historical episodes; we would expect, for example, that Supporters of the war effort in Vietnam would be more likely than Critics to look to the 1938 Munich Conference for decision rules on how to cope with aggression. However, there is no reason to believe that persons in any group would be more, or less, inclined to accept the general proposition that one may profitably look to the past for guidance. Hence the hypothesis that there will be no significant differences between the Supporters, the Critics, and the other five groups in this respect.

Results for two items relating to the uses of history are summarized near the end of Table 6.7. There is qualified support for our core premise on the pervasiveness of the propensity toward historical analysis. The respondents rejected overwhelmingly the proposition that it is best to forget past foreign policy mistakes; but their reactions were much more evenly divided on the wisdom of treating each crisis on “its own merits” rather than “relying on past experience.” Contrary to our hypothesis, the seven groups do in fact differ in their propensities to look to the past, but they do so in ways that are not easily interpreted. The scores for the Supporters and the Critics are virtually identical, and most of the variance appears to be accounted for by the Ambivalents, who most strongly rejected the belief that one should avoid looking to history for insight into dealing with contemporary issues. The evidence does not negate our core premise that reliance on past experience is a pervasive tendency, but it is not sufficient to determine whether there is a systematic propensity for some persons to adduce lessons from history and for others to avoid doing so.

Other Lessons of Vietnam

Of the 34 lessons of Vietnam on which we solicited responses, four did not meet our substantive and statistical criteria for inclusion in any of the clusters discussed above. They are considered separately in this section.

The identity of primary American interests in the world was a major focus of the postmortems on Vietnam; accordingly, our questionnaire offered for evaluation the lesson that the “vital interests of the U.S. are largely confined to Western Europe, Japan, and the Americas.” This proposition reflects the perspective of
the Trilateral Commission; responses to it are perhaps especially significant since one of the Commission’s members was subsequently elected President of the United States, and its former Director, Zbigniew Brzezinski, now serves as National Security Adviser to the President. Our sample of leaders, however, rejected this formulation of America’s vital interest by a margin of about 3 to 2, with nearly 30 percent expressing strong disagreement. The hypothesis that this item would elicit strongest agreement among the Critics and strongest disagreement among the Supporters is only marginally upheld. Differences among the seven groups are significant, but within a very narrow range; they form only a moderately consistent pattern across the seven groups.

Some observers have commented that public opinion ultimately turned against the war effort because of the heavy casualties among ground troops, combined with an unpopular draft. In response, it has been suggested that, in any future limited war, greater use be made of air power in order to avoid heavy ground casualties. Less than one-third of the respondents agreed that this was a useful lesson to be drawn from the war; about one-half disagreed; and a high proportion expressed no opinion on the issue. The hypothesis that this lesson would attract more favorable reaction among those who supported the effort in Vietnam must be rejected.

That the failure of a military effort costing some fifty thousand lives and 150 billion dollars should give rise to sober second thoughts about the role of military power in contemporary foreign affairs is scarcely surprising. By a margin of 2 to 1, the respondents agreed with the lesson that “the efficiency of military power in foreign affairs is declining.” But the hypothesis that agreement would be weakest among the Supporters and strongest among the Critics must be rejected. Although there is a tendency toward greater disagreement with the proposition among the three groups on the left-hand side of Table 6.7 (as predicted by the hypothesis), the differences across the groups are not significant at the .001 level.

The proposition that “weak allies excessively influence U.S. foreign policy” received agreement from a plurality—but not a majority—of the respondents. Considerable uncertainty is reflected in the finding that almost as many answered “no opinion” as “agree strongly” or “disagree strongly.” The hypothesis that Critics would express stronger agreement with this proposition is not supported.

The Lessons of Vietnam: Conclusion

The data on the lessons of Vietnam suggest two major conclusions. First, a pattern of deep and profound division among the respondents was uncovered. While there is general agreement that Americans should learn from past mistakes, this consensus breaks down once attention focuses on specific substantive lessons. Disagreement pervades all levels of thinking about how the lessons of Vietnam
should guide the future conduct of American foreign policy, from the broadest questions of “grand design,” through “grand strategy” and “tactics.” Second, with only a few exceptions, the patterns of response correspond closely to those suggested by our hypotheses.

We can gain a somewhat different perspective on the data by ranking, for each of the seven groups, the lessons that received the strongest support. Table 6.8 provides added confirmation for the conclusion that there is a noticeable absence of consensus among our sample of American leaders. Although the criterion of inclusion was only moderately stringent (an average rating of 0.40 on a scale of 1.00 to —1.00), not one of the thirty-four lessons appears in all seven rankings. Only two appear in six rankings (“the Soviet Union is expansionist in its foreign policy goals”; “disagreement between the executive and the Congress hinders the effective conduct of foreign policy”); three other lessons may be found in five rankings. If we took into account the place accorded each lesson in each ranking, the dissensus would be even greater. One final observation further illustrates the sharp cleavages among the groups. For the Supporters, twelve lessons met the criteria for inclusion in Table 6.8; the comparable figure for the Critics is six. Yet no one lesson appears on both lists!

V. Summary and Conclusion

Table 6.9 summarizes the fit between our hypotheses on the sources of failure, the consequences, and the lessons of Vietnam on the one hand, and the data provided by our sample of 2,282 leaders on the other. The first two columns of Table 6.9 identify the hypotheses, and the third indicates the number of relevant questionnaire items for each hypothesis. The fourth and fifth columns summarize the results of the statistical tests used to determine whether there were significant differences among the seven groups of respondents. These tests do not, however, indicate whether or not the seven groups were arrayed in the order predicted by each hypothesis. The sixth column presents rank-order correlations between the predicted and actual ordering of the groups.

Table 6.9 indicates the full extent to which our hypotheses were consistently supported by the data. The differences among the seven groups of respondents were significant for 61 of the 66 questionnaire items, and virtually all the differences were in the predicted direction. Moreover, the correlations between the predicted and actual group rankings satisfied rather demanding standards: correlation coefficients exceeding .85 resulted for 50 of the 66 questionnaire items.

Consensus, Vietnam, and Belief Systems

Earlier we indicated that our analysis would center around three basic propositions: the post-World War II consensus on U.S. foreign policy has been shattered;
Table 6.8  Ranking of the Lessons of Vietnam Receiving Highest Agreement From Each Group *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporters</th>
<th>Converted Supporters</th>
<th>Ambivalent Supporters</th>
<th>Ambivalent Critics</th>
<th>Converted Critics</th>
<th>Critics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avoid graduated escalation</td>
<td>U.S.S.R. is expansionist</td>
<td>Avoid graduated escalation</td>
<td>U.S.S.R. is expansionist</td>
<td>Avoid Angola involvement</td>
<td>Avoid Angola involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.S.R. is expansionist</td>
<td>Avoid graduated escalation</td>
<td>U.S.S.R. is expansionist</td>
<td>Must honor alliance commitments</td>
<td>Third-World revolutionaries nationalist</td>
<td>Press more likely to tell truth on foreign policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Must honor alliance commitments</td>
<td>Must honor alliance commitments</td>
<td>Domino theory is valid</td>
<td>Exec.-Congress cooperation is valid</td>
<td>Exec.-Congress cooperation is valid</td>
<td>Avoid graduated escalation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domino theory is valid</td>
<td>Exec.-Congress cooperation is vital</td>
<td>Must honor alliance commitments</td>
<td>Must honor alliance commitments</td>
<td>Exec.-Congress cooperation is vital</td>
<td>Avoid Angola involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid half-measures militarily</td>
<td>Americans don't understand role of power</td>
<td>Exec.-Congress cooperation is vital</td>
<td>Americans lack patience</td>
<td>Exec.-Congress cooperation is vital</td>
<td>Exec.-Congress cooperation is vital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exec.-Congress cooperation is vital</td>
<td>Domino theory is valid</td>
<td>Americans lack patience</td>
<td>Americans don't understand role of power</td>
<td>Americans lack patience</td>
<td>Must honor alliance commitments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americans don't understand role of power</td>
<td>Americans lack patience</td>
<td>Americans can't understand role of power</td>
<td>Americans can't fight limited war</td>
<td>U.S.S.R. is expansionist</td>
<td>Third-World revolutionaries nationalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviets abuse détente</td>
<td>Avoid half-measures militarily</td>
<td>Americans can't fight limited war</td>
<td>U.S.S.R. should solve own problems</td>
<td>U.S.S.R. is expansionist</td>
<td>Scale down U.S. international role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americans lack patience</td>
<td>Americans can't fight limited war</td>
<td>Strike at heart of enemy power</td>
<td>Press more likely to tell truth on foreign policy</td>
<td>U.S.S.R. is expansionist</td>
<td>Enlist U.N. cooperation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This table lists all “lessons of Vietnam” that received at least an average rating of 0.40 on a scale of 1.00 (Agree Strongly) to —1.00 (Disagree Strongly). Lessons are listed in order of decreasing importance for each group.
Table 6.9 Summary of the Hypotheses on the Sources of Failure, Consequences, and Lessons of Vietnam Tested with Data for 2,282 American Leaders Classified into Seven Groups According to Their Position on the War

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis Number</th>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Number of Questionnaire Items</th>
<th>Significant Differences</th>
<th>Correlations between Predicted and Actual Rankings of the Seven Groups (r)***</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>ANOVA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOURCES OF FAILURE (TABLE 6.3):</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.1a</td>
<td>Domestic constraints</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.96, .96, 1.00, 96, 96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.1b</td>
<td>Military factors</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.89, .96, 93, 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.1c</td>
<td>Actions of others</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.86, .93, 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.1d</td>
<td>No clear goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.2a</td>
<td>Lack of knowledge and understanding</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.93, .96, .89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.2b</td>
<td>An unsound undertaking</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.96, .96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.2c</td>
<td>Inadequate intelligence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.2d</td>
<td>Excessive reliance on air power</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.2e</td>
<td>Opposition of world opinion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONSEQUENCES OF VIETNAM (TABLE 6.5):</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.1a</td>
<td>Impact on the international system</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.96, 1.00, 1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.1b</td>
<td>Adversaries encouraged</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.96, .89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.1c</td>
<td>Constraints on future U.S. policy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.24, .95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.1d</td>
<td>Types of future U.S. undertakings</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.74, .93, .63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.2</td>
<td>Damage to American society</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.86, .71, .75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Scores</td>
<td>Significance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.1a</td>
<td>Bipolarity of the international system</td>
<td>5 5 5</td>
<td>.96, .93, .93, .93, .96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.1b</td>
<td>Threats from U.S. adversaries</td>
<td>3 3 3</td>
<td>.96, .94, .96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.1c</td>
<td>Utility of military power</td>
<td>4 4 4</td>
<td>.88, .99, .89, .89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.1d</td>
<td>Coping with conflict unilaterally</td>
<td>3 3 3</td>
<td>.86, .96, .96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.1e</td>
<td>Domestic constraints on foreign policy</td>
<td>5 5 5</td>
<td>.93, .86, .96, .89, .96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.1f</td>
<td>Limited war and air power</td>
<td>1 0 1</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.2a</td>
<td>Reducing U.S. involvement abroad</td>
<td>5 5 5</td>
<td>.25, .71, .95, .64, .51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.2b</td>
<td>Performance of the U.S. government</td>
<td>3 3 3</td>
<td>.86, .93, .96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.2c</td>
<td>U.S. vital interests limited</td>
<td>1 1 1</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.2d</td>
<td>Efficiency of military power declining</td>
<td>1 0 1</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.2e</td>
<td>Influence of weak allies excessive</td>
<td>1 0 1</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.4</td>
<td>Forgetting the past</td>
<td>2 2 2</td>
<td>.57, .88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Of the total number of items relevant to each hypothesis, the number for which differences among the groups were significant at the .001 level, as measured by analysis of variance (ANOVA) and chi square (X²).

** Spearman rank-order correlation between the hypothesized rankings of the groups and the actual group scores. The correlations for individual questionnaire items are given in the same order as in the tables presenting the group scores.

*** This hypothesis predicted no significant differences among the groups.
the Vietnam experience has been a critical event in this respect; and the resulting views on foreign policy could appropriately be designated as competing belief systems. To what extent do the findings support these propositions? Surely they uphold the first proposition. The existence of deep cleavages among the seven groups of respondents has been confirmed repeatedly, and these differences extend across a broad spectrum of questions, ranging from beliefs about the international system to issues of strategy and tactics.

In order to test the second proposition—that Vietnam was a water shed experience with respect to basic American beliefs about international politics and foreign policy—we classified the respondents into seven groups solely on the basis of their policy preferences during the early and late stages of the war. Admittedly, this is a rather simple classification scheme, but it serves our purposes well because it isolates views on the war from other variables such as age, occupation, and party identification. Indeed, it is precisely because the classification scheme described in Table 6.2 is simple and based purely on the Vietnam issue that the results are so striking. Stated differently, knowing how a person reacted to the Vietnam War provides a good start toward describing many of his or her foreign policy beliefs. In turn, this enhances our confidence in assessing the impact of Vietnam on the beliefs of American leaders.

The third proposition postulated that responses to four clusters of issues—policy preferences on Vietnam, diagnoses of the sources of failure, prognoses of the consequences of the war, and prescriptions about the lessons of Vietnam—would form coherent and internally consistent belief systems. The hypotheses that guided our analysis of the issues within each cluster represented, in effect, our conception of the beliefs that logically seemed to form a coherent system of thought. The data yielded strong support for this line of reasoning; strikingly different, almost mutually exclusive, belief systems were uncovered.

Is the fact that respondents in the groups at the ends of the spectrum hold sharply divergent views sufficient evidence from which to draw broad conclusions about a breakdown of agreement on the bases of U.S. foreign policy? Even the bipartisan, center-of-the-road coalition that supported the main outlines of American foreign policy during the late 1940s and the 1950s did not lack critics on either end of the political spectrum. Does an emphasis on the groups at either end of the scale overlook the possibility of broad consensus within the area bounded by those who consistently favored a military victory in Vietnam and those who were just as undeviating in their demands for a complete withdrawal? The answer seems clear: the data do not support the existence of a broad consensus among the five middle groups. In the first place, the Supporters and Critics are not merely insignificant fringe groups; between them, they constitute approximately one-third of the entire sample. Second, and just as important, is the fact that divisions among the middle groups are almost as deep as between those at the ends of our scale. Both the Converted Critics and the Converted
Supporters differed significantly from the groups adjacent to them on the scale on more than three-fourths of the 68 questionnaire items. Likewise, the differences between the Converted Supporters and Converted Critics are highly significant on well over half of the items, and the same number of differences also divide the Ambivalent Supporters from the Ambivalent Critics. In short, there is not much sustenance for the theory that the middle groups constitute a consensus that effectively bridges the chasm between the groups at each end of the scale.

As indicated earlier, analysis of the respondents’ attributes, other than their policy preferences during the Vietnam War, is beyond the scope of this paper, but it may be useful to anticipate one question that will almost certainly be raised about these findings. Do the present results merely mask cleavages that are essentially generational in origin? Elsewhere we have undertaken multivariate analyses that include age as a variable. The results provide only limited support for the generational hypothesis. Space limitations preclude a detailed discussion, but two summarizing points may be worth making. First, although some generational differences are found in responses to this survey, they consistently tend to account for less of the variance than the categories of “Vietnam policy position” described here. Second, differences between generations do not always fall into the neat pattern sometimes suggested by the thesis of “the Munich generation versus the Vietnam generation.” Thus, the often-articulated argument that the basic cleavages on foreign policy issues in this country pit the world views of an older generation of “cold warriors” against those of their “dovish” offspring is an oversimplification and, in some important respects, inaccurate.

If the data and our interpretations of them are valid, the findings of this article may have significant implications for the task of rebuilding a workable consensus in support of American foreign policy. The consensus may have crumbled quickly as a result of Vietnam; our data suggest that it will not be easily reconstructed. Indeed, they help to explain why Presidents Nixon and Ford failed in their explicit efforts to rebuild a shared, nationwide perspective in which détente was to serve as a unifying concept in much the same way that the Truman-Acheson-Kennan policy of containment served earlier generations. Moreover, the split that occurred over the meaning of détente in both major political parties during the election campaign of 1976 is not surprising in the light of our findings. For it is not just that we found deep cleavages among our respondents; the more significant point is that these differences appear to be embedded within and sustained by well-defined clusters of supporting beliefs that extend from conceptions of the international system to the most effective means by which the United States should pursue its foreign policy goals.

Coherent and internally consistent belief systems tend to be self-perpetuating. Because of the ambiguity and uncertainty that characterize so many important issues in international relations, leaders with competing belief systems are likely
to see what they expect and want to see in the course of world affairs. Those who maintain that the domino theory is a fact of international life, for example, will find that events in Southeast Asia or Africa sustain their beliefs, whereas those who doubt its validity point to developments elsewhere as evidence. Such illustrations could be multiplied many times over. The point is that these competing conceptions of international politics are unlikely to change soon or casually. It may well take some dramatic international developments—on the scale of another Pearl Harbor or Vietnam War—to bring about rapid convergence of a new set of unifying beliefs about international relations and American foreign policy.  

Acknowledgments

An earlier, and much longer, version of this paper, entitled "Vietnam, Consensus, and the Belief Systems of American Leaders," was delivered at the 1977 Hendricks Symposium on American Politics and World Order, University of Nebraska, October 6-7, 1977.

We gratefully record that the project reported here was made possible by the support of the Research Council of Duke University, the Center for International Affairs of Harvard University, and the Institute for Transnational Studies of the University of Southern California. We have also incurred debts to many persons who have assisted us in various ways. Sidney Verba and Donald Ferree of Harvard University commented helpfully on earlier drafts of our questionnaire. Professor Edward Laurance of the Naval Post-Graduate School made it possible for us to include military officers at that institution in our sample. Daniel Harkins and Tom Johnson provided us with indispensable programming assistance. Others at Duke and U.S.C. who helped in various ways were: Linda Ram, Edwin McClain, Robert Kolin, Joan Campbell, Sarah Crenshaw, Mark Casciari, Brenda Funches, Raymond A. Lavine, Hugo Orozco, Eliza Hubbard, Bruce Smith, Antony Burt, Cindy Gail Abrams, Jim Wolfe, Gary K. Gartin, Eric Holsti, Heidi Rosenau, Kay Neves, and Alice Dorman. Finally, we are greatly indebted to the 2,282 respondents who took the time to fill out our rather lengthy questionnaire.
This paper examines the relationship between the domestic and foreign policy beliefs of American opinion leaders, using data drawn from nationwide surveys in 1984, 1988 and 1992. Responses to fourteen items appearing in each of the surveys are used to identify four domestic policy types: liberals, populists, conservatives, and libertarians. An additional 14 items are used to classify respondents into four foreign policy types: hardliners, internationalists, isolationists and accommodationists. There is a high correlation between the domestic and foreign policy types. Further analyses examine the responses of the four domestic policy types to several international issues: future threats, US interests and roles, foreign policy goals, and approaches to peace. Background variables associated with the domestic and foreign policy beliefs indicate that the cross-cutting cleavages created by domestic and international issues during the two decades after World War II are giving way to overlapping divisions that have powerful partisan and ideological foundations.

Some years ago, three perceptive analysts of foreign affairs, one of whom now serves as the Clinton administration’s national security adviser, complained that, “For two decades, the making of American foreign policy has been growing far more political—or more precisely, far more partisan and ideological” (Destler, Gelb, and Lake, 1984: 13). Is their assessment valid a decade later? Alternatively, have some mitigating factors reduced the doleful impact of partisan and ideological cleavages on the conduct of American diplomacy? At least two possibilities come to mind. One involves the erosion of the sharp dividing line
between domestic and foreign policy issues, and whether, as a result, positions on domestic issues have dampened partisan–ideological divisions by creating cross-cutting rather than overlapping cleavages. As we shall see later, evidence in support of this possibility is not hard to find in the literature on American public opinion. Second, although there are also data showing a systematic correlation between attitudes on domestic and foreign policy, most of it was derived from the Cold War period. Have the dramatic international events of the decade, since the Destler–Gelb–Lake analysis, altered political attitudes sufficiently to render their verdict obsolete? This chapter addresses these questions, focusing on American opinion leaders. After examining the relationship between domestic and foreign policy beliefs over an eight-year period encompassing elite surveys in 1984, 1988, and 1992, a more detailed investigation analyzes responses to a wider range of issues in the most recent of these surveys.

Before turning to the data, methods, and findings, it may be useful to summarize briefly the findings and controversies in the existing literature on the relationship between attitudes on domestic and foreign policy issues. Even a cursory survey reveals that a definitive answer is elusive. Questions about that relationship, part of a larger controversy about the strength of ideological thinking and structural coherence in American public opinion, are the focus of a vigorous debate that has yet to produce a consensus.

Much of the evidence on the issue is derived from analyses of data generated either by panel studies of the American electorate or by Gallup and other surveys of public opinion. At first glance it appears that virtually all the findings point toward the conclusion that attitudes about issues in the domestic and international arenas are independent rather than systematically linked. In their study of the 1948 election, Berelson and his colleagues (1954: 197–198) found a limited correlation between domestic “position [economic] issues” and either civil rights or international “style issues.” “The dilemma is that the two contemporary axes of liberalism–conservatism, the one economic–class and the other ethnic–international, vary independently of each other…. To know, for example, that someone supported the New Deal on economic issues provided no indication of his international or civil rights opinions.” Similar findings emerged from several other studies of the electorate. Campbell and his colleagues (1964: 113) reported: “Across our sample as a whole in 1956 there was no relationship between scale positions of individuals on the domestic and foreign attitudinal dimensions.” Partisanship characterized responses to domestic issues but not to foreign policy issues. Key (1961: 158) uncovered a similar finding. Assessing the relationship between internationalism—a willingness to tolerate international involvement—and domestic liberalism, he concluded: “The lines of cleavage in the two policy areas did not coincide.” Converse’s (1964) frequently cited analysis of belief systems among elites and the general public reported correlations among responses to domestic and foreign policy issues. He came to the same conclusion.
Among the general public, the degree of policy consistency, whether on domestic issues, foreign policy issues, or across the two issue areas, was quite low.

More recently the apparent consensus represented by the Converse findings has generated considerable controversy. Part of the debate is methodological, centering on the manner in which questions are framed, the clarity of questions, the degree to which the unsure are prodded to state a position, and similar issues of research procedures (Achen, 1975; Sullivan, Piersen, and Marcus, 1978). Another part of the controversy focuses on trends, specifically on the durability of findings that, to a large degree, drew from evidence generated during the 1950s. This was a period of American economic, political, and military dominance in foreign affairs—the shock of Sputnik in 1957 notwithstanding—with the 1956 and 1960 elections taking place after the Korean War and before escalation of the Vietnam conflict. Domestically, the Eisenhower years were marked by relatively good figures on the “misery index” (the summed rates of unemployment and inflation). Despite the Montgomery bus boycott and Greensboro sit-ins, the full impact of the civil rights movement had yet to be felt. According to the critics, this period, both celebrated and criticized for marking “the end of ideology,” is insufficiently representative for assessing the degree of ideological consistency among the general public. In support of that view, a number of analysts found that, beginning with the Johnson–Goldwater election campaign of 1964, ideological consistency among the public did in fact increase (Nie and Anderson, 1974; Nie, Verba, and Petrocik, 1976). Some corroborating evidence is also discernible in Hero’s (1969) assessment of public opinion polls on domestic and foreign policy issues from the late 1930s to 1967: he found a very weak relationship between the two, but there were some indications of a strengthening during the post-Eisenhower years. Those who claim to have found a greater ideological consistency among the general public during the turbulent era of the 1960s and 1970s have also encountered criticism. This is not the place to provide a blow-by-blow account of these debates; for excellent and detailed summaries of the vast literature, see Kinder (1983), Kinder and Sears (1985), Sniderman and Tetlock (1986), and Sniderman (1993).

For present purposes, the more directly relevant question concerns the degree of consistency of views across domestic and foreign policy issues among persons in leadership positions. Compared to data for the general public, evidence about elite attitudes is much scantier. Many findings point toward greater ideological consistency among leaders, and the usual explanations are located in different levels of education and awareness of the issue content associated with such terms as “liberal” and “conservative.” Almond’s (1950) pioneering study of The American People and Foreign Policy asserted the existence of a broad consensus among elites that cut across the two issue areas: “More basically, this foreign policy consensus is founded upon a consensus of fundamental attitudes and ideologies that may be described in two dimensions—values and means. The
advocates of the American foreign consensus are, in general, agreed that the primary aims of American policy, both domestic and foreign, should turn on a reconciliation of individual freedom and mass welfare of a primarily material kind" (Almond, 1950: 159).

Although Almond did not present systematic survey evidence to buttress his findings on this score, most analysts have tended to agree at least with the point that, compared to the general public, elites are more likely to hold policy positions that are consistent—that is, that their beliefs are held together by some underlying ideological principles. Converse (1964) found that correlations among responses to both domestic and foreign policy issues were consistently higher for Congressional candidates than for the public at large. Russett and Hanson (1975: 138) surveyed military officers and business leaders, and they also had access to Barton’s (1974–75) data from a broader spectrum of elites. They found “dovish [international] and liberal [domestic] attitudes consistently together on the one hand, and conservative [domestic] and hawkish [international] attitudes regularly together on the other.” Similar results emerged from an analysis of a 1984 survey of American opinion leaders (Holsti and Rosenau, 1988), as well as from a panel study of American elites (Murray, 1993).

Despite the indications of a greater propensity toward consistency among elites than among the general public, conclusions on this score should be drawn with some caution because contradictory evidence also exists. For example, Luttbeg (1968) found no substantial difference between elites and the general public with respect to the structure of their beliefs, a conclusion supported by Wittkopf’s (1990) re-analysis of the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations surveys. Also, it bears repeating that the base of evidence from which tentative conclusions about leadership beliefs may be adduced is limited. Despite widespread acceptance of Almond’s thesis that the public is stratified into tiers and is marked by substantial differences in interest, information, and activity, data and research on elites represent but a very small fraction of the total public opinion literature. Finally, not all elite studies deal with both domestic and foreign policy issues. For example, the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations surveys (Rielly, 1975, 1979, 1983, 1987, and 1991) and the first two Foreign Policy Leadership Project surveys (Holsti and Rosenau, 1984) are devoid of questions on domestic policy.

This paper extends the previously cited analysis of 1984 data from opinion leaders with evidence from subsequent surveys in 1988 and 1992. These studies encompass three strikingly different international settings, especially in the range of relations between Washington and Moscow. The 1984 survey took place at the height of “Cold War II” when vitriolic rhetoric and arms races had overtaken any manifestations of detente. Only four years later, President Reagan and Chairman Gorbachev were meeting regularly, had signed an unprecedented arms control agreement, and referred to each other as friends rather than as leaders of “evil empires.” Startling as the changes between 1984 and 1988 were, they paled in
comparison with those of the next four years, which witnessed not only the end of the Cold War but also of the Soviet Union. To summarize very briefly, then, the three surveys spanned the Cold War, the transition from the Cold War to cooperation, and the early post-Cold War era. Any findings that persist through such dramatic changes would appear to be very robust indeed.

Methods

Samples and Return Rates

The Foreign Policy Leadership Project (FPLP) has conducted nationwide surveys of American opinion leaders by means of a mailed questionnaire every four years since 1976.¹ The sample for each survey, representing leaders in a wide range of occupations—including politics, business, the military, the media, the State Department and Foreign Service, labor unions, churches, academia, law, and health care—was drawn in part from such standard sources as Who's Who in America, Who's Who in American Women, Who's Who in American Politics, and the State Department Directory. Others were included by virtue of their positions in specific institutions; for example, membership in the current class at the National War College, chief editorial writers of newspapers with a circulation of 100,000 or more, and labor union officers. The samples for each survey have included approximately 4000 opinion leaders. The 1984 survey yielded 2515 completed questionnaires for a return rate of 62 percent. The 1988 and 1992 data include 2226 and 2312 completed questionnaires for return rates of 57 percent and 58 percent respectively.

The Domestic Issues Scales

The analysis of the 1984 data ranked respondents from most-to-least conservative based on their answers to seven economic and seven social issues. Some of the analyses focused on respondents who ranked in the top quintile of the liberalism and conservatism scales. The present analysis adopts a somewhat different approach to classifying respondents. Separate scales have again been created for economic and social issues. The six items for each scale had to meet two criteria: (1) the questions had to appear in each of the three surveys since 1984, and (2) they had to meet reliability standards. The first criterion excluded several questions which appeared in the later surveys, but not in 1984. These included items about AIDS testing, the balanced budget amendment, and term limitations for elected officials, all of which scaled well.

Table 7.1 summarizes responses for each of the twelve issues in 1984, 1988, and 1992. The economic issues scale includes items on taxation, tuition tax credits, regulation, defense spending, and income redistribution; those in the social issues scale focus on several of the most controversial and emotion-laden issues.

This question asks you to indicate your position on certain domestic issues. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Issues Scale</th>
<th>% Agree strongly + Agree somewhat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[N = 2,515]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing the federal budget deficit by raising taxes</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxing environmental regulation to stimulate economic growth*</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing tuition tax credits to parents who send children to private or parochial schools*</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing the defense budget in order to increase the federal education budget</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easing restrictions on the construction of nuclear power plants*</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redistributing income from the wealthy to the poor through taxation and subsidies</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[N = 2,226]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing the federal budget deficit by raising taxes</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxing environmental regulation to stimulate economic growth*</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing tuition tax credits to parents who send children to private or parochial schools*</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing the defense budget in order to increase the federal education budget</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easing restrictions on the construction of nuclear power plants*</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redistributing income from the wealthy to the poor through taxation and subsidies</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[N = 2,312]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing the federal budget deficit by raising taxes</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxing environmental regulation to stimulate economic growth*</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing tuition tax credits to parents who send children to private or parochial schools*</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing the defense budget in order to increase the federal education budget</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easing restrictions on the construction of nuclear power plants*</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redistributing income from the wealthy to the poor through taxation and subsidies</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social Issues Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Agree strongly + Agree somewhat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[N = 2,515]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busing children in order to achieve school integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving abortion decisions to women and their doctors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviving the Equal Rights Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permitting prayer in public schools*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barring homosexuals from teaching in public schools*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banning the death penalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[N = 2,226]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busing children in order to achieve school integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving abortion decisions to women and their doctors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviving the Equal Rights Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permitting prayer in public schools*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barring homosexuals from teaching in public schools*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banning the death penalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[N = 2,312]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busing children in order to achieve school integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving abortion decisions to women and their doctors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviving the Equal Rights Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permitting prayer in public schools*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barring homosexuals from teaching in public schools*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banning the death penalty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: For items without an asterisk [*], “agree” responses scored as “liberal” and “disagree” response scored as “conservative”. Reverse scoring used for items with an asterisk.
of recent years: school busing, abortion, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), school prayer, gay rights, and the death penalty. Aggregate responses to these dozen issues reveal a greater degree of stability than change over the eight-year period in question. Support for reducing the defense budget increased from 58 percent in 1984 to 77 percent eight years later, a change that no doubt reflects the end of the Cold War. Two other economic issues, relating to environmental regulation, gave rise to 7 percent changes, but in offsetting directions; relaxing environmental regulations drew even less support in 1992 than in 1984, but there was a corresponding increase of those who approved easing regulations on construction of nuclear plants. Responses to the six social issues were even more stable. For four issues—school busing, abortion, ERA and the death penalty—the changes were negligible. Support for school prayer increased by 7 percent and there was a 9 percent decline among those who favored banning homosexual teachers from public schools. The correlations among responses to the items on the economic issues scale were uniformly positive, between .28 and .32, in all three surveys. Cronbach’s alpha, a measure of reliability, ranged between .70 and .74. The comparable figures for the social issues scale were slightly higher, with correlations in the .33 to .38 range, and alpha coefficients between .74 and .78.

The rationale underlying the classification scheme described in Table 7.1 parallels the well-supported thesis that a single isolationist-to-internationalist scale is not adequate to describe foreign policy attitudes (Wittkopf, 1990). The premise is that a single liberal-to-conservative dimension is insufficient to capture some important differences between economic and social issues and, therefore, that it is useful to distinguish between them. For example, being a fiscal conservative does not necessarily mandate a single position on the Equal Rights Amendment, school prayer, or capital punishment; and the bitter debates, even among avowed conservatives, between pro-choice and pro-life advocates underscore the point even more dramatically. Because the terms “liberal” and “conservative” have varied sufficiently in meaning their contemporary content cannot be considered self-evident.

The present analysis incorporates the following defining premises.
With respect to economic issues, liberals were assumed to favor:

- an active role for government in regulating the economy, and protecting the environment;
- taxation for purposes of income redistribution, while opposing tax policies that provide benefits to the more affluent.

On social issues, it was assumed that liberals were in favor of the following:

- an active role for government in promoting the interests of those who have traditionally been at a disadvantage owing to race, class, gender, or other attributes;
a ban on the death penalty, at least in part because it has been inflicted disproportionately upon some traditionally disadvantaged groups.

Conservatives were assumed to favor, the following positions on economic issues:

- removing or reducing governmental restrictions on economic activity;
- reducing taxes;
- a large defense budget to ensure a strong national defense.

On social issues, conservatives were assumed to oppose:

- an active role for government in attempting to legislate equality among income groups, sexes, races, and the like;
- an active role for government in support of those who challenge “traditional values.”

Agreement with seven of the twelve items that constitute the domestic issues scale was scored as “liberal,” whereas agreement with the other five (identified by an asterisk in Table 7.1) was rated as a “conservative” answer. Each respondent was then given two scores, the first based on summed responses to the six economic issues, and the second derived from preferences on the six social issues. A cutting point of 0.00 was used for each of the scales. Respondents who scored on the “liberal” side of both the economic and social scales are classified as liberals, and those who were on the “conservative” side with respect to both economic and social issues are designated as conservatives. Respondents with a liberal position on economic issues and conservative preferences on social issues are labeled populists. The final group—those who favored a conservative position on economic issues and a liberal stance on social issues—are the libertarians.

Several points emerge from the distribution of respondents summarized in Table 7.2. Of the two underlying dimensions, the social issues appear to be more divisive than the economic ones. Second, although the liberals and conservatives constitute a strong majority of the entire leadership sample, there are enough populists and libertarians to support the premise that a single ideological scale is not sufficient to capture preferences on both economic and social issues. Indeed, whereas liberals and conservatives combined to account for 78 percent of the total in 1984, that figure had declined to 76 percent in 1988, and still further to 74 percent in the most recent survey. The populist group increased between 1984 and 1992, mostly at the expense of the conservatives.

Some additional domestic policy items can be used to undertake a modest test of this classification scheme. On economic issues, the liberals and populists should take positions that differ significantly from those of the other two groups.
Liberals, Populists, Libertarians, and Conservatives

Table 7.2 The Distribution of Liberals, Conservatives, Populists, and Libertarians, 1984–1992

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Issues</th>
<th>Liberal (%)</th>
<th>Conservative (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>1984: 45</td>
<td>1984: 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Issues</th>
<th>Populists (%)</th>
<th>Conservatives (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>1984: 15</td>
<td>1984: 33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social issues should find a different alignment, with conservatives and populists arrayed against the liberals and libertarians. On both types of issues, the greatest difference should be between those who disagree on both scales—the liberals and conservatives.

Leaders were asked to rank three possible national economic goals: preservation of the private enterprise system, the welfare state, and the environment. The domestic policy classification scheme suggests that conservatives and libertarians should provide the strongest support for the former, whereas liberals and populists should give the highest priority to the latter two national goals. Further, the widest gaps should be between the liberals and conservatives. The results summarized in Table 7.3 support all these expectations. Six other domestic policy questions, described in Table 7.4, provide a second test of the domestic issues scheme. The two environmental issues—laws dealing with acid rain (7.4-A) and oil drilling in parks (7.4-F)—yield results that are exactly as expected, as do two social/value items: AIDS testing (7.4-B) and term limits (7.4-G). Responses to another social/value item on legalizing drugs (7.4-E) also fit the expected pattern except that the populists were even less supportive of the proposal than the conservatives. The question on a balanced budget amendment (7.4-D) elicited strikingly different responses from liberals and conservatives, but by a small margin the populists rather than libertarians ranked second in their enthusiasm for the proposal. On balance, the evidence indicates that the domestic policy classification scheme not only yields satisfactory reliability scores but also that it can be used with at least moderately satisfactory results to predict responses to other domestic policy issues. Additional validation for this domestic issues classification scheme emerges from the respondents' self-placement on a standard ideology scale, as reported in Table 7.11 below.
Table 7.3 Appraisal of Three National Goals by Liberals, Populists, Libertarians, and Conservatives: 1992 FPLP Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Goal</th>
<th>% # 1 Rank ordering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Respondents [N=2,312]</td>
<td>Liberals [N=1,080]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserve and protect the private enterprise system</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserve and protect the welfare state</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserve and protect the environment</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberals [N=441]</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Populists [N=441]</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libertarians [N=166]</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservatives [N=625]</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences among groups significant at the .001 level for all items.

Table 7.4 Other Domestic Issues Assessed by Liberals, Populists, Libertarians, and Conservatives: 1992 FPLP Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domestic Issue</th>
<th>% Agree Strongly + Agree Somewhat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Respondents [N=2,312]</td>
<td>Liberals [N=1,080]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Enacting tougher anti-pollution laws to reduce acid rain</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Requiring that applicants for marriage licenses, insurance policies, and some jobs be tested for AIDS</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Restricting the number of terms that elected officials may serve</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Adding a balanced budget amendment to the constitution</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Legalizing drugs such as cocaine in order to reduce drug-related crimes</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Opening up more parks and recreation lands for oil drilling</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Populists [N=441]</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libertarians [N=166]</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservatives [N=625]</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences among groups significant at the .001 level for all items.
The domestic issues scheme is analogous to the militant internationalism (MI)—cooperative internationalism (CI) scheme developed by Wittkopf (1990) for foreign policy issues. In that scheme, dichotomizing and crossing the MI and CI dimensions yields four types, with the quadrants labeled hard-liners (support MI, oppose CI), accommodationists (oppose MI, support CI), internationalists (support both MI and CI), and isolationists (oppose both MI and CI). Analyses of previous FPLP surveys supported Wittkopf’s findings; the MI/CI scheme effectively describes core elements in orientations toward international affairs (Holsti and Rosenau, 1990, 1993). Knowing respondents’ placement on the MI and CI dimensions provides a powerful predictor of attitudes toward a broad array of international issues.

In previous analyses, the militant internationalism scale focused on two core elements: attitudes toward the USSR or communism and the use of force. Responses to seven questions from the 1976–88 FPLP surveys represent various dimensions of an MI orientation, with an emphasis on: a conflictual world in which the USSR and its expansionist policies represent a major threat to the United States; the necessity of being prepared to use force, including the CIA, to cope with the threats; the dangerous consequences, as postulated by the “domino theory,” of failing to meet international challenges; and a zero-sum view of the Cold War. Although the validity of longitudinal analyses is materially enhanced by using precisely the same wording each time a question is posed, altered global realities made it necessary to make four changes in the 1992 version of the MI scale. “Russia” replaced “Soviet Union” in one question. The wording in two questions on the domino theory and on US obligations to cope with aggression was altered by using the terms “aggressor nations” and “expansionist power” in lieu of “communism.” Finally, a proposition that seems quite central to an MI perspective—“Rather than simply countering our opponent’s thrusts, it is necessary to strike at the heart of the opponent’s power” (Schlesinger, 1975)—replaced an item opposing better relations with the USSR. Owing to these changes, any direct comparison of overall support for an MI perspective in 1992 relative to the previous FPLP surveys is problematical.

The seven items on the CI scale emphasize international cooperation and institutions; non-strategic “North–South” issues, including hunger and the standard of living in less developed nations; arms control; and foreign aid. Whereas changed international realities mandated alterations in the MI scale, this was not true of the CI scale; the items and their wording have remained identical in all five FPLP surveys. Increased support for cooperative internationalism in 1992 is entirely the consequence of a striking shift toward more favorable attitudes regarding the United Nations. No doubt the direction and magnitude of these opinion changes reflect the events surrounding the Persian Gulf War and the
ability of the United States, with the cooperation of the Soviet Union and the
acquiescence of China, to lead the Security Council toward action to force Iraq
out of Kuwait. Responses to questions on the United Nations offset moderately
decreling support for three items with a significant Third World focus: global
hunger, foreign aid, and the standard of living in LDCs.2

Despite the changes described above, correlations among responses to the
seven; questions on the 1992 MI scale are uniformly positive (ranging between
.10 and .67), as they have been in all FPLP surveys, and Cronbach’s alpha scores
have consistently; exceeded the conventional requirement that it reach the .70
level. The CI scales yielded quite similar results, with correlations in the .12 to
.67 range, and alpha scores between .77 and .80.

In order to classify respondents, a score of 0.00 was used as the cutting point
on both scales for each of the five surveys. Whereas those opposing militant
internationalism have slightly outnumbered the supporters in all surveys, there
has been a moderate but steady trend toward increasing support for cooperative
internationalism. Table 7.5, depicting the distribution of hard-liners, isolationists,
internationalists, and accommodationists, confirms that the latter two groups—
leaders with a favorable stance toward cooperative internationalism—outnumber
the other two. As in 1984 and 1988, accommodationists constitute a slight major-
ity of the entire sample. The most discernible change in 1992 is the increased
number of internationalists, mostly at the expense of the hard-liners and, to a
lesser degree, the isolationists.

**Domestic and Foreign Policy Beliefs: 1984–1992**

The extent to which positions on domestic and foreign policy are related may
be summarized by combining the classification schemes for the two types of

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**Table 7.5** Distribution of Hard-liners, Internationalists, Isolationists and Accommodationists
in the 1984–1992 FPLP Surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cooperative Internationalism</th>
<th>Militant Internationalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>Hard-Liners (%)</td>
<td>Isolationists (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Internationalists (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984:</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988:</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992:</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>Accommodationists (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984:</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988:</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992:</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
issues for the three leadership surveys under consideration (Table 7.6). The distributions indicate that there is a rather strong correspondence, a conclusion supported by the summary statistic, \( \phi \), which ranges from .56 to .61. A consistent majority of domestic liberals are also foreign policy accommodationists, that is, they support CI and oppose MI. On the other hand, approximately equal proportions of the domestic conservatives are either foreign policy hard-liners or internationalists, the two groups that favor militant internationalism. With respect to foreign policy issues, the populists and libertarians are quite similar; both are predominantly accommodationists and internationalists. These are the two groups that favor cooperative internationalism. One possible interpretation is that although both populists and libertarians favor CI, their reasons for doing so differ. The former (economic liberals) may support CI because they prefer government spending for domestic rather than defense purposes, and perhaps the latter (economic conservatives) do so because they oppose the type of “big government” that almost invariably attends wars, crises, confrontations, and extensive commitments abroad.

The results in Table 7.6 can be supplemented by a more detailed analysis of the manner in which the four domestic policy groups responded to a broader range of foreign policy issues. The analyses that follow are limited to a sample of the results from the 1992 survey.

Beliefs about Post-Cold War International Relations

Military preponderance of the American- and Soviet-led blocs, that is, the bipolar international system at the strategic level, was a dominating feature of the Cold War era. When asked to describe the contemporary international system, almost 90 percent of those taking part in the 1992 leadership survey agreed that it is now multipolar. The 7 percent difference between liberals (85%) and conservatives (92%) is in the predictable direction, but it is not statistically significant and, in any case, it pales in comparison to the striking convergence of views on the structure of the system. Although Russia remains a highly armed nuclear power, the sea change in attitudes is reflected in the fact that fewer than 3 percent of the opinion leaders still viewed the system as bipolar. Nor was there much support for the thesis that the disintegration of the Soviet Union has created a “unipolar moment” in which only the United States has the means, and therefore the responsibility, to create and maintain international stability (Krauthammer, 1990–91).

Future Threats to US National Security

Opinion leaders were asked to assess the severity of a dozen potential threats to US national security during the remaining years of the century. The defining
Table 7.6 Relationship between Attitudes on Domestic Issues (Liberals, Conservatives, Populists, Libertarians) and International Issues (Accommodationists, Internationalists, Hard-liners, Isolationists) among US Opinion Leaders in the 1984, 1988, and 1992 FPLP Surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Economic Issues</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1984 (%)</td>
<td>1988 (%)</td>
<td>1992 (%)</td>
<td>1984 (%)</td>
<td>1988 (%)</td>
<td>1992 (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liberal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberals</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Accommodationists</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodationists</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Isolationists</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolationists</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Internationalists</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalists</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hard-liners</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conservative</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Populists</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Accommodationists</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodationists</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Isolationists</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolationists</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Internationalists</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalists</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hard-liners</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

characteristics of the four groups suggest that the conservatives and populists should be most sensitive to military/strategic, threats and to those arising from a challenge to traditional values, whereas the liberals and populists should show the greatest concern for economic and environmental hazards. The data summarized in Table 7.7 generally sustain these expectations, although in some cases the differences across groups are very modest; for example, fewer than one leader in six believed that Middle East conflict (7.7-J), unwarranted American interventions abroad (7.7-K), or mass migrations (7.7-L) represented an "extremely serious" future security threat.

Two questions focus on threats arising from nuclear weapons which might come into the possession of Third World countries (7.7-A), and on those remaining in several of the former Soviet republics (7.7-I). Although the former issue was judged to be an extremely serious threat by more than three-fifths of the opinion leaders, far fewer of them expressed a comparable level of concern about weapons in the republics that seceded from the USSR. On both questions the pattern of group responses was as expected, although differences on the latter issue were rather small. The two items on possible environmental security threats (7.7-E, 7.7-G) gave rise to very large inter-group differences. As expected, liberals and populists expressed much greater concern than leaders in the other two groups. A similar pattern of differences emerged on questions about several domestic issues (7.7-B) and a somewhat comparable international one—the growing gap between rich and poor nations (7.7-G). Finally, three items touch upon several aspects of traditional values: the budget deficit (7.7-C), drugs (7.7-D), and population growth (7.7-F), control of which is sometimes linked to the highly charged abortion issue. These potential threats, which ranked third, fourth, and sixth among the twelve options, all gave rise to a similar pattern of group responses. As predicted, the conservatives and populists expressed the greatest concern for the first two, followed by the libertarians and liberals; assessments of the population threat were in precisely the reverse order.

**US Interests and Roles**

Fifteen items in the 1992 survey explored leadership beliefs about US interests in the post-Cold War world and the rules that it might assume in pursuing those interests (Table 7.8). Overwhelming majorities of more than 90 percent of the opinion leaders favored greater attention to economic and social issues (7.8-A) and the formation of international coalitions to deal with such an agenda (7.8-B). Although a high proportion of conservatives agreed with these positions, their support was significantly lower than that expressed by leaders in the other three groups. Propositions that the United States should also assume a leadership role
Table 7.7 Future Threats to American National Security Appraised by Liberals, Populists, Libertarians, and Conservatives: 1992 FLP Survey

This question asks you to evaluate the seriousness of the following issues as threats to American national security during the remaining years of this century. Please indicate how serious you regard each possible threat.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Respondents [N=2,312]</th>
<th>Liberals [N=1,080]</th>
<th>Populists [N=441]</th>
<th>Libertarians [N=166]</th>
<th>Conservatives [N=625]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. The possession of nuclear weapons by Third World countries</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. An inability to solve such problems as the decay of cities, homelessness, unemployment, racial conflict, and crime</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. The federal budget deficit</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. International drug trafficking</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Environmental problems like air pollution and water contamination</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Uncontrolled growth of the world’s population</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. A growing gap between rich nations and poor nations</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. The greenhouse effect and other changes in the global climate induced by human activities</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Nuclear weapons in republics that seceded from the former Soviet Union</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Armed conflicts in the Middle East</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. American interventions in conflicts that are none of our business</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Mass migrations</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences, among groups significant at the .001 level for all items except J and L.
on more security-oriented issues, including international aggression (7.8-C) and a new world order (7.8-D), evoked support from majorities in all four groups, but to a significantly greater degree from conservatives than liberals. The related propositions that “America’s conception of its leadership role in the world must be scaled down” (7.8-F), in part because it is no longer a superpower (7.8-I), yielded precisely the reverse pattern of responses, with agreement among liberals outstripping that among conservatives by a margin of more than 2–1 on both items. However, respondents in all four groups agreed that America’s allies should assume a greater responsibility in their own defense (7.8-E) and that this nation could most effectively influence Third World development by solving its own problems (7.8-G). The Patrick Buchanan proposal that the United States needs a foreign policy that “puts America first, and second and third as well” received very modest support—fewer than one opinion leader in four agreed—except from the conservatives, almost half of whom agreed with the contender for the 1992 Republican presidential nomination (7.8-L).

Two additional items explored possible rationales for US interventions abroad in the post-Cold War era, including support for groups seeking self-determination and for democratization. Prior to the Cold War, proponents of self-determination included some notable liberals, Woodrow Wilson among them, whereas conservatives have generally given higher priority to international stability. These differences were somewhat transformed during the Cold War, as conservatives tended to support self-determination movements that might weaken the Soviet empire whereas liberals favored self-determination for peoples in the British, French, Dutch, and other colonial empires. Responses by opinion leaders to the trade-off between self-determination and international stability (7.8-H) are consistent with the more traditional liberal and conservative views; although the entire leadership sample was divided almost evenly on the issue, differences between liberals and conservatives were very large.

Leaders in none of the four groups expressed much enthusiasm for intervention in the internal affairs of other countries in support of democracy (7.8-M), but these responses were not part of a more general support for a retreat into isolationism. Indeed, given several opportunities to do so, large majorities of the leaders rejected four propositions, each of which expressed strong isolationist sentiments. Barely a third of the respondents agreed that, “We shouldn’t think so much in international terms but concentrate more on our own national problems” (7.8-J). Even smaller minorities accepted definitions of American vital interests that are limited to Western Europe, Japan, and this hemisphere (7.8-K), while excluding the Third World (7.8-O), and fewer than one respondent in six wished to restrict US involvement in world affairs to a purely military contribution (7.8-N).
Table 7.8 US International Roles and Interests Assessed by Liberals, Populists, Libertarians, and Conservatives: 1992 FPLP Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>All Respondents [N = 2,312]</th>
<th>Liberals [N = 1,080]</th>
<th>Populists [N = 441]</th>
<th>Libertarians [N = 166]</th>
<th>Conservatives [N = 625]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. US foreign policy should supplement military preparedness with an equal</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. The United States should be as ready to form economic and diplomatic</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. The US should take all steps including the use of force to prevent</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. The US is the dominant power of the post-Cold War era and is capable</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Our allies are perfectly capable of defending themselves and they can</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. America's conception of its leadership role in the world must be</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. The best way to encourage democratic development in the &quot;Third World&quot;</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. The US should exercise its power in such a way as to assure continuing</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Although its power is greater relative to other countries, the US is</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.
J. We shouldn't think so much in international terms but concentrate more on our own national problems
K. Vital interests of the US are largely confined to Western Europe, Japan and the Americas
L. What we need is a new foreign policy that puts America first, and second and third as well
M. The US should not hesitate to intrude upon the domestic affairs of other countries in order to establish and preserve a more democratic world order
N. The US should only be involved in world affairs to the extent that its military power is needed to maintain international peace and stability
O. Third World conflicts cannot jeopardize vital American interests

Differences among groups significant at the .001 level for all items except G, J, K and O.
Making American Foreign Policy

Foreign Policy Goals

Each of the FPLP surveys has borrowed a cluster of questions on foreign policy goals used by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations in its quadrennial surveys of leaders and the general public. Responses to the 1992 survey are grouped into five clusters of issues: world order security issues (Table 7.9: A–D), world order economic and environmental issues (E–H), US economic interests (I–L), US value issues (M–N), and Cold War security issues (O–Q).

Two arms control issues received the highest number of “very important” ratings from the leadership sample. More than 85 percent of respondents in all four groups rated control of nuclear proliferation (7.9–A) as a “very important” foreign policy goal, and differences among them were negligible. This strong inter-group agreement did not, however, extend to the more general goal of arms control (7.9–B); although accorded the top priority by almost three-fourths of the entire leadership sample, there were wide differences among the four groups, especially between liberals and conservatives. A similar pattern emerged on the goal of strengthening the United Nations (7.9–C). Finally, although there was considerable support for the American-led effort to reverse Iraq’s conquest of Kuwait in 1991, leaders in none of the groups expressed very much enthusiasm for a more open-end commitment to protecting weaker nations against aggression (7.9–D).

A series of items on international economic and environmental world order issues gave rise to predictable differences among respondents, paralleling those that were used to define the four groups. Thus, compared to leaders in the other two groups, liberals and populists gave significantly higher importance ratings to fostering international cooperation (7.9–E), protecting the global environment (7.9–F), combatting world hunger (7.9–G), and helping to improve the standard of living in less developed countries (7.9–H). Liberals were most inclined to rate these goals as “very important,” followed by the populists, libertarians, and conservatives in that order; the range of inter-group responses exceeded 30 percent in each case.

Four additional items asked respondents to assess goals that center on the pursuit of American economic interests: securing adequate energy supplies (7.9–I), reducing the trade deficit (7.9–J), and protecting us jobs (7.9–K) and business interests abroad (7.9–L). Only the energy goal was rated as “very important” by a majority of respondents, and fewer than one opinion leader in four gave that assessment to the protection of business interests. The first three of these goals yielded quite similar patterns of inter-group responses: the liberals were significantly less enthusiastic, whereas differences among the other groups were rather small. Not unexpectedly, conservatives outdistanced the others in their support for protecting US business interests abroad.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Worldwide arms control</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Strengthening the United Nations</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Protecting weaker nations against foreign aggression</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World Order Economic and Environmental Issues</th>
<th>All Respondents [N= 2,312]</th>
<th>Liberals [N= 1,080]</th>
<th>Populists [N= 441]</th>
<th>Libertarians [N= 166]</th>
<th>Conservatives [N= 625]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E. Fostering international cooperation to solve common problems, such as food, inflation, and energy</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Protecting the global environment</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Combatting world hunger</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Helping to improve the standard of living in less developed countries</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>US Economic Interests</th>
<th>All Respondents [N= 2,312]</th>
<th>Liberals [N= 1,080]</th>
<th>Populists [N= 441]</th>
<th>Libertarians [N= 166]</th>
<th>Conservatives [N= 625]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Securing adequate supplies of energy</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Reducing the US trade deficit with foreign countries</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Protecting the jobs of American workers</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Protecting the interests of American business abroad</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M. Promoting and defending human rights in other countries</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O. Defending our allies' security</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Matching Russian military power</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. Containing communism</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences among groups significant at the .001 level for all items except A, D, and N.
Promoting democracy and human rights abroad have been central to a number of liberal twentieth century American administrations, including those of Woodrow Wilson and Jimmy Carter. The end of the Cold War has stimulated further debate about the emphasis that these values and institutions should play in the conduct of American foreign relations. Opinion leaders did not, in the aggregate, accord either human rights (7.9–M) or democracy abroad (7.9–N) a very high priority; they ranked tenth and fifteenth among the seventeen goals. Given the defining characteristics of the four groups, the liberals and libertarians would be expected to be most supportive of a human rights emphasis; the data support that expectation. They also offered the strongest support for the promotion of democracy abroad, but only at a very modest level and with very small inter-group differences.

The fifth cluster of questions centers on goals that had been near or at the top of the US foreign policy priorities during the four decades of the Cold War. These undertakings have clearly been pushed to the back burner, or perhaps completely off the stove, on the agenda of most opinion leaders. About one-third of them assessed the defense of allies (7.9–O) as “very important,” and an even smaller proportion of them accorded a similar rating to the goals of matching Russian military power (7.9–P) or containing communism (7.9–Q). It is consistent with the definition of the four groups that the strongest support for these goals was found among conservatives, followed by the populists, libertarians, and liberals.

Approaches to Peace

Respondents in the four groups often disagreed sharply on effectiveness of eight broad approaches to peace (Table 7.10). Conservatives overwhelmingly judged that “military superiority of the United States” (7.10–E) is the most effective path to peace, whereas that approach ranked last among liberals. Conversely, the latter placed the greatest emphasis on economic cooperation (7.10–A), better international communication and understanding (7.10–B), narrowing the rich nation–poor nation gap (7.10–F), arms control (7.10–D), and international organizations (7.10–G). None of these approaches elicited much enthusiasm from conservatives. With one exception, on better international communication and understanding, assessment of these strategies for peace found the responses of populists and libertarians between the liberals and conservatives. Collective security has often had liberal champions; Woodrow Wilson, a staunch supporter of Article 10 of the League of Nations Covenant, is a notable example. Leaders taking part in the 1992 survey expressed only modest support for this path (7.10–C), however, and differences among the four groups were not significant. The classical realist prescription for peace—a balance of power (7.10–H)—received very modest support from leaders in any of the four groups, least of all from the conservatives.
Table 7.10 Approaches to Peace Assessed by Liberals, Populists, Libertarians, and Conservatives: 1992 FPLP Survey

How effective do you consider each of the following as an approach to world peace? Please indicate your assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>All Respondents [N=2,312]</th>
<th>Liberals [N=1,080]</th>
<th>% Very Effective Populists [N=441]</th>
<th>Libertarians [N=166]</th>
<th>Conservatives [N=625]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Trade, technical cooperation, and economic interdependence</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Better communication and understanding among peoples and nations</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Collective security through alliances</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Arms control</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Military superiority of the US</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Narrowing the gap between rich and poor nations</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Strengthening the United Nations and other international organizations</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Political efforts to achieve a balance of power within regions and between great powers</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences among groups significant at the .001 level for all items except C.
Who Are the Liberals, Populists, Libertarians, and Conservatives?

Respondents in each of the leadership surveys were asked to provide some standard background information. Table 7.11 summarizes the relationship between domestic policy orientations as defined earlier (Table 7.2) and the background attributes of those taking part in the 1992 survey. The results are consistent with those of every previous analysis of the FPLP data, including the 1976 and 1980 surveys that are not discussed here because they did not include domestic policy items. To summarize briefly, three inter-related background attributes—ideology, party, and occupation—have consistently emerged as the most important correlates of political beliefs and policy preferences, whereas the other attributes—including military service (\(\phi = .18\)), age (.15), gender (.13), education (.13) and foreign travel (.10)—tend to be rather weak in that respect.

Although surveys of the general public have consistently found an association between education and political attitudes, leaders included in the FPLP samples have had very little variation in educational experience; for example, over three-fourths of the 1992 respondents had earned one or more graduate degrees.

Table 7.11  Who are the Liberals, Populists, Libertarians, and Conservatives? The Relationship between Background Attributes of Leaders and Domestic Policy Attitudes in the 1992 FPLP Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Of the leaders who identify themselves as …</th>
<th>… the percentage whose domestic policy attitudes classify them as …</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideology</strong> ([\phi = .70])</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very liberal</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat liberal</td>
<td>588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat conservative</td>
<td>701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very conservative</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Party</strong> ([\phi = .61])</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupation</strong> ([\phi = .45])</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business executive</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military officer</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clergy</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public official</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Department</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educator</td>
<td>655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor leader</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
percent of them had at least an undergraduate degree, and fewer than 2 percent had no college experience.

As noted earlier, the ideological self-identification may also serve as a consistency check on the domestic issue classification scheme proposed here. Of those who identified themselves as "very liberal" and "somewhat liberal," 94 percent and 81 percent, respectively, expressed domestic policy preferences that placed them in the liberal category. Similarly, the self-identified conservatives had policy positions that placed a great majority of them in the conservative category. The populists and libertarians tended to describe themselves in middle positions of the ideology scale but with a tilt toward the conservative rather than the liberal end.

Conclusion

We began with the Destler–Gelb–Lake (1984) lament about the impact of partisanship and ideology on the conduct of American foreign relations. The evidence presented here indicates that the strong relationship between domestic and foreign policy beliefs uncovered in responses to the 1984 leadership survey has persisted through the early post-Cold War years. Responses to specific questions have changed over the eight-year period under analysis; for example, support for reducing the defense budget to finance increased education expenditures increased significantly between 1984 and 1992, and descriptions of Soviet/Russian foreign policy goals as "expansionist" fell sharply during the same period. But the structure of both domestic and foreign policy beliefs has remained quite stable. No doubt one reason for this stability is that both clusters of beliefs appear to be systematically grounded in ideology and partisanship. The very strong relationship between ideology, party and placement in the domestic policy classification scheme is summarized in Table 7.12. Self-identified liberals (81%), and their domestic policy preferences place most of them in the liberal category. Similarly, opinion leaders who identified themselves as conservatives were predominantly Republicans (70%), and a majority of them expressed domestic policy opinions that classified them as conservatives. Among the small contingent of cross-pressured leaders—liberal Republicans and conservative Democrats—domestic policy preferences tended to reflect ideological rather than party identifications. A comparable summary of foreign policy beliefs reveals a quite similar pattern, albeit with a slightly less powerful overall correlation (Table 7.13). Finally, it is worth noting that these relationships have remained quite stable over time. Similar analyses of the 1984 and 1988 leadership surveys yielded phi coefficients of .78 (1984) and .78 (1988) for domestic policy beliefs. The comparable figures for foreign policy beliefs are .63 (1984) and .66 (1988).
Although the evidence has identified some areas of substantial agreement among leaders—notably in characterization of the post-Cold War international system as multipolar, rejection of an undiscriminating retreat into isolationism, preferences for liberalizing rather than restricting international trade, and support for assisting reform processes in the former Soviet Union—it also uncovered considerable evidence of deep partisan and ideological cleavages among opinion leaders. Five years after the Berlin Wall was demolished, many of the issues that dominated the Cold War agenda, including the role of force and the nature of American commitments abroad, continue to divide American leaders; responses to much of the “post-Cold War” agenda reveal a comparable absence of agreement. Similar differences may also be found on many domestic questions, especially the social issues.\(^7\)

Disagreements on domestic and foreign policy issues have been the exception rather than the rule in American politics; in that sense, the data presented here hardly represent a break from earlier eras. What may be new is the extent that the cross-cutting cleavages created by domestic and international issues during

Table 7.12 Ideology, Partisanship, and Domestic Policy Beliefs in the 1992 Foreign Policy Leadership Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-identification</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Liberal (%)</th>
<th>Populist (%)</th>
<th>Libertarian (%)</th>
<th>Conservative (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very liberal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Somewhat liberal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>28</td>
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<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very conservative</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Republican</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>

\(^*\)Phi = .74

\(^1\)141 respondents listed another party preference or did not identify any preference.
the two decades following the Second World War are giving way to overlapping divisions which, in turn, have powerful ideological and partisan foundations. The end of the Cold War has done little to alter this trend. The tenor of political debate during the first two years of the Clinton administration would appear to sustain the continuing relevance of the Destler–Gelb–Lake diagnosis in this respect. The broader implications of these tendencies will vary according to one’s normative vision. Those who have criticized American politics and parties for lacking ideological coherence will no doubt be pleased, whereas those who find merit in the more pragmatic style of politics made necessary by cross-cutting cleavages are less likely to applaud.

References

178 • Making American Foreign Policy


Acknowledgements

The research described in this paper was made possible by support from the National Science Foundation, most recently through grant number NSF–SES–91–22033. We are also grateful to Daniel F. Harkins for highly skilled programming of the FPLP data, and to Rita Dowling for superior and cheerful secretarial assistance.

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Introduction

One of the continuities linking the foreign policies of the Bush and Clinton administrations was support for expanding the ‘zone of democracy’. Both of the post-cold war presidents used State of the Union addresses and many other vehicles to promote the proposition that this goal could provide one of the foundations of American foreign policy, much as containment of Soviet expansionism did during four and a half decades after World War II.¹

The idea of an American mission to expand democracy has a venerable history, dating back to the early days of the republic.² It has not, however, been free of controversy.³ Is it either a desirable or a feasible goal of foreign policy? Is it best implemented actively by policy or passively by example? Woodrow Wilson placed the expansion of democracy squarely among American war aims in his Fourteen Points and his speech on 2 April 1917, requesting that Congress declare war against Germany. The Atlantic Charter and other allied proclamations during World War II also asserted that the war against the Axis powers was guided in part by such Wilsonian goals. Both world wars found major democracies such as the United States, Great Britain, and France among the victors but, except in the defeated countries—Japan, Germany and Italy—there were only limited successes in promoting democracy in formerly authoritarian countries after World War II.

Expressions of American support for expanding democracy were not hard to find during the cold war. For many years Congress went through the annual ritual of voting for the ‘Captive Nations Resolution’, for example, but some important
barriers stood in the way of moving beyond symbolic and rhetorical exercises for promoting democracy in areas where it did not exist. The first was a lack of agreement about the appropriate targets of such efforts. Conservatives typically limited their support to promoting democracy in Soviet bloc countries. In contrast, liberals were more inclined to argue that the US should use its leverage to promote political reform in countries such as South Africa or among allies that were also recipients of American military and economic assistance. The second barrier was international. Where was it desirable or feasible to promote democracy at other than the rhetorical level without the risks of provoking a world war or uprisings against faithful allies in the confrontation with the Soviet Union?

The end of the cold war largely dismantled these barriers. Not only were the potential costs associated with expanding democracy significantly reduced, but this goal also seemed to offer a unifying focus for American foreign policy, thereby helping to rebuild the foreign policy consensus that had been one of the notable casualties of the Vietnam War. In short, this has appeared to be a foreign policy goal that not only promised a very favourable risk-reward ratio abroad, but that also offered the promise of rich domestic political dividends.

This chapter examines the role of American public opinion in promoting and sustaining the expansion of democracy: To what extent has the public been the driving force behind Washington's efforts to promote political reform abroad? The next section briefly describes how both aspects of the question—the role of public opinion in the foreign policy process and the goal of promoting democracy in other countries—are among the issues that most clearly divide proponents of the realist and liberal perspectives on international affairs. The third section presents some evidence on how both the general public and opinion leaders have assessed the goal of expanding democracy during the past two decades. The analysis is based on a broad rather than a restrictive view of expanding democracy. Competitive elections are a crucial element of democracy, but governments may in fact gain electoral victories by pledges to repress some minority or other. For example, generations of politicians in the American South won elections by promising to maintain second-class citizenship for blacks. Thus, this section will also include evidence about some related issues, including the promotion and defence of human rights abroad. The data are intended to shed some light on several questions:

1. How strong is public support for promoting democracy in other countries?
2. To what extent do the views of the general public diverge from those of opinion leaders?
3. How, if at all, has the end of the cold war affected support for expanding democracy abroad?
4. To what extent has the goal of expanding democracy abroad served to bridge the partisan and ideological gaps that have characterized most foreign policy issues since the Vietnam War?

The conclusion presents several possible explanations for the dominant patterns in the public opinion data and touches briefly on the policy implications of the findings.

Liberals vs. Realists on Public Opinion and Promotion of Democracy Abroad

At first glance it might appear that this discussion addresses two quite distinct issues: the role of public opinion in the formulation of foreign policy, and the promotion of political reform in other countries as a foreign policy goal. Both issues are at the core of the venerable debates between advocates of realism and liberalism, the two dominant perspectives on the conduct of foreign affairs. Proponents of these two schools of thought generally hold sharply divergent views on the role of public opinion in the foreign policy process as well as on the appropriate weight that should be accorded to reforming domestic institutions abroad.

The first issue centres on the role of public opinion and its ability to make a useful contribution to the quality of foreign policy and diplomacy. A long liberal tradition, dating back to Immanuel Kant and Jeremy Bentham and continuing through Woodrow Wilson, asserts that democracies are more peaceful at least in part because the public can play a constructive role in constraining policy makers. Elihu Root, a distinguished Republican foreign policy leader, eloquently summarized the case for democratizing foreign policy in the initial issue of Foreign Affairs:

When foreign affairs were ruled by autocracies or oligarchies the danger of war was in sinister purpose. When foreign affairs are ruled by democracies the danger of war will be in mistaken beliefs. The world will be the gainer by the change, for, while there is no human way to prevent a king from having a bad heart, there is a human way to prevent a people from having an erroneous opinion.6

In contrast, Alexis de Tocqueville, Walter Lippmann, E. H. Carr, Hans J. Morgenthau, George F. Kennan and most other realists have been intensely sceptical of the public because the effective conduct of diplomacy requires long-term strategic visions of the national interest, combined with the ability to pursue those interests with speed, secrecy, and flexibility. These requirements would often be jeopardized were the public, whose preferences are allegedly driven by emotions and
short-term considerations, to have a significant role in foreign affairs. Lippmann’s indictment of the public would gain the support of many realists:

The unhappy truth is that the prevailing public opinion has been destructively wrong at the critical junctures. The people have impressed a critical veto upon the judgements of informed and responsible officials. They have compelled the government, which usually knew what would have been wiser, or was necessary, or what was more expedient, to be too late with too little, or too long with too much, too pacifist in peace and too bellicose in war, too neutralist or appeasing in negotiations or too intransigent. Mass opinion has acquired mounting power in this country. It has shown itself to be a dangerous master of decision when the stakes are life and death.7

By the late 1960s or early 1970s a near-consensus had developed among public opinion analysts on three points: public opinion is volatile, lacks any coherent structure, and is largely irrelevant in the conduct of foreign affairs. Were these three propositions generally valid, it would scarcely be of more than modest academic interest to devote much effort to analysing public attitudes on expanding democracy. However, during the past quarter-century some powerful challenges have been mounted against all three of them. Although the debate about the nature and impact of public opinion is far from over, we now have a growing body of evidence that public attitudes are in fact quite stable, have at least a moderate degree of structure, and often play a significant role in foreign policy decisions.8

Realists and liberals also disagree about the extent to which the nature of domestic institutions and practices in other countries are proper concerns of foreign policy. The realist thesis in opposition to such policies is grounded in three propositions. First, an effective foreign policy requires that national interests be pursued with sober understanding of the balance between risks and rewards on the one hand, and relevant resources on the other. It is necessary and sufficient that such policies be focused on the demanding task of influencing the international behaviour of other states, without taking on the added and extraneous burden of judging and seeking to reform their domestic institutions and practices as well. Realists often cite with approval the 1821 Independence Day address by Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, in which he answered demands that the United States should assist other nations in gaining their freedom: ‘Wherever the standard of freedom and independence has been or shall be unfurled, there will her [US] heart, her benedictions and her prayers be. But she does not go abroad in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own.’9

The doctrines of state sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries constitute the second pillar in the realist argument against
Promotion of Democracy as Popular Demand?

Efforts to reform political institutions and practices abroad. In an imperfect world, these norms are essential to avoid constant conflict. Without them, the international system would more closely approximate a state of perpetual war because no political grievance—real or perceived—would lie beyond the reach of external powers that might be tempted to launch crusades to redress them. Although realists generally are not counted among the staunchest defenders of international institutions, they frequently remind their liberal critics that Article 2, paragraph 7 of the UN Charter explicitly endorses the doctrine of non-interference: ‘Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter.’

The third point usually emphasized by realists is that, even if it were desirable to give a high priority to political reform abroad, this is not a feasible goal. Political institutions, including democratic ones, must originate in indigenous cultural values and practices. They can be imposed from abroad only in the most unusual circumstances; for example, it required the total defeat of Germany and Japan in World War II, followed by long periods of post-war occupation, to impose effective democratic institutions on those two countries. It is simply not feasible, according to most realists, for the United States to take on such an agenda, even in an era in which it is the world’s only superpower. As three critics of an active American effort to promote democracy put it, ‘there is no surer way to turn millions of America’s admirers into America’s opponents than to force an unfamiliar social system on them.’

Liberals bring forth a number of responses to the realist brief against according a priority to the promotion of democracy abroad. They can muster evidence about the emergence of at least some international consensus on acceptable internal institutions and practices. The 1926 international agreement to abolish slavery is a pre-World War II example. The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights and additional international and regional treaties and institutions created in the wake of the Nazi Holocaust constitute further indications of widening agreement that the doctrines of sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs are not absolute barriers against international concern with what goes on within a country’s borders. Although events in Cambodia, Somalia, Burundi, Rwanda, Bosnia, Chechnya, Haiti and elsewhere provide ample evidence that progress on reforming internal institutions is at best slow and uneven, there is a discernible international trend in the direction of more rather than less concern for such issues. Thus, according to liberals, it is in its national interest for the United States to be a leader rather than a laggard in the undertaking.

The role of public opinion in the policy process and the priority to be assigned the expansion of democracy are intimately linked in the realist-liberal debate. Not the least reason for realist scepticism about public opinion is the fear that
the public will give undue weight to reformist and humanitarian impulses—what Michael Mandelbaum has derisively called 'foreign policy as social work'.\footnote{11} Indeed, one of the worst realist nightmares is that the public, aroused by vivid television presentations of egregious denials of basic political and human rights in some country of no vital American national interest, will press Washington to undertake a costly and ill-fated intervention at the risk of major losses while achieving little more than salving the American national conscience. Moreover, should the undertaking result in even modest casualties, the public may then clamour for immediate withdrawal, further damaging America's credibility and reputation for mature international leadership.\footnote{12}

The liberal rebuttal to the realist case begins with the propositions that promoting democracy abroad constitutes the 'right thing' and that doing so is consistent with the most basic American values, including those articulated in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. Liberals further assert that their concerns are not merely a reflection of dedication to fundamental democratic values, but are also grounded in a sober appreciation of three important political realities. First, long-term domestic support, a prerequisite for success in any significant international undertaking, can be sustained only when the public is persuaded that the ends and means of foreign policy are consistent with basic American values. As Jimmy Carter put it in his May 1977 speech at Notre Dame: 'I believe that we can have a foreign policy that is democratic, that is based on fundamental values, and that uses power and influence for humane purposes. We can also have a foreign policy that the American people both support and understand.'\footnote{13} Moreover, although the public may not be sufficiently informed or sophisticated to understand all the nuances of international affairs, they correctly believe that regimes which consistently deny fundamental political and human rights to their own citizens cannot be trusted to behave responsibly toward other countries, much less to carry out their international agreements. Finally, liberals point out that because democratic regimes don't go to war with each other, expanding the 'zone of democracy' is a significant contribution to peace.\footnote{14}

Data

Through much of the cold war, promotion of democracy was largely limited to rhetoric about America's adversaries. Washington's response to the East German uprising in 1953 and the Hungarian revolution in 1956 revealed that campaign slogans about 'liberation' and 'rolling back the iron curtain' were just that—campaign slogans. Nor was there much interest in promoting democracy among America's authoritarian allies for fear that successor regimes might prove to be less faithful cold war partners or, worse, to be dominated by radical leftists. It took the conjunction of the domestic civil rights movement, intense controversy over the costly but failed military effort in support of South Vietnam, and a backlash
against the Realpolitik foreign policy strategies of the Nixon-Kissinger period to stimulate serious debates about the role of democratization and human rights in American foreign policy.

It is thus not surprising that there are relatively few public opinion survey questions about the promotion of democracy or human rights abroad prior to the 1970s. Even for the period since the mid-1970s we have nothing that comes close to approximating the almost monthly surveys assessing presidential approval or performance ratings. There are, however, two continuing survey projects, both initiated in the wake of the war in Vietnam and continuing into the post-cold war era, that provide at least some evidence about American attitudes toward promoting democracy and human rights abroad. In 1974, the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (CCFR) undertook a major survey of attitudes toward foreign affairs. Subsequent replications of that study have been conducted at four-year intervals.15 The CCFR studies included both the general public and much smaller samples of leaders. The Foreign Policy Leadership Project (FPLP) surveys of American opinion leaders, first conducted in 1976, have also included follow-up studies at four-year intervals—1980, 1984, 1988, 1992, and 1996.16 Much of the evidence for this paper is drawn from the CCFR and FPLP surveys. Some additional data about the desirability and feasibility of promoting political change abroad has been drawn from surveys conducted by such major polling firms as Gallup as well as some that have been sponsored by major newspapers and networks.

Findings

Since its inception, the CCFR surveys have asked both the general public and leaders to rate the importance of various foreign policy goals for the United States, including ‘helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations’. Table 8.1, a summary of the results for each of the six surveys, includes responses to all of the goals in the questionnaire, not merely the promotion of democracy, in order to convey a better sense of how assessments of that goal have compared with others. It is clear that promoting the spread of a democratic form of government to other nations has not been a high foreign policy priority for the general public. Indeed, more often than not it has been the foreign policy goal that was assigned the fewest ‘very important’ ratings, and in none of the surveys did as many as one-third of the respondents accord the top rating to this goal. Although some observers have criticized American diplomacy for misguided zeal in attempting to propagate the country’s values and institutions abroad, there is little in these data to suggest a groundswell of public enthusiasm for such undertakings.

Nor does the evidence in Table 8.1 indicate that the end of the cold war and the disintegration of the Soviet Union kindled any burning desires to promote
Table 8.1 The Importance of American Foreign Policy Goals: Assessments by the General Public in the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations Surveys, 1974–1994 (% ‘very important’ ratings)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>'For each [foreign policy goal], please say whether you think that it should be a very important foreign policy goal of the United States, a somewhat important foreign policy goal, or not an important goal at all.'</th>
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<th>1982</th>
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<th>1990</th>
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<td>—</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Worldwide arms control</td>
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<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Strengthening the United Nations</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Protecting weaker nations against aggression</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Improving the global environment</td>
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<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Combating world hunger</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Helping to improve the standard of living in less developed countries</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. Stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the US</td>
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<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Controlling and reducing illegal immigration</td>
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<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Securing adequate supplies of energy</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
<td>K. Reducing the US trade deficit with foreign countries</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Protecting the jobs of American workers</td>
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<td>78</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>83</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>43</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O. Helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td><strong>Cold war/security issues</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Maintaining superior military power worldwide</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. Defending our allies’ security</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Matching Soviet military power</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Containing communism</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


the spread of democracy, even though the risks of igniting a superpower confrontation with Moscow by doing so have virtually vanished. Notwithstanding the fact that the Bush and Clinton administrations placed expanding democracy near the top of their foreign policy agendas, since 1986 there has in fact been a slight decline in support for promoting democracy abroad.

The five most recent CCFR surveys have also asked respondents to rate the importance of ‘promoting and defending human rights in other countries’. Improving the state of human rights abroad has rarely been a top priority for the American public. The high point occurred in 1990, just a year after the Berlin
Wall had come down, when 58 per cent of the general public rated it as ‘very important’, but even then it ranked only sixth, well behind such economic and security goals as protecting the interests of American workers and businesses abroad, securing adequate supplies of energy, defending allies, and preventing nuclear proliferation.

Just as the end of the cold war failed to stimulate heightened enthusiasm for promoting democracy abroad, the post-cold war period has also witnessed a precipitous decline in the priority to be accorded to human rights in American foreign policy. By 1994 only about one-third of the public rated it as a ‘very important’ goal, the lowest figure since the question was introduced to the CCFR surveys in 1978.

The CCFR surveys have also included much smaller samples of political and other leaders. Their assessments of possible American foreign policy goals are summarized in Table 8.2. As was true of the general public, the leaders taking part in the CCFR surveys have expressed very muted support for efforts to bring democratic institutions to other nations. This ranked as the least important goal in four of the six studies, and it never gained a ‘very important’ rating from as many as one-third of the leaders.

The related goal of promoting and defending human rights abroad has fared somewhat better than expanding democracy in the judgement of opinion leaders surveyed by the CCFR, but not substantially so. At no time did it rank among the most important goals of American foreign policy, nor did it ever gain a top rating from a majority of the respondents. Moreover, although improving the state of human rights abroad was never among the top priorities during the 1970s and 1980s, the period since the end of the cold war has witnessed reduced rather than heightened enthusiasm for this foreign policy goal among leaders, paralleling the trend among the general public. The decline in support was especially notable during the period between the 1990 and 1994 surveys.

The six Foreign Policy Leadership Project (FPLP) surveys of American opinion leaders have borrowed the CCFR cluster of questions asking respondents to rate the importance of various foreign policy goals. The questions have been worded identically with those in the CCFR surveys, making it possible to undertake cross-survey comparisons. It should be noted, however, that the FPLP samples are substantially larger, employ different sampling designs, and include an additional leadership group: senior military officers. Assessments of foreign policy goals during the 1976–96 period are summarized in Table 8.3. Once again, responses to the entire cluster of items are included in order to permit a comparison of views about promoting democracy and human rights abroad with other foreign policy goals.

The results reveal a very tepid response to expanding democracy abroad, as this goal ranked at or near the bottom in each of the six FPLP surveys. Even at the peak of support in 1988 only one-quarter of the opinion leaders judged it to
### Table 8.2 The Importance of American Foreign Policy Goals: Assessments by Leaders in the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations Surveys, 1974–1994 (% ’very important’ ratings)

*For each [foreign policy goal], please say whether you think that it should be a very important foreign policy goal of the United States, a somewhat important foreign policy goal, or not an important goal at all.*

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Worldwide arms control</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Strengthening the United Nations</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Protecting weaker nations against aggression</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>E. Improving the global environment</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Combatting world hunger</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Helping to improve the standard of living in less developed countries</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. Stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the US</td>
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<tr>
<td>I. Controlling and reducing illegal immigration</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. Securing adequate supplies of energy</td>
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<td>88</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>72</td>
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<td>K. Reducing the US trade deficit with foreign countries</td>
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<td>49</td>
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<td>L. Protecting the jobs of American workers</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>N. Promoting and defending human rights in other countries</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>O. Helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P. Maintaining superior military power worldwide</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. Defending our allies’ security</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Matching Soviet military power</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Containing communism</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>43</td>
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</tr>
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</table>


be a ’very important’ foreign policy goal. By 1996 fewer than one leader in six gave it that rating. As was the case with responses to the CCFR surveys, although promoting human rights in other countries garnered somewhat stronger support than the goal of expanding democracy among opinion leaders taking part in the FPLP studies, it never ranked very high when compared with other foreign policy goals. And once again the data indicate that the end of the cold war has not heightened support for efforts to improve and protect the state of human rights abroad. To the contrary, by 1996 ‘very important’ ratings for this goal had declined to 24 per cent, the lowest figure recorded in any of the FPLP surveys.
## Table 8.3 The Importance of Foreign Policy Goals: Assessments by American Opinion Leaders in the Foreign Policy Leadership Surveys, 1976–1996 (% ‘very important’ ratings)

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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>2282</td>
<td>2502</td>
<td>2515</td>
<td>2226</td>
<td>2312</td>
<td>2141</td>
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<tr>
<td>World order security issues</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>83</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Worldwide arms control</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Strengthening the United Nations</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Protecting weaker nations against aggression</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>—</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>World order economic issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Fostering international cooperation to solve common problems, such as food, inflation, and energy</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Protecting the global environment</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Combatting world hunger</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>56</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. Helping to improve the standard of living in less developed countries</td>
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<td>I. Securing adequate supplies of energy</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. Protecting the jobs of American workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>K. Protecting the interests of American business abroad</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>US values and institution issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>L. Stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the US</td>
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<td>58</td>
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<tr>
<td>M. Controlling and reducing illegal immigration</td>
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<tr>
<td>N. Promoting and defending human rights in other countries</td>
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<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>O. Helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cold war/security issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>P. Maintaining superior military power worldwide</td>
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<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. Defending our allies’ security</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Containing communism</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Matching Soviet military power*</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>18</td>
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At least some tentative answers to several of the questions posed earlier appear to have emerged at this point. First, there has been a remarkably consistent absence of strong support for either of the closely related goals of promoting democracy and human rights abroad. Second, the end of the cold war does not appear to have provided an impetus for moving these goals higher on the foreign policy agenda; indeed, to the extent that there have been changes since the Berlin Wall came down, they are in the direction of reduced rather than increased support for both of them. It is noteworthy that such consistent results have emerged from the twelve surveys undertaken by two organizations over a period of more than two decades. Finally, the evidence in Tables 8.1–8.3 indicates that differences between the general public and opinion leaders are rather limited. These results certainly do not provide a great deal of support for realist fears that a poorly informed and emotional public might drive leaders, who know better, into feckless crusades to make the world over in the American image.

The foregoing analyses have focused on questions asking respondents to assess the importance of foreign policy goals. Although these questions have the virtue of having been asked over a span of more than two decades with precisely the same wording, they have the disadvantage of being rather abstract and removed from the specific context of actual decisions and policies. Stated differently, the ‘goals’ questions may provide evidence about what respondents believe to be desirable, but they tell us much less about what they regard as feasible in given circumstances, or about how they may assess trade-offs between goals. Two of the more difficult and controversial issues touching on such trade-offs have involved American policies toward the Soviet Union and China. To what extent should the United States have pressed for democratization within the Soviet Union or for better treatment of Jews and other minorities within the USSR if doing so might have endangered negotiations on arms control and other strategic issues, or even given rise to serious deterioration in relations between Washington and Moscow? Should the United States insist upon political reform and improvement of China’s human rights record as a condition for better relations, including normalization of trade, with Beijing?

Table 8.4 summarizes the results of a dozen questions concerning Soviet-American relations posed by several survey organizations over the span of the Carter and Reagan administrations. Although the wording of the questions varied quite substantially, making it hazardous to make any direct comparison of responses, the data suggest that the American public usually ascribed a higher priority to concerns other than expanding democracy and human rights in the Soviet Union. One exception occurred in 1977, just two months after Carter’s inauguration but before the Brezhnev regime demonstrated that it, too, could play the ‘linkage game’ in response to such actions as Carter’s open letter to Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov. In a Time magazine survey, a majority—55 per cent—agreed that the President should continue to complain to the Soviets...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Survey</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 1977</td>
<td>President Carter says that he is trying to bring more morality to our country’s foreign policy. Some people feel that he is doing the right thing, others that he is making unwise decisions. Do you personally feel that [he] should or should not continue to complain to the Russians about the suppression of human rights even if it slows down détente and the chances for an arms agreement?</td>
<td>Should</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Should not</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1977</td>
<td>Tell me if you tend to agree or disagree [that] President Carter hurt his chances of getting an agreement on SALT because he kept talking about how the Russians were violating human rights.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris</td>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1977</td>
<td>We are currently engaged in talks to reach an arms agreement with Russia, and Russia is one of the countries President Carter has criticized for denying its citizens human rights. Do you think Carter’s criticism will decrease, increase, or won’t affect the chances of reaching an [arms] agreement?</td>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roper</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Won’t affect outcome</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1978</td>
<td>Do you feel that President Carter’s continuing emphasis on the Russian violations of human rights of dissidents in that country has made it more difficult to reach agreement with the Russians on SALT arms control and other important issues?</td>
<td>Has</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris</td>
<td></td>
<td>Has not</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1978</td>
<td>Do you think that the US should break off negotiations with Russia aimed at limiting nuclear weapons because of Russian violations of human rights, or do you think negotiations should continue?</td>
<td>Continue</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC/AP</td>
<td></td>
<td>Break off</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 1985</td>
<td>Some people think that the US should make agreement on the arms control treaty dependent on progress in other areas of difference between this country and the Soviet Union—including human rights and regional conflicts. Others believe that arms control is so important we should negotiate in that area regardless of progress in other areas of difference between our nations. Which comes closer to your views?</td>
<td>Yes, dependent</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gallup</td>
<td></td>
<td>Negotiate regardless</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
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Table 8.4 Continued

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<th>Date/Survey</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 1985</td>
<td>What do you think is the most important topic that should be discussed at the Geneva summit meeting: nuclear weapons disarmament, a nuclear test ban, outlawing nuclear weapons in space, reducing missiles stationed in Europe, peace talks for regional trouble-spots, human rights, cultural exchanges, or what? [Adds up to more than 100% due to multiple responses.]</td>
<td>Nuclear disarmament</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Regional trouble-spots</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Space weapons</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Test-ban</td>
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<td>Missiles in Europe</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural exchanges</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1987</td>
<td>Which of these is the most important in America’s policy toward the Soviet Union: human rights, reducing nuclear weapons, situations like Afghanistan, or making Western Europe safe?</td>
<td>Nuclear weapons</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1988</td>
<td>I’d like to read you three things the Soviets could do that many Americans would think of as positive steps for the Soviets to take. If the Soviets were to do only one of them, which one would be the most important?</td>
<td>Nuclear arms agreement</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americans Talk Security</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ease Third World tensions</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Improve human rights</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All (vol.)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1988</td>
<td>Which viewpoint is closest to your own—that we should hold up arms agreements until the Soviets improve human rights, or that we should go ahead with arms agreements regardless of whether or not the Soviets have improved human rights in their country?</td>
<td>Go ahead with agreements60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americans Talk Security</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hold up agreements</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Neither (vol.)</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
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</table>
September 1988

Peter D. Hart* describe some specific goals the next president might give priority to. Which one or two would you say are the most important for the next president to address?

- Slow down arms race: 47
- Stop terrorism: 35
- Stop world hunger: 22
- Ensure strong defence: 16
- Stop communism in Central America: 15
- Ensure respect for US human rights and democracy: 13
- Promote human rights and democracy: 11
- Middle East peace: 11
- Avoid US military involvement abroad: 10
- End apartheid: 8
- None (vol.): 1
- Not sure: 2
- Do not pressure: 66
- Pressure now: 27
- Don't know: 7

*Sample limited to ages 18–44.

December 1988

Gallup

Some people feel that now is a good time for the US to put pressure on Gorbachev to make concessions on human rights, regional conflicts, and other areas of difference between our countries. Others feel that we should not put pressure on Gorbachev so that his attempts to reform the Soviet system have a better chance to succeed. Which view comes closer to your own?
about the suppression of human rights 'even if it slows down detente and the chances for an arms agreement.' Two other 1977 surveys revealed considerable ambivalence about whether Carter's criticisms would in fact damage the chances of achieving an arms control agreement.

By 1978, however, a strong majority felt that a US human rights emphasis had in fact hurt efforts to achieve an arms control treaty, and an even larger majority rejected the proposition that Washington should break off such negotiations because of Soviet human rights violations. Further, in five surveys undertaken during the Reagan era the public repeatedly accorded a higher priority to arms control than to regional conflicts, Third World tensions, and other points of contention between the two superpowers, including the state of human rights in the Soviet Union. By 1988, two-thirds of the public rejected the proposition that the US should press the Gorbachev regime for concessions on the grounds that such pressures might damage the Soviet leader's own efforts at reform.

The public has been somewhat more ambivalent about its preferences when faced with a trade-off between, on the one hand, improving relations and expanding trade with China, and, on the other, pressing the leaders in Beijing for political reform, including improvement of its human rights record. Few recent issues have more clearly divided American leaders along realist-liberal lines. Henry Kissinger, George Bush, and other realists have been vocal advocates of the view that relations with China were too important to be held hostage to American preferences about Beijing's domestic institutions and practices; in any case, they argued, expanding trade relations was the best vehicle for promoting political reform. After rejecting this position during the 1992 presidential campaign, Bill Clinton joined the realist camp. Representatives Richard Gephardt and Nancy Pelosi, New York Times columnists A. M. Rosenthal and Anthony Lewis, and the Christian right were among the more vocal proponents of the opposing view that China's record on democratization and human rights should play an important role in Sino-American relations.

Since the mid-1980s questions relating to American policy toward China have been posed in various forms at least 14 times, with results that fail to yield a clear pattern of public preferences. Prior to the Tiananmen Square massacre of pro-democracy dissidents in June 1989, a majority of the public was disinclined to let US relations with China depend on human rights considerations. Six months after the massacre an overwhelming majority of those taking part in a Los Angeles Times survey asserted that the US should 'stand up for human rights as a condition of our friendship' with China, but soon thereafter the public mood began to shift toward a more ambivalent stance. For example, between January 1990 and October 1991 four CBS/New York Times surveys asked, 'when the United States deals with China, which do you think is more important: to criticize the way China suppressed human rights, or to avoid criticism in order to maintain good relations with China?' In none of these surveys did either option garner
support from a majority of the respondents; the 'good relations' policy prevailed in the first two surveys by 4 per cent and 2 per cent, whereas the 'human rights' position was favoured by margins of 11 per cent and 4 per cent in the two later polls. However, more recent surveys indicate that public attitudes are shifting in the direction of a more accommodating stance toward China despite the absence of visible steps toward democratizing that country's political system or improving its human rights record. For example, a 1995 Times-Mirror survey revealed that 62 per cent of the respondents believed that 'the US should not get involved in China's domestic affairs, even if it means overlooking human rights abuses,' whereas fewer than half that number stated that 'the US should try to promote democracy in China, even if it risks worsening relations with China.'

In summary, there is little evidence in Table 8.5 to support the charge that a moralistic and unrealistic public is pushing the United States toward an unwise confrontation with China. If anything, the data suggest that those who are reluctant to undertake actions that might spoil relations with Beijing slightly outnumber those who would press for a China that is more democratic and sensitive to the human rights of its citizens.

Party, Ideology and Support for the Promotion of Democracy

There is ample evidence that during the decades since the Vietnam War most foreign policy issues have divided leaders and the general public along partisan and ideological lines. The end of the cold war has not given rise to a dramatic change in the direction of bridging these partisan and ideological cleavages, although there are some important issues, notably trade and protectionism and relations with Israel, on which the fault lines run along somewhat different dimensions. The question to be addressed here is whether the promotion of democracy abroad has been another of the many issues that pits Republicans against Democrats and liberals against conservatives.

Whereas Table 8.1 provided aggregate summaries of responses to the promotion of democracy goal question, Table 8.6 reports assessments of that goal according to party affiliation and ideological self-description by members of the general public who took part in the Chicago Council surveys. The results indicate that, contrary to many other foreign policy issues, partisan and ideological differences on this foreign policy goal have been rather narrow. Neither Republicans nor Democrats have expressed much support for the promotion of democracy abroad and the gaps between them have ranged between 1 per cent and 8 per cent. A very similar pattern is evident when respondents are classified according to ideology. Moreover, support for expanding democracy reached a peak—if that is the appropriate term to describe 'very important' ratings that never rose above 30 per cent—during the 1980s, and it has declined among all partisan and ideological groups since the end of the cold war.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Survey</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 1985</td>
<td>Do you think that the human rights situation in China is such that the United States should make our relations with them depend on the human rights situation there?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1989</td>
<td>Which course of action do you think better serves America’s long-term interests: should we be conciliatory to the Chinese, or should we stand up for human rights as a condition of our friendship?</td>
<td>Stand up</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA Times</td>
<td></td>
<td>Conciliatory</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1990</td>
<td>When the United States deals with China, which do you think is more important: to criticize the way China suppresses human rights, or to avoid criticism in order to maintain good relations with China?</td>
<td>Criticize</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS/NYT</td>
<td></td>
<td>Good relations</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Both (vol.)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1990</td>
<td>Same question as above</td>
<td>Criticize</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS/NYT</td>
<td></td>
<td>Good relations</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Both (Vol.)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1991</td>
<td>Same question as above</td>
<td>Criticize</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBS/NYT</td>
<td></td>
<td>Good relations</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Both (Vol.)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1991</td>
<td>Same question as above</td>
<td>Criticize</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS/NYT</td>
<td></td>
<td>Good relations</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>Both (Vol.)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1993</td>
<td>Which one of the following comes closer to your point of view: We should maintain good trade relations with China, despite disagreements we might have with its human rights policies? We should demand that China improve its human rights policies if China wants to continue to enjoy its current trade status with the United States?</td>
<td>Good trade</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC/WSJ</td>
<td></td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Neither (Vol.)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 1994</td>
<td>NBC/WSJ</td>
<td>Same question as above</td>
<td>Good trade</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Human rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Neither (Vol.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1994</td>
<td>NBC/WSJ</td>
<td>Same question as above</td>
<td>Good trade</td>
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<td>Human rights</td>
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<td>Neither (Vol.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1994</td>
<td>NBC/WSJ</td>
<td>Same question as above</td>
<td>Good trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Human rights</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Neither (Vol.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1994</td>
<td>LA Times</td>
<td>Do you think Congress should make Chinese progress in human rights a</td>
<td>Requirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>requirement for extending that country’s most favoured nation trade</td>
<td>Separate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>status, or would it be better to keep human rights discussions</td>
<td>Neither/other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>separate from our trade agreements with China?</td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1994</td>
<td>Time/CNN</td>
<td>Which of these two policy goals do you think is more important in</td>
<td>Human rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>dealing with China?</td>
<td>Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraging China to exercise human rights in the treatment of its</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>citizens. Establishing a strong trading relationship with China.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1995</td>
<td>NBC/WSJ</td>
<td>Should First Lady Hillary Clinton attend the UN World Conference on</td>
<td>Should attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Women, to be held in China, or should she not attend because Harry</td>
<td>Not attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wu, an American citizen and human rights activist, is being held by</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chinese authorities on espionage charges?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1995</td>
<td>Times-Mirror</td>
<td>Do you think the US should try to promote democracy in China, even if</td>
<td>Promote democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>it risks worsening relations with China? Or, do you think the US</td>
<td>Not get involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>should not get involved in China's domestic affairs, even if it means</td>
<td>DK/Refused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>overlooking human rights abuses?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8.7 summarizes assessments of the human rights foreign policy goal by both leaders and the general public in five Chicago Council and one Times-Mirror surveys. As in Table 8.6, respondents are classified according to party and ideology. The results yield several conclusions. First, Democrats generally have accorded higher importance to the goal of defending and promotion of human rights abroad, although partisan differences among the general public were quite small during 1986 and 1990, the years of strongest support for human rights. The partisan gap was only 4 per cent in the latter survey as a majority of Republicans, Democrats, and independents assigned the highest rating to that goal. Second, compared with the general public, partisan gaps have consistently been much wider among leaders. Differences between Republicans and Democrats reached a peak of 37 per cent in 1994, when only 9 per cent of the Republican leaders rated human rights abroad as a ‘very important’ foreign policy goal.

When members of the general public are classified according to ideology, the range of judgments about the pursuit of human rights abroad has typically exceeded the partisan differences—the 1982 survey represents the one exception—and there is little evidence that the gaps have been narrowing since the end of the cold war. The five CCFR surveys reveal that liberals consistently have given higher priority to human rights goals. As was true of partisan gaps on this question, the ideological differences were more pronounced among leaders than among general public, with the gaps ranging between 27 per cent and 39 per cent.

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Levels of partisan differences among opinion leaders taking part in the FPLP surveys are presented in Table 8.8. The goal of promoting democracy abroad has given rise to relatively narrow gaps linked to party identification. Although responses to the most recent survey in 1996 yielded statistically significant differences, the more important points that emerged from the data are, first, that
Promotion of Democracy as Popular Demand?

Table 8.7 Assessment of ‘Promoting and Defending Human Rights in Other Countries’, Leaders and the General Public 1978–1994 (% ‘very important’ ratings)

<table>
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<td>[CCFR]</td>
<td>[CCFR]</td>
<td>[CCFR]</td>
<td>[T-M]*</td>
<td>[CCFR]</td>
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<tr>
<td>All respondents</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>By party**</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Republicans</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>57</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Democrats</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Independents</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By ideology**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conservatives</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Middle of the road</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Liberals</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEADERS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All respondents</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By party</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Republicans</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Democrats</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Independents</td>
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<td>By ideology</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Conservatives</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Middle of the road</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Liberals</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NA: Question not asked.
CCFR: Chicago Council on Foreign Relations.
* Reported percentages are for ‘top priority’ responses.
** Not all respondents were asked about party and ideology in the 1978–1994 CCFR surveys.

‘helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations’ was a rather low priority goal among all opinion leaders, whether Republicans, Democrats, or independents, and second, that its importance fell rather sharply between 1992 and 1996 for members of all three groups.

A somewhat different pattern may be seen in the bottom half of Table 8.8. Sharp and consistently significant partisan differences are evident in each of the five surveys that asked opinion leaders to appraise the importance of ‘promoting and defending human rights in other countries’. In each case Democrats were significantly more inclined than their Republican counterparts to rate the human rights goal as ‘very important’ and they did so by margins exceeding 20 per cent. In each survey, responses by the independents placed them between members of the two major parties.

Table 8.9 reports responses to the goals of promoting democracy and human rights abroad when those taking part in the FPLP surveys are classified according to self-placement on a standard five-point ideology scale. Although most analyses have shown that ideology is a very strong source of differences on a wide array
of foreign policy issues, the goal of promoting democracy has yielded rather muted differences across the ideology scale. Moreover, the pattern of ideological differences has varied across surveys. In four of them, including the 1996 study, liberal leaders expressed the strongest support for this goal, but in the other two studies, both of them during the Reagan era, the conservatives were slightly more enthusiastic about exporting democracy. No doubt the conservative support arose largely from a hope such efforts would be targeted at the Soviet Union and its cold war allies rather than, for example, South Africa.22

In contrast, promoting human rights abroad as a foreign policy goal has consistently given rise to exceptionally large chasms between liberals and conservatives. The gaps ranged from a low of 34 per cent in 1980 to a high of 53 per cent twelve years later. In each instance the ‘very liberal’ opinion leaders ascribed the greatest importance to human rights abroad, and there was a steady erosion of support as one moved toward the ‘very conservative’ end of the ideological spectrum. Although the importance of human rights has declined among all five groups since the end of the cold war, the range of opinions has remained very wide.

Some additional questions in the FPLP surveys gave opinion leaders further opportunities to express their views on issues related to the promotion of democracy abroad. The 1980 study was undertaken after the fall of the Shah of Iran, the authoritarian ruler who had become the designated pillar of American interests in the Persian Gulf region. It included a question that asked respondents to assess the proposition that, ‘The US should not become aligned too closely with authoritarian regimes’. A very slight majority—53 per cent—including two-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations</th>
<th>Promoting and defending human rights in other countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td>6    7   19   28   21  12</td>
<td>NA 15 16 25 25 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>9    12  18   25   26  20</td>
<td>NA 36 47 53 52 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>6    8   18   20   21  12</td>
<td>NA 26 35 36 35 23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.8 The Importance of Promoting Democracy and Human Rights Abroad in the Foreign Policy Leadership Surveys of American Opinion Leaders Classified by Party, 1976–1996 (% ‘very important’ ratings)

*For each foreign policy goal, please say whether you think it should be a very important, a somewhat important, or not an important goal at all.*
Promotion of Democracy as Popular Demand?

Table 8.9 The Importance of Promoting Democracy and Human Rights Abroad in the Foreign Policy Leadership Surveys of American Opinion Leaders Classified by Ideology, 1976–1996 (% ‘very important’ ratings)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td>Helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Very liberal</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somewhat liberal</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somewhat conservative</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very conservative</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
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</table>

Differences significant at .001 level in 1980 and 1996

Promoting and defending human rights in other countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very liberal</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somewhat liberal</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somewhat conservative</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very conservative</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences significant at .001 level in all years

NA Question not asked.

thirds of the Democrats, agreed, whereas a majority of the Republicans dissented. The 1992 and 1996 surveys asked opinion leaders whether ‘The US may have to support some dictators because they are friendly toward us.’ Wide partisan gaps emerged from their responses, with strong support from members of the GOP and equally strong disagreement from Democrats. In 1996, however, all three groups expressed a somewhat greater willingness to support friendly tyrants than they had four years earlier.

The two most recent FPLP surveys also included the dictum that the US should be prepared ‘to intrude upon the domestic affairs of other countries’ with a view to establishing and preserving ‘a more democratic world order.’ That proposition gained the support of fewer than one leader in five in 1992, with somewhat greater approval from Republicans. Four years later, when experiences in Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia had revealed some of the risks of interventions, even this limited level of support had been cut in half, as only one opinion leader in ten agreed with it. Republicans, Democrats, and independents expressed almost equally strong disapproval toward such interventionist policies (Table 8.10).

Finally, Table 8.11 reports results for the same three propositions when respondents are classified according to ideological rather than partisan self-identifications. The first two items, concerning alignment with authoritarian
**Table 8.10** Assessments of Foreign Policy Guidelines Relevant to Democratization in US Foreign Policy in the Foreign Policy Leadership Surveys of American Opinion Leaders Classified according to Party (% agree strongly + agree somewhat)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Independents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980*</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992*</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996*</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Differences significant at the .001 level

**Table 8.11** Assessments of Foreign Policy Guidelines Relevant to Democratization in US Foreign Policy in the Foreign Policy Leadership Surveys of American Opinion Leaders Classified according to Ideology (% agree strongly + agree somewhat)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Very liberal</th>
<th>Somewhat liberal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Somewhat conservative</th>
<th>Very conservative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980*</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Differences significant at the .001 level
Promotion of Democracy as Popular Demand?

regimes and support for friendly tyrants, revealed a consistent pattern in which the more conservative opinion leaders were by far the most supportive of the Realpolitik position that the domestic institutions and practices of other countries—especially of friendly ones—should not govern American relations with them. The gaps between the most conservative and liberal groups on these questions are huge, exceeding 40 per cent in each case. The final proposition in Table 8.11 yielded mixed results. Conservatives were somewhat more prepared than liberals to undertake interventions on behalf of a more democratic world order in 1992, but on balance even they were strongly against undertakings of this kind. By 1996 respondents in all five ideological groups expressed an overwhelming distaste for such interventions, with only minor differences among them.

Conclusion

With a few scattered exceptions, the data presented in the foregoing tables point quite clearly to the conclusions that there is very limited support among either the general public or opinion leaders for the expansion of democracy abroad, and that the end of the cold war has not given rise to heightened approval for that goal. At the very least, it is hard to find any evidence to sustain realist fears that the public is the driving force behind ill-conceived efforts to export American values and institutions to other countries. Moreover, support for such goals is often a source of sharp partisan differences, and even sharper ideological ones. Indeed, such gaps seem to narrow only when Republican and Democrats, and liberal and conservatives, are united in overwhelming opposition to policies directed at expanding democracy and human rights abroad.

What can explain these findings, including an apparent paradox: as the opportunities for promoting democracy have increased with the end of the cold war, and as the costs and risks of doing so have fallen, why has public enthusiasm for pursuing this goal declined? One possible argument is that perhaps the survey data are simply inadequate to capture public sentiments on expanding democracy abroad; because of such deficiencies as poor wording of the questions, respondents have not been offered an opportunity to express their real views on these issues. While this explanation cannot be ruled out with certainty, it seems rather implausible when a wide range of surveys undertaken across a period of more than two decades by several organizations have yielded such consistent results. Moreover, surveys of both the general public and opinion leaders, which have often revealed large gaps between the two groups on many issues, have pointed to similar conclusions about the low priority assigned to democratization as well as the declining support for that goal during the post-cold war era. If we can at least tentatively assume that the survey data are valid on these issues, then we must look elsewhere for explanations. Three possible lines of reasoning depict
the public in quite different ways: as irrational and ostrich-like, rational and prudent, and cynical.

The first of these explanations may be found in the ‘return to the womb’ thesis articulated by Arthur Schlesinger and other critics who believe that, in the absence of cold war imperatives and effective leadership in Washington, an isolationist and unilateralist public has endangered the ‘magnificent dream’ of American global leadership directed at a more stable and humane world order. It is not hard to find evidence of post-cold war ‘compassion fatigue’ in survey data such as those presented in Tables 8.1–8.3. But a number of other analysts have challenged Schlesinger’s gloomy assessment of contemporary public opinion about foreign affairs and America’s proper role in the world, and they have presented evidence to buttress their doubts that the public has abandoned support for important aspects of global leadership.

Hints about a second possible source of the findings emerge from Jentleson’s studies showing that a ‘pretty prudent public’ is prepared to use American, armed forces abroad to prevent aggression but not to alter the nature of governments or institutions in other countries. The evidence presented here suggests a somewhat broader and more general version of the Jentleson thesis: the public is reluctant to have the United States involved in promoting internal changes abroad, and this lack of support is not limited to situations that require the use of American armed forces. This reluctance might arise from several sources. For example, perhaps there is agreement with the proposition that democratic institutions and practices cannot be exported successfully, least of all by the United States, because they can only emerge indigenously. It is thus neither feasible nor desirable to assign a high priority to the expansion of democracy. This view, if valid, is largely consistent with realist warnings against allowing reformist ideals, however laudable in themselves, to govern the conduct of foreign affairs.

A third and somewhat different explanation for indifference to the expansion of democracy would emphasize public cynicism about such undertakings, arising in part from a revulsion about the rag-tag band of dictators and human rights abusers that have received American approbation as ‘democrats,’ ‘friends of democracy,’ or ‘the moral equivalent of the Founding Fathers,’ especially during the cold war. These friendly tyrants included but were not limited to the various regimes in Saigon during the Vietnam War, the Shah of Iran, Ferdinand Marcos and the contras in Nicaragua. Even President Carter, who was far more sensitive to human rights issues than his predecessors or successors, was not immune to this tendency to mislabel some of America’s cold war friends; recall, for example, his extravagant toast to the Shah during a visit to Iran. The cynicism explanation would also take into account the mountains of survey data revealing public disenchantment with virtually all American institutions, especially political ones at the federal level, including the White House, Congress, and much of the bureaucracy. If the public has lost faith in the efficiency, effectiveness, and fairness of
American public institutions, is it surprising that they have consistently expressed only lukewarm support for efforts to export them to other countries?

We thus have three quite different explanations for the data. According to proponents of the first, an ostrich-like American public is quite prepared to turn its back on more than half a century of effective world leadership with consequences that are likely to be tragic. The second emphasizes a public that, because it is rational, prudent, and discriminating, is unwilling to endorse goals that seem beyond reasonable reach. The third posits a public that is not irrational, but which has grown cynical in the face of perceptions that the rhetoric of American leaders about the virtues of democracy has not been matched by reasonable standards of probity and performance, either at home or abroad.

Perhaps there is some element of truth in all three of these theses and there may also be other sources of public disinterest in expanding democracy. But wherever one finds an explanation for the evidence presented above, it seems clear that leaders who propose to place expansion of democracy at or near the top of the country’s post-cold war foreign policy agenda surely cannot count on a powerful groundswell support from either the general public or opinion leaders. To the contrary, it appears that policymakers who propose to pursue such goals will have to make frequent and effective use of the ‘bully pulpit’ to persuade a sceptical public that promotion of democracy and human rights abroad is indeed a vital national interest.

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to the National Science Foundation for five grants that supported the Foreign Policy Leadership Project surveys of American opinion leaders; to the Duke University Research Council and the Trent Foundation for additional grant support; to Eugene R. Wittkopf for sharing some of his data from the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations and Times-Mirror surveys; to Robert Jackson for obtaining relevant data from the Roper Center; to David Priess for research assistance; to Daniel F. Harkins for many years of programming assistance; to Rita Dowling for secretarial assistance; and to participants in the January 1988 SSRC-sponsored conference on US promotion of democracy for useful comments and suggestions.
Although civilian-military relations are central to democratic governance, American interest in the issue has waxed and waned. Until 1945 the United States favorable geographic position permitted it to demobilize rapidly after each war. The onset of the Cold War almost before the guns of World War II had cooled ensured that the United States would maintain a large military establishment. The unprecedented threats arising from the Cold War and the inception of nuclear weapons heightened concerns about relations between the military and civilian society. They also triggered a flurry of important studies on civilian-military relations, as well as a warning from retiring President Dwight D. Eisenhower on the potential dangers to democratic society of a permanent “military-industrial complex.” Two schools of thought about coping with the civilian-military gap emerged from these studies. According to one perspective, associated most closely with Samuel Huntington, because military values and ways of thinking were more appropriate for dealing with the external threats of the Cold War, the gap would best be closed by society moving toward the more conservative values of the military. Military sociologist Morris Janowitz presented an alternative prescription, focusing on the technological requirements of modern warfare that should appropriately lead toward civilianizing the military.

Controversies surrounding the Vietnam War provided the impetus for renewed consideration of the relationship between the military and civilian society. The flood of postmortems on the causes of U.S. failure in Vietnam has only slightly abated a quarter century after the last evacuation of Americans from Saigon. The wide range of explanations includes some that lay the blame
on the civilian leadership for incompetence—or worse—and undue meddling in the conduct of war, as well as others that indict the military leadership for a variety of serious shortcomings.3

The end of conscription in 1973 and the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 have given rise to a “third wave” of questions about civilian-military relations. The United States has reverted to an older tradition of an all-volunteer military, but it will remain far larger than it was in previous periods of peace. At the same time, issues such as the extraordinary efforts to avoid military service during the Vietnam War by top political and opinion leaders in Washington (President Bill Clinton, House Speaker Newt Gingrich, Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, columnists George Will and Patrick Buchanan), the treatment of women in uniform, a host of widely publicized sex scandals in the military, incidents of mutual disrespect between the military and members of the Clinton administration, and policies toward gays and lesbians in uniform have further roiled civilian-military relations. Tensions between the first Clinton administration and the military so quickly became visible that only ten weeks after Inauguration Day the Gallup Organization, whose surveys have rarely touched upon civilian-military relations, asked the public to “rate relations between Bill Clinton and the military.” Almost two-thirds of the respondents replied “not good,” and of these, 65 percent stated that the president was to blame for this state of affairs.4

The anecdotal evidence about changes and strains in contemporary civilian-military relations receives additional systematic support from an analysis of seventy-five policy disagreements between civilian and military authorities spanning a period of more than six decades and ending in 1997. Prior to the end of the Cold War, civilian preferences prevailed in well over 90 percent of the cases (fifty-nine of sixty-three), whereas during the post-Cold War period they did so in fewer than half (five of twelve).5

A further source of controversy centers on the possible use of the armed forces to cope with a plethora of domestic problems.6 The military were actually deployed to cope with the Los Angeles riots following the Rodney King verdict, in which four white police officers were found not guilty of beating a black motorist; and there have been proposals for using the armed forces to cope with domestic terrorism, drug interdiction, immigration control, and other problems.7 Some recent articles in military journals have even suggested that it may be necessary for the armed forces to cope with domestic “chaos” and to arrest a societal decline into decadence. According to one author, “We must be willing to realize that our real enemy is as likely to appear within our own borders as without.”8

In short, the 1990s have witnessed many developments that have generated a vigorous debate centering on an important question: Is there a crisis in civilian-military relations? In a provocative article and subsequent book, journalist Thomas Ricks presented some disturbing evidence pointing to an alarming and
A Widening Gap between the U.S. Military and Civilian Society?

• 209

growing cultural chasm between the professional military and civilian society. He identified three sources of the widening gap: civilian ignorance of the military arising from a decline in the number of individuals with military experience in the postconscription era; politicization of the military, accompanied by a growing estrangement from the values of civilian society—“private loathing for public America”; and the post–Cold War security environment, which lacks the kind of unifying threat that the Soviet Union had posed during the previous four decades.9

This article focuses on the second of the sources in Ricks's diagnosis. It does so by presenting and analyzing extensive survey data on the political and ideological identifications, as well as some policy preferences, of military and civilian leaders from 1976 to 1996, a period that encompassed the collapse of détente; the second phase of the Cold War; the Reagan-Gorbachev détente; the disintegration of the Soviet Union; the end of the Cold War; numerous post–Cold War conflicts; and American interventions in the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti, Rwanda, and elsewhere.10 The conclusion addresses briefly some policy implications and assesses several proposals for coping with the gap between the military and civilian society.

Several major themes emerge from the analyses that follow. First, the evidence provides strong support for Ricks's thesis that the partisan and ideological chasms dividing civilian and military leaders have widened substantially as a result of increasing military espousal of conservative Republicanism. Second, analyses of preferences on a broad range of domestic and foreign policy issues reveal some substantial differences between civilian and military leaders, but these gaps are neither uniformly large nor are they growing wider across the board; indeed, the post–Cold War period has witnessed a convergence of views on several issues. Third, because sharp partisan and ideological divisions between civilian and military leaders may have significant policy implications, especially at a time when there are likely to be increasing demands on the armed forces to undertake other than conventional military operations, proposals to bridge or at least narrow the chasm between the two groups of leaders merit serious consideration. The conclusion suggests that many of these proposals are Likely to encounter considerable opposition.

Data and Methods

Although this is the age of polling, the mountains of available data about the opinions of the American general public vastly outstrip the far more limited evidence about the views of its leaders. There have been some surveys of military leaders, but these have often been onetime studies. The absence of standard questions that routinely appear in multiple surveys makes it even more difficult to undertake reliable analyses of trends.11
Evidence for the analyses that follow was drawn from the Foreign Policy Leadership Project (FPLP) surveys that I initiated with James Rosenau at a time when many Americans were debating the causes, consequences, and lessons to be drawn from the United States’ failed military effort in Vietnam. The first survey, in 1976, was replicated every four years, most recently in 1996. Each of the six surveys was conducted by means of a long questionnaire that was mailed to samples of approximately 4,000 opinion leaders whose names had been drawn from such general sources as Who's Who in America and Who's Who of American Women, as well as more specialized directories listing leaders in occupations that are underrepresented in Who's Who, including media leaders, politicians, military officers, labor leaders, State Department and Foreign Service officers, foreign policy experts outside government, and the like.

In the five most recent FPLP surveys (1980–96), the military sample included students at the National War College (NWC) and a smaller number of senior uniformed Pentagon officers whose names were drawn randomly from the Congressional Directory. Because it was not possible to obtain permission to distribute the questionnaire at the NWC in 1976, the survey that year included students at the Naval Post-Graduate School (NPGS) as well as the Pentagon officers.

Return rates for the FPLP surveys have ranged between 53 percent and 64 percent. In 1996, 2,141 opinion leaders filled out and returned the questionnaire for a return rate of 54 percent. Because the student body at the NPGS is substantially larger than that at the NWC, the 1976 study included 500 military respondents. The number of military officers in the subsequent surveys has ranged between 115 and 177.

Findings

This section summarizes some evidence from the FPLP surveys, first on the party and ideological identifications of military and civilian leaders, followed by their responses to questions about foreign and defense policy, and, finally, to a number of controversial domestic issues.

Samuel Huntington and other students of civilian-military relations have noted that the American officers corps has a long tradition of abstaining from political participation. George Marshall, for example, never voted on the grounds that even casting a ballot might run contrary to this tradition, and not until he decided to seek the presidency did Dwight Eisenhower reveal his preference for the Republican Party (GOP). On the other hand, in his research, Thomas Ricks found that not only are members of the military becoming more active in politics, but they have become increasingly affiliated with the Republican Party: “The military appears to be becoming politically less representative of society, with a long-term downward trend in the number of officers willing to identify themselves as liberals. Open identification with the Republican Party is becom-
A Widening Gap between the U.S. Military and Civilian Society?  •  211


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<td>Republicans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indeed, contrary to Janowitz’s finding that the highest-ranking officers are also the most conservative, Ricks suggested that the trend toward a growing civilian-military gap will accelerate because junior officers are “overwhelmingly hard-right Republicans and largely comfortable with the views of [conservative talk-show host] Rush Limbaugh.”

Each of the six FPLP surveys asked respondents: “Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?” Their answers, summarized in Table 9.1, provide very strong support for Ricks’s thesis of growing partisanship and identification with the Republican Party among the military. In the 1976 survey, fewer than half of the officers identified themselves with one of the two major political parties; in sharp contrast, more than two-thirds of the civilian leaders did so. The proportion of Republican military officers grew steadily during the next two decades, from fewer than one-third in the 1976 survey to two-thirds of those taking part in the 1996 study, while those declaring themselves to be independent or without any partisan affiliation dropped from a solid majority to about one in four. During the same period, identification with the Republican Party also increased among civilian leaders, but at a far less impressive rate—from 25 percent to 34 percent. The proportion of civilians expressing a preference for the Democratic Party has remained relatively stable—at or near 40 percent—but that has not been true of the military officers. Even in 1976 there were relatively few Democrats among the military, and since the late 1980s their numbers have dwindled to fewer than 10 percent.

As a consequence of these trends, the partisan gap between military and civilian leaders has widened steadily, a trend that has shown no signs of abating.

Previous studies have almost uniformly found that military officers tend to be conservative. Indeed, Huntington argued that the “military mind” is appropriately
Making American Foreign Policy


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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very liberal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>8</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"realistic and conservative."\(^{15}\) In addition to data on partisan affiliations, the FPLP surveys provide evidence on ideological orientations, as respondents were also asked to place themselves on a standard seven-point ideology scale. The two end points, “far left” and “far right,” were so infrequently checked by either civilians or military officers that those responses were combined with the “very liberal” and “very conservative” categories for purposes of statistical analysis, thereby creating a five-point scale. Responses to the ideology item in the six FPLP surveys, reported in Table 9.2, offer strong evidence to support Ricks’s thesis that military leaders overwhelmingly identify themselves as conservative in their political orientation. Even when measured against a 1976 baseline that was strongly tilted toward the conservative end of the ideological spectrum, the virtual disappearance of liberalism among military leaders during the following two decades is quite dramatic, as is the deepening chasm between military officers and civilian leaders in this respect. Since 1980 well over 70 percent of the former identified themselves as conservative, and by 1996 fewer than 3 percent admitted to having liberal leanings. In contrast, the latest FPLP survey found almost equal numbers of liberals and conservatives among the civilian leaders. It should be noted, however, that military identification with the most conservative position on the ideology scale has actually declined somewhat since 1984.

The FPLP samples did not seek to include junior officers, and thus these data are not very well suited to test Ricks’s hypothesis that the younger members of the military are even more enthusiastic in their embrace of hard-core Republican conservatism. It is nevertheless possible to undertake at least some analyses based on the age of the military officers who took part in these surveys. The 1976 sample did include a large contingent of somewhat younger students at the NPGS, but
they were not notably different from senior Pentagon officers in their partisan or ideological preferences. For example, if we score ideological self-identifications on a scale of 1 (very liberal) to 5 (very conservative), the NPGS students had a mean score of 3.54, whereas the comparable figure for Pentagon officers was an only slightly more conservative 3.65.

Because the FPLP surveys asked respondents for date of birth, it is possible to undertake further analysis of the links between age and political-ideological orientation. Tables 9.3 and 9.4 summarize some evidence about the relative impact of intergenerational differences, on the one hand, and on the other, the changes within any age group with the passing of time. Table 9.3 reveals that affiliation with the Republican Party increased for all age groups during the period covered by the six FPLP surveys. In contrast, differences between generations within any given survey were less pronounced; the notable exception to this conclusion was in 1996 when 92 percent of the youngest age group identified themselves as Republicans, thereby providing support for Ricks’s hypothesis that identification with the GOP is strongest among the youngest military officers. It should be noted, however, that this figure is based on a rather small group of only twelve officers in the “post-Vietnam War” age group.

Similar evidence about the ideological self-identification of military officers, grouped by date of birth, in the six FPLP surveys is summarized in Table 9.4. The data reveal a very strong conservative tilt among all age groups in each of the six surveys, if we exclude the figure for the two members of the World War II generation in the 1988 survey (both described themselves as “moderates”). The results also largely parallel those reported in Table 9.3 in this respect: officers in all generational groups have tended to become more conservative over the two decades covered by the FPLP surveys, whereas age-based differences within any given survey are somewhat less pronounced.

### Table 9.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation (Date of birth)</th>
<th>% Republican (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post–Vietnam War (born after 1954)</td>
<td>92 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam War (born 1941–54)</td>
<td>32 (383) 53 (19) 58 (50) 60 (97) 60 (136) 62 (52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim (born 1933–40)</td>
<td>36 (59) 43 (86) 34 (44) 56 (32) 78 (9) 67 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean War (born 1924–32)</td>
<td>33 (18) 53 (38) 73 (22) 74 (17) 50 (6) 63 (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World War II (born before 1924)</td>
<td>57 (23) 20 (5) 70 (10) 50 (2) — —</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages are based on respondents who identified year of birth, excluding those who did not do so.
In summary, the responses reported in Tables 9.1 and 9.2 provide clear support for Ricks's thesis that there is a strong trend toward conservative Republicanism among military officers and, concomitantly, a widening gap between them and civilian leaders. The data in Tables 9.3 and 9.4 suggest that these trends can be traced more directly to growing Republican conservatism within each age cohort across the period of two decades than to striking differences between generations at any given time.

One of the prominent explanations for the growth of conservative Republicanism is that the military are merely reacting to a president who not only avoided conscription but who also wrote as a youth that he "loathed" the military. The data presented here provide rather scant sustenance for that explanation. Even if the FPLP studies had ended with the survey in early 1992, when George Bush was in the White House and a Clinton presidency seemed like a very improbable long shot—that is, if the 1996 data were erased from the foregoing tables—the primary trends described here would already have been in place.

In summary, the responses reported in Tables 9.1 and 9.2 provide clear support for Ricks's thesis that there is a strong trend toward conservative Republicanism among military officers and, concomitantly, a widening gap between them and civilian leaders. The data in Tables 9.3 and 9.4 suggest that these trends can be traced more directly to growing Republican conservatism within each age cohort across the period of two decades than to striking differences between generations at any given time.

One of the prominent explanations for the growth of conservative Republicanism is that the military are merely reacting to a president who not only avoided conscription but who also wrote as a youth that he "loathed" the military. The data presented here provide rather scant sustenance for that explanation. Even if the FPLP studies had ended with the survey in early 1992, when George Bush was in the White House and a Clinton presidency seemed like a very improbable long shot—that is, if the 1996 data were erased from the foregoing tables—the primary trends described here would already have been in place.

These partisan and ideological self-identifications are intrinsically important for theories of civilian-military relations, and they take on added significance in an era marked by increasing political activity by military leaders. Ricks's analysis of the civilian-military gap goes beyond these self-identifications, however, because he also addresses the widening gaps in civilian and military opinions on policy issues.

**Foreign and Defense Policy Issues**

Owing to an overriding concern about the role the United States would play in the post-World War II international system—specifically, whether it would retreat...
A Widening Gap between the U.S. Military and Civilian Society?

into isolationism as it had done after World War I—much of the public opinion research during and immediately after World War II measured attitudes on a single isolationist-to-internationalist scale. For example, the longest-running foreign policy question posed by pollsters—“Should the United States play an active role in world affairs, or should it stay out?”—was introduced in 1943, and some variant of that query was asked at least twenty-three times during the next thirteen years. Most recent studies have shown, however, that attitudes of both opinion leaders and the general public on foreign affairs are better described in multidimensional terms. A series of studies by Eugene Wittkopf demonstrated that there are two “faces of internationalism”: militant internationalism (MI) and cooperative internationalism (CI). Dichotomizing and crossing these two dimensions yields four types of belief systems on international affairs: hardliners (support MI, oppose CI), accommodationists (oppose MI, support CI), internationalists (support both MI and CI), and isolationists (oppose both MI and CI). The FPLP studies used somewhat different methods and questions than those employed by Wittkopf; however, analyses of these six surveys reveal that the MI-CI scheme is an effective way to classify the foreign policy beliefs of opinion leaders: that is, knowing how respondents are classified into these four groups provides powerful predictors of their attitudes on a broad array of international issues.

Militant internationalism is a perspective on international affairs that emphasizes a conflictual world in which expansionist powers represent a major threat to the United States; the necessity of being prepared to use force, including the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), to cope with this threat; the dangerous consequences, as postulated by the “domino theory,” of failing to meet international challenges; and a zero-sum view of international politics. Responses to the items that constitute the MI scale are reported in Table 9.5. Ideally, the seven questions should have remained constant during the 1976–96 period, but international realities associated with the end of the Cold War—most important, the disintegration of the Soviet Union—required some changes between the 1988 and 1992 surveys on questions A, C, E, and G.

The results indicate that, compared to their civilian counterparts, military officers have generally expressed stronger support for most aspects of militant internationalism. But another significant pattern also emerges from the data in Table 9.5. Since the end of the Cold War, the gap between military and civilian leaders has tended to narrow rather than widen. Indeed, by 1996 it had all but disappeared on four of the seven questions: the validity of the domino theory; the proposition that any communist victory is a defeat for America’s national interest; assessments of Russian foreign policy goals; and the dictum that the United States “should take all steps, including the use of force, to prevent aggression by any expansionist power.” Declining military support for the first two of these items (A and B) largely accounted for the convergence of views. Both civilian
**Table 9.5** Militant Internationalism Scale: Responses of Military and Civilian Leaders in the FPLP Surveys of American Opinion Leaders, 1976-96.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1. There is considerable validity in the “domino theory” that when one nation falls to communism, others nearby will soon follow a similar path.</td>
<td>Military Agree</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2. There is considerable validity in the “domino theory” that when one nation falls to aggressor nations, others nearby will soon follow a similar path.</td>
<td>Military Agree</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Any communist victory is a defeat for America’s national interest.</td>
<td>Military Agree</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1. The Soviet Union is generally expansionist rather than defensive in its foreign policy goals.</td>
<td>Military Agree</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2. Russia is generally expansionist rather than defensive in its foreign policy goals.</td>
<td>Military Agree</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. There is nothing wrong with using the CIA to try to undermine hostile governments.</td>
<td>Military Agree</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E1. The United States should take all steps, including the use of force, to prevent the spread of communism.</td>
<td>Military Agree</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2. The United States should take all steps, including the use of force, to prevent aggression by any expansionist power.</td>
<td>Military Agree</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Containing communism (as a foreign policy goal).</td>
<td>Military Very</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians Important</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G1. It is not in the United States’ interest to have better relations with the Soviet Union because the United States is getting less than it is giving to them.</td>
<td>Military Agree</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G2. Rather than simply countering the opponent’s thrusts, it is necessary to strike at the heart of the opponent’s power.</td>
<td>Military Agree</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and military leaders have assessed Moscow’s foreign policy goals in a far more benign way since the end of the Cold War (C1 and C2), erasing any differences between them. The pattern of convergence on the “preventing aggression” question is somewhat different. The Cold War wording—“to prevent the spread of communism” (E1)—elicited far greater agreement from the military than from civilians, but the convergence of views on the post-Cold War version, aimed at “any expansionist power” (E2), was largely the result of increased civilian support in 1992 and 1996 for American action against aggressors. In contrast, very sharp military-civilian differences remain on two issues: the legitimacy of using the CIA to undermine hostile governments (D), and the strategy of employing military power to “strike at the heart of the opponent’s power” (G2). In both instances, the military officers were significantly stronger supporters of these propositions.

In contrast to militant internationalism, the cooperative internationalism perspective emphasizes international cooperation and institutions; “North-South” issues, including hunger and the standard of living in developing countries; arms control; and foreign aid. Responses to the seven questions that constitute the CI scale are summarized in Table 9.6. Unlike in the MI scale, the end of the Cold War did not require any changes in the CI-scale questions. Compared to their civilian counterparts, military leaders have been consistently less inclined to support the various elements of cooperative internationalism. This pattern is especially evident with respect to questions that may have significant implications for American policy toward the developing world, including economic assistance (B), improvement of the standard of living in poor countries (C), global hunger (E), and general international cooperation (G). As was the case with the MI scale, however, the 1996 FPLP survey revealed that the civilian-military gap on several items in the CI scale has actually narrowed since the end of the Cold War. It has virtually disappeared on support for enlisting the cooperation of the United Nations (UN) for settling international disputes (A), and on the importance attributed to arms control as a foreign policy goal (D). The slight convergence of views on several other questions in the 1996 survey is less the result of growing enthusiasm for elements of cooperative internationalism among the military and more a consequence of declining support—sometimes described as post-Cold War “compassion fatigue”—for cooperative internationalism on all seven questions in Table 9.6 among both civilian and military leaders.

Answers to the MI and CI questions may be used to classify the opinion leaders into four categories. Based on an average score for responses to the questions in Tables 9.5 and 9.6, each respondent was placed on MI and CI scales of 1.00 (all answers “agree strongly” or “very important”) to –1.00 (all answers “disagree strongly” or “not at all important”). An average score of 0.00 served as the cutting point between supporters (those with a score greater than 0.00) and opponents (those with a score less than 0.00). For example, a respondent with

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. It is vital to enlist the cooperation of the UN in settling international disputes.</td>
<td>Military Agree</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. The United States should give economic aid to poorer countries even if it means higher prices at home.</td>
<td>Military Agree</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Helping to improve the standard of living in less developed countries (as a foreign policy goal).*</td>
<td>Military Very</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians Important</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Worldwide arms control (as a foreign policy goal).*</td>
<td>Military Very</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians Important</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Combating world hunger (as a foreign policy goal).*</td>
<td>Military Very</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians Important</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Strengthening the UN (as a foreign policy goal).*</td>
<td>Military Very</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians Important</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Fostering international cooperation to solve common problems, such as food, inflation, and energy (as a foreign policy goal).*</td>
<td>Military Very</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civilians Important</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Widening Gap between the U.S. Military and Civilian Society?


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Military</td>
<td>Civilians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>1984</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a score of 0.52 on MI and -0.27 on CI would be classified as a hard-liner. The distribution of military and civilian leaders when they are classified according to the MI-CI scheme is reported in Table 9.7. Strong majorities of the military officers in each of the six surveys are found in the two categories defined as supporting MI—hard-liners and internationalists—whereas that was true of the civilian leaders only in the 1980 survey that was undertaken shortly after Iranian militants took American embassy personnel hostage and the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. In contrast, the proportion of civilian leaders in the accommodationist category has consistently outstripped that of military officers. Relatively few leaders have been classified as isolationists, but there was a rather sharp increase between 1992 and 1996 in the proportion of both groups of leaders in that category.

Some analysts have criticized the MI-CI classification scheme because it is not sufficiently sensitive to an important distinction between those who would seek to attain international goals through multilateral efforts in conjunction with allies and through international institutions, on the one hand, and others who would prefer that the United States pursue its interests unilaterally, unfettered by the need to coordinate policies and compromise with other countries. To address this criticism, ten items in the 1996 survey were used to construct a unilateral-multilateral scale. The questions address several general aspects of
unilateralism and multilateralism, as well as specific questions about whether the United States should be willing to contribute to multilateral peacekeeping forces and the acceptable command structures of such deployments. The latter questions are especially relevant for civilian-military relations, and they have been the source of considerable controversy.

Responses of military and civilian leaders to these items are presented in Table 9.8. Two distinct patterns emerge from the data. Differences between the two groups of leaders are quite limited on five of the items (B, D, F, G, and J). These include support at a near-consensus level among both the military and civilians on general propositions about multilateralism and the need for collective action to deter aggression, as well as the more specific corollary that the United States should accede to North Atlantic Treaty Organization requests for peacekeeping forces. More than two-thirds of both groups would also accept a NATO-appointed commander when U.S. troops are involved. Patrick Buchanan’s dictum that “what we need is a new foreign policy that puts America first, second, and third as well” received support from only about one-third of either the military or civilian respondents.

The other five items in Table 9.8 (A, C, E, H, and I) gave rise to large and statistically significant civilian-military differences. The common denominator among these items is that they focus on the UN and international organizations. In each case, the military leaders were significantly less enthusiastic about the role that such organizations might play in American policy. Most important, whereas a solid majority of civilian leaders would permit U.S. troops to serve under a UN-appointed commander, only about one-third of the military officers would accept such an arrangement. Many military officers have served in NATO and experienced its successes; far fewer of them have been deployed in UN operations, and those undertakings have a mixed record. Nevertheless, a majority of military officers would respond favorably to UN requests to have U.S. armed forces involved in peacekeeping operations.

When the unilateral-multilateral scale is divided into four equal intervals, each respondent was classified on the basis of his or her answers to these questions. The results reveal that almost three-fourths (74 percent) of the civilian leaders are classified as multilateralists, including 33 percent who are “strong multilateralists.” In contrast, the comparable figures for the military leaders are 63 percent and 8 percent, respectively. Although these differences are statistically significant, it is worth noting again that unilateralism among military officers is focused, arising largely from skepticism about the UN and international organizations; it does not represent the kind of indiscriminate unilateralism espoused by, for example, Patrick Buchanan.

Each of the FPLP surveys also asked respondents to express their agreement or disagreement with some recent American foreign and defense policy decisions. Those taking part in the 1996 study were presented with a broad range
of undertakings that had been initiated during the previous four years, including such controversial ones as U.S. interventions in Somalia and Haiti, as well as granting "most favored nation" (MFN) trade status to China. Assessments of these endeavors by military and civilian leaders, summarized in Table 9.9, reveal several patterns. Although many of these actions were associated with the Democratic Clinton administration, thirteen of them gained the support of a majority of the military leaders, whereas only eleven of them elicited such approval from the civilians. Statistically significant differences between the two groups of leaders emerged on only four decisions: using troops to try to end the civil war in Somalia, "granting 'most favored nation' trade status to China," reducing the U.S. budget contribution to the UN, and developing an active missile defense system. Finally, only two of the policies found a majority of civilians on one side and a majority of the military on the other; both centered on China, and in each instance the latter were more supportive of U.S. efforts to promote

### Table 9.8 Unilateral-Multilateral Scale: Responses of Military and Civilian Leaders in the FPLP Survey of American Opinion Leaders, 1996.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reported Responses</th>
<th>Military</th>
<th>Civilians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. U.S. armed forces should be used in response to requests from the UN for peacekeeping forces.*</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. U.S. armed forces should be used in response to requests from NATO for peacekeeping forces.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Strengthen the UN and international organizations (as an approach to peace).*</td>
<td>Very Effective</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. If interests compel the United States to intervene militarily, it should be undertaken as part of a multilateral operation.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Unilaterally reducing the U.S. share of contributions to the UN budget.*</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Increasingly, countries will have to act together to deter and resist aggression.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. What we need is a new foreign policy that puts America first, second, and third as well.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. The time is ripe for the United States and other countries to cede some of their sovereignty to strengthen the powers of the UN and other international organizations.*</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. The United States (should) accept a commander appointed by the UN when U.S. troops take part (in peacekeeping operations).*</td>
<td>Accept</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. The United States (should) accept a commander appointed by NATO when U.S. troops take part (in peacekeeping operations).</td>
<td>Accept</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Differences between groups significant at the .001 level.
economic relations with the Beijing regime through granting MFN status and subsidizing American firms doing business in China.

The differences on China policy are sufficiently striking, and perhaps unexpected, to warrant further exploration of the 1996 survey data for possible explanations. One answer might be in levels of perceived threat from the Beijing regime, but that largely washes out in light of responses to several other questionnaire items. Although the military were slightly more inclined than the civilians to judge China as a serious national security threat (31 percent to 26 percent), by a somewhat larger margin (57 percent to 45 percent) they disagreed with the proposition that “China is generally expansionist rather than defensive in its foreign policy goals.” The key question of Taiwan also fails to provide a wholly persuasive answer for differences between civilian and military leaders. Although the civilians expressed a greater willingness to use U.S. armed forces to protect Taiwan in case of a Chinese invasion (41 percent to 36 percent), and to agree that the United States has a “moral obligation” to protect Taiwan’s security (57 percent to 54 percent), these differences are rather small.

Still another possible explanation for civilian-military differences on China policy might be found in two questions concerning the proper role of human rights in foreign affairs. Because the Beijing regime’s record on human rights has been a continuing source of controversy, especially since the Tiananmen Square massacre of student dissidents in 1989, responses to these questions may be relevant to preferences on China policy. Asked to assess the importance of promoting and protecting human rights abroad as a foreign policy objective, only 37 percent of the military officers rated it as either a “very” or “moderately” important goal, whereas the comparable figure for the civilian respondents was 66 percent. Moreover, a significantly higher proportion of military officers (39 percent against 24 percent of civilians) agreed that the United States should avoid using economic sanctions to promote and defend human rights. In short, many in the military are expressing the classical realist argument that strategic concerns, undiluted by preferences about another country’s internal practices, should govern U.S. foreign policy. In the case of China, military officers generally do not perceive it as a major security threat today, and they have expressed a preference for a policy of economic engagement rather than one of attempting to reform China’s human rights record.

Finally, the most controversial Post–Cold War military intervention has been in Bosnia. Those taking part in the 1996 FPLP survey were asked whether they favored or opposed sending U.S. peacekeeping troops to Bosnia, both some months earlier when the Dayton accords were signed and at the time of the survey. Significant differences characterized military and civilian views when the deployment was announced in late 1995; whereas supporters outnumbered opponents by 58 percent to 36 percent among civilian leaders, military respondents were opposed by a margin of more than three to two. But these differences
A Widening Gap between the U.S. Military and Civilian Society?

had largely evaporated by the spring of 1996, mostly as the result of changes in military thinking; support for the deployment increased to 56 percent among the military and to 60 percent among civilian leaders.

In summary, the evidence presented in Tables 9.5 and 9.6 on militant and cooperative internationalism sustains Ricks’s thesis of a wide gap in attitudes between civilian and military leaders on some issues, but it provides more modest support for the proposition that the gap has been increasing. Indeed, in a number of important respects, the period since the end of the Cold War has witnessed some convergence in the views of these two leadership groups. The data in Tables 9.7–9.9 center on questions that appeared only in the 1996 FPLP survey, and thus they cannot address the question of trends in civilian and military attitudes. They suggest, however, that cleavages between civilian and military leaders on current foreign and defense policy issues are better described as focused and

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<tr>
<td>Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with these recent U.S. foreign and defense policies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree Strongly + Agree Somewhat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sending U.S. troops to deliver humanitarian aid to Somalia.</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using U.S. troops to try to end the civil war in Somalia.*</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granting “most favored nation” trade status to China.*</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing food and assistance to the republics of the former Soviet Union.</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sending U.S. peacekeeping troops to Haiti.</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signing the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with Canada and Mexico.</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using threats of protectionism to open Japanese and European markets to U.S. goods.</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting UN economic sanctions against Iraq.</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting a plan to expand NATO to include such Eastern European countries as Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic.</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tightening economic sanctions against Cuba.</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signing the GATT trade agreement and joining the World Trade Organization (WTO).</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilaterally reducing the share of U.S. contributions to the UN budget.*</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing high-level government support for American companies doing business in China.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing normal diplomatic relations with Vietnam.</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing aid to help Mexico deal with its financial crisis.</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing a defense system against missiles that might be fired, deliberately or accidentally, at the United States.*</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Note: *Differences between groups significant at the .001 level.
limited rather than as so pervasive that they span the entire spectrum of U.S. foreign relations.

Domestic Issues

Ricks’s thesis about the gap between the military and civilian society gives prominence to the military’s contempt for a society that it views as materialistic, hedonistic, and decadent. The first two FPLP surveys in 1976 and 1980 dealt almost entirely with foreign and defense policy issues. They included only two domestic policy questions: the pace of racial integration and the trade-off between policies designed to combat inflation and unemployment. Compared to the civilian leaders, the military officers favored the more conservative positions in both surveys. They were significantly less inclined to describe the pace of integration as “too slow” and to be more supportive of policies that gave precedence to combating inflation rather than fighting unemployment.

The 1984 study introduced a larger cluster of items that asked respondents to express their views on some of the more controversial economic, social, and value issues being debated in the United States, including: taxes, budget allocations, school busing and prayer, abortion, and capital punishment. Although some domestic policy questions have been added to the questionnaire since the 1984 survey, those listed in Table 9.10 have been asked in each of the four most recent studies, and they have been used to construct a domestic policy typology that is introduced below.

Military officers have generally taken more conservative positions than their civilian counterparts on economic issues, but in some instances—for example, the two questions dealing with regulations on the environment (B) and nuclear power plants (E)—the differences have been relatively modest. Responses to two questions account for most of the civilian-military differences on economic issues. Not surprisingly, the largest gaps have been recorded on the proposition that the defense budget should be reduced in order to increase federal spending for education (D). The item on income redistribution (F) also gave rise to consistently large differences between the two groups of leaders. The evidence does not, however, reveal a striking trend toward a widening civilian-military gap on the economic issues, in part because by 1996 both groups of leaders had moved toward more conservative positions on taxes, the defense budget, and income redistribution.

Differences between military officers and civilian leaders on social issues have been consistently very large, and in each case the former group espoused the more conservative position. Indeed, only in one instance (the abortion question in 1988) was the gap less than 10 percent. Civilian-military differences on social issues in the most recent FPLP survey ranged from a low of 11 percent on abortion to more than 30 percent on school prayer and the death penalty.
A Widening Gap between the U.S. Military and Civilian Society?


This question asks you to indicate your position on certain domestic issues. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Reducing the federal budget deficit by raising taxes.</td>
<td>Military 72% 72% 74% 43%</td>
<td>Civilians 68 66 66 50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Relaxing environmental regulation to stimulate economic growth.</td>
<td>Military 37 23 19 31</td>
<td>Civilians 28 15 22 28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Providing tuition tax credits to parents who send children to private or parochial schools.</td>
<td>Military 55 34 46 56</td>
<td>Civilians 37 35 40 41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Reducing the defense budget in order to increase the federal education budget.</td>
<td>Military 15 13 47 12</td>
<td>Civilians 61 65 79 56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Easing restrictions on the construction of nuclear power plants.</td>
<td>Military 46 50 45 45</td>
<td>Civilians 39 36 46 37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Redistributing income from the wealthy to the poor through taxation and subsidies.</td>
<td>Military 23 22 29 18</td>
<td>Civilians 46 43 47 42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<td>G. Busing children in order to achieve school integration.</td>
<td>Military 17 26 19 18</td>
<td>Civilians 38 41 39 35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Leaving abortion decisions to women and their doctors.</td>
<td>Military 69 74 69 71</td>
<td>Civilians 83 82 81 82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Reviving the Equal Rights Amendment.</td>
<td>Military 27 29 35 23</td>
<td>Civilians 58 56 55 50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Permitting prayer in public schools.</td>
<td>Military 73 75 77 79</td>
<td>Civilians 37 38 43 44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Barring homosexuals from teaching in public schools.</td>
<td>Military 73 64 58 52</td>
<td>Civilians 36 31 26 23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Banning the death penalty.</td>
<td>Military 12 11 3 4</td>
<td>Civilians 35 36 35 35</td>
<td></td>
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Moreover, only on a single issue is there any evidence that the gap between the two groups is narrowing; military support for "barring homosexuals from teaching in public schools" has declined, but it remains at more than twice that of the civilian respondents. On the other hand, whereas support for banning the death penalty has remained at a steady one-third of the civilian leaders, it has virtually disappeared among military officers.

Thus, whereas military officers are somewhat more conservative than their civilian counterparts on economic issues, much wider gaps exist on most of the
social issues that have generated highly emotional debates during the past few decades. This finding is consistent with those of Huntington and Ricks, both of whom indicate that the military and civilians differ sharply on social values.25

The scheme for classifying respondents on domestic issues assumes that a single liberal-to-conservative dimension may not be adequate, because policy preferences on economic issues do not necessarily correspond ideologically to those on social issues. Therefore it may be useful to distinguish between them. For purposes of creating a domestic issues typology, on economic issues liberals were assumed to favor

- an active role for government in regulating the economy and activities that may threaten the environment; and
- taxation for purposes of income redistribution, while opposing tax policies that provide benefits mainly for the more affluent.

On social issues liberals were assumed to support

- an active role for government in promoting the interests of those who have traditionally been at a disadvantage owing to race, class, gender, or other attributes; and
- a ban on the death penalty, at least in part because it has been inflicted disproportionately upon members of some disadvantaged groups.

In contrast, conservatives were assumed to favor the following positions on economic issues:

- removal or reduction of governmental restrictions on economic activity, including environmental regulations;
- reduction in taxes; and
- a large defense budget to ensure a strong national defense.

On social issues conservatives were assumed to oppose

- an active role for government in attempting to legislate equality between classes, sexes, races, or other groups; and
- an active role for government in support of those who challenge “traditional values,” including advocates for gay rights or a pro-choice position on abortion.

These premises were incorporated into scoring responses to the twelve items in Table 9.10. Each leader was assigned two scores, the first based on responses to the six economic issues and the second derived from preferences on the six
A Widening Gap between the U.S. Military and Civilian Society?

Scores for each answer ranged from 1.00 ("agree strongly") to –1.00 ("disagree strongly"). After averaging the score for each respondent, a cutting point of 0.00 was used for each of the scales. The two scores were then used to classify each leader as belonging to one of four groups: liberals (liberal on both scales), conservatives (conservative on both scales), populists (liberal on economic issues, conservative on social ones), and libertarians (conservative on economic issues, liberal on social ones).

The distribution of military and civilian leaders, when classified in this manner, is shown in Table 9.11. The differences are striking. They are also consistent with the ideological self-identifications reported earlier in Table 2. Overwhelming majorities of at least 80 percent of the military leaders in each of the four surveys are classified as either conservatives or populists, the two groups that are defined as expressing conservative positions on social issues. In contrast, while a plurality of civilian leaders are classified as liberals, only a small fraction of military officers are in that category. These results do not indicate, however, that the gap between the military and civilians is widening, perhaps because the 1984 results created a baseline that already had such a pronounced tilt toward conservative views among military officers.

Priorities on budget allocations provide further evidence about preferences on a broad spectrum of policies issues. Respondents taking part in the 1996 survey were provided with a list of government programs and asked to indicate whether spending for them was "too high"—and thus, presumably, should be reduced—"too low," or "about right." Table 9.12 reports the net results for the two groups of leaders—that is, the percentage of those who felt that too little was being spent for each program minus the percentage who felt that spending
Several patterns emerge from the data in Table 9.12. Very substantial differences between the military and civilian leaders may be found in three clusters of government activity. Security-related programs (the defense budget, foreign military assistance, and foreign intelligence) gave rise to differences in excess of 40 percent, with the military officers expressing stronger support for higher spending in each instance. Welfare-type programs (welfare, improving the conditions of Black Americans) also yielded differences of 40 percent or more, with the military favoring greater spending reductions. Social Security and programs directed toward improving the nation’s health-care system received less support from military officers, by margins of 20 percent or more. Civilian leaders were also more inclined than the military to increase budget allocations for improving and protecting the environment.

Responses to the other eight areas of government activity revealed an impressive degree of agreement between the military and civilian respondents. For example, if we focus on the programs for which supporters of increased spending outnumbered those favoring cuts by at least 50 percent, the military and civil-


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<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Too Little minus</th>
<th>Too Much</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic aid to nations</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>–3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military aid to nations*</td>
<td>–14</td>
<td>–58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs to combat violence and crime</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with drug addiction</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving the nation’s education system</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving and protecting the environment</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare*</td>
<td>–85</td>
<td>–41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense spending*</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>–34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving and protecting the nation’s health*</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass transportation</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathering intelligence about countries*</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>–16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving the conditions of Black Americans*</td>
<td>–31</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highways and bridges</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Security*</td>
<td>–33</td>
<td>–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space exploration programs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>–6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and development programs</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Differences between groups significant at the .001 level.
A Widening Gap between the U.S. Military and Civilian Society?

ian lists are identical: crime, highways and bridges, research and development, education, drug addiction, and mass transportation. Moreover, the rank-order correlation between the two columns of numbers in Table 9.12 is a rather high .62, indicating that the budget priorities of military and civilian leaders are, despite the sharp differences on the eight programs discussed above, in greater agreement than discord.

Because the FPLP surveys were designed for a different purpose, they are not very good instruments for measuring hostility to and alienation from society, one of the central concerns in Ricks's diagnosis of the gap between the military and civilian society. It is possible, however, to draw a small number of items from the 1996 questionnaire that provided respondents an opportunity to express dissatisfaction and frustration. For example, the final few questions in the survey asked respondents to react to the budget gridlock that resulted in government shutdowns just months before they received the questionnaire.

Answers to the eight questions, summarized in Table 9.13, generally indicate rather muted civilian-military differences. By far the largest gap centered on the media, with fewer than a quarter of the military officers, in contrast to a solid majority of civilians, agreeing that "the press is more likely than the government to report the truth about the conduct of foreign policy." This question is not ideal for exploring alienation, however, because it only gives respondents a chance to compare two institutions rather than permitting an absolute assessment of


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<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree Strongly + Agree Somewhat</th>
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<tr>
<td>The American people are too deeply divided along ethnic and racial lines for their government to exercise effective leadership abroad.*</td>
<td>Military: 4% Civilians: 14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declining patriotism at home undermines the effectiveness of the United States' policies abroad.</td>
<td>Military: 58% Civilians: 52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With governments everywhere weakening, the world is headed for a long period of fragmentation and disorder.</td>
<td>Military: 48% Civilians: 51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The press is more likely than the government to report the truth about the conduct of foreign policy.*</td>
<td>Military: 23% Civilians: 59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The failure (to reach agreement on the 1996 budget) is a measure of the deep-seated cleavages at work in the United States.*</td>
<td>Military: 57% Civilians: 71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The failure (to reach agreement on the 1996 budget) stems from the inability of politicians to look beyond the next election.</td>
<td>Military: 80% Civilians: 85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am optimistic about the long-term prospect of working out the apparent (government) stalemate.</td>
<td>Military: 77% Civilians: 72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I never felt angrier about the way the government is working in this country.</td>
<td>Military: 30% Civilians: 42%</td>
</tr>
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Note: * Differences between groups significant at the .001 level.
each, and thus it deprives them of the opportunity to express dissatisfaction (or satisfaction) with the truthfulness of both the media and the government. In other respects, there are few striking differences between the two groups of leaders. The final question provided the most direct opportunity to express anger and frustration about the government. The civilians were somewhat more prone than the military to express these feelings “about the way the government is working in this country.”

Conclusion

The results summarized here provide strong support for the propositions that members of the American military are becoming increasingly partisan, and that they are also significantly more Republican and conservative than civilians holding comparable leadership positions. Moreover, the evidence also sustains the proposition that the civilian-military gap in partisan and ideological identifications is widening, at least for the 1976–96 period covered by the FPLP surveys. These data cannot tell us if the current state of affairs is unique or whether similar patterns might be found if we had comparable survey data from earlier periods of approximately similar length—for example, between the War of 1812 and the Mexican War, between the Civil and Spanish-American Wars, between the two world wars, or between the onset of the Cold War and the escalation of the Vietnam conflict. Evidence adduced by Samuel Huntington and others suggests that these earlier periods were indeed marked by low levels of political participation and partisanship. Moreover, current force levels far outstrip those of any previous peacetime period. It is thus plausible, but certainly not proven beyond dispute, that Ricks's thesis describes a significant departure from previous American experience.

When the analysis turned to attitudes on specific foreign and domestic issues, however, the description of the military as made up of hard-core conservatives whose views are increasingly out of step with the rest of society needs some modification. Although a wide gap between the two groups is evident on many issues, it is not uniformly large. For example, domestic social issues gave rise to far wider chasms between civilian and military leaders than did economic ones. Moreover, evidence that differences on policy questions have actually widened during the past decade is less compelling. The end of the Cold War has witnessed a narrowing gap on some issues, sometimes because civilians have moved toward military positions, at other times as a result of changes in military thinking.

Limitations

Although the data presented here substantiate much but not all of Ricks’s thesis about a growing gap between the military and civilian society, they do not ad-
dress many interesting questions about civilian-military relations after the Cold War. Students of military affairs will be interested in the effects of the gap on the ability of the military to function effectively, especially in an era that may be marked by increasing demands for other than conventional military operations. Many of these questions are being addressed in a series of studies under the leadership of the Triangle Institute for Security Studies. The TISS project includes surveys that will probe, more directly and in greater depth than those reported here, many aspects of contemporary military culture and the sources, nature, and magnitude of any divergences from civilian society. Another set of studies, being undertaken by the Center for Security and International Studies, will focus on morale in the post-Cold War military.

Possible Objections

It is also important to acknowledge some possible objections to and limitations of these analyses that may bear significantly on the conclusions that can be drawn. First, as noted earlier, the FPLP questionnaires were not designed to address some of the central problems addressed by Ricks, especially the putative contempt of the military for contemporary society as self-indulgent, materialistic, and lacking in decent values. The very limited evidence adduced in Table 9.13 is hardly sufficient to plumb such crucial issues.

A second possible objection is that the FPLP samples are not adequately representative of the military. The point is well taken. The samples were deliberately intended to reach the top echelons of the military by focusing on senior officers in the Pentagon and students at the National War College—the apex of the military educational system. Thus, except in 1976 they did not include junior officers, a group given special attention by Ricks, or enlisted personnel. Although other studies have shown that there is a positive correlation between rank and conservatism, it is also possible to construct an alternative hypothesis that bears directly on the important question of military contempt for and alienation from contemporary society: because top-ranking officers of the type sampled by the FPLP surveys have by definition enjoyed the greatest degree of professional success in their military careers, they may be less likely to espouse very intense alienation from a system that has rewarded them. If that is the case, then the evidence presented here would systematically underestimate the gap between the military and civilian society. The declining proportion of civilian leaders with any military experience is likely to exacerbate tensions between these two groups of leaders. Thus, although these data may corroborate and illuminate some of the concern voiced by Ricks, they cannot provide conclusive evidence on all aspects of his apprehensive view of a widening gap between the military and civilian society.
Implications

What about the broader policy implications of these findings? The FPLP data revealed that military officers are consistently the strongest supporters of increased defense spending. By itself that finding is no more surprising—or disturbing—than evidence that academics are strong advocates of higher budgets for education, or that health-care professionals favor greater expenditures for medical research. To the extent that such differences encompass a far wider range of issues, often with considerable intensity of opinion, and that they are also grounded in powerful partisan and ideological cleavages, there is clearly greater cause for concern. The implications of these findings can perhaps be depicted by a continuum on which one end point represents complete agreement on all issues, and the other depicts such intense disagreement on all questions that a military coup cannot be ruled out as a real threat. Fortunately, the present situation is far from either end point. Complete harmony within complex organizations is usually an indication of intellectual torpor and may well be an early warning sign of future difficulties. And, despite some evidence of egregious rhetoric and behavior, there appears to be little threat of a coup.33

Yet even if we dismiss these two extreme scenarios, tempestuous civilian-military relations can give rise to very real policy problems. Three examples of increasing severity illustrate but do not exhaust these costs: (1) a loss of policy coherence, especially if it is deemed necessary to adopt “lowest common denominator” options in order to resolve differences or, more generally, if a pathological variant of bureaucratic politics governs decisionmaking; (2) a narrowing of options for dealing with major issues as, for example, when the military dig in their heels against using force in some situations; and (3) reduced U.S. credibility in the eyes of adversaries if they believe, correctly or not, that deep divisions within the top American leadership may rule out implementation of some foreign and defense policy options. Debates surrounding the Gulf War and interventions in Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia provide illustrations of each of these costs. Controversies about when, where, and under what circumstances U.S. armed forces should be deployed abroad constitute one of the enduring legacies of Vietnam. Even before the end of the Cold War, differences among top leaders quickly became public, as illustrated by the open disagreement between Secretary of State George Shultz and Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger in 1984 over differences on the conditions necessary for the deployment of American forces abroad. Each of the post-Cold War interventions generated similar public differences, often pitting highly visible military officers against civilian leaders. General Colin Powell, for example, spoke out twice against military intervention in Bosnia during the 1992 presidential campaign. An intriguing question that lies beyond the scope of this article is whether Saddam Hussein, the junta in Haiti, or the various parties in the Bosnia conflict may have miscalculated
whether and how the U.S. government would fulfill its stated commitments as a result of perceived differences in Washington.

The gap might be narrowed, if not bridged, without further effort were there compelling evidence that American society is becoming more conservative. Four decades ago Samuel Huntington cited and welcomed evidence that such changes in social values seemed to be taking place. He largely dismissed the relevance of the market-based economic values of American business as thoroughly liberal and quite antithetical to the conservatism of the military mind. In fact, trends since the late 1950s would appear to be precisely the opposite of those on which Huntington placed his hopes. Support for economic conservatism has certainly gained substantially as the political center of gravity on such issues as the role of unions, welfare, taxation, and, more generally, the proper role of the government in the economy has moved sharply to the right in recent decades; however, one can make a strong case that there has been a countervailing trend toward more liberal positions on most social values, including but not limited to those involving women and other minorities.

Prescriptions

It is usually easier to diagnose a problem than to prescribe solutions. That is certainly the case with respect to differences between the military and civilian society. The international security environment is unlikely to change dramatically over the short run and, in any case, we would hardly want to see a drastic change for the worse as a way of bridging the civilian-military gap. If systemic changes cannot be counted upon to provide solutions, we need to look elsewhere—that is, within the United States. Three broad approaches to narrowing the civilian-military gap can be identified: (1) restoration of conscription, perhaps as one option in a broader plan for mandatory national service; (2) curtailment of the costly infrastructure of on-post facilities, from post exchanges and grocery stores to medical facilities and golf courses, that enable military personnel to meet almost all of their needs without much contact with civilians; and (3) changes in the education of the officer corps.

The first approach to bridging the gap between the military and civilian society is to restore conscription with the option, as in Germany, of alternative forms of national service (e.g., the Peace Corps, VISTA, or Teach for America). This proposal may have much to recommend it for reasons that go well beyond closing the gap between the military and civilian society. However, it will almost surely evoke intense opposition from virtually all libertarians, most traditional liberals, some conservatives and, no doubt, others as well. The history of proposals for peacetime conscription does not offer much hope for its proponents. As the Nazi war machine was rolling over Western Europe in 1940, a conscription bill passed the House of Representatives by only a single vote, and President Harry
Truman’s proposal for a one-year stint of universal military training after World War II went nowhere. More recently, the multitude of lawsuits against school boards that have imposed a minimal requirement of community service for high school graduation suggests that any proposal for national service will face very rough political sledding. Thus, short of American involvement in a protracted major power conflict, there also appears to be little prospect for a return to conscription. Because the international system is also unlikely to change in ways that significantly reduce or eliminate global security problems, an almost equally implausible scenario would posit a major reduction in the size of the armed forces to levels not seen since Pearl Harbor. The United States is thus likely to continue to have a military that is both large and professional.

A second approach would “monetize” the many economic, medical, and other benefits enjoyed by military personnel, replacing them with higher pay scales, with a view not only to reducing the rapidly escalating costs of such benefits, but also to breaking down the isolated “company town” features of contemporary military life. This plan would perforce bring military personnel into closer contact with civilians, but whether it could surmount the powerful opposition that it would surely evoke is unclear; it would certainly engender opposition from those who believe that the essence of military culture will not be well served by increased contact with a society that is, at its core, antimilitary except in times of war, to say nothing of those who believe that civilian culture is decadent almost beyond redemption.

The self-selection process almost guarantees that those who choose a career in the military will espouse values and opinions that are more “conservative” than those of the civilian society. Over the longer run, efforts to reduce the isolation of the military through education may offer a third approach to narrowing the civilian-military gap, but it must be acknowledged that the obstacles are hardly trivial. Radical variants would eliminate the service academies or transform them into postgraduate institutions for training officers who had received their undergraduate education at civilian universities and colleges. It seems unlikely that any administration would want to provoke the political firestorm that this plan would surely ignite. Ricks’s more modest suggestion that elite universities reintroduce or strengthen ROTC programs makes sense, but doing so may lead to objections based on budgetary considerations given the substantially higher tuition costs compared with those at public institutions. A more serious obstacle may be that its implementation would have to overcome significant biases both at many educational institutions and among graduates of the military academies. Finally, increasing graduate-level contacts may offer a fruitful solution. Evidence that civilian graduate education “does not profoundly alter the values and beliefs of U.S. Army officers” suggests that there are limitations on what can be achieved by bringing more midcareer officers into universities. This is not an especially surprising finding; it seems equally unlikely that midcareer education of other
A Widening Gap between the U.S. Military and Civilian Society?

occupational groups—for example, business executives in MBA programs—will result in a fundamental transformation of their basic values and beliefs. Indeed, most socialization studies suggest that political and ideological orientations are established at a much earlier age. Nevertheless, the close contacts engendered by graduate education at least provide opportunities for both civilians and military students to challenge and maybe even break down some of the stereotypes they hold of each other. If not a comprehensive solution, it can offer a nontrivial contribution toward dealing with the civilian-military gap.

Acknowledgment

I am greatly indebted to the National Science Foundation for grants that have supported the research described here, most recently with grant no. NSF-SBR-95-14921 to support the 1996 Foreign Policy Leadership Survey; to the Josiah C. Trent Memorial Foundation for its support of the 1996 survey; to Daniel Harkins for his expert programming and skills in navigating his way through the Duke computer system; to Rita Dowling for her secretarial expertise and willingness to type a seemingly endless number of tables with good humor; to Davis Bobrow, Vincent Davis, Michael Desch, Peter Feaver, Joseph Grieco, Charles Hoppe, Richard Kohn, Miko Nincic, Edward Rhodes, Thomas Ricks, James Rosenau, Gene Wittkopf, Robert Zelnick, and two anonymous reviewers for helpful comments on an earlier draft; to Edward Laurence of the Naval Post-Graduate School and Terry Deibel of the National War College, who provided invaluable assistance in distributing the Foreign Policy Leadership Project (FPLP) questionnaires to military officers at the Naval Post-Graduate School and the National War College, respectively; and, of course, to the almost 14,000 civilian and military leaders who took the time to fill out the questionnaires in the six FPLP studies.
A diverse group of pundits, politicians, and policy-makers has depicted public opinion as the proverbial 800-pound gorilla on the back of officials who seek to protect vital national interests in the post–Cold War international arena. One line of criticism, often associated with “realists,” depicts an emotional but poorly informed public that, energized by television images of unspeakable suffering at the hands of local tyrants, has pushed the United States into well-intentioned but hopeless and often dangerous undertakings—for example, “nation-building” in Somalia or “restoring democracy” in Haiti. George Kennan, the dean of American realists, chided the Bush administration for its intervention in Somalia on precisely these grounds (Kennan, 1993, A25).

According to other critics, the end of the Cold War has had a retrogressive impact on public opinion, which, it is asserted, has reverted to its traditional stance, ranging between skepticism and outright hostility, toward an active American role in the world. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., the distinguished historian and one-time adviser to President Kennedy, charged that after fifty years of commitment to the “magnificent dream of collective security,” the general public and opinion leaders are pushing the country “back to the womb” by espousing isolationism and unilateralism (Schlesinger, 1995). Similar diagnoses have emerged from other quarters. According to these analyses, the euphoria engendered by the fall of the Berlin Wall, followed by the dramatic victory in the Persian Gulf War, has evaporated. After a half century encompassing the period between the attack on Pearl Harbor that brought the United States into World War Two and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the public is allegedly eager to lay down the mantle of international leadership and to turn its attention and energies to domestic and private endeavors. Schlesinger and others have described contemporary public opinion as
Lacking in enthusiasm for peacekeeping missions unless the areas in question have a direct link to such vital national interests as oil from the Middle East.

Unwilling to undertake or persist in any foreign undertakings that might entail casualties.

Suffering from “compassion fatigue,” resulting in ever-diminishing support for assistance programs other than emergency relief for natural disasters.

Withdrawing its long-standing support for international institutions, including but not limited to the United Nations and NATO, partly because of a belief that the United States contributes more than its fair share to their activities, partly because they are thought to have outlived whatever utility they had during the Cold War.

Unwilling to accept multilateral missions abroad; if such undertakings are unavoidable, it is better to act unilaterally. The public is described as especially adamant in opposing any mission that could place American forces under the command of non-American officers.

Consequently, fearful of a public backlash against international undertakings that entail significant costs or risks, policy-makers have been seriously hamstrung in efforts to play an effective leadership role appropriate to the world’s only superpower.

Is Schlesinger’s obituary for internationalism valid? Has it been replaced by the spirit of isolationism and unilateralism? For five decades after Pearl Harbor, there was a widespread belief among both leaders and the general public that vital national interests require the United States to play a leadership role in world affairs; disagreements tended to focus not on the desirability of assuming the burdens—and enjoying the benefits—of international leadership but, rather, on the goals, strategies, and tactics to implement that role. Thus, if Schlesinger is correct, withdrawal of domestic support for internationalism would represent a sea change, comparable to the collapse of isolationism during World War Two.

In order to assess these depictions of public opinion and their relevance for the third theme identified by Robert Lieber in his introduction to this volume, this chapter examines evidence from general surveys conducted by Gallup, the National Opinion Research Center (NORC), and others, as well as more specialized surveys conducted by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (CCFR), the Foreign Policy Leadership Project (FPLP), the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA), and the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Several of these projects have also surveyed opinion leaders, providing an opportunity to compare their opinions with those of the general public. After a brief overview of public assessments of America’s proper role in the world, the analysis examines attitudes on more specific international issues.
Internationalism or Isolationism

The dawn of the “age of polling” coincided with bitter debates during the second Roosevelt administration on the proper American policy toward expansionist dictatorships in Europe and Asia. Gallup and other surveys revealed strong isolationist sentiments that contributed to Roosevelt’s caution in confronting a congress intent upon passing various forms of “neutrality legislation” to ensure that the United States would not again be drawn into a world war.

Roosevelt and others who pointed to American isolationism during the inter-war period as one of the causes of World War Two took an interest in gauging public attitudes toward active international engagement after the war. Since 1943, Gallup, NORC, CCFR, and other polling organizations have asked the public whether the United States should “play an active role in world affairs, or should it stay out.” The first survey found that 76 percent favored the internationalist option, whereas only 14 percent preferred withdrawal. Subsequent surveys encompassed the end of World War Two; the onset of the Cold War; two long costly wars in Asia and a short victorious one in the Persian Gulf region; crises in the Caribbean, Taiwan Straits, Berlin, and the Middle East; several periods of warming relations between Moscow and Washington, followed by the end of the Cold War and disintegration of the USSR; and post-Cold War deployment of American armed forces abroad, both unilaterally and in conjunction with NATO and the United Nations.

Despite this period of almost unprecedented international turbulence and some variations in the precise wording used in the surveys, responses to these questions about the appropriate international stance of the United States have remained relatively stable (see Figure 10.1). Notwithstanding fears of a post-1945 public reversion to isolationism expressed periodically by distinguished analysts—Hadley Cantril (1967); Gabriel Almond (1950); Walter Lippmann (1955); and George F. Kennan (1951)—no survey has shown a ratio of less than three-to-two in favor of internationalism. By the late 1980s, a period marked by dramatically improving relations between Washington and Moscow, that margin had increased to more than two-to-one.

Fears about an American return to isolationism have recently resurfaced, but the end of the Cold War did not bring about a dramatic reorientation of public attitudes about the country’s general stance toward the world. In the wake of the Persian Gulf War, a Washington Post survey revealed that more than three-fourths of the public favored an active American role in the world. Two years later, when the Gulf War euphoria had worn off and it had become clear that the end of the Cold War had not ended troubling conflicts into which the United States might be drawn, support for an internationalist American role remained quite high, as 67 percent favored that position as against only 28 percent who preferred to “stay out of world affairs.” Even controversies over the American role in peacekeeping
Figure 10.1 Should the United States play an active role in world affairs, or should it stay out?
operations had little impact on the strong majority (61 percent to 28 percent) favoring "an active part in world affairs" during the turbulent weeks leading up to the 1998 congressional elections (Rielly, 1999, 8).

Although comparable evidence about leaders' preferences is less extensive and it is heavily concentrated in the post-Vietnam era, most of it indicates that elites outstrip the general public in their support for active involvement in international affairs. The CCFR surveys, which posed the question directly to the general public and to a smaller sample of elites starting in 1978, have revealed strong and consistent differences. During the twenty-four-year period (1974–1998), the general public preferred an active American international role rather than withdrawal by margins ranging from 66 to 24 percent (1974) to a low of 53 to 35 percent (1982). In contrast, leaders taking part in the CCFR studies have been virtually unanimous in judging that it is better for the United States to "take an active part in world affairs"; that option never failed to gain the support of fewer than 96 percent of them. Indeed, it is hard to find any other significant question about foreign policy that has yielded such one-sided results.

These responses might seem to lay to rest charges that the public is leading a post–Cold War stampede back to isolationism, but it is important not to read too much into them. Because "an active part in world affairs" can encompass a wide array of international commitments and undertakings, the data should not be counted as decisive evidence of a broad foreign policy consensus or of sustained support for all manner of international activities, which can range from humanitarian assistance, multilateral trade agreements, and arms control negotiations to military interventions abroad. Nor do they reveal how the public might react when confronted with trade-offs or with the costs of active international involvement, especially when the price is paid in the coin of American casualties. Moreover, even those favoring an "active role" can differ on crucial questions of implementation. Unilateralists prefer that the United States go it alone, unbridled by the need to consult, coordinate, and cooperate with other countries. In contrast, multilateralists favor acting and sharing the burdens with others, even if doing so requires some compromises. Thus, we need to turn to appraisals of specific international threats, and then to preferences of both the general public and opinion leaders on more specific issues such as foreign policy goals, globalization, trade and protectionism, foreign aid, and deployment of troops abroad.

**Threats to Vital U.S. Interests**

Although the disintegration of the USSR at the end of 1991 brought the Cold War to an end, most Americans continue to perceive a world that poses a plethora of threats to vital U.S. interests. The Chicago Council surveys asked both the
Table 10.1 Threats to Vital U.S. Interests: Assessments by the General Public and Leaders in the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations Surveys, 1990–1998 (percentage of “critical” ratings)

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<td>International terrorism</td>
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<td>69</td>
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<td>61</td>
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<td>Chemical and biological weapons</td>
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<td>72</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>The possibility of unfriendly countries becoming nuclear powers</td>
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<td>72</td>
<td>34</td>
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<td>AIDS, Ebola virus, and other potential epidemics</td>
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<td>57</td>
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<td>56</td>
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<tr>
<td>The development of China as a world power</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>62</td>
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<td>Large number of immigrants and refugees coming into the U.S.</td>
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<td>72</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>Economic competition from Japan</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global warming</td>
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<td>Economic competition from low-wage countries</td>
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<td>Islamic fundamentalness</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>The military power of Russia*</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional ethnic conflict</td>
<td>—</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic competition from Europe</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
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*Soviet Union in 1990

general public and leaders to assess such threats. The most recent survey presented respondents with a much broader menu than had been the case in 1990 and 1994 (see Table 10.1).

Compared with leaders, the public has been consistently more apprehensive about external threats; that was the case with all thirteen items presented in the 1998 survey. Solid majorities in both groups rated terrorism, chemical and biological weapons, nuclear proliferation, and China’s ascendancy as “critical” threats. Increasing apprehension about China is especially evident among leaders, fewer than one in six of whom expressed such concerns as recently as 1990. In contrast to these areas of agreement, the public was far more inclined to assign a “critical” rating to threats arising from AIDS and other epidemics, immigration, and global warming. Similarly, although perceived economic threats stemming from competitors abroad have abated substantially among leaders, members of the general public are less persuaded on that score; gaps between the two groups are quite large with respect to competition from Japan (31 percent), low-wage countries (24 percent), and Europe (8 percent). Finally, even among the threats judged to be less critical—Islamic fundamentalism, Russian military power, and regional ethnic conflict—the gaps between leaders and the general public are quite wide.

**Foreign Policy Goals**

Each of the CCFR surveys has included a cluster of items asking respondents to assess the importance of various foreign policy goals. The results, summarized in Table 10.2, reveal that in 1998, the general public gave very high priority to defending the country’s economic interests. This finding does not, however, constitute a post-Cold War change of priorities. Protecting the jobs of American workers has ranked as the top goal in all but three of the surveys, and it just barely missed doing so in 1974 as well; in the most recent study (1998), it ranked second to stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the United States, as it had done four years earlier. Energy security has also consistently been accorded a “very important” rating by more than 60 percent of the public. Two surveys during the 1990s also saw an increase in the number of respondents who rated “protecting the interests of American business abroad” as a top priority.

In contrast to the urgency accorded to protecting economic interests—and despite occasional charges that the American public has been obsessed with Cold War concerns—such goals as “containing communism” and “matching Soviet military power” have ranked at the top of the foreign policy agenda in none of the CCFR surveys, not even in those conducted prior to the disintegration of the USSR. Indeed, the public has consistently been at least as concerned about arms control and preventing nuclear proliferation. A more general military/security
Table 10.2  The Importance of American Foreign Policy Goals: Assessments by the General Public in the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations Surveys, 1974–1998 (Percentage of “Very Important” Ratings)

"For each [foreign policy goal], please say whether you think that it should be a very important foreign policy goal of the United States, a somewhat important foreign policy goal, or not an important goal at all."

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<td>Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons</td>
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<td>82</td>
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<tr>
<td>Combating international terrorism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strengthening the United Nations</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protecting weaker nations against aggression</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worldwide arms control</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>69</td>
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<td>World order economic and environmental issues</td>
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<td>Combating world hunger</td>
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<td>58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving the global environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helping to improve the standard of living in less developed countries</td>
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<td>35</td>
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<td>U.S. economic interest issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the U.S.</td>
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<td>89</td>
<td>81</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protecting the jobs of American workers</td>
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<td>78</td>
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<td>65</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>Securing adequate supplies of energy</td>
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<td>78</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Controlling and reducing illegal immigration</td>
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<td>Reducing the U.S. trade deficit with foreign countries</td>
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<td>Protecting the interests of American business abroad</td>
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<td>U.S. values and institutions issues</td>
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<td>Promoting and defending human rights in other countries</td>
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<td>Promoting market economies abroad</td>
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<td>Helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations</td>
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<td>Maintaining superior military power worldwide</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defending our allies’ security</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>Containing communism</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>59</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Matching Soviet military power</td>
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goal, “maintaining superior military power worldwide,” ranked tenth among the sixteen goals rated by those taking part in the 1994 CCFR survey. Despite persistent Republican charges that the Clinton Administration had permitted dangerous erosion of military capabilities, this goal moved up only three places four years later.

Another Cold War concern, “defending our allies’ security,” appeared among the top three goals only after the Cold War had ended. Its high ranking in 1990 reflected events surrounding the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq and, perhaps, the fact that the United States and the Soviet Union were on the same side rather than adversaries in that conflict, thereby eliminating the risk of a major confrontation between them. By 1994 and 1998, however, the goal of protecting allies received its lowest ratings since 1978. A more general and open-ended security concern, “protecting weaker nations against aggression,” received a high rating only in 1990, when Iraqi forces still occupied Kuwait.

It is impossible to measure long-term trends on some issues because there are no Cold War baselines against which to compare responses to the two most recent CCFR surveys. Stopping the flow of illegal drugs ranked among the top three foreign policy goals in both studies, but concern with illegal immigration declined from its position as the fourth highest goal in 1994. Nevertheless, 55 percent of the public still rated stopping immigration as “very important” four years later; a similar number of respondents had judged that immigration poses a “critical” threat to the United States (Table 10.1).

Finally, the public has rarely expressed much enthusiasm for promoting American values and institutions abroad. Although the Bush and the Clinton administrations placed the expansion of democracy high on their foreign policy agendas, at least rhetorically, the public seems unpersuaded. With a single exception, efforts to promote human rights or democratic forms of government abroad have ranked among the least important foreign policy goals. The human rights goal was accorded an unusually high rating in 1990, probably reflecting widespread reports of human rights violations by Iraqi invasion forces in Kuwait.

The foreign policy goals questions were also posed to leaders by the CCFR, although there were variations in the specific items presented to the two groups. Many of the same questions also appeared in the six FPLP surveys. These two studies thus provide data on a wide range of foreign goals in thirteen surveys conducted during 1974 to 1998. Aside from a shared judgment that energy security and combating world hunger are very important, other goals accorded the highest rating by leaders revealed a somewhat broader set of priorities than those of the general public. Their top goals included such world order issues as arms control, “fostering international cooperation to solve common problems, such as food, inflation and energy,” and the global environment. In contrast to the views of the general public, “defending our allies’ security” was given a high priority by leaders in three earlier CCFR surveys (1978, 1982, 1986); after
declining in importance in 1990, this goal rebounded in the judgment of leaders to rank as the third most important, behind only preventing nuclear proliferation and combating international terrorism, in both 1994 and 1998.

The CCFR surveys found that, compared with leaders, the general public generally rated “strengthening the United Nations” as more important. Despite Schlesinger’s lament that post-Cold war American isolationism often takes the form of unilateralism, ample evidence indicates that although the public is skeptical of some kinds of interventions abroad, it prefers that such operations be undertaken in conjunction with others (Kull and Destler, 1999, 77–80; Rielly, 1999, 5, 25). Thus, a stronger United Nations may be seen as a form of risk- and burden-sharing. Support for the UN among leaders increased sharply in the 1990 CCFR and 1992 FPLP surveys, reflecting Security Council activities in the wake of Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, before dropping in 1994 and 1998, when only one-third of them rated strengthening that organization as a very important foreign policy goal.

There are, finally, some broad similarities in the less highly rated goal priorities of the general public and leaders. Such Cold War goals as containment or “matching Soviet military power” dominated the rankings of neither group. Nor did either leaders or the general public exhibit a great deal of fervor for promoting U.S. values and institutions abroad. “Promoting and defending human rights in other countries” as a foreign policy goal only once received a “very important” rating from even half of either group. Even though many communist and other authoritarian regimes collapsed in the late 1980s and early 1990s, few respondents, whether among the opinion leaders or the general public, expressed much interest in “helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations.” Indeed, that goal consistently ranked among the lowest in the priorities of both groups. The difficulties of achieving success, especially in countries lacking any tradition of democratic institutions, probably contributed to these ratings. There is also compelling evidence that a “pretty prudent public” supports interventions abroad to cope with aggression but is much less enthusiastic about efforts to reform governments (Jentleson, 1992; Jentleson and Britton, 1998). Perhaps abuse of the term democracy by American officials when referring to friendly tyrants—for example, when President Reagan compared the Nicaraguan “contras” to the American founding fathers, or when other presidents toasted the Shah of Iran or Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines in glowing terms as friends of democracy—has also made both opinion leaders and the general public somewhat cynical about America’s ability to export democracy.

Globalization, Trade, and Protectionism

The final decade of the twentieth century witnessed important steps toward a globalized economy featuring lowered trade barriers, creation of such trade
organizations as the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), vastly expanded international markets in currencies and securities, and movement of production facilities from high production cost to low-cost areas. The United States emerged from the Cold War as the predominant military power. America’s position as the leading economic power is equally evident, in part because countries that earlier seemed poised to challenge the U.S. position—notably Japan, Germany, and the Soviet Union—suffered serious economic setbacks during the 1990s, whereas the United States has enjoyed an extended period of high employment, low inflation, and rising stock markets—and a steadily widening gap between the most and the least affluent sectors of society.

When asked in the 1998 CCFR survey to assess globalization, “especially the increasing connection of our economy with others around the world,” 54 percent of the public judged it to be “mostly good,” whereas only 20 percent responded “mostly bad.” Respondents with a favorable verdict on globalization also held internationalist views on other aspects of foreign affairs, including participation in U.N. peacekeeping forces, repaying its back dues to that organization, foreign aid, and membership in NATO (Rielly, 1999, 22). Support for globalization is even stronger among leaders who, by a margin of 87 to 12 percent, judged it favorably.

Broad support for globalization notwithstanding, there is also evidence of public disquiet. Recall that the public has not shared the view among leaders that threats arising from international economic competition have declined sharply, and it has consistently ranked “protecting the job of American workers” at or near the top of the foreign policy agenda. The six most recent CCFR surveys asked both the general public and leaders whether they “sympathize more with those who want to eliminate tariffs or those who think such tariffs are necessary” (see Table 10.3). The results reveal a wide gap between the two groups, with a steady majority of the general public supporting tariffs through the 1990 survey. Four years later, in the midst of energetic efforts by the White House and many congressional leaders in both political parties to gain approval of the treaty incorporating the Uruguay Round of GATT and creation of the WTO, support for tariffs fell below 50 percent; however, proponents of such trade barriers still outnumbered those who would eliminate them by 48 percent to 32 percent, and the margin in favor of tariffs was virtually identical in 1998. Contrary to the widespread belief that protectionism is largely confined to union members and blue-collar workers, retention of tariffs actually received slightly higher than average approval from the college-educated and those with incomes above $50,000 (Rielly, 1995, 29–30).

In contrast, although there had been some increase in support for protectionism among leaders during the dozen years ending in 1990, that position was espoused by no more than one-third of those taking part in any of the CCFR surveys. By 1994, only one leader in five wanted to retain tariffs, but that figure
increased to 34 percent four years later. However, wording of the CCFR question may have affected the results, because respondents were not offered such options as “maintain tariffs at current levels” or “reduce but do not eliminate tariffs.”

Opposition to protectionism also emerges from a question posed four times between 1984 and 1996 to larger samples of leaders in the FPLP surveys. Even
though the question was phrased in a manner that explicitly incorporates the most widely used argument for protectionism—“erecting trade barriers against foreign goods to protect American industries and jobs”—fewer than one leader in four expressed either strong or moderate agreement with such a policy in any of the four surveys, and by 1996, opponents of trade barriers outnumbered proponents by a margin of 77 to 22 percent.

Finally, assessments of NAFTA, a controversial pact bringing Mexico, Canada, and the United States into a free-trade zone that narrowly passed through the congress in December 1993, and the WTO provide further evidence of attitudes on trade. Leaders taking part in surveys conducted by three organizations across a three-year period expressed overwhelming support for NAFTA. The WTO received comparable support in the 1996 FPLP study. In contrast, the public was much more evenly divided on NAFTA, with opponents slightly outnumbering supporters until 1994, when the CCFR poll found that NAFTA was judged as “mostly a good thing for the U.S. economy.” But the latter survey was undertaken just before the financial crisis triggered by devaluation of the Mexican peso. Thus, the wide gap between the general public and leaders on trade spans general attitudes toward tariffs as well as such specific undertakings as NAFTA.

Foreign Economic Assistance

The general public favored such early post-World War Two foreign-aid undertakings as the Marshall Plan; a November 1948 Gallup survey found that the public supported it by an overwhelming 65 to 13 percent margin. During the past two decades, however, international economic and technical assistance programs have been far less popular, often ranking as the top candidates for budget cuts. Many members of congress point to public disfavor as a powerful reason for paring aid budgets. But there is also strong evidence that many survey questions do not fully plumb sentiments about foreign assistance; the public generally overestimates the amounts that the United States spends on foreign aid. Queries about the “appropriate” level for American foreign aid spending revealed that the median amount proposed is far higher than actual expenditures (Kull and Destler, 1999, 125).

The CCFR surveys again provide directly comparable evidence about opinions on foreign aid among leaders and the general public. When asked, “on the whole, do you favor or oppose our giving economic aid to other nations for purposes of economic development and technical assistance?” the general public has been quite evenly divided on the question, with support ranging between 45 percent (1990 and 1994) and 53 percent (1986). In 1998, supporters of foreign aid narrowly outnumbered opponents by 47 percent to 45 percent. A plurality of respondents favored keeping the same level of assistance to Africa, Russia, Poland, Israel, and Egypt, but it also preferred reducing rather than increasing
aid to them. College graduates, liberals, travelers abroad, and those with higher incomes have been the strongest supports of foreign aid (Rielly, 1999).

A comparison of public attitudes with those of opinion leaders reveals a dramatic gap, as leaders have consistently expressed strong approval of economic assistance. In none of the CCFR surveys through 1990 did fewer than 90 percent of the leaders express support for foreign aid when asked the identical question. In 1998, the public-leader gap was more than 40 percent—88 percent approval by leaders compared with 47 percent by the general public. Among leaders, business executives and members of congress expressed the strongest opposition to foreign aid (Rielly, 1995, 31). A related question asked opinion leaders taking part in the FPLP surveys whether they would support economic aid to poorer countries “even if it means higher prices at home.” Following an equal division between supporter and opponents on the issue in 1976, moderate majorities of opinion leaders in the subsequent five surveys favored such assistance.

**Deployment of U.S. Troops Abroad**

The deployment of troops abroad has often generated bitter debates. A public controversy was sparked during the War of 1812 when militia units refused to invade Canada on the grounds that fighting for “the common defense” could be done only on American soil. During the Mexican-American War, young Congressman Abraham Lincoln mercilessly hectored the Polk administration with “spot resolutions,” demanding to know the exact location of the bloodshed that allegedly justified the American invasion of Mexico. Even before World War Two, there were also numerous deployments of U.S. troops abroad without declarations of war—for example, to quell the Philippine insurrection after the Spanish-American War and to pursue Pancho Villa in Mexico during the Wilson administration. The issue became even more visible with the expanded American international role after 1945. Symbolizing the controversies were contentious debates over the obligations entailed in the NATO Treaty; the constitutionality and wisdom of the War Powers Resolution of 1973, a congressional effort to restrict the president’s ability to send troops into combat or into situations that might entail combat; and the extremely close vote in the congress on authorizing the use of force to expel Iraq from Kuwait.

Each of the CCFR surveys asked leaders and the general public to indicate whether they favored or opposed the use of the American troops in various hypothetical situations, including several that involved an invasion of such American friends or allies as Western Europe, South Korea, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, and Poland. Similar questions were included in surveys conducted by the *Times-Mirror*, the Pew Center for the People & The Press, and the most recent FPLP study (see Table 10.4). The results have varied substantially by geographical area. The only case in which majorities among the general public
Table 10.4 Opinions on Use and Stationing of U.S. Troops Abroad: The General Public and Leaders, 1976–1998

“Would you favor or oppose the use of U.S. troops if…”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>General Percentage Who Favor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet troops invaded Western Europe</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia invaded Western Europe</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>FPLP</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia invaded Poland</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Korea invaded South Korea</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>T-M</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>FPLP</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Pew</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab forces invaded Israel</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>T-M</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>FPLP</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Pew</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran invaded Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq invaded Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>T-M</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>FPLP</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Pew</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China invaded Taiwan</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>FPLP</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in Cuba attempted to overthrow the</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castro dictatorship</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>FPLP</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbian forces killed large numbers of</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>CCFR</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethnic Albanians in Kosovo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10.4  Continued

“Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with “ … “

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Percentage Who Favor</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>FPLP</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>FPLP</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>FPLP</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>FPLP</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>FPLP</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>FPLP</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: CCFR = Chicago Council on Foreign Relations surveys; FPLP = Foreign Policy Leadership Project surveys; T-M = Times-Mirror survey; Pew = Pew Research Center for People & The Press.

consistently approved the use of American troops concerned a hypothetical Soviet or Russian invasion of Europe. Although Poland recently joined NATO, in 1998 less than one-third of the public expressed similar approval in support of the Warsaw government.2

In 1990, while American forces were being deployed in the Persian Gulf area after Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, a slight majority of the public approved using U.S. troops if Iraq invaded Saudi Arabia. This attitude remained little changed through 1997, long after the troops that had been engaged in Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield had been withdrawn, but by 1998, that approval fell below 50 percent. Although Israel has never asked for aid in the form of American troops, Saddam Hussein’s frequent and vocal threats, combined with Scud missile attacks against that country during the Persian Gulf crisis, also appear to have resulted in a sharp increase among those favoring assistance to Israel. That support persisted into 1997 but declined slightly a year later.

Finally, the United States has had several security commitments in Asia, but the public generally has been less willing to use troops in that area. Although American armed forces have long been stationed in South Korea, at no time during the past quarter century has a majority expressed support for using U.S. troops to defend South Korea against another attack from North Korea. The use of American forces in response to an invasion of Taiwan by China gained even less approval. However, in the face of Chinese threats against Taiwan in recent years, public attitudes may be undergoing some changes. The 1998 CCFR study found that public support for using U.S. troops to aid Taiwan rose to 27 percent, and another survey in 1999 revealed that the general public was prepared to accept quite high American casualties if required to defend Taiwan (Feaver and Gelpi, 1999).

Compared with the general public, leaders have consistently been more willing to employ American armed forces in the hypothetical situations previously described, with one notable exception. Whereas fewer than one leader in five
would support sending American troops to Cuba if people there attempted to overthrow the Castro regime, more than twice as many among the general public would approve such action. Differences between the two groups on the use of troops abroad are typically quite large, ranging from 9 percent to more than 40 percent. An FPLP survey item posed the issue of troops abroad in a somewhat more general manner. Instead of focusing on reactions to using U.S. armed forces in specific hypothetical conflicts, the survey item asked leaders to appraise the general critique that “Stationing American troops abroad encourages other countries to let us do their fighting for them.” Consistent majorities of those taking part in these six leadership surveys, reaching a peak of 66 percent in 1998, expressed agreement. Thus, although leaders are generally predisposed to come to the aid of key friends and allies under siege, it appears that they are also wary of more general commitments, especially to countries that may be willing to turn the fighting over to the United States because they are unable or unwilling to make a full commitment to self-defense. These views are, at least in part, a lingering residue of the Vietnam War.

United Nations and NATO peacekeeping activities during the past decade have generated controversies centering on two points: under what circumstances should U.S. forces be included in peacekeeping forces, and under whose command should they be permitted to serve? Former Senator Robert Dole’s proposed “Peace Powers Resolution” would have restricted the president’s ability to deploy American forces in international peacekeeping efforts, and the Republican “Contract with America” would also have limited the circumstances under which U.S. forces might serve under foreign commanders. These controversies notwithstanding, a multitude of surveys during the 1990s revealed broad, if not unconditional, public support, ranging between 57 percent and 91 percent, for U.S. participation in peacekeeping activities, especially if the United States votes to take part (Kull and Destler, 1999, 98; Rielly, 1999, 25). It is, of course, inconceivable that the United States could be forced against its will to join any such undertaking. The PIPA, CCFR, and FPLP surveys also indicate that neither opinion leaders nor the general public would balk at having American peacekeeping forces serve under foreign commanders appointed by the UN or NATO (Kull and Destler, 1999, 109–111; Rielly, 1995, 8).

In that climate of controversy, proposals to send troops to Bosnia stimulated vigorous debates about the feasibility and desirability of American intervention, the proper role of public opinion in policy-making, and the meaning of survey data on the Bosnia issues (Kull, 1995–1996; Newport, 1995; Rosner, 1995–1996; Saad, 1995; Saad and Newport, 1995; Sobel, 1995, 2001). Proponents of intervention acknowledged the lack of public enthusiasm for deploying U.S. troops but asserted that it was imperative for the United States to assume a leadership role in maintaining a tolerable world order (Schlesinger, 1995). Emphasizing that American interests rather than values should govern foreign policy, opponents
of intervention attacked President Clinton for "applying the standards of Mother Teresa to U.S. foreign policy" (Mandelbaum, 1996). Survey data revealed persisting and stable opinions on several points: a solid majority believed that solution of the Bosnia issue was a "very important" or "somewhat important" foreign policy goal; an equal proportion of the public asserted that Congress must approve any military involvement; and, although few Americans believed that unilateral intervention in Bosnia was either a moral obligation or a matter of the national interest, there was moderately strong support for deploying U.S. troops as part of a United Nations peacekeeping force. These opinions remained relatively stable after President Clinton's decisions to send American forces into Bosnia as part of a multinational effort to enforce the 1995 Dayton peace accord. Whether public support for the Bosnia or the later Kosovo peacekeeping undertakings would collapse were they to result in even moderate casualties—a proposition that, fortunately, had not yet been put to a test—remains uncertain. Survey evidence on this point depends on the manner in which the question is posed (Saad, 1995). More generally, the issue of casualties lies at the heart of controversies about post-Cold War undertakings.

Questions about the willingness of the public in democracies to accept combat deaths predate the end of the Cold War. Catastrophic losses during World War One are often linked to French and British unwillingness to confront Hitler's Germany through most of the 1930s, and some historians have faulted American military strategy during World War Two as excessively driven by casualty-aversion (Kennedy, 1999). A leading critic of U.S. policy in Vietnam, George Ball, warned in 1965 that the conflict could not be won because the public would not accept large casualties: "Producing a chart that correlated public opinion with American casualties in Korea, Ball predicted that the American public would not support a long and protracted war" (Clifford, 1991, 412). A study of the Korean and Vietnam Wars indeed revealed a strong inverse relationship between public support and combat deaths (Mueller, 1973). More broadly, Luttwak (1994) has argued that postindustrial societies, including the United States, are afflicted by casualty-aversion arising from the smallness of families, preventing them from effectively playing the role of great powers. The U.S. response to the 1993 ambush of eighteen Rangers in Mogadishu is often cited as proof that the U.S. public cannot accept the almost inevitable costs of military operations abroad. Indeed, Somali faction leader Mohamed Farah Aideed reportedly stated that his strategy for driving U.S. forces out of Somalia derived from a belief that Americans would not tolerate casualties.

These episodes seemingly provide a rich base of evidence supporting those who assert, whether with satisfaction or dismay, that a long history of public casualty-aversion has a powerful constraining grip on policy decisions. Most commentaries on the 1999 NATO air war against Yugoslavia asserted that public opinion had created a virtually insurmountable barrier against the in-
troduction of ground troops to protect Kosovars from ethnic cleansing by the Milosevic regime in Belgrade because NATO troop deployments would surely entail costs—casualties—that Western publics were unwilling to tolerate. The strategy of flying beyond the reach of Serbian air defense systems, even if the less precise high altitude bombing campaign resulted in collateral deaths among civilians, was also linked to the public’s alleged unwillingness to countenance the loss of pilots.

Yet some compelling evidence indicates that this depiction of public casualty-aversion is overdrawn. A study covering an extended period of American history reveals that the public will accept high casualties, as during World War Two, to achieve goals that are deemed to be important (Larson, 1996). Even controversial post-Cold War interventions have evoked public responses that cast some doubt on the conventional wisdom. The initial reaction to the Mogadishu ambush was to stay the course rather than withdraw. When confronted with a hypothetical scenario involving one hundred U.S. fatalities in Bosnia, a plurality of respondents (37 percent) wanted to “bring in reinforcement;” another 26 percent preferred to “strike back,” and 10 percent wanted to “stay the course” (Kull and Destler, 1999; see also Logan, 1996). Finally, a 1999 survey of the general public, civilian leaders, and military elites revealed that the latter two groups were actually less willing than the general public to accept casualties in a series of six hypothetical scenarios, including “To prevent widespread ‘ethnic cleansing’ in Kosovo.” According to Feaver and Gelpi (1999), “The public can distinguish between suffering defeat and suffering casualties.” Although this evidence does not suggest that the public is indifferent to combat fatalities, especially in undertakings for which the administration is unable or unwilling to demonstrate that American intervention is desirable (because of a compelling link to vital national interests), and feasible (there is a reasonable prospect for success), it does raise questions about the alleged “iron law” of the post-Cold War policy: public insistence on casualty-free operations.

The data just summarized reveal a consistent pattern of substantially higher support by leaders for various aspects of internationalism, not only in the form of stronger approval for an “active part in world affairs” but also in greater support for liberal trade policies, economic assistance, and deployment of American troops abroad. The evidence indicates also that both leaders and the general public make distinctions between various types of international policies and undertakings, and these distinctions appear to reflect events and developments in the international arena.

Partisanship: Persistence or Abatement?

During the middle 1980s, three perceptive analysts of American foreign policy, one of whom later served as National Security Adviser to President Clinton,
asserted: “For two decades, the making of American foreign policy has been growing far more political—or more precisely, far more partisan and ideological” (Destler, Gelb, and Lake, 1984, 13). Although their observation was not specifically focused on: public opinion, it brings up an interesting question: Has the end of the Cold War served to bridge partisan differences on foreign policy? Even if partisanship and ideology were the primary sources of cleavages during the early years of the Reagan administration, is that diagnosis still valid for the post-Cold War era? After all, Ronald Reagan, a highly partisan and ideological president, almost completely reversed his attitudes about the USSR during his presidency, as did the general public.

“Politics stops at the water’s edge” has been a favorite political slogan, especially among administration officials debating critics of their foreign policies. Whether it is also a broadly accurate depiction of the foreign policy process is more questionable. Partisan differences colored debates on issues as diverse as responses to the wars arising from the French Revolution, the tariff issue at various times during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the question of American participation in the League of Nations. On the other hand, efforts by the Roosevelt administration to develop a bipartisan coalition in support of American membership in the United Nations were successful, and the agreement between Cordell Hull and John Foster Dulles assured that U.N. participation would not become a partisan issue in the 1944 election. During the early post-World War Two years, bipartisan cooperation between the White House and congress on many European issues made possible such initiatives as aid to Greece and Turkey (the Truman Doctrine), the Marshall Plan, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Agreement among prominent leaders of the two major parties no doubt contributed to the fact that, among the general public, Democrats and Republicans differed little with respect to these and other major foreign policy undertakings. A 1946 Gallup survey revealed that 72 percent of respondents in both political parties favored an “active” international role for the United States, and the 1947 program of aid to Greece and Turkey also received identical levels of approval from Democrats and Republicans. Issues relating to the Far East tended to be more contentious and placed greater strains on bipartisan cooperation, especially after the Truman-MacArthur confrontation during the first year of the Korean War. But even on most Asian issues, survey data revealed limited partisan differences. The absence of strong partisan cleavages extended into the early years of the Vietnam War, as majorities within both parties expressed strong support for the policies of the Johnson administration.

For two decades spanning the Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and early Johnson administrations, then, whatever differences divided the American public on foreign policy issues rarely fell along partisan lines. Barry Hughes (1978, 128) concluded that the “evidence points overwhelmingly to insignificant party differences in the general population” on most foreign policy issues. Indeed, during
the pre-Vietnam period, the distribution of attitudes among supporters of the
two major parties was sufficiently similar that the self-identified “independents”
usually stood on one side or another of the Democrats and Republicans, rather
than in between them.

The period since the Vietnam War has witnessed the emergence of striking
partisan differences on a broad range of foreign and defense policy issues, and
efforts by several administrations to create a foreign policy consensus fell short
of enduring success. The Nixon-Kissinger campaign to create a post-Vietnam
foreign policy consensus grounded in détente with the Soviet Union ultimately
failed. Attempts by the Carter administration to achieve the same goal through
an emphasis on human rights, and by the first Reagan administration to cre-
ate a consensus around a more assertive stance toward the Soviet Union, were
equally unavailing in the longer run. Surveys during the 1980s revealed sharp
and persistent partisan differences on foreign and defense issues as varied as
the intervention in Lebanon (25 percent), the appropriate size of the defense
budget (31 percent), the trade embargo on Nicaragua (39 percent), aid to the
contras in Nicaragua (15 percent), and the Strategic Defense Initiative (29 per-
cent). Gallup polls since the end of the Cold War have shown little change in
this respect, as most foreign policy issues continue to generate wide partisan
gaps; these include the decision to lift economic sanctions against South Africa
(21 percent), join NAFTA (12 percent), cut in defense spending (14 percent),
deploy U.S. peacekeeping forces in Bosnia prior to (20 percent) and after (27
percent) the Dayton agreement, introduce U.S. ground troops into Kosovo (19
percent), and approve of the peace agreement ending the war against Yugoslavia
(16 percent). The bifurcation among partisan lines has been sufficiently great
that, unlike during the pre-Vietnam period, responses of political independents
typically fell between those of Democrats and Republicans.3

The end of the Cold War has been marked by diminution of partisan diff er-
ences on questions such as the perception of a diminished threat from Moscow,
as well as on a few nonstrategic issues. Despite these areas of converging opin-
ions, there is little evidence of a broad post-Cold War foreign policy consensus.
Even the Persian Gulf War—a short, successful conflict against an adversary that
almost everyone could “love to hate,” that resulted in relatively light American
casualties—revealed partisan differences before, during, and after the war (Hol-
sti, 1996, 136–138). The fruits of the Persian Gulf conflict have not included a
bipartisan consensus on such questions as when, how, against what adversaries,
and for what purposes, force should be used.

The congressional votes in January 1991 on using military force against Iraq
and the Republican “Contract with America,” prepared for the 1994 congressional
elections, are striking illustrations of the extent to which bipartisanship among
leaders in foreign and defense policy is a relic of a bygone era.4 Surveys of opinion
leaders also provide revealing evidence about the persistence or abatement of
partisan differences. The Chicago Council “goals” question summarized in Table 10.2 was also included in the six FPLP surveys of opinion leaders that spanned a two-decade period through 1996. Table 10.5 provides the overall “very important ratings” for each goal, as well as the size of the partisan gap.

At first glance it appears that the data provide support for the thesis of declining importance attached to some important aspects of foreign affairs, especially when the 1992 and 1996 responses are compared. However, a longer-term perspective indicates that in several cases, the 1992 results may represent an anomaly. For example, the importance attached to strengthening the United Nations reached an exceptionally high level in that year, no doubt because the Gulf War was conducted under the formal authorization of several Security Council resolutions. Support for strengthening the UN declined quite sharply in 1996, but to a level that was quite typical of the four surveys conducted prior to the end of the Cold War. A similar pattern emerged on several other questions, including arms control and protecting weaker nations from aggression. The latter goal received higher than normal support in 1992 as a result of the successful liberation of Kuwait a year earlier.

The evidence in Table 10.5 also suggests a declining sense of urgency among leaders about other foreign policy goals, especially those clustered under the heading of “world order economic and environmental issues.” The end of the Cold War has coincided with an especially sharp decline in the importance attributed to combating hunger, improving the standard of living in less developed countries, the global environment, and international economic cooperation. Moreover, the 1996 responses to these goals are not merely a drop from abnormally high levels in 1992; they are part of a longer-term trend of “compassion fatigue.”

Among goals encompassing U.S. economic interests, energy security continues to be regarded as very important by most respondents, but two others—protecting jobs and the interests of American business abroad—have been regarded as being of great urgency by only small numbers of respondents. Drug trafficking and illegal immigration did not appear in surveys prior to 1996, precluding any assessment of trends. Security goals that formed the core of American foreign policy during the Cold War did not evoke a great deal of urgency in 1996, but, with one exception, these results do not represent a sharp shift from earlier surveys. It is no surprise that, “containing communism” has ranked as the least important goal since the end of the Cold War. Nor have opinion leaders taking part in the FPLP surveys ascribed much importance to promoting such American values as human rights and democracy abroad. During the Cold War, efforts to support human rights and democracy other than at the rhetorical level risked alienating some allies—“friendly tyrants”—as well as escalating tensions with adversaries. Yet there is scant evidence that the end of the Cold War has been
Table 10.5 The Importance of American Foreign Policy Goals Rated by Leaders in the Foreign Policy Leadership Surveys, 1976–1996: Assessments of Importance and Partisan Gaps

Here is a list of possible foreign policy goals that the United States might have. Please indicate how much importance should be attached to each goal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S. economic interest issues</th>
<th>Percentage of “Very important” ratings, entire leadership sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the U.S.</td>
<td>58 [18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling and reducing illegal immigration</td>
<td>29 [-2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing the U.S. trade deficit with foreign countries</td>
<td>33 [26]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping up the value of the dollar</td>
<td>64 [8]</td>
</tr>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>U.S. values and institutions issues</th>
<th>Percentage of “Very important” ratings, entire leadership sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoting market economies abroad</td>
<td>6 [5] 10 [12]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cold War/Security issues</th>
<th>Percentage of “Very important” ratings, entire leadership sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining superior military power worldwide</td>
<td>40 [34]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening countries who are friendly toward us</td>
<td>23 [10] 38 [8]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here is a list of possible foreign policy goals that the United States might have. Please indicate how much importance should be attached to each goal.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>87 [-1]</td>
<td>83 [-5]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keeping peace in the world</td>
<td>70 [-6]</td>
<td>76 [-7]</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improving the global environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>48 [-19]</td>
<td>54 [-20]</td>
<td>69 [-19]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>developed countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldwide population control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>47 [-9]</td>
<td>55 [-8]</td>
<td>55 [-12]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>problems such as food, inflation, and energy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping solve world inflation</td>
<td>49 [-3]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Averting financial crises arising from Third World</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>45 [-7]</td>
<td>47 [-7]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>debts</td>
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Note: Gaps exceeding 6 percent are significant at the .001 level.
widely perceived as providing a low-risk environment for elevating human rights and democracy toward the top of America’s foreign policy agenda.

The partisan gaps in Table 10.5 offer only modest evidence that the end of the Cold War has resurrected a foreign policy consensus among opinion leaders. Bipartisan agreement on the importance of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons is diluted somewhat by the substantial gap—16 percent—on the importance of “worldwide arms control.” There are also rather muted differences between Republicans and Democrats on several of the less highly rated goals: defending allies, protecting weaker nations, protecting the jobs of American workers, and promoting democracy abroad.

In contrast, substantial partisan gaps emerged on many other issues. World order security issues gave rise to significant differences, with Democrats attributing considerably greater importance to these goals. A similar pattern, though with even greater partisan differences averaging almost 30 percent in 1996, characterizes responses to the world order economic and environmental issues. On the other hand, compared with Democratic leaders, Republicans typically attributed greater importance to American economic interests and security goals. Just as Republicans gave a higher priority to matching Soviet military power during the Cold War, in 1996 they were far more enthusiastic than Democrats about “maintaining superior military power worldwide.” Finally, as noted earlier, promoting American values abroad has gained a great deal of support in none of the FPLP surveys, but as overall support for human rights has declined, reaching a new low in 1996, the gap between Republicans and Democrats actually widened.

Although partisan cleavages are evident on a great many issues, trade stands out as a notable exception. As demonstrated by protests at the 1999 World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle and by groups criticizing permanent normal trade status for China in 2000, trade issues have given rise to a bipartisan coalition of opponents—liberal Democrats who favor imposing stricter environmental and workplace regulation on America’s trade partners have joined forces with conservative Republicans who demand that China be held accountable for its persecution of dissidents, Christians, and Tibetans, as well as its threats against Taiwan. The 2000 election is a good case in point. George W. Bush and Al Gore largely agreed on the virtues of trade liberalization, whereas staunch conservative Patrick Buchanan and ultraliberal Ralph Nader were of a mind in attacking free trade and globalization. The most recent FPLP survey of opinion leaders also found scant evidence of partisan cleavages. A majority of Democratic and Republican opinion leaders opposed erecting trade barriers; rated protecting jobs as a foreign policy goal of limited importance; and approved major steps toward trade liberalization, including NAFTA, GATT, and the WTO agreements. The grant of “most favored nation” trade status to China divided leaders
almost evenly, but the cleavages cut across rather than along party lines. Finally, bipartisan agreement on trade liberalization was supported by the widespread belief—shared by Republicans, Democrats, and independents—that economic competition, whether from Europe or Japan, does not constitute a serious threat to the United States. It should be noted that the absence of partisan divisions on trade issues in 1996 represents continuity rather than change in the views of opinion leaders; earlier surveys also found that trade is among the few issues on which cleavages do not follow closely along party lines.

In summary, although the Destler-Gelb-Lake thesis about the growing partisan gaps on foreign affairs was articulated almost two decades ago, well before the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the data in Table 10.5 suggest that it continues to provide an insightful perspective on many foreign policy issues.

Conclusion

The evidence indicates greater persistence than change in public attitudes toward foreign affairs since the end of the Cold War: Opinion leaders continue to be more internationalist than the general public on virtually all issues; the general public has shown little indication of a mindless retreat toward isolationism, and even less support for unilateralism in preference to action in cooperation with NATO or the United Nations; and most issues other than trade continue to give rise to partisan cleavages among both leaders and the general public. It is also hard to find persuasive evidence supporting either of the charges summarized at the beginning of this chapter. The public has shown neither much support for crusades to make the world over in the American image, nor for the agenda of those who would withdraw from most international organizations, eliminate foreign aid, withdraw American forces stationed abroad, and otherwise seek to cut the ties that have enmeshed the United States in the global system. One exception is immigration, which has been a major concern of the general public, and to a much lesser extent, of leaders.

Thus, although the data reveal declining support for some international endeavors and disquiet about the effects of economic globalization—a concern that predates the end of the Cold War—evidence of continuity in public opinion dominates signs of sharp change. Even with respect to the most controversial post-Cold War undertakings, military interventions abroad that may pose the risk of casualties, the public is selectively supportive rather than reflexively opposed. Support is most likely for interventions in such areas of traditional concern as Europe, when the purpose is to prevent or punish aggression rather than to promote American values or institutions, and when there is a reasonable prospect of success. Whether or not one agrees with these criteria, they bear considerably greater resemblance to traditional “realism” than to “isolationism.” Indeed, they are less stringent than the so-called “Weinberger doctrine,” a set of
six preconditions for military interventions abroad proposed by the Secretary of Defense in 1984 and opposed by his cabinet colleague, George Shultz (New York Times, November 29, 1984; Shultz, 1993).

Domestic politics certainly have complicated and sometimes damaged Washington’s ability to conduct foreign affairs and to demonstrate essential leadership in attempting to cope with the “buzzing, blooming confusion” of the post-Cold War international arena. This is not an unfamiliar pattern. Periods of crisis and conflict, when there is an accretion of power by the executive branch, are often followed by congressional efforts to restore its prerogatives and, more generally, by the intrusion of domestic political concerns into the conduct of foreign affairs. The years following the Civil War, World War One, and the Vietnam War illustrate this pattern, and the post-Cold War era appears to be no exception.

But where is the primary locus of the problem? Is it in a public that recently focused more attention to domestic issues than to international ones? Or in intensified partisanship in congress? Or in the willingness of some congressional leaders to engage in such damaging frivolities as withholding payments of legitimate dues to the United Nations or holding up ambassadorial and other appointments for reasons that are unrelated to the qualifications of the nominees? Or in the print and electronic media that have drastically reduced coverage of foreign affairs in recent years (Emery, 1989)? Or in parochial single-issue interest groups that find it easier to thrive in the absence of an overriding international threat? Many of these actors state that they are, in fact, accurately reflecting public preferences. Media leaders assert that, in focusing on domestic issues and entertainment, they are merely giving the public what it wants. Many senators and representatives argue that, in their opposition to peacekeeping operations, foreign aid, or the United Nations and other international institutions, they are reflecting the views of an increasingly isolationist public that has lost patience with recalcitrant allies, inefficient international organizations, and Third World kleptocracies that look to America to bail them out of problems of their own making.

There is compelling evidence that foreign and defense policy have lost a good deal of their salience for the general public. Domestic issues seem to impinge more directly on the daily lives of most citizens, and the declining coverage of international affairs by the print and the electronic media reinforces and exacerbates the public tendency to focus on problems at home in the absence of wars, crises, and other dramatic events abroad. In virtually every post–Gulf War survey asking, “What are the major problems facing the country today?” the list is dominated by such issues as drugs, crime, education, poverty, immorality, the economy, Social Security, and similar concerns. The paucity of international issues near the top of these lists is not, however, necessarily an unambiguous or even especially valid indicator of isolationism. Indeed, public inattention to international problems during the closing years of the twentieth century derives at least
in part from a general sense of satisfaction with the administration's conduct of foreign affairs. Not only did former President Clinton's overall approval ratings remain at a remarkably high level, but respondents to the 1998 CCFR survey, conducted during House impeachment proceedings against Clinton, gave him the highest percentage of "very successful" ratings for his foreign policies of any post-World War president. When "somewhat successful" responses are included, Clinton ranked second only to his immediate predecessor, George Bush (Rielly, 1999, 36–37; Lipset and Bowman, 2000; and Walt, 2000).

The 1998 CCFR survey revealed that, when asked to identify "the two or three biggest foreign policy problems facing the United States today," only 7 percent cited "getting involved in the affairs of other countries" or "excessive foreign aid," two points often emphasized by such proponents of isolationism as columnist, author, and perennial presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan; these expressions of disquiet were down sharply from the 1994 survey, when the comparable figures were 19 percent and 16 percent, respectively. In contrast, three times that many could not think of a single major international problem, although, as shown in Table 10.1, many perceive a world posing multiple threats to vital U.S. interests. These responses seem to point to a public that is rather poorly informed about the world (as usual), inattentive, generally satisfied with the conduct of foreign affairs—but not necessarily leading a charge of "back to the womb." The public mood is perhaps most accurately described as "apathetic internationalism" (Lindsay, 2000).

American military and economic preponderance, the absence of an immediate and a credible threat to national security—"rogue states" such as Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, North Korea, Sudan, and Cuba clearly cannot fill the boots worn by Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan, or the Soviet Union during the past six decades. Although a long period of economic growth and low unemployment has mitigated some domestic problems, the persistence of drug-related crime, urban decay, crumbling infrastructure, pockets of poverty, and educational deficiencies has, not unreasonably, focused public attention toward the domestic arena. That focus does not, however, necessarily constitute isolationism, or even indifference to everything that lies beyond America's shores. The evidence summarized before, as well as from other studies, indicates that leaders who claim to be surfing on powerful waves of isolationism and unilateralism among the American people are in fact "misreading the public" (Kull and Destler, 1999). Even the alleged casualty-aversion of the public may be an instance of elite misperception; indeed, leaders who underestimate the public's willingness to engage in peacekeeping and other undertakings that pose the risk of casualties may be seeking to legitimate their own reluctance to take part in such activities.6

The latter point raises an interesting question. Why, when leaders are consistently more internationalist than the general public, do they seem more reluctant to tolerate casualties? In the case of the Clinton administration, legitimating a
reluctance to take actions by pointing to the alleged casualty-aversion of the public may have served to avoid confrontations with the military and congress. The military have generally expressed limited enthusiasm for the kinds of interventions that have characterized the past decade (the "Powell Doctrine"), and even less for former President Clinton. As Clinton learned from almost his first day in the Oval Office, when he attempted to implement his campaign pledge on gays in the military, there is little to be gained by arousing the wrath of senior military officers. Similarly, the Marine barracks bombing in Lebanon and the death of eighteen Rangers in Mogadishu revealed that, even though the initial public reactions may be to reinforce military units and/or seek to punish the culprits, congressional reactions to casualties are at least as likely to be directed against administration policies.

Where does that outcome leave a new administration that seeks to have the United States play an effective leadership role in world affairs? Although one should exercise great caution in attempting to draw historical parallels, it may be instructive to recall the half decade immediately following the end of World War Two. Some pioneering opinion analysts of that period feared that a fickle and poorly informed public, weary of the sacrifices imposed by four years of war, would resist any efforts to continue shouldering the burdens of world leadership. In a memo to President Roosevelt, just prior to his departure for the Yalta Conference in 1945, Hadley Cantril warned that "it is unrealistic to assume that Americans are international-minded . . . The present internationalism rests on rather unstable foundations: it is recent, it is not rooted in broad or long range conceptions of self-interest, it has little intellectual basis" (Cantril, 1967, 76). Gabriel Almond (1950) examined responses to questions about the "most important problems facing the country." Noting that wartime concerns with international issues had been replaced with domestic ones, he concluded that a volatile and inattentive public provided very shaky foundations upon which to sustain global leadership. Yet, during the 1945 to 1950 period, the public came to support a number of unprecedented undertakings that have been described as "the revolution in American foreign policy," suggesting that there is a significant difference between an inattentive and an isolationist public. Effective presidential leadership, often bridging partisan lines, was able to generate public support for innovative undertakings, some of which ran counter to such deeply embedded axioms as George Washington's admonition "to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world."

We should be wary of pushing too far the parallels between the 1945 to 1950 period and the present. The most striking difference is that Stalin's Soviet Union posed a threat to vital interests far greater than any that exists today. Nevertheless, the example suggests that because even a poorly informed and an inattentive public is not necessarily isolationist, it can be persuaded to support an American leadership role in a broad range of international undertakings if
it can be shown that they are both desirable and feasible. A critical element is a presidential leadership that is capable of making an effective case for its foreign policy agenda; of avoiding the mendacity that all too often has marred efforts to use the "bully pulpit" to gain public support, with the consequence that public trust in government has declined precipitously during the past several decades; and of reading the public accurately rather than misreading it.

Election Postscript

President George W. Bush began his term with some significant handicaps arising from the divisive 2000 election and its tumultuous aftermath. Persisting doubts about the validity of the crucial vote count in Florida would similarly have dogged Al Gore had he ultimately been declared the victor, but the election also created other difficulties for Bush. Although Congress remained very narrowly under Republican control, defeat in the popular presidential vote and GOP losses in the Senate and House races made it difficult for the administration to claim a strong mandate, especially on controversial domestic initiatives.

One domestic political strategy for a president who was elected by a very narrow margin is to forge a bipartisan coalition. John F. Kennedy did so four decades ago when he appointed prominent Republicans to two of the key foreign policy positions: Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and Secretary of the Treasury Douglas Dillon.

President Bush has chosen a different strategy. Despite pre- and post-election pledges to unite Americans, the administration's initial domestic and foreign policies are clearly aimed at placating the most conservative elements within the Republican Party and the largest donors to his presidential campaign. Domestically, this strategy has manifested itself in a highly controversial $1.6 trillion tax cut plan that runs counter to strong public preferences for using the current budget surplus to buttress Social Security and to reduce the $5.8 trillion national debt. Other examples include reversing regulations on workplace safety, environmental protection of national forests and monuments, and opposing proposals to reduce permissible levels of arsenic in public water supplies.

The Bush administration's foreign and defense policies are also marked by unilateralist proclivities that appeal to the Jesse Helms wing of the GOP rather than to moderates. Although Secretary of State Colin Powell is highly respected by the public and in Congress, he has already been overruled publicly on two issues. Powell's nominee for the Population, Refugees and Migration Bureau was rejected, as was his statement that the United States would continue negotiations with North Korea on weapons of mass destruction and the means of their delivery. By reversing Powell on the latter issue, the Bush administration also headed off the possibility, admittedly a long shot, that a verifiable arms
control agreement with North Korea would call into question a key argument for another project dear to the hearts of conservative unilateralists—a national missile defense system. Other manifestation of policies that appeal to the most conservative elements in the Republican Party include undercutting the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change; appointing an outspoken opponent of the United Nations and arms control (John R. Bolton) to a key State Department position on arms control; and reducing spending on aid programs to Russia to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction. China presents a more difficult problem for the Bush administration, as its business supporters are strong proponents for engagement through expanded trade, whereas its unilateralist supporters advocate a much harder line toward Beijing and greater military assistance for Taiwan. The defection in May 2001 from the GOP of Senator James Jeffords, who found himself increasingly at odds with Republican policies, resulted in Democratic control of the Senate. Whether that will moderate Bush administration policies is not yet clear.

The evidence summarized in this chapter offers only modest support for the Schlesinger diagnosis of a rush toward unilateralism. However, should the Bush administration continue along that path, it is unlikely to provoke powerful resistance from a public whose foreign policy preferences are generally internationalist and multilateralist, but whose attention is focused primarily on domestic issues. It may thus ultimately turn out that Schlesinger's concerns were premature rather than invalid.

References

Congressional Quarterly. 1994 CQ Almanac.


In 1995, four years after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Arthur Schlesinger—historian, former presidential adviser and once a vocal critic of American intervention in the Vietnam War—wrote that the age of American internationalism was coming to an end. Looking back on the commitment to collective security during the Cold War, he described the hope that "Americans had made the great turning and would forever after accept collective responsibilities" as "an illusion."

It is now surely clear that the upsurge in American internationalism during the Cold War was a reaction to what was seen as the direct and urgent Soviet threat to the security of the United States. It is to Joseph Stalin that Americans owe the 40-year suppression of the isolationist impulse. The collapse of the Soviet threat faces us today with the prospect that haunted Roosevelt half a century ago—the return to the womb in American foreign policy …The isolationist impulse has risen from the grave, and it has taken the new form of unilateralism (Schlesinger 1995, 5).

Schlesinger’s essay went on to describe declining support for internationalism across the entire spectrum of American society, from the "housewife in Xenia, Ohio," to members of the Council on Foreign Relations, and to many officials in Washington. But Schlesinger was writing at about the midpoint between demolition of the quintessential symbol of the Cold War—the Berlin Wall—and the terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001, and eight years prior to the war against Iraq. Have the September 11 attacks and the regime change in Iraq
“changed everything,” as asserted by some commentators, or will they prove to be less than defining moments for the new millennium? The realist critique of democracies, and especially of public opinion, is that because memories of even dramatic events are short lived, parochial domestic and personal concerns will ultimately drive international ones to the back burner. If, in fact, the dozen years following the end of the Cold War were marked by a reversion to isolationism and unilateralism, as claimed by Schlesinger, then, barring a repetition of terrorist attacks on the homeland, the events of September 11, 2001 may well represent a temporary change in a long term trend away from internationalism and multilateralism. The alternative thesis is that public support for broad and active international engagement, often with the cooperation of allies and through various international institutions, persisted through the years following the disintegration of the Soviet Union. In that case, multilateral impulses are likely to persist into the foreseeable future. For that reason, it is useful to undertake separate analyses of the pre- and post-September 11 periods.

As we are now several years into a new millennium and memories of the Cold War are becoming fainter, are we indeed witnessing a fundamental redefinition of the U.S. role in the world along the lines described in Schlesinger’s obituary for “a magnificent dream?” For more than a half century following Pearl Harbor there was a widespread belief among American leaders that vital national interests required the United States to play an active leadership role in world affairs; disagreements among elites tended to focus not on the desirability of assuming the burdens—and enjoying the benefits—of international leadership but, rather, on the goals, strategies and tactics that should be employed in implementing that role. For example, even the sharp differences between incumbent Jimmy Carter and challenger Ronald Reagan that surfaced during the 1980 presidential campaign were not about whether the United States should take an active position in world affairs, but rather about the goals, values, and strategies that should inform and guide the country in its international undertakings. Reagan emphasized the need to restore a military posture that he charged had been dangerously compromised by the misguided pursuit of détente and arms control by the Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations, and to confront more forcefully an evil and expansionist Soviet empire. In contrast, Carter was no more inclined than Reagan to reduce America’s internationalist stance, but he sought to use that leadership position in the service of rather different goals and values. His definition of a “foreign policy that the American people can be proud of” included emphasizing arms control rather than arms racing and promoting human rights. Thus, if Schlesinger’s diagnosis of post-Cold War American foreign policy correctly unearthed a surge toward isolationism and unilateralism, it would be a watershed in thinking about foreign affairs comparable to that triggered by the attack on Pearl Harbor, which, in the words of Senator Arthur Vandenberg, “ended isolationism for any realist” (Vandenberg 1952, 1).
How compelling is the thesis that we are undergoing such a fundamental change in beliefs about the country’s appropriate role in the world? What evidence suggests that Schlesinger may in fact have discerned an important transformation in American thinking about foreign affairs? Several points come to mind. First, as has been noted by Schlesinger and so many others that it has almost become a cliché, the United States lost the guiding beacon of the Cold War; opposition to the expansion of Soviet influence was so widely regarded a vital national interest that it provided a default position for American policymakers that usually prevailed in the absence of a powerful case to the contrary. Not only are the links between core American interests and the outcomes of post-Cold War conflicts such as those in Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Kosovo harder to establish, but it may not be easy to agree even upon the indicators of success or failure of military intervention in such conflicts.

Some post-Cold War elections might offer additional grounds for supporting Schlesinger’s analysis. The 1994-midterm elections provided the Republicans with majorities in both the Senate and House for the first time in forty-two years. The Republican “contract with America” included several provisions with isolationist and unilateralist overtones. Moreover, the presidential candidacies of Patrick Buchanan and Ross Perot, while ultimately failing to gain either the Republican nomination or the White House, represented nontrivial alternative conceptions of the general U.S. role in international affairs, as well as of preferences on such specific issues as trade and protectionism, alliance commitments, immigration policy, peacekeeping missions, and the like. Despite the results of the 1992 and 1996 elections, they did not represent the final acts in semi-isolationist and unilateralist challenges within either major political party. Ralph Nader’s independent presidential campaign in 2000, like those of Buchanan and Perot, was grounded in a critique of globalization and, especially, on the consequences of trade liberalization. And, as will be noted below, the successful George W. Bush presidential campaign in 2000 staked out a foreign policy position with more than a few unilateralist overtones.

Although generational theses have rarely provided wholly persuasive explanations of continuity and change in foreign policy, the 1990s in fact witnessed a major change at the leadership level that might plausibly be linked to ways of thinking about international affairs. The defeats of George Bush and Bob Dole in the 1992 and 1996 elections represented the last hurrah of a generation that came to adulthood during World War II, a conflict in which both Bush and Dole served with valor. Indeed, until Bill Clinton’s inauguration, all post-World War II presidents save Ronald Reagan had had combat experience. In contrast, many leaders in Washington, including former President Clinton, President Bush, Vice President Cheney, and former Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott, share an important common experience—extraordinary efforts to avoid military service in Vietnam. Although several leading Senators in both parties served in that
conflict, unless John Kerry or Wesley Clark wins the Democratic nomination in 2004, John McCain and Al Gore, both unsuccessful presidential candidates in 2000, may turn out to have been the last serious contenders for the White House who saw active duty in Vietnam.

But the case for a fundamental post-Cold War change in American orientations toward world affairs is not entirely compelling because there are also some reasons to suspect that continuity has not fully given way to change during recent years. As revealed in Figure 11.1, surveys of the general public reveal that a substantial majority of Americans continue to support an "active role in world affairs," a point acknowledged by Schlesinger but dismissed as little more than lip-service to "euphonious generalities in support of internationalism" because of declining public enthusiasm for some more specific international goals (Schlesinger 1995, 7). Nor have opinion leaders, the most internationalist stratum of American society for many decades, shown much inclination to abandon their views in this respect. Eight Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (CCFR) and six Foreign Policy Leadership Project (FPLP) surveys of American opinion leaders, spanning the Cold War and post-Cold War eras (1974–2002) do not offer much evidence that the internationalist impulses of leaders collapsed in tandem with the ebbing Soviet threat.

More detailed studies, drawing on evidence from the late 1980s and 1990s, have generally found that even the startling events marking the end of the Cold War, culminating in disintegration of the USSR, did not give rise to equally dramatic changes in public opinion. Appraisals of quite specific aspects of foreign affairs—for example the perceived level of threat from the Soviet Union—may have changed to reflect international realities, but the basic structures of attitudes toward foreign affairs proved quite resistant to change (Murray 1996). If the spectacular developments of 1989–1991 did not yield substantial changes in foreign policy orientations, are there compelling reasons to believe that those of the subsequent years have done so? For example, several acute observers of the American political arena noted in the early 1980s that the formulation of American foreign policy had become increasingly marked by strident partisan and ideological bickering (Destler, Gelb, and Lake 1984). There is little evidence that the end of the Cold War or events of the post-Cold War period—including the military campaign to remove the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq—have softened, much less bridged, these partisan and ideological cleavages. More specifically, it is not wholly clear that recent years have witnessed the emergence of a bipartisan post-Cold War consensus favoring either isolationism or unilateralism.

Finally, is it possible that the attacks of September 11 have served to create a new internationalist foreign policy consensus in which international terrorists and terrorist organizations will play the same role that Axis powers did during World War II and the Soviet Union did during the Cold War? Has the enormity of the attacks convinced a vast majority of American policy makers, opinion
A Return to Isolationism and Unilateralism?

Figure 11.1 Should the United States Play an Active Role in World Affairs, or Should It Stay Out?
leaders, and the general public that the path to success against terrorism must entail consultation, collaboration, and cooperation with other countries on a scale not seen since the height of the Cold War when the United States played a key role in formation of the United Nations and NATO, the Marshall Plan for economic reconstruction of Europe, and resistance to aggression in Korea? Alternatively, have these attacks persuaded significant segments of the public that an America with fewer international entanglements will also be a less inviting target for violently disaffected terrorist groups—what one analyst has called “blowback” (Johnson 2000)? The recency of the attacks suggests considerable caution in projections about their long run consequences, but at least some preliminary observations are possible.

Before proceeding, it may be useful to distinguish between the two key terms in Schlesinger’s lament about U.S. foreign policy. Isolationism refers to policies that seek to limit or reduce the country’s international engagements to the extent that it is possible to do so. Admonitions by George Washington and Thomas Jefferson to shun permanent entangling alliances were efforts to protect the weak young nation from dangerous embroilments in Europe’s frequent wars. Unilateralism, which may or may not be a part of an isolationist stance, attempts to engage the world with as few constraints as possible from norms, treaties, agreements, international organizations, and other countries. Its proponents point to the ability to pursue self-defined national interests, undiluted by the need to compromise, and the preservation of the country’s sovereign prerogatives as its primary virtues. Flexibility and the ability to act with speed are touted as additional benefits of unilateralism.

A preference for unilateralism may be part of an effort to reduce engagement abroad, as it was during the 1920s and 1930s when the United States failed to ratify the Treaty of Versailles, torpedoed the London International Economic Conference of 1933, and adopted various kinds of “neutrality legislation” to prevent the country from being drawn into conflicts abroad in ways that it allegedly had been in 1917. But unilateralism may also characterize the policies of a nation that is highly engaged with the world across virtually all issue areas—that is, one that has clearly rejected the isolationist path. In this case, unilateralism takes the form of a country using its power to impose its own rules of engagement whenever there is a possibility that treaties, agreements, norms, or international organizations might require consultation, cooperation, or compromise with others; might impinge upon a broad definition of sovereignty; or in other ways limit the country’s freedom of action. American exceptionalism lies at the heart of many briefs on behalf of the unilateral path to coping with global issues. According to its advocates, multilateralism and its attending constraints may be necessary for the weak, who can only pursue their vital interests in conjunction with allies, and for whom treaties, agreements, and international organizations provide a rational way to impose some limits on the powerful. But there is no
A Return to Isolationism and Unilateralism?

reason for the powerful, and certainly not for a superpower, to accept that logic because, like F. Scott Fitzgerald's description of the rich, "they are different." Indeed, the overarching goal, as one analyst points out, is to "invoke America's global mission to limit the prerogatives of other nations but not the United States" (Judis 2003, 22).

Post-Cold War America is not lacking in articulate voices for greatly reduced engagement abroad and their primary arguments are not unlike those of their ideological brethren in earlier eras. A central theme is that the welfare of the United States and its democratic institutions are at an unreasonable, perhaps even fatal risk, as a result of excessive entanglements with the rest of the world, whether because the country will be swamped by floods of immigrants seeking better economic opportunities, or because American meddling in conflicts that have only a marginal relationship to vital national interests breeds resentment and invites attacks (Buchanan 2002; Schwarz and Layne 2002). The events of September 11 have been cited by neo-isolationists as dramatic proof that their fears are well founded. These arguments notwithstanding, the proponents of isolationism are still on the margins rather than at the core of contemporary political debates within either of the two major political parties. For this reason, the remainder of this discussion will focus on the issue of unilateralism, with only secondary attention to isolationism.

This chapter addresses these issues in three stages. The first section examines the policy proclivities of the Bush administration, both before and after the terrorist attacks of 2001. Necessarily that survey must summarize major trends rather than undertake detailed descriptions of all aspects of foreign and defense policy. The next part analyzes the views of opinion leaders. There is ample evidence that, compared to the general public, leaders have typically been more inclined to support internationalist and multilateralist policies across a fairly wide range of issues. Any recent change in this respect would therefore provide especially telling support for the Schlesinger thesis. Surveys conducted by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations and the Foreign Policy Leadership Project provide the bulk of the evidence about opinion leaders. The third stage assesses the views of the general public as revealed in surveys conducted by Gallup, the CCFR, the Pew Center for the People and the Press, the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland, and others.

Bush Administration Foreign and Defense Policies

The Bush administration came to office following the closest and most controversial presidential election since 1876. During the electoral campaign, members of the Bush team asserted that they would present a dramatically different orientation toward world affairs than that of the outgoing Clinton administration. Their goals, strategies, and tactics would be characterized by a "hard-headed
realism” that placed core national interests ahead of such vague and elusive goals as “nation building,” “peacekeeping,” and what one critic described derisively as “international social work” worthy of Mother Theresa but not of the world’s only superpower (Mandelbaum 1996). To be sure, in one of the televised presidential debates candidate Bush did express the need for the United States to be humble rather than arrogant in exercising its global leadership, but it was also clear that U.S. interests would be self-defined rather than compromised or diluted by any perceived need to accommodate allies, international agreements, international institutions, much less anything as vague as “world opinion.” For example, shortly before the election, Condoleezza Rice, a key member of the Bush foreign policy team who would subsequently be named National Security Adviser, asserted that U.S. peacekeeping troops in parts of the former Yugoslavia would be withdrawn should Bush be elected. Admittedly such rhetoric is not always a reliable guide to the policies of a new administration, a point amply demonstrated by candidate Bill Clinton’s attacks on the policies of incumbent President George H. W. Bush in 1992; after denouncing Bush’s actions with respect to refugees from Haiti, the civil war in Bosnia, and most-favored-nation trade status for China, Clinton subsequently adopted policies that varied only slightly from those of his predecessor.

Thus, we are left with two questions. Was the pattern described by former Secretary of State Warren Christopher (2002) as “the anti-predecessor syndrome” repeated in the transition between Clinton and his successor? How did the events of September 11 affect the foreign and defense policy orientations of the present administration?

President Bush and his advisers did not invariably follow the path favored by the most vocal unilateralists, including former Senate Foreign Relations Committee chair Jesse Helms, journalist-presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan, syndicated columnists Charles Krauthammer, George Will, and William Safire, many libertarians, and others who argued that the end of the Cold War at last freed the United States from having to waste its resources in supporting ungrateful allies, the United Nations, NATO, and other such relics of the Cold War. Most notably, they accepted some key aspects of globalization that had been championed by the previous Bush and Clinton administrations, including trade liberalization and permanent normal trade status for China. They also rejected the xenophobic anti-immigrant policies favored by many Republicans, including Patrick Buchanan and former California Governor Pete Wilson.

These points aside, the Bush administration also undertook some major steps that put it at odds with most of America’s closest allies. Among the most visible actions was a firm commitment to deploying a national missile defense (NMD) system even in advance of tests that would demonstrate its technical feasibility. To critics who argued the NMD would require withdrawal from one of the foundations of the Cold War arms control regime, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty,
Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and others argued that international conditions had changed fundamentally since the agreement was signed in 1972, that the other party to it had ceased to exist with the disintegration of the USSR, and, most importantly, that the administration would not permit any treaty to stand in the way of a program that they believed would materially enhance the country's security.

Of the other major unilateralist steps, withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol on global warming drew strong criticism from America's allies, most of whom were among the 178 countries that reached an agreement on the issue in July 2001. Because the United States is the major source of such suspected causes of global warming as carbon dioxide emissions, its withdrawal represented a significant setback on efforts to deal with the issue. In reply, administration critics of the Kyoto Protocol raised questions about whether there really is a global warming problem, whether man-made emissions are among its major sources, and the justice of imposing less demanding requirements on such developing countries as India and China. Most importantly, the president made clear his unwillingness to accept an agreement that might impose any costs on the U.S. economy. Although the Kyoto Protocol would have faced a steep uphill battle in the Senate, the administration also rejected the strategy of working toward a modified agreement that might accommodate major U.S. reservations. To underscore its position, the administration did not take part in negotiations in Marrakech, Morocco, in 2001 to revive the accord by finding common ground (Joyner 2003). A report from the Environmental Protection Agency that had also been reviewed by other agencies concluded that man-made emissions were major sources of global warming. Submitted to the United Nations in June 2002, the report outlined the ways in which the United States would be changed, mostly for the worse, as a result. Nevertheless, the administration reiterated its opposition to the Kyoto Protocol and asserted that it would be better to adapt to the negative consequences of global warming than to take actions to prevent or mitigate them. When asked about the global warming study produced by his own administration, President Bush scornfully replied, "I have read the report put out by the bureaucracy" (Seeyle 2002). With Canadian ratification of the Kyoto Protocol in 2002, it was only one nation shy of becoming law in more than one hundred countries. The heart of the agreement, an emissions trading system closely resembling the original U.S. proposal, is set to begin on a full scale in 2005 (Pohl 2003).

In May 2002 the administration announced that it was withdrawing all support for the International Criminal Court that will have jurisdiction over charges of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes starting in July 2002. The Clinton administration had signed the I.C.C. Treaty during its final month in office although it was aware that it had little chance of approval by the Senate. The United States would refuse to provide any information that might be used
to bring a case against any individuals even though the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties requires states not to take steps to undermine treaties that they sign. The I.C.C. has strong support from most U.S. allies, especially Canada, which played a lead role in its creation. Bush administration opponents assert that it would hamper the war on terrorism because it might be used to undertake politically-motivated prosecution of American officials and military personnel. According to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, “By putting U.S. men and women in uniform at risk of politicized prosecutions,” the I.C.C. “could well create a powerful disincentive for U.S. military engagement in the world” (Lewis 2002, A9). The U.S. position is thus that it has the right to try others’ military personnel without ceding that right to any international body.1 In order to derail the I.C.C., the administration threatened to veto continuation of United Nations operations in Bosnia in July 2002 and left open the possibility that it would veto all UN peacekeeping operations. A last minute compromise effectively provided American peacekeeping personnel a one-year exemption from prosecution by the I.C.C. The Security Council renewed the exemption for another year by a 12-0 vote—France, Germany, and Syria abstained—on June 12.

To further undermine the I.C.C., the administration, with strong congressional support, notified all signatories to the treaty that they would lose all military assistance unless they signed bilateral agreements exempting all American personnel from the jurisdiction of the new court. Members of NATO, Israel, and a very few others are exempt. Legislation signed in 2002 prohibits cooperation with the I.C.C. and authorizes the president to use any necessary means to free covered persons held by or on behalf of the court (Joyner 2003). It should be noted that the jurisdiction of the I.C.C. is severely circumscribed; it may act only in cases of suspected genocide or crimes against humanity, and then, only if the government of the accused fails to bring the suspect to trial within its own legal system. According to military analyst Andrew Bacevich, a retired colonel with experience in peacekeeping operations, the effort to drive a single stake simultaneously through the heart of the I.C.C. and peacekeeping operations was motivated largely by a desire to placate the “nationalist right,” whose members have consistently and vocally expressed their opposition to any use of the military for purposes other than war-fighting, and for whom any treaty that binds the United States is anathema (Bacevich 2002).

The Bush administration has also been opposed to international efforts to cope with other issues that cross national frontiers. “Offshore” banking has become a major industry for several mini-states, including the Cayman Islands. These countries permit non-residents to open unregistered accounts that offer confidentiality and lie outside the purview of tax and other officials. Shortly after the administration came to office in 2001, Secretary of the Treasury Paul O’Neill testified before the Senate that the United States would oppose any international
efforts to monitor these banking activities, although there were strong reasons to suspect that many of the accounts served as tax-avoidance havens, vehicles for money laundering by drug dealers, and other illicit activities. The stated reason was that, by easing tax collection from those with such accounts, it was a form of tax increase. When informed of a study revealing that in the Cayman Islands alone there were more than a million offshore accounts and businesses, fewer than 1 percent of which were disclosed and legal, O’Neill replied, “I find it amusing” (Johnston 2001, A1). The United States is estimated to lose $70 billion per year in taxes as a result. It was later revealed that the Houston-based energy firm Enron had some nine hundred accounts in the Caymans. Although the United States belatedly took steps to stop banking activities by suspected terrorist organizations, including “charities” that may be covers for terrorist fundraising, there has been no serious U.S. effort to revive international efforts toward comprehensive regulation of offshore banking (Thachuk 2002).

Another example illustrates the administration’s propensity to put the parochial interests of favored domestic interest groups ahead of international cooperation. The Small Arms Control Pact is intended to slow the flow of small arms and assault weapons, mostly to Third World Nations, where they are responsible for about a half million deaths annually; more than 70 percent of the victims are women and children. The agreement would not infringe on the rights of Americans to acquire and bear arms, but strident opposition from Attorney General Ashcroft and the National Rifle Association, whose leaders have been quite vocal in reminding the president that their members put George W. Bush into the White House in the tightly contested 2000 election, guaranteed that the United States would oppose it. In his address to the plenary session of the Small Arms conference, Under-Secretary of State John R. Bolton not only criticized the draft “Program of Action,” but he also asserted that, “Neither will we, at this time, commit to beginning negotiations and reach agreement on any legally binding instrument” (Bolton 2001). The United States, the only member of the General Assembly to oppose the UN Agreement to curb the International Flow of Illicit Small Arms, is the leading exporter of such weapons with sales of about $1.2 billion in 1998. United States opposition also provides a convenient cover for international sales by Russian and Chinese arms producers.

Additional examples of the Bush administration’s determination not be bound by multilateral agreement, especially if they might be opposed by significant domestic constituent, include the following (Joyner 2003):

- Elimination of the miniscule funding ($34 million) for the United Nations Population Fund, much to the delight of the pro-life groups in the United States, although independent investigations have demonstrated the falsity of the claim that such funds are used for abortions in China.
Opposition to the Convention on Rights of the Child, an agreement to which, among UN members, only the United States and Somalia are not a party.

- Opposition to the Comprehensive [nuclear] Test Ban Treaty.
- Refusal to become party to the Landmines Convention.
- Refusal to strengthen the 1972 Biological and Toxic Weapons Convention, to which the United States is already a party.

Finally, the president's approval in September 2002 of the National Security Strategy doctrine is the most important example of American exceptionalism. Existing rights to pre-emptive self-defense require that the threat must be imminent, immediate, or overwhelming. Instead, the NSS permits the administration to undertake a preventive war if it believes that at some future time another government might strike the United States. Presumably the administration would be loathe to extend a similar right to other states—for example, India or Pakistan—even if they could also claim, with some justification, that they also face a potential threat to national security (Byers 2003).

Although sometimes portrayed as a response to the September 11 terrorist attacks, the roots of the unilateralist/unipolar thesis go back to the first Bush administration when Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney commissioned a study group headed by undersecretary for defense policy Paul Wolfowitz—the other members were Lewis Libby and Eric Edelman—to develop a new plan to make permanent U.S. global military dominance. The resulting Wolfowitz blueprint did not prevail at that time against the opposition of Colin Powell, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Secretary of State George Shultz, and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, but it became the centerpiece of the Project for the New American Century (PNAC) in 1997 (Dorrien 2003). Cheney, Wolfowitz, Lewis, and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld were among members of PNAC who became key foreign policy officials of the Bush administration.

The terrorist attacks of 2001 energized the Bush administration to form an international coalition to destroy Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaeda organization that was responsible for the attacks on New York and Washington and to uproot the Taliban regime in Afghanistan that provided a haven for al-Qaeda. Many NATO allies provided vital help ranging from special forces personnel deployed in combat and peacekeeping missions in Afghanistan to intelligence about al-Qaeda, an organization whose trained members are believed to reside in scores of nations. Indeed, for the first time in its history, NATO invoked Article V—the provision that “an attack on one is an attack on all.” In addition, a number of countries near or adjoining Afghanistan—Pakistan, Russia, several other republics of the former Soviet Union, and China—offered valuable assistance, including intelligence, bases and staging areas for U.S. and other military personnel, and overflight rights. In short, the logic of events and geographic realities left the Bush
A Return to Isolationism and Unilateralism?

administration little choice but to eschew unilateralism in favor of a multilateral approach. Indeed, the president made it clear that others had an obligation to assist in the war against terrorists. In this sense, he was correct when he denied at a news conference that his was a unilateralist administration: “I asked them for help, didn’t I.”

But if multilateralism means more than demanding help from allies—as the president stated repeatedly “you are either with us or with the terrorists”—then the tenor of the administration’s approach to foreign affairs is less clear. If multilateralism also implies a habit of taking seriously the vital interests of allies and of being prepared to offer quid pro quos in appropriate circumstances, then it is not clear that the terrorist attacks led the president and his key advisers to experience an epiphany similar to that of Senator Arthur Vandenberg upon learning of the attack on Pearl Harbor six decades earlier. Although an administration cannot be held accountable for the rhetoric of its most ardent cheerleaders in the media and elsewhere, the follow-up to the events of September 11 has confirmed for them not only that the United States is the world’s only superpower, but also that it best serves its own interests by severing any constraints that might be imposed by acting in cooperation with less red-blooded allies. Two months prior to the terrorist attacks, in one of his more restrained essays on that theme, syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer, a staunch proponent of a unilateral approach to foreign affairs since the end of the Cold War, wrote:

After eight years during which foreign policy success was largely measured by the number of treaties the president could sign and the number of summits he could attend, we now have an administration willing to assert American freedom of action and the primacy of American national interests. Rather than contain American power within a vast web of constraining international agreements, the new unilateralism seeks to strengthen American power and unashamedly deploy it on behalf of self-defined global ends. Ends such as a defense against ballistic missiles... And the most flamboyant demonstration of the new unilateralism was Bush’s out-of-hand rejection of the Kyoto Protocol on global warming, a refreshing assertion of unwillingness to be a party to farce, no matter how multilateral...

An unprecedented dominant United States, however, is in the unique position of being able to fashion its own foreign policy. After a decade of Prometheus playing pygmy, the first task of the new administration is precisely to reassert American freedom of action...

The new unilateralism recognizes the uniqueness of the unipolar world we now inhabit and thus marks the real beginning of American post-Cold War foreign policy (Krauthammer, June 8, 2001, A29).

The terrorist attacks and the debates about how best to deal with the Saddam Hussein regime only increased the vehemence of his insistence that the United
States pursue its interests on a “go it alone” basis, untrammeled by the interests or preferences of others. Similar assessments and prescriptions have emerged consistently from other major media sources who count themselves among the administration’s strongest supporters, including William Safire, George Will, The Weekly Standard, the editorial pages of the Wall Street Journal, and Fox News.

In its pronouncements and actions, the Bush administration has often been somewhat more measured in its language—that is especially true of Secretary of State Colin Powell—but the evidence that the views of allies have been given much weight in Washington is in rather short supply. Simply parading foreign leaders to the White House or to the president’s ranch in Texas is not a compelling indicator of multilateralist impulses. As a former European specialist on the National Security Council, Ivo Daalder, put it: “The notion that you can just act in the way you did 25 years ago—which is that we’ll assert our leadership and expect others to follow—just doesn’t play anymore….multilateralism] has nothing to do with whether you’re willing to talk to people. It’s whether you are willing to take their views into account” (Brunt 2001). The events of September 11 are not likely to alter that reality permanently, nor have they apparently had an impact on many aspects of U.S. foreign policy. For example, there are no indications of any second thoughts about the issues described briefly above: national missile defense, environmental issues, the I.C.C., or small arms trafficking. Even the evidence that al-Qaeda owes some of its success to its ability to move its assets around in various shadowy banking institutions has not given rise to new American interest in comprehensive international efforts to pierce the veil of secrecy offered by offshore banks.

The administration has also been quite insensitive to the domestic political needs of allied leaders, most of whom are accountable to parliaments and electorates. Rhetoric from the president and his economic advisers has consistently supported steps toward liberalizing world trade, but post-September 11 actions have often followed a rather different path. In response to demands from the domestic steel industry, in 2002 the administration imposed harsh tariffs ranging from 8 to 30 percent on imported steel. The tariffs increases were subsequently rescinded on a few steel products, but not enough to mitigate their negative impact on some of America’s closest allies, not only during the Cold War, but also in the current campaign on terrorists. These include members of the European Union, Japan, Brazil, South Korea, and Russia. In March 2003, the World Trade Organization ruled that the steel tariffs were illegal, but the United States asserted that it would appeal the decision (Becker 2003).

Twenty-seven percent duties on soft lumber imports were targeted on Canada, costing some 20,000 workers in British Columbia their jobs. Owing to the disparity in Canadian and U.S. populations, this is equivalent to the loss of 200,000 jobs in the United States, or in the state of Oregon alone. On May 27, 2003, a World Trade Organization panel sided with Canada on the issue,
but that is unlikely to be the end of it. Similarly, the huge farm subsidies in the 2002 U.S. farm bill—another instance in which President Bush's free market rhetoric, as well as pledges made at the international economic conference in Doha, Qatar, gave way to partisan electoral calculations—will almost surely ruin many Canadian farmers. According to a Canadian foreign policy analyst, the grass roots view north of the border is that whatever the rhetoric coming out of the Oval Office, its occupant "doesn't hesitate to knife 'allies and best friends' in the back if it placates the American right wing," a view echoed by a member of Parliament who stated, "The Americans have forgotten who their friends are" (private communication May 2002; Simon 2002, A14).

Although the Pervez Musharraf regime in Pakistan has taken considerable domestic risks in assisting the United States in its efforts against the Taliban and al-Qaeda, there have been no steps to lift American duties on textile exports from Pakistan. There were powerful domestic political reasons for each of these actions; for example, the steel industry in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, three key electoral swing states, will reap handsome rewards from the stiff tariffs on steel imports, while many other industries, such as automobile manufacturers, and all U.S. consumers will bear the costs. These are certainly not the first or last times that trade policy has been driven by perceived domestic political concerns, but even the Clinton administration, often accused of being excessively driven by electoral considerations, refused to meet the demands of the steel industry.

The months prior to the invasion of Iraq yielded perhaps the most significant illustration of insensitivity to the political interests of other countries. The United States applied intense and highly public pressure on Turkey, a loyal NATO ally in conflicts spanning a half-century since the Korean War, to permit stationing a large military force that would attack Iraq from the north. Sizeable Kurdish populations may be found in both southern Turkey and northern Iraq, and for many years Turkey was convulsed by a bloody civil war with its Kurdish minority. Moreover, Kurds in northern Iraq made it clear that they would oppose with force any Turkish military involvement in the campaign to topple the Saddam Hussein regime. Despite U.S. use of carrots (a huge aid and loan package) and sticks (threats to withdraw support for such major Turkish goals as entry into the European Union), by a close vote the democratically-elected parliament in Ankara rejected U.S. demands. Washington made it clear that there would be a price to pay for this decision even though it was quite predictable that the northern invasion would have little impact on the outcome of the war because Iraq's third-rate and poorly led military forces would be quickly routed by the U.S. and British military thrusts from Kuwait. In effect, the United States was demanding that the Ankara government commit an act of political self-immolation because its refusal to cave in to American demands faithfully reflected the overwhelming public opposition—83 percent in 2002 and 82 percent on the eve of the war—to allowing the U.S. and its allies to use bases in Turkey for military
action against Iraq (Pew 2002, 3; Pew 2003, 1). Turkey’s decision may well have spared the country from a renewal of its civil war. Ankara’s unwillingness to become a participant in the war also contributed to the relative stability after the war in Kurdish areas of Iraq that compared favorably to the turbulence in Baghdad and some other parts of Iraq.

In summary, the evidence suggests that Schlesinger’s fears of an American reversion to unilateralism were not wholly off the mark. Although he was writing in the middle of the 1990s, when neither the accession of George W. Bush to the presidency in 2001 nor the terrorist attack nine months later could have been foreseen, subsequent events have provided at least some support for his lament. It remains to be seen whether the views of American opinion leaders and the general public have been a driving force behind, or at least willing supporters of, the new unilateralism.

American Opinion Leaders

In order to gain some insight about the extent to which the end of the Cold War has given rise to unilateral preferences among opinion leaders, this section initially examines some data from the 1996 FPLP survey. The analysis then turns to results from the 2002 CCFR poll with a view to assessing the impact of the terrorist attacks of the previous year.

Ten questions in the 1996 FPLP survey were used to construct a unilateral-multilateral scale. Listed in Table 11.1, these items address several aspects of this dimension. Two general questions focus on the most appropriate U.S. foreign policy orientation and the best ways to deter aggression. Other questions address several hot button issues that are at the core of debates among proponents and opponents of multilateralism, including the role of the United Nations, the appropriate circumstances for American participation in peacekeeping missions abroad, under whose command U.S. troops in such undertakings should be permitted to serve, and the wisdom of ceding some aspects to sovereignty to strengthen the UN and other international organizations. The ten items form a reliable scale with an alpha coefficient of .81, well in excess of the conventional standard of .70.

Two of the questions elicited very limited support for a multilateral approach to world affairs. A mere one opinion leader in five judged that strengthening the United Nations and international organizations provided a “very effective” approach to peace, and only about one third of the respondents agreed that the United States and countries should “cede some of their sovereignty to strengthen the power of the U.N.”

In contrast to these very skeptical views of international organizations, the remaining eight questions brought forth responses that ranged from moderate to exceptionally strong support for a multilateral approach to contemporary
A Return to Isolationism and Unilateralism?

The general proposition that "countries will have to act together to deter and resist aggression" gained the approval of 90 percent of the opinion leaders. Contrary to those who regard NATO as a Cold War relic that has outlived its original purpose of deterring the USSR in Europe, it continued to maintain strong support; an overwhelming 85 percent agreed that the United States should contribute troops to NATO peacekeeping missions. Despite the critical assessments of international organizations, an overwhelming majority of opinion leaders also agreed that the United States should contribute peacekeeping forces in response to requests by the UN in light of the hammering that the UN occasionally took from the Clinton administration and more frequently from the Republican leadership, to say nothing of the myth that the UN secretary general ordered U.S. troops into a fire fight that killed eighteen of them in Somalia, it may seem somewhat surprising that a majority (54%) of the respondents expressed a willingness to have American military personnel serve under a UN-appointed commander in peacekeeping undertakings.

As a partial test of its utility, the unilateral/multilateral scale can be combined with the scales on the two types of internationalism—militant and cooperative—

| Table 11.1 Unilateral-Multilateral Scale: 1996 FPLP Survey of American Opinion Leaders |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| U.S. armed forces should be used in response to requests from the United Nations for peacekeeping forces | % Agree | 75 |
| U.S. armed forces should be used in response to requests from NATO for peacekeeping forces | % Agree | 85 |
| Strengthen the United Nations and other international organizations [as an approach to peace] | % Very effective | 20 |
| If interests compel the U.S. to intervene militarily it should be undertaken as part of a multilateral operation | % Agree | 80 |
| Unilaterally reducing the U.S. share of contributions to the U.N. budget | % Agree | 39 |
| Increasingly countries will have to act together to deter and resist aggression | % Agree | 90 |
| What we need is a new foreign policy that puts America first, second, and third as well | % Agree | 30 |
| The time is ripe for the U.S. and other countries to cede some of their sovereignty to strengthen the power of the U.N. and other international organizations | % Agree | 34 |
| The U.S. [should] accept a commander appointed by the United Nations when U.S. troops take part | % Should accept | 54 |
| The U.S. [should] accept a commander appointed by NATO when U.S. troops take part | % Should accept | 68 |

Correlations: Range = .10 – .62, mean = .30
Alpha = .81
that were originally developed by Wittkopf (1990). Doing so creates a classification scheme of eight types; that is, each of the four MI/CI groups—hard-liners, isolationists, accommodationists, and internationalists—would be further divided into unilateralist and multilateralist subgroups. Unless it can be shown, however, that this further subdivision enhances our insight into thinking about international affairs, the value of doing so is rather limited. Evidence from the 1996 Foreign Policy Leadership Project survey in fact supports the value of a distinction between preferences for unilateralism or multilateralism. This point may be illustrated by a cluster of items asking respondents to appraise the effectiveness of various approaches to world peace. As indicated in Table 11.2, the further division of the four MI/CI groups does reveal consistently significant differences. For example, consider the internationalist group, those who support both militant and cooperative internationalism. Compared to the unilateralists within that group, the multilateralists were consistently more inclined to rate as "very effective" approaches that require acting in conjunction with other countries—arms control, trade, international organizations, international communication, collective security, narrowing the rich nation-poor nation gap, etc.—while expressing less support for such unilateral measures as military superiority. Similar patterns of differences can be discerned between the unilateralist and multilateralist variants within the other three groups—hard-liners, isolationists, and accommodationists.

Finally, responses to the ten-item scale may be used to describe the distribution of opinion leaders on the multilateral-unilateral scale, as well as to assess how preferences for each of these approaches are linked to other political beliefs and to partisan and ideological self-descriptions. The scale was divided into four equal intervals wherein one endpoint was defined as multilateralist responses to each of the ten items and the other as unilateralist responses to all of them. As revealed in Table 11.3, the 2,141 opinion leaders who took part in the survey were predominantly on the multilateral side of the scale. More specifically, they were distributed among the four categories in this manner: Strong multilateralists (31.7%), moderate multilateralists (41.3%), moderate unilateralists (21.4%), and strong unilateralists (5.7%).

Further analysis also reveals strong links between preferences for multilateral or unilateral approaches to foreign affairs and other political beliefs. The figures in Table 11.2 suggested that the multilateral-unilateral scale can usefully be combined with the MI/CI scheme to provide eight distinct ways of thinking about foreign affairs, but there are also clear links between them. For example, unilateralists are also predominantly hard-liners and isolationists whereas multilateralists are more likely to be either internationalists or accommodationists. Multivariate analyses reveal, however, that the unilateral-multilateral and MI/CI scales are sufficiently different that both make an independent contribution to
Table 11.2 Approaches to Peace Assessed by Opinion Leaders in 1996: Groups Defined by Foreign Policy Orientations [N = 2,141]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Isolationists</th>
<th>Hard-liners</th>
<th>Accommodationists</th>
<th>Internationalists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military superiority of the United States</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective security through alliances</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade, technical cooperation, and economic interdependence</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arms control</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrowing the gap between rich and poor nations</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening the United Nations and other international organizations</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political efforts to achieve a balance of power within regions and</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between great powers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better communications and understanding among peoples</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences among groups significant at the .001 level for all items

Key: Uni. = Unilateralists, Multi. = Multilateralists
Table 11.3 Unilateralists and Multilateralists: Relationship to Other Beliefs, Party, and Ideology: 1996 FLP Survey of American Opinion Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Foreign policy beliefs</th>
<th>Domestic issues</th>
<th>% Party</th>
<th>% Ideology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong multilateralists</td>
<td>Hard-liners</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Conservatives</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Isolationists</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Libertarians</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internationalists</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Populists</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accommodationists</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>Liberals</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[N=679]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate multilateralists</td>
<td>Hard-liners</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Conservatives</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Isolationists</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Libertarians</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internationalists</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Populists</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accommodationists</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Liberals</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[N=884]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate unilateralists</td>
<td>Hard-liners</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Conservatives</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Isolationists</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Libertarians</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internationalists</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Populists</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accommodationists</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Liberals</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[N=457]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong unilateralists</td>
<td>Hard-liners</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Conservatives</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Isolationists</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Libertarians</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internationalists</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Populists</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accommodationists</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Liberals</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[N=121]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Fewer than 0.5%

Owing to rounding error, column totals may not equal 100%

Phi = .61
Phi = .56
Phi = .46
Phi = .61
responses, not only to the questions summarized in Table 11.2, but also to a much broader range of other foreign and defense policy issues.

There are similarly strong links between the multilateral-unilateral scale and a domestic issues classification scheme. As one moves from the most multilateral to the most unilateral categories, the number of conservatives rises and the number of liberals falls. The smaller libertarian and populist groups are more evenly divided in their placement on the multilateral-unilateral scale. In light of these strong relationships, it does not come as a surprise that there are also strong relationships between multilateral or unilateral policy preferences and party identification and self-placement on a standard ideology scale. Unilateralists are predominantly Republicans and conservatives, Democrats and liberals tend to support multilateralism, and independents constitute about one-fifth to one-quarter of the opinion leaders in each category. But it is also important to keep in mind that these four categories do not include equal numbers of opinion leaders. Thus, while the 121 strong unilateralists are overwhelmingly Republican (72%), they are outnumbered by the members of the GOP who constitute 36 percent of the moderate multilateralists.

These data address Schlesinger’s fears, published in 1995, about powerful demands from opinion leaders are pushing the country toward reducing its role in world affairs and pursuing its international interests unencumbered by allies and international institutions, but they do so only through 1996. Thus they cannot address questions about the impact of the September 11 terrorist attacks five years later.

Table 11.4 summarizes responses in the 2002 CCFR survey of opinion leaders to questions that touch upon unilateralism and multilateralism. The item about NATO indicates growing rather than eroding support for that alliance. In 1990, as the Cold War was winding down and the Soviet Union was experiencing the convulsions that would lead to its disintegration a year later, more than 60 percent of respondents to the CCFR survey favored reducing the U.S. commitment to NATO or withdrawing altogether. In contrast, twelve years later, more than three-fourths of the opinion leaders expressed support for maintaining or increasing the U.S. commitment to the alliance.

Preferences for acting in conjunction with allies rather than for going it alone also emerged from a general question on coping with crises and on a specific item on the use of American troops to overthrow the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq. With respect to the latter undertaking, only 22 percent favored the “go it alone” option. However, had that question been posed eight months later, during the run-up to the attack on Iraq, the results would probably have revealed some shift of sentiment toward the option of taking action alone or with only the support of Great Britain.

Nor do any of the other items in Table 11.4 provide much support for the thesis that multilateralist sentiments have been ebbing since the end of the Cold

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>With respect to its commitment to NATO, the U.S. should:</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>1994</th>
<th>1990</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase it</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep as it is now</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease but remain in NATO</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdraw from NATO</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In responding to international crises, do you think the U.S. should or should not take action alone, if it does not have the support of its allies?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1998</th>
<th>Should act alone</th>
<th>Should not act alone</th>
<th>Not sure/decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the U.S. is asked to be part of a UN international peacekeeping force in a troubled part of the world, do you think we should?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Take part</th>
<th>Leave this job to other countries</th>
<th>Depends on circumstances [VOL]</th>
<th>Not sure/decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>79%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There has been some discussion about whether the U.S. should use its troops to invade Iraq and overthrow the regime of Saddam Hussein. Which of the following positions is closest to yours?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The U.S. should not invade Iraq</th>
<th>The U.S. should only invade Iraq with UN approval and the support of its allies</th>
<th>The U.S. should invade Iraq even if we have to go it alone</th>
<th>Not sure/decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you favor or oppose the U.S. paying its UN dues in full?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Favor</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
<th>Not sure/decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>87%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you think the U.S. should or should not participate in the following treaties and agreements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kyoto agreement to reduce global warming:</th>
<th>Should participate</th>
<th>Should not participate</th>
<th>Not sure/decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Should participate</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The treaty that bans all use of land mines:</th>
<th>Should participate</th>
<th>Should not participate</th>
<th>Not sure/decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Should participate</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The treaty that would prohibit nuclear weapon test explosions worldwide:</th>
<th>Should participate</th>
<th>Should not participate</th>
<th>Not sure/decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Should participate</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Return to Isolationism and Unilateralism?

War. Support for the United Nations, whether by participation in peacekeeping operations or by paying dues in full, was at an impressive level. It is again likely that a similar survey during the days prior to the invasion of Iraq would have revealed a somewhat less sanguine view of the UN after Washington, unable to gain much support in the Security Council for its demands to disarm Iraq by force and to force the ouster Saddam Hussein, withdrew its resolution on the issue.

Finally, the 2002 CCFR survey asked opinion leaders about the desirability of participating in treaties and agreements pertaining to global warming, land mines, nuclear weapons testing and the International Criminal Court. In each case, the treaties gained approval from substantial majorities, although the Kyoto Protocol on global warming and the I.C.C.—both the targets of strident administration rhetoric attacking them—were opposed by about one-third of the opinion leaders, whereas opposition to the other two treaties fell below 25 percent.

The General Public

Have members of the general public, whose internationalist proclivities typically trail behind those of the opinion leaders, regarded the end of the Cold War and the outbreak of brutal local and regional conflicts, often triggered by “failed states,” as sufficient reason to pull back from what Schlesinger described as the “magnificent dream” of collective security? How, if at all, have the events of September 11 affected public attitudes toward international engagement?

Recall from Figure 11.1 that, contrary to the conventional description of public opinion as “volatile,” the American people have shown a quite stable preference for “an active role” in world affairs despite the fact that the six decades in question constitute a period of unprecedented international turbulence. At the same time, compared to leaders, the public has also shown considerable disquiet about several aspects of internationalism. Specifically, trade liberalization and globalization, both of which have typically garnered strong support among leaders, have engendered less enthusiasm among the public, and the same pattern of differences can be seen in most surveys about foreign aid, with leaders expressing stronger approval for both economic and military assistance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The agreement to establish an International Criminal Court that would try individuals for war crimes, genocide, or crimes against humanity if their own country won’t try them:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Should participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should not participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure/decline</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The figures for 1990, 1994, and 1998 are also drawn from CCFR surveys.
programs. Similarly, the public has generally had a more selective view of when and in defense of whom U.S. troops should be deployed abroad.

Nevertheless, there is also a good deal of evidence that those who portray the post-Cold War mood of the American people as isolationist and unilateralist are in fact "misreading the public" (Kull and Destler, 1999). Data from several surveys, including Pew, Gallup, CCFR, and PIPA, yield a much more subtle and variegated picture of public opinion, even before the dramatic events of September 11. Several important generalizations emerge from the data.

Most Americans are uneasy with such international roles as "the world's policeman" which imply that, because of its predominant military and economic resources, the United States has the means to impose its solutions on most international problems. The unilateralist/triumphalist arguments of the Charles Krauthammers, William Safires, and George Wills is that because of the power position of the United States, unmatched since the Roman Empire at the height of its power, only a lack of wisdom and courage prevents the country from pursuing its interests irrespective of the views of allies or adversaries. Aside from the fact that the thesis is historically dubious—U.S. economic and military predominance during 1945–49, when the nation produced almost half of the world's goods and services and enjoyed a monopoly on nuclear power, in fact exceeded that of the contemporary era—it has not found an especially receptive public reaction. Most Americans prefer that the country work actively with others, most notably with allies, to cope with the plethora of security, humanitarian, and other issues that have surfaced in recent decades. Burden sharing is probably the best single term to describe predominant public preferences on a wide range of international undertakings, whereas going it alone, the essence of unilateralism, is the much less popular path. The 2002 CCFR survey offered respondents several opportunities to express their views on the proper U.S. role in the post-September 11 world. When asked about "the more important lesson of September 11," 61 percent stated that it was the "need to work more closely with other countries," whereas only 34 percent stated that it was the "need to act on its own more." Further probes reinforced these results. In connection with its status as the sole remaining superpower, fully 71 percent asserted that "the U.S. should do its share to solve international problems together with other countries," whereas only one respondent in six preferred for the U.S. to "be the preeminent leader in solving international problems." Finally, two-thirds of the respondents agreed that the "U.S. is playing the role of world policeman more than it should be," whereas about one-third disagreed.

Additional evidence on this score emerged from six Pew surveys conducted between 1993 and 2001. Two of the studies took place just days before September 11 (August 25–September 5) and about five weeks after the terrorist attacks (October 15–21). The results confirm that an overwhelming majority of Americans prefer a "shared leadership role" to that of "the single world leader." That was...
A Return to Isolationism and Unilateralism?

Table 11.5 America’s Role in the World, 1993–2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“What kind of leadership role should the United States play in the world?”</th>
<th>Early September 2001</th>
<th>October 2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be the single world leader</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A shared leadership role:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Most active leading nation</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• About as active as other leading nations</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Don’t know/refused</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shouldn’t play any leadership role</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know/refused</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


true both before and after September 11 (see Table 11.5). Another question in the Pew surveys asked “how should the U.S. determine its policy with regard to the war on terrorism?” Prior to September 11 a plurality of 48 percent preferred that the U.S. “strongly take into account the interests of its allies,” whereas 38 percent stated that the policy should be based “mostly on the national interests of the U.S.” When the same question was posed after the terrorist attacks, the margin in favor of strongly considering the interests of allies increased to almost two-to-one (59%–30%) (Pew, October 24, 2001).

These findings are quite robust. A PIPA survey revealed a majority of 73–24 percent in favor of a multilateral approach to the war on terrorists, even though the question specifically mentioned the primary objection of the unilateralists: “it would be better not to get these countries involved, because if we did, the operation would get bogged down by having to make decisions together with these countries” (PIPA, November 2001, 2). An earlier Los Angeles Times poll, undertaken just days after the attacks, found that six in ten respondents agree that U.S. action “should only be undertaken as part of a cooperative effort” (Richardson, 2001, 6). Support for the multilateral approach is probably sustained in part by the belief—espoused by 75 percent of respondents to a Pew poll—that the U.S. is “getting the support that we need from our traditional allies” (Pew, December 2001).

Although the United Nations has rarely been able to achieve the lofty goals of its founders—the few exceptions are in such specialized areas as some programs of the World Health Organization—public support for that organization remains high. Indeed, the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations surveys indicate that, compared to elites, the general public accords in higher degree support for “strengthening the UN” as an important foreign policy goal. A majority believes that the United States should pay its UN dues, including the large sums on which
its payments are long overdue. And when interventions abroad are under consideration, most Americans prefer acting under auspices of and in cooperation with the UN or NATO rather than taking action alone. This is another manifestation of the strong preference for sharing the burdens of important international undertakings. It is also possible that public preferences for multilateral action are also rooted in a feeling that military action in conjunction with NATO or the UN endows a greater legitimacy on the use of force, but the survey data are inadequate on this point.

The previously-cited Pew surveys conducted in early September and mid-October 2001 also revealed that goal priorities for American foreign policy remained remarkably stable during the period encompassing the terrorist attacks. Not surprisingly nearly all (93%) post-September 11 respondents rated “taking measures to protect the U.S. from terrorist attacks” as a top policy priority, but even in the pre-September 11 survey that goal had earned the highest number (80%) of “top priority” ratings. Of the fourteen goals in the Pew survey, responses to only one half changed by as much as 6 percent. The rank order of the top eight goals—antiterrorism, antiproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, job protection, energy security, reducing the spread of AIDS and other infectious diseases, anti-drug trafficking, getting other countries to pay more of the costs of maintaining world order, and protecting groups and nations against genocide—were precisely identical in the two surveys; the pre- and post-September 11 rank-order correlation for the fourteen items was an exceptionally high .97. The trend toward declining interest in altruistic international goals persisted in these two surveys, with reduced importance attributed to improving the standard of living in less developed countries, hunger, and reducing the spread of AIDS and other infectious diseases. Skepticism about promoting American values and institutions was also evident as fewer than 30 percent of the respondents assigned a “top priority” either to promoting democracy or human rights abroad (Pew, October 24, 2001).

The 2002 CCFR survey provides the most recent and complete evidence on foreign policy goals. Because seventeen of the items also appeared in the comparable survey four years earlier, they provide at least some basis for assessing the impact of the September 11 attacks. Moreover, the identical items were included in a smaller survey of leaders. The results are summarized in Table 11.6. It is hardly surprising that combating terrorism and preventing nuclear proliferation ranked as the top goals for both leaders and the general public, but this did not represent a significant post-September 11 change as these had been among the most important foreign policy goals four years earlier.

As had been the case in previous CCFR surveys, including that in 1998, issues revolving around U.S. economic interests continued to receive a very high number of “very important” assessments from the general public. Drug trafficking, job protection, energy security, immigration control, and the trade
### Table 11.6 The Importance of American Foreign Policy Goals: Assessments by the General Public and Leaders in the 1998 and 2002 Chicago Council on Foreign Relations Surveys [Percentage of “Very Important” Ratings]

“For each [foreign policy goal], please say whether you think that it should be a very important foreign policy goal of the United States, a somewhat important foreign policy goal, or not an important goal at all.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>World order security issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combating international terrorism</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening the United Nations</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting weaker nations against aggression</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening international law and institutions</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>World order economic and environmental issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combating world hunger</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving the global environment</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping to improve the standard of living in less developed countries</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safeguarding against global financial instability</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>U.S. economic interest issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the U.S.</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting the jobs of American workers</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Securing adequate supplies of energy</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling and reducing illegal immigration</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing the U.S. trade deficit with foreign countries</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting the interests of American business abroad</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>U.S. values and institutional issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting and defending human rights in other countries</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting market economics abroad</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cold War/Security issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining superior military power worldwide</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defending our allies’ security</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Deficit received the top rating from a majority of the respondents, and protecting the interests of U.S. businesses abroad barely failed to do so. The gaps between leaders and the general public on these goals were enormous, ranging from 24–50 percent or more on the related issues of job protection and immigration control. In every case the general public-leader gap increased materially during the four-year interval between the two surveys. The focus on U.S. economic interests might be cited by proponents of the Schlesinger thesis as evidence that
the public is indeed turning inward, but responses to many of the other ques-
tions would appear to contradict that conclusion. For example, in comparison
to 1998, assessments of many other goals also recorded significant increases of
8 percent or more. These include: protecting weaker nations against aggression,
strengthening the United Nations, improving the global environment, defending
allies, maintaining military superiority, and promoting human rights abroad. The
picture that emerges from Table 11.6 is of a U.S. public that is not merely focused
on self-regarding interests, but that also seems prepared to support a rather wide
range of international undertakings. In every case save two, goal ratings increased
between 1998 and 2002, and the two exceptions—on drug trafficking and world
hunger—recorded changes of 1 percent or less. It is also worth noting that in the
post-September 11 survey, the attribution of importance by leaders outstripped
those of the general public on only two of the foreign policy goals: strengthening
international law and institutions, and helping to improve the standard of living
in less developed countries.

It is indeed true that most public opinion surveys rank foreign aid at or near
the top of programs whose budgets should be reduced rather than increased,
and the proposition that “taking care of problems at home is more important
than giving aid to foreign countries” elicited agreement from 84 percent of re-
spondents to a 2001 PIPA poll. The gap between leaders and the general public
with respect to support for foreign aid has been consistently high, but there is
also quite persuasive evidence that the preferences of the latter group are based
on substantial misinformation about the actual size of U.S. foreign aid budgets.
Many erroneously believe that such expenditures constitute one of the largest
items in the federal budget. The median estimate was 20 percent whereas the
actual amount is less than 1 percent. When asked what would be a “fair share”
for foreign aid, the median figure is approximately ten times greater than the cur-
rent allocations. When respondents are informed of the actual level of economic
and technical assistance, support for foreign aid rises sharply (Kull and Destler
1999; PIPA 2001). Humanitarian impulses are an important consideration in
preferences about foreign aid. More than three-fourths of the public agreed that
too much aid is allocated to undemocratic governments with poor records on
human rights. When asked whether aid should be sent only to areas where the
United States has security interests or should be allocated to parts of the world
where the United States has no security interests but hunger is a problem, the
latter option was preferred by a margin of 63–34 percent (PIPA 2001).

The gap between perceptions and reality on foreign aid was reinforced by
the most recent CCFR survey. When asked about the percentage of the federal
budget that goes to foreign aid, the median and mean responses were 25 and
31 percent, whereas in fact the correct figure is less than 1 percent. When asked
about the appropriate level of foreign assistance, the comparable figures were 10
percent and 17 percent. These results again confirm the fact that sentiments for
reducing foreign aid—one of the constants of virtually all surveys that deal with the issue—are based on vastly exaggerated conceptions about actual American outlays for such programs.

Public approval for deployment of U.S. forces abroad has generally lagged behind that of leaders. There is stronger support for sending troops to protect the victims of aggression—for example, in response to Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990—than for interventions to cope with internal conflicts, such as the civil wars arising from the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia (Jentleson 1992; Eichenberg 2002). Moreover, the public expresses greater approval for troop deployments in such areas of traditional American interests as Europe than, for example, in Africa. To date, the U.S. military personnel have not been deployed in peacekeeping operations in the conflict between Israel and its neighbors. Nothing in the long and troubled history of the conflict suggests any peacekeeping mission is likely to yield quick or easy success. Nevertheless, should there be a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, more than three-fourths of the American public would support U.S. participation to enforce such an agreement if it were undertaken with other countries under United Nations sponsorship (PIPA, May 8, 2002, 5).

The 2002 CCFR survey asked both the general public and leaders about the circumstances under which they would be willing to deploy U.S. troops abroad. The questions at the top of Table 11.7 have a very distinct post-September 11 tenor, probing for attitudes on sending military forces to the Philippines, Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia. When we compare these results with those of earlier surveys that focused on the use of troops to protect allied countries against attack from their neighbors, the impact of the terrorist attacks seems quite clear. Whereas the public has consistently exhibited much less enthusiasm than leaders for such actions on behalf of most allies, the gap between the two groups has narrowed significantly in situations that might seem to be linked to a war against terrorists. There was a strong consensus in support of using U.S. troops to prevent genocide, for peacekeeping in Afghanistan, for fighting terrorism in the Philippines, to overthrow the Saddam Hussein government in Iraq, and, to a somewhat lesser degree, to protect the regime in Pakistan. In two instances there was a striking divergence of views between the public and leaders and, interestingly, in both cases a majority of the public approved the use of U.S. troops whereas leaders did not. Two-thirds of the public supported military action against drug lords in Colombia, whereas fewer than one-third of the leaders did so. The two groups were also on opposite sides on the question of preventing the overthrow of the government in Saudi Arabia. The revelation that fifteen of the nineteen September 11 hijackers were Saudi subjects and the rather lukewarm assistance provided to the United States by the Riyadh government has opened up a debate in Washington about the future of U.S.-Saudi relations that would have been unthinkable only a few years ago. Indeed, after the war against Iraq,
Table 11.7  The Uses of U. S. Troops Abroad: 2002 CFR Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would you favor or oppose the use of U.S. troops:</th>
<th>Percent who favor:</th>
<th>General Public</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To stop a government from committing genocide and killing large numbers of its own people</td>
<td>77 85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To assist the Philippine government to fight terrorism</td>
<td>78 70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be part of an international peacekeeping force in Afghanistan</td>
<td>76 88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To overthrow Saddam Hussein's government in Iraq</td>
<td>75 —</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To fight drug lords in Colombia</td>
<td>66 31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be part of an international peacekeeping force to enforce a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians</td>
<td>65 79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the government of Pakistan requested our help against a radical Islamic revolution</td>
<td>61 61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the government of Saudi Arabia requested our help against an attempt to overthrow it</td>
<td>54 41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would you approve or disapprove of the use of U.S. military troops:</th>
<th>Percent who favor:</th>
<th>General Public</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To destroy a terrorist camp</td>
<td>92 —</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To assist a population struck by famine</td>
<td>81 —</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To liberate hostages</td>
<td>77 —</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To uphold international law</td>
<td>76 —</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To ensure the supply of oil</td>
<td>65 —</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To help bring peace to a region where there is a civil war</td>
<td>48 —</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There has been some discussion about whether the U.S. should use its troops to invade Iraq and overthrow the government of Saddam Hussein. Which of the following positions is closest to yours?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Public</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The U.S. should not invade Iraq</td>
<td>13 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The U.S. should only invade Iraq with UN approval and the support of its allies</td>
<td>65 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The U.S. should invade Iraq even if we have to go it alone</td>
<td>20 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure/decline</td>
<td>2 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


all U.S. military personnel save for a small token force were withdrawn from Saudi Arabia. A survey taken just prior to that decision found strong support (67%) for withdrawal (PIPA, April 29, 2003).

The middle part of Table 11.7 provides further evidence that the post-September 11 era has been marked by an erosion of public opposition to the use of U.S. troops abroad. (The question was not included in the survey of leaders, but there is no reason to believe that their responses would have deviated dramatically
from those of the general public). Earlier surveys revealed public support for coming to the aid of specific allies who might be subject to attack by Cold War adversaries. The results in Table 11.7 indicate strong support for the use of armed forces in more general undertakings, including coping with famine, liberating hostages, and upholding international law. As revealed in many other surveys, there was considerably less enthusiasm for intervention in civil wars.

The conventional wisdom that the public will reject armed interventions abroad if they involve casualties received very little support when the question was posed in connection with the post-September 11 deployment of ground troops into Afghanistan. Hypothetical questions about acceptable losses must be viewed with more than the usual level of caution, especially if the somewhat ambiguous term “casualties” rather than “deaths” or “killed” is used. Virtually every poll posed a question about the use of ground troops in the war against terrorists and support for this option ranged upwards of 60 percent. Even when follow-up questions raised the prospect of heavy casualties, support remained quite high. For example, a Pew survey shortly after the terrorist attacks revealed that 82 percent favored the use of ground troops, while only 8 percent opposed that option. When a revised version of the question added the phrase, “even if we might suffer thousands of casualties,” supporters of military action still outnumbered opponents by 77 to 9 percent (Pew, September 2001, 3). Polls taken after the introduction of ground troops into Afghanistan, and those which specifically mentioned battle deaths, found only a moderate decline in support for the ground war. Although evidence of public sensitivity to casualties abounds, responses to the events of September 11 indicate a public willingness to bear the costs if the goals are seen as desirable and feasible—as they clearly were in the case of the intervention in Afghanistan.

These results suggest persisting public support for an active international role, but with a decided preference for multilateralism rather than going it alone. What could account for the disjunction between the administration’s policies and public preferences on these issues? One explanation—that the president and his advisers lack sufficient polling data—can be ruled out. Despite vowing to govern “based on principle and not polls and focus groups,” the administration spent about one million dollars in 2001 on surveys. The results of the polls are used less to align decisions with public sentiments and more to develop effective rhetorical strategies to sell preferred policies. Because pollsters do not rank high on the list of most admired professions, the Bush administration has this in common with those of Franklin Roosevelt, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon—the existence of polling operations and the resulting data are kept very close to the vest (Green 2002).

Although the evidence about long-run impact of the September 11 terrorist attacks on public attitudes is far from conclusive at this point, that which is available would certainly not appear to sustain the charge of a reversion to traditional
American isolationism or unilateralism. The war to root out the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and to destroy the al-Qaeda network has continued to enjoy widespread support despite the ability of many al-Qaeda leaders to evade capture. Although analogies between the Pearl Harbor and twin Trade Towers/Pentagon attacks are sometime overdrawn, most Americans have reacted to the two events in the same way—with a determination to punish the perpetrators. Nor has the hypothesis that the public will not support any undertaking that involves body bags gained greater credence though, fortunately, the level of U.S. casualties in Afghanistan and Iraq has remained quite low to this point and thus the conventional wisdom has not been put to a very rigorous test. Unlike the war in Iraq, to be discussed below, the United States has been fortunate in the strong support it has garnered from most of its allies and from strategically located countries in the war in Afghanistan and against al-Qaeda and thus questions of unilateralism and multilateralism have yet to surface as a major issue. Should the war on terrorists ultimately involve deployment of U.S. troops in a large number of countries abroad, result in eroding support from allies, and give rise to mounting casualties—that is, if the effort takes on some of the characteristics of the Vietnam quagmire three decades ago—then public support might well decline.

Finally, it is worth noting that strong support for the war on terrorists has not been accompanied by much enthusiasm for suppressing domestic debate about the conflict. Few have been inclined to agree with administration officials who equated any questions about the conduct of the war as a breach of bipartisanship or, worse, as support for terrorists. According to a survey shortly after the terrorist attacks, overwhelming majorities of the public believed that critics should be allowed to express their views (75%), even if doing so takes the form of anti-war protests (71%) (Pew 2001). Similar sentiments surfaced during the weeks prior to the invasion of Iraq when, in response to the question, “how much have you heard from war opponents” 42 percent replied “too little” and only 24 percent selected the “too much” option. Even those supporting the use of force against Iraq preferred the “too little” option by a margin of 35–30 percent (Pew, February 20, 2003).

The final stage of this analysis examines how, if at all, the Iraq issue that culminated in the invasion of that country in March, 2003, may have affected public preferences for pursuing foreign policy goals in conjunction with allies, or doing so alone. The Bush administration repeatedly stated that removal of the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq is a top priority because it possessed threatening weapons of mass destruction, and, in a campaign timed for the traditional Labor Day beginning of the 2002 election season, it was able to gain strong support for military action from both the House and Senate. During the months between the September 11 terrorist attacks and the invasion of Iraq, almost all polling organizations regularly asked the public about whether the United States should use force to effect a regime change in Iraq. When the question of removing Saddam
Hussein from power was posed as a “support-oppose” choice, the results were exceptionally consistent; every survey yielded a majority that would support using force to engineer a regime change in Baghdad. As usual, variations in the precise wording of the questions have affected the results, but only enough to change the size of the majority that favors toppling Saddam Hussein, not the majority itself. The controversies surrounding the issue, then, have centered not on the desirability of removing the Iraqi dictator from power but, rather, on whether doing so should be contingent upon support from the United Nations Security Council, major U.S. allies in NATO, or both.

Table 11.8 presents some evidence from Gallup and Pew surveys undertaken during the two years prior to March 2003; the 1992 Gallup results indicate that the preference for a regime change in Baghdad dates back to the aftermath of the first Gulf War. These surveys found majorities, ranging between 52 percent (seven months prior to the September 11 attacks) and 68 percent, in favor of military action versus Iraq. Six of the Pew polls also asked advocates of military action whether their support was conditional upon the support of major allies or whether they favored acting “even if allies won’t join”; in none of them did the “go it alone” option gain a majority. In the mid-March 2003 Pew survey, completed just days prior to the United States-Britain invasion of Iraq, more than a quarter of the 59 percent who supported military action conditioned their approval on the agreement of major allies to join the war effort. None of these or other surveys appear to have asked whether consistent support from the Tony Blair government in London was sufficient to qualify as assistance from “major allies.”

The second part of Table 11.8 reports responses to a question, posed by the New York Times/CBS poll during the month prior to the invasion of Iraq, about whether the United States should or should not “take into account the views of allies before taking action” against Iraq. In each instance solid majorities favored that option rather than “doing what it thinks is right no matter what its allies think.”

At this writing (June 2003), the Anglo-American military campaign has succeeded in removing Saddam Hussein and his Baath Party from power in Iraq. While military success may give rise to some reconsideration of the relative merits of “going it alone” versus burden sharing with allies, the evidence available to date suggests that neither the September 11 terrorist attacks nor the debates about how to cope with the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq have given rise to strong unilateralist sentiments among the general public. To the contrary, it consistently portrays a public that accepts an active global role for the United States (see Figure 11.1) while, at the same time, strongly preferring to share the burdens of that role with allies and major international organizations.

Even postwar surveys, which might have been expected to validate unilateralist policies in light of the predictable ease with which U.S. and U.K forces crushed those of Iraq, found continued support for multilateralism in general and, more
Table 11.8 Support for Invasion of Iraq With or Without Support of Allies, 2001–2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favor</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Even if allies won’t join</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only if allies agree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know/refused</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know/refused</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gallup wording: "Would you favor or oppose sending American troops back to the Persian Gulf in order to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq?"

When it comes to Iraq, do you think the United States should do what it thinks is right no matter what its allies think, or should the U.S. take into account the view of allies before taking action?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>March 7–9</th>
<th>March 4–5</th>
<th>February 24–25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do what it thinks is right</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take allies into account</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know/no answer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: New York Times/CBS surveys
specifically, for the United Nations. To be sure, two-thirds of the respondents felt that if the United States became a more dominant force in the world as a result of the war, it would be “something positive.” Yet a strikingly large majority (76%) also agreed that “the U.S. should do its share in efforts to solve international problems together with other countries,” whereas only 12 percent asserted that, “The U.S. should continue to be the preeminent world leader in solving international problems.” Contrary to the claims of Richard Perle, Charles Krauthammer, and many other conservative pundits that the UN has rendered itself wholly irrelevant because the Security Council failed to support the U.S. position on Iraq, only a third of those taking part in the PIPA survey agreed that, in the future, the United States “should feel more free to use force without UN authorization,” and fully 88 percent felt that trying to get UN authorization to take military action against Iraq “was the right thing to do” (PIPA, April 29, 2003).

Conclusion

Recent U.S. foreign and defense policies reflect a greater degree of unilateralism than at any time since Pearl Harbor. In this sense, Arthur Schlesinger’s diagnosis and forecast of the mid-1990s has turned out to be rather prescient. But to the extent that his analysis located the roots of isolationism and unilateralism in irresistible pressures from the general public (“the housewife in Xenia, Ohio”) or opinion leaders (“members of the Council on Foreign Relations”), the evidence is much less kind to his thesis. Both pre- and post-September 11 surveys indicate greater persistence than change in public attitudes toward foreign affairs since the end of the Cold War: opinion leaders continue to be more internationalist than the general public on most issues; the general public has shown little indication of a mindless retreat toward isolationism, and even less support for unilateralism in preference to action in cooperation with NATO or the United Nations. Although consultation and cooperation with others may sometimes seem less efficient than acting alone, as we are constantly reminded by vocal unilateralists in the media and elsewhere, most Americans seem to prefer that path. The public has not shown much support for crusades to make the world over in the American image (see Table 11.6), but neither has it jumped on the bandwagon of those who would bypass or withdraw from NATO, the UN and most other international organizations, reduce or eliminate foreign aid, withdraw most American forces stationed abroad, and otherwise seek to cut the ties that have enmeshed the United States in the global system.

Thus, although the data reveal declining support for some international endeavors and ripples of disquiet about the effects of economic globalization—a concern that predates the end of the Cold War—evidence of continuity in public opinion dominates signs of sharp change. Even with respect to the most controversial post-Cold War undertakings, military interventions abroad that
may pose the risk of casualties, the public is selectively supportive rather than reflexively opposed. Support is most likely for interventions in such areas of traditional concern as Europe or when the purpose is to prevent or punish aggression, and when there is a reasonable prospect of success. Less approval may be forthcoming when the goal is to promote American values and institutions or to effect a change in leadership abroad. The clear links between Afghanistan and the al-Qaeda terrorists underlay support for military intervention in that country following the September 11 attacks. Conditional support for toppling Saddam Hussein is an exception to general skepticism about interventions for purposes of regime change; no doubt Iraq's previous invasions of Iran and Kuwait contributed to support for removal of the Baath party regime. Public concern about and willingness to deal forcefully with terrorist threats is not merely a post-September 11 phenomenon. Recall that compared to opinion leaders, a higher proportion of the general public rated terrorist attacks as a greater threat. Moreover, whereas in 1998 the public was generally unenthusiastic about using U.S. troops abroad in a number of hypothetical scenarios, the same CCFR survey revealed that 57 percent favored “attacks by U.S. ground troops against terrorist training camps and other facilities” and by 2002 that figure increased to a near-unanimous 91 percent. Whether or not one agrees with these preferences, they bear considerably greater resemblance to traditional “realism” than to “isolationism.” Indeed, they are less stringent than the so-called Weinberger doctrine, a set of six preconditions—including the support of Congress and the public—for military interventions abroad proposed by the Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger in 1984 and opposed by his Cabinet colleague, George Shultz (New York Times, November 29, 1984; Shultz 1993).

Domestic politics certainly have complicated and sometimes damaged Washington’s ability to conduct foreign affairs and to demonstrate essential leadership in attempting to cope with the “buzzing, blooming confusion” of the post-Cold War international arena. This is not an unfamiliar pattern. Periods of crisis and conflict, when there is an accretion of power by the executive branch, are often followed by congressional efforts to restore its prerogatives and, more generally, by the intrusion of domestic political concerns into the conduct of foreign affairs. The years following the Revolutionary War, Civil War, World War I, and the Vietnam War illustrate this pattern, and the post-Cold War era appears to be no exception.

But where is the primary focus of the problem? Is it in a public that, at least until the 2001 terrorist attacks, focused more attention to domestic issues than to international ones? Or in intensified partisanship in Congress? Or in the willingness of some congressional leaders to engage in such damaging frivolities as withholding payments of legitimate dues to the United Nations or holding up ambassadorial and other appointments for reasons that are unrelated to the qualifications of the nominees? Or in the print and electronic media that have
A Return to Isolationism and Unilateralism?

• drastically reduced coverage of foreign affairs in recent years (Emery 1989; Norris 1995; Robinson and Livingston 2003)? Or in parochial single-issue interest groups that found it easier to thrive in the absence of an overriding international threat after the disintegration of the USSR, and whose post-September 11 activities often have been directed at persuading public officials that their pet projects, no matter how far removed from foreign policy or homeland security, are in fact an integral part of “the war on terrorism?” Many of these actors state that they are in fact accurately reflecting public preferences. Media leaders assert that, in focusing on domestic issues and entertainment, they are merely giving the public what it wants. Many senators and representatives argue that, in their opposition to peacekeeping operations, foreign aid, or the United Nations and other international institutions, they are reflecting the views of an increasingly isolationist public that has lost patience with recalcitrant allies, inefficient international organizations, and Third World kleptocracies that look to America to bail them out of problems of their own making.

There is compelling evidence that foreign and defense policy issues have lost a good deal of their salience for the general public except in time of crisis or war. At least until the terrorist attacks in 2001, domestic issues seemed to impinge more directly on the daily lives of most citizens, and the declining coverage of international affairs by the print and electronic media reinforces and exacerbates the public tendency to focus on problems at home in the absence of wars, crises, and other dramatic events abroad. In virtually every post-Gulf War and pre-September 11 survey asking, “What are the major problems facing the country today,” the list was dominated by such issues as health care, corporate malfeasance, unemployment, drugs, crime, education, poverty, immorality, the economy, Social Security, and similar concerns. Even during the months leading up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003, most polls revealed that the weak state of the U.S. economy ranked at the top of public concerns. The paucity of international issues near the top of these lists is not, however, necessarily an unambiguous or even especially valid indicator of isolationism. Indeed, public inattention to international problems during the closing years of the twentieth century derived at least in part from a general sense of satisfaction with the conduct of foreign affairs. Not only did former President Clinton’s overall approval ratings remain at a remarkably high level, but respondents to the 1998 CCFR survey, conducted during House impeachment proceedings against Clinton, gave him the highest percentage of “very successful” ratings for his foreign policies of any post-World War president. When “somewhat successful” responses are included, Clinton ranked second only to his immediate predecessor, George H. W. Bush (Rielly 1999, 36–37; Lipset and Bowman 2000; Walt 2000).

The exceptionally high approval ratings enjoyed by George W. Bush are a direct consequence of his leadership in the war on terrorists and the war against Iraq rather than a groundswell of support for his domestic agenda. These re-
responses seem to point to a public that is rather poorly informed about the world (as usual), inattentive most of the time, generally satisfied with the conduct of foreign affairs—but not necessarily leading a charge of "back to the womb." Not surprisingly, the events of September 11 and their aftermath dominated public attention to the news. According to the Pew News Interest Index, eight of the ten stories to which Americans paid the most attention involved those events and subsequent U.S. actions against terrorism (Kohut 2002, 15). Except in the immediate aftermath of crises, the public mood is perhaps most accurately described as "apathetic internationalism" (Lindsay 2000).

The absence of sustained public attention to international issues is not without important policy consequences for it eases the task of policy makers who employ emotional appeals to drum up public support for favored undertakings. The public relations campaign during the run up to the invasion of Iraq is a case in point. The core of the administration's indictment was that the Baghdad regime possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) that posed an imminent national security danger; further, Iraq's ties to the al-Qaeda terrorist group gave rise to the threat that these weapons could well fall into the hands of those who planned further terrorist attacks on the United States. Although persuasive evidence was not forthcoming on either of these points prior to the March 2003 invasion, repeated assertions by the president and his top advisers, reinforced by Saddam Hussein's well-deserved reputation for unusual brutality, resulted in a public that was prepared to believe both charges. Perhaps post-war investigations will ultimately uncover evidence that the administration's case was valid but to date they have not done so. Nevertheless, although the war received massive media coverage, 41 percent of respondents to a postwar survey believed that WMDs had in fact been found and 22 percent stated that Iraq had used such weapons against the United States during the conflict (PIPA, May 14–18, 2003).

In any case, the political impact within the United States of the WMD issue may be minimal because a majority (58%) considered the war to be "justified even if [the] U.S. does not find weapons of mass destruction" (Pew, April 30, 2003).

Where does that leave any administration that seeks to have the United States play an effective leadership role in world affairs? Although one should exercise great caution in attempting to draw historical parallels, it may be instructive to recall the half-decade immediately following the end of World War II. Some pioneering opinion analysts of that period feared that a fickle and poorly informed public, weary of the sacrifices imposed by four years of war, would resist any efforts to continue shouldering the burdens of world leadership. In a memo to President Roosevelt, just prior to his departure for the Yalta Conference in 1945, his personal pollster Hadley Cantril warned that "it is unrealistic to assume that Americans are international-minded . . . The present internationalism rests on rather unstable foundations: it is recent, it is not rooted in broad or long range conceptions of self-interest, it has little intellectual basis" (Cantril 1967,
Gabriel Almond (1950) examined responses to questions about the “most important problems facing the country.” Noting that wartime concerns with international issues had been replaced with domestic ones, he concluded that a volatile and inattentive public provided very shaky foundations upon which to sustain global leadership. Yet, during the 1945–1950 period the public came to support a number of unprecedented undertakings that have been described as “the revolution in American foreign policy,” suggesting that there is a significant difference between an inattentive and an isolationist public. Effective presidential leadership, often bridging partisan lines, was able to generate public support for innovative undertakings, some of which ran counter to such deeply-embedded axioms as George Washington’s admonition “to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world.”

We should be wary of pushing the parallels between 1945–1950 and the present too far. The most striking difference is that Stalin’s Soviet Union posed a threat to vital interests far greater than any that exists today, even when the activities of terrorist organizations or the so-called axis of evil are taken into account. Nevertheless, the example suggests that because even a poorly informed and inattentive public is not necessarily isolationist or unilateralist, it can be persuaded to support an American leadership role in a broad range of international undertakings if it can be shown that they are both desirable and feasible. A critical element is a presidential leadership that is capable of making an effective case for its foreign policy agenda; of avoiding the mendacity that all too often has marred efforts to use the “bully pulpit” to gain public support, with the consequence that public trust in government has declined precipitously during the past several decades; and of reading the public accurately rather than misreading it.

History suggests that active cooperation with other countries may be the most effective and rewarding form of world leadership. In the years after World War II many American leaders of both political parties rejected the “Fortress America” concept of national security in favor of multilateralism. The United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, NATO, and resistance to aggression in Korea were among the more important milestones along the multilateral path to a more stable international order. Much to the surprise of many experts of that era, the American public was persuaded, largely through the concerted efforts of effective leaders in both parties, to abandon its traditional preference for limited peacetime international obligations and to embrace an unprecedented set of multilateral commitments. The multilateral path also made the vast preponderance of power enjoyed by the United States in the aftermath of World War II more palatable and less threatening to allies, thereby contributing in no small way to acceptance abroad of America’s international leadership role (Ikenberry 2001).

There would appear to be food for thought in the words of an author who is not widely known for an excessive deference to liberal perspectives and prescrip-
tions on foreign affairs or to the merits or multilateralism as an approach for all seasons and all reasons.

If the United States could move past the anxiety engendered by this inaccurate sense of constraint [from European allies], it could begin to show more understanding for the sensibilities of others, a little generosity of spirit. It could pay its respects to multilateralism and the rule of law and try to build some international political capital for those moments when multilateralism is impossible and unilateral action unavoidable. It could, in short, take more care to show what the founders called "a decent respect for the opinions of mankind" (Kagan 2002).

The evidence reviewed here reveals that even a “decent respect for the opinions” of a much smaller group, the American public, might give policy makers reason to pause as they weigh the longer term costs and benefits of unilateralism.

But is multilateralism, with its sensitivity to the vital interests of countries whose citizens do not vote in the United States, a realistic path toward electoral success at home? All first term presidents since Rutherford B. Hayes, save those who died in office (James A. Garfield, Warren G. Harding, and John F. Kennedy), have sought election to a second term. The most improbable success in this respect was the startling victory by Harry S. Truman in 1948. According to a recent study, his foreign policy actions during the year prior to the election, including the Marshall Plan and the Berlin airlift to bring food and fuel to the beleaguered citizens of that city, probably brought him enough votes to win the election (Zaller 2004). Perhaps the American public, for all its apathy and other well-documented weaknesses, appreciates “a generosity of spirit” and can be persuaded to reward it on election day.

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A Return to Isolationism and Unilateralism? • 309


Acknowledgments

For helpful comments and suggestions on an earlier draft, I am grateful to Peter Feaver, Kal Holsti, Bruce Jentleson, Bob Keohane, Tim Lomperis, Jim Rosenau, and Richard Sobel. I also wish to thank Anne Marie Boyd for superb research and secretarial assistance.

Any relevant developments between completion of this draft and the APSA conference will be summarized at the panel session.
Conclusion

Theories of International Relations and Foreign Policy Analysis
Theories of International Relations

Universities and professional associations usually are organized in ways that tend to separate scholars in adjoining disciplines and perhaps even to promote stereotypes of each other and their scholarly endeavors. The seemingly natural areas of scholarly convergence between diplomatic historians and political scientists who focus on international relations have been underexploited, but there are also some signs that this may be changing. These include recent essays suggesting ways in which the two disciplines can contribute to each other; a number of prizewinning dissertations, later turned into books, by political scientists that effectively combine political science theories and historical materials; collaborative efforts among scholars in the two disciplines; interdisciplinary journals such as *International Security* that provide an outlet for historians and political scientists with common interests; and creation of a new section, “International History and Politics,” within the American Political Science Association.¹

This essay is an effort to contribute further to an exchange of ideas between the two disciplines by describing some of the theories, approaches, and “models” political scientists have used in their research on international relations during recent decades. A brief essay cannot do justice to the entire range of theoretical approaches that may be found in the current literature, but perhaps those described here, when combined with citations of some representative works, will provide diplomatic historians with a useful, if sketchy, map showing some of the more prominent landmarks in a neighboring discipline.

The most enduring “great debate” among students and practitioners of international relations has pitted realism against various challengers. Because “classical realism” is the most venerable and persisting theory of international relations, it provides a good starting point and baseline for comparison with competing models. Robert Gilpin may have been engaging in hyperbole when he questioned...
whether our understanding of international relations has advanced significantly since Thucydides, but one must acknowledge that the latter’s analysis of the Peloponnesian War includes concepts that are not foreign to contemporary students of balance-of-power politics.  

Following a discussion of classical realism, an examination of "modern realism" or "neo-realism" will identify the continuities and differences between the two approaches. The essay then turns to several models that challenge one or more core premises of both classical and modern realism. The first three challengers focus on the system level: Global-Society/Complex-Interdependence/Liberal-Institutionalism, Marxist/World System/Dependency, and constructivism. Subsequent sections discuss several "decision-making" models, all of which share a skepticism about the adequacy of theories that focus on the structure of the international system while neglecting political processes within units that comprise the system.

Several limitations should be stated at the outset. Each of the systemic and decision-making approaches described below is a composite of several models; limitations of space have made it necessary to focus on the common denominators rather than on subtle differences among them. This discussion will pay little attention to the second "great debate," centering mostly on methodological issues; for example, what Stanley Hoffmann called "the battle of the literates versus the numerates." Efforts of some political scientists to develop "formal" or mathematical approaches to international relations are neglected here; such abstract models are likely to be of limited interest to historians. The "post modern" challenge to all other theories and methodologies—the third "great debate"—will only briefly be described and evaluated. With these caveats, let me turn now to classical realism, the first of the systematic models to be discussed in this essay.

**Realism**

There have always been Americans, such as Alexander Hamilton, who viewed international relations from a realist perspective, but its contemporary intellectual roots are largely European. Three important figures of the interwar period probably had the greatest impact on American scholarship: diplomat-historian E. H. Carr, geographer Nicholas Spykman, and political theorist Hans Morgenthau. Other Europeans who have contributed significantly to realist thought include John Herz, Raymond Aron, Hedley Bull, and Martin Wight, while notable Americans of this school include scholars Arnold Wolfers and Norman Graebner, diplomat George Kennan, journalist Walter Lippmann, and theologian Reinhold Niebuhr.

Although realists do not constitute a homogeneous school—any more than do any of the others discussed in this essay—most of them share at least five core premises about international relations. To begin with, they view as central
questions about the causes of war and the conditions of peace. They also regard the structure of the international system as a necessary if not always sufficient explanation for many aspects of international relations. According to classical realists, “structural anarchy,” or the absence of a central authority to settle disputes, is the essential feature of the contemporary system, and it gives rise to the “security dilemma”: in a self-help system one nation’s search for security often leaves its current and potential adversaries insecure, any nation that strives for absolute security leaves all others in the system absolutely insecure, and it can provide, a powerful incentive for arms races and other types of hostile interactions. Consequently, the question of relative capabilities is a crucial factor. Efforts to deal with this central element of the international system constitute the driving force behind the relations of units within the system; those that fail to cope will not survive. Thus, unlike “idealists” and some “liberal internationalists,” classical realists view conflict as a natural state of affairs rather than as a consequence that can be attributed to historical circumstances, evil leaders, flawed sociopolitical systems, or inadequate international understanding and education.

A third premise that unites classical realists is their focus on geographically-based groups as the central actors in the international system. During other periods the primary entities may have been city states or empires, but at least since the Treaties of Westphalia (1648), sovereign states have been the dominant units. Classical realists also agree that state behavior is rational. The assumption behind this fourth premise is that states are guided by the logic of the “national interest,” usually defined in terms of survival, security, power, and relative capabilities. Although the national interest may vary according to specific circumstances, the similarity of motives among nations permits the analyst to reconstruct the logic of policymakers in their pursuit of national interests—what Morgenthau called the “rational hypothesis”—and to avoid the fallacies of “concern with motives and concern with ideological preferences.”

Finally, the state can also be conceptualized as a unitary actor. Because the central problems for states are starkly defined by the nature of the international system, their actions are primarily a response to external rather than domestic political forces. According to Stephen Krasner, for example, the state “can be treated as an autonomous actor pursuing goals associated with power and the general interest of the society.” Classical realists, however, sometimes use domestic politics, especially the alleged deficiencies of public opinion, as a residual category to explain deviations from “rational” policies.

Realism has been the dominant model of international relations during at least the past six decades because it seemed to provide a useful framework for understanding the collapse of the post-World War I international order in the face of serial aggressions in the Far East and Europe, World War II, and the Cold War. Nevertheless, the classical versions articulated by Morgenthau and others have received a good deal of critical scrutiny. The critics have included scholars
who accept the basic premises of realism but who found that in at least four important respects these theories lacked sufficient precision and rigor.

Classical realism has usually been grounded in a pessimistic theory of human nature, either a theological version (for example, Saint Augustine and Reinhold Niebuhr) or a secular one (for example, Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Morgenthau). Egoism and self-interested behavior are not limited to a few evil or misguided leaders but are basic to *homo politicus* and thus are at the core of a realist theory. But because human nature, if it means anything, is a constant rather than a variable, it is an unsatisfactory explanation for the full range of international relations. If human nature explains war and conflict, what accounts for peace and cooperation? In order to avoid this problem, most modern realists have turned their attention from human nature to the structure of the international system to explain state behavior.8

In addition, critics have noted a lack of precision and even contradictions in the way classical realists use such core concepts as “power,” “national interest,” and “balance of power.”9 They also see possible contradictions between the central descriptive and prescriptive elements of realism. On the one hand, nations and their leaders “think and act in terms of interests defined as power,” but, on the other, statesmen are urged to exercise prudence and self-restraint, as well as to recognize the legitimate interests of other nations.10 Power plays a central role in classical realism, but the correlation between relative power balances and political outcomes is often less than compelling, suggesting the need to enrich analyses with other variables. Moreover, the distinction between “power as capabilities” and “usable options” is especially important in the nuclear age, as the United States discovered in Vietnam and the Soviets learned in Afghanistan. The terrorist attack on New York and Washington of September 11, 2001, even more dramatically illustrated the disjunction between material capabilities and political impact.

Although classical realists have typically looked to history and political science for insights and evidence, the search for greater precision has led many modern realists to look elsewhere for appropriate models, analogies, metaphors, and insights. The discipline of choice is often economics, from which modern realists have borrowed a number of tools and concepts, including rational choice, expected utility, theories of firms and markets, bargaining theory, and game theory.

The quest for precision has yielded a rich harvest of theories and models, and a somewhat less bountiful crop of supporting empirical applications. Drawing in part on game theory, Morton Kaplan described several types of international systems—for example, balance-of-power, loose bipolar, tight bipolar, universal, hierarchical, and unit-veto. He then outlined the essential rules that constitute these systems. For example, the rules for a balance-of-power system are: “(1) increase capabilities, but negotiate rather than fight; (2) fight rather than fail to increase capabilities; (3) stop fighting rather than eliminate an essential actor; (4)
oppose any coalition or single actor that tends to assume a position of predominance within the system; (5) constrain actors who subscribe to supranational organizational principles; and (6) permit defeated or constrained essential actors to re-enter the system. Richard Rosecrance, David Singer, Karl Deutsch, Bruce Russett, and many others, although not necessarily realists, also have developed models that seek to understand international relations by virtue of system-level explanations.

Kenneth Waltz’s Theory of International Politics, the most prominent effort to develop a rigorous and parsimonious model of “modern” or “structural” realism, has tended to define the terms of a vigorous debate during the past two decades. It follows and builds upon another enormously influential book in which Waltz developed the Rousseauian position that a theory of war must include the system level (what he called the “third image”) and not just first (theories of human nature) or second (state attributes) images. Why war? Because there is nothing in the system to prevent it.

Theory of International Relations is grounded in analogies from microeconomics: International politics and foreign policy are analogous to markets and firms. Oligopoly theory is used to illuminate the dynamics of interdependent choice in a self-help anarchical system. Waltz explicitly limits his attention to a structural theory of international systems, eschewing the task of linking it to a theory of foreign policy. Indeed, he doubts that the two can be joined in a single theory and he is highly critical of many system-level analysts, including Morton Kaplan, Stanley Hoffmann, Richard Rosecrance, Karl Deutsch, David Singer, and others, charging them with various errors, including “reductionism,” that is, defining the system in terms of the attributes or interactions of the units.

In order to avoid reductionism and to gain parsimony, Waltz erects his theory on the foundations of three core propositions that define the structure of the international system. The first concentrates on the principles by which the system is ordered. The contemporary system is anarchic and decentralized rather than hierarchical; although they differ in many respects, each unit (state) is formally equal. A second defining proposition is the character of the units. An anarchic system is composed of sovereign units and therefore the functions that they perform are also similar; for example, all have the task of providing for their own security. In contrast, a hierarchical system would be characterized by some type of division of labor. Finally, there is the distribution of capabilities among units in the system. Although capabilities are a unit-level attribute, the distribution of capabilities is a system-level concept. A change in any of these elements constitutes a change in system structure. The first element of structure as defined by Waltz is a quasi-constant because the ordering principle rarely changes, and the second element drops out of the analysis because the functions of units are similar as long as the system remains anarchic. Thus, the third attribute, the distribution of capabilities, plays the central role in Waltz’s model.
Waltz uses his theory to deduce the central characteristics of international relations. These include some nonobvious propositions about the contemporary international system. For example, with respect to system stability (defined as maintenance of its anarchic character and no consequential variation in the number of major actors) he concludes that, because a bipolar system reduces uncertainty, it is more stable than alternative structures. Furthermore, he contends that because interdependence has declined rather than increased during the twentieth century, this trend has actually contributed to stability, and he argues that the proliferation of nuclear weapons may contribute to rather than erode system stability.16

Waltz’s effort to bring rigor and parsimony to realism has stimulated a good deal of further research, but it has not escaped controversy and criticism.17 Most of the vigorous debate has centered on four alleged deficiencies relating to interests and preferences, system change, misallocation of variables between the system and unit levels, and an inability to explain outcomes.

Specifically, a spare structural approach suffers from an inability to identify completely the nature and sources of interests and preferences because these are unlikely to derive solely from the structure of the system. Ideology or domestic politics may often be at least as important. Consequently, the model is also unable to specify adequately how interests and preferences may change. The three defining characteristics of system structure are not sufficiently sensitive to specify the sources and dynamics of system change. The critics buttress their claim that the model is too static by pointing to Waltz’s assertion that there has only been a single structural change in the international system during the past three centuries.

Another drawback is the restrictive definition of system properties, which leads Waltz to misplace, and therefore neglect, elements of international relations that properly belong at the system level. Critics have focused on his treatment of the destructiveness of nuclear weapons and interdependence. Waltz labels these as unit-level properties, whereas some of his critics assert that they are in fact attributes of the system.

Finally, the distribution of capabilities explains outcomes in international affairs only in the most general way, falling short of answering the questions that are of central interest to many analysts. For example, the distribution of power at the end of World War II would have enabled one to predict the rivalry that emerged between the United States and the Soviet Union (as de Tocqueville did more than a century earlier) but it would have been inadequate for explaining the pattern of relations between these two nations—the Cold War rather than withdrawal into isolationism by either or both, a division of the world into spheres of influence, or World War III. In order to do so, it is necessary to explore political processes within states—at minimum within the United States and the Soviet Union—as well as between them.
Robert Gilpin shares the core assumptions of modern realism, but his study of *War and Change in World Politics* also attempts to cope with some of the criticism leveled at Waltz’s theory by focusing on the dynamics of system change. In doing so, Gilpin also seeks to avoid the criticism that the Waltz theory is largely ahistorical. Drawing upon both economic and sociological theory, his model is based on five core propositions. The first is that the international system is in a state of equilibrium if no state believes that it is profitable to attempt to change it. Second, a state will attempt to change the status quo of the international system if the expected benefits outweigh the costs. Related to this is the proposition that a state will seek change through territorial, political, and economic expansion until the marginal costs of further change equal or exceed the marginal benefits. Moreover, when an equilibrium between the costs and benefits of further change and expansion is reached, the economic costs of maintaining the status quo (expenditures for military forces, support for allies, etc.) tend to rise faster than the resources needed to do so. An equilibrium exists when no powerful state believes that a change in the system would yield additional net benefits. Finally, if the resulting disequilibrium between the existing governance of the international system and the redistribution of power is not resolved, the system will be changed and a new equilibrium reflecting the distribution of relative capabilities will be established.18

Unlike Waltz, Gilpin includes state-level processes in order to explain change. Differential economic growth rates among nations—a structural-systemic level variable—play a vital role in his explanation for the rise and decline of great powers, but his model also includes propositions about the law of diminishing returns on investments, the impact of affluence on martial spirit and on the ratio of consumption to investment, and structural change in the economy.19 Table 12.1 summarizes some key elements of realism. It also contrasts them to other models of international relations—Global-Society/Complex-Interdependence, Marxist/World System/Dependency, and constructivism, to which we now turn.

**Global Society, Interdependence, Institutionalism**

Just as there are variants of realism, there are several Global-Society/Complex-Independence/Liberal Institutionalism (GS/CI/LI) models, but this discussion focuses on two common denominators; they all challenge the first and third core propositions of realism identified earlier, asserting that inordinate attention to the war/peace issue and the nation-state renders it an increasingly anachronistic model of global relations.20

The agenda of critical problems confronting states has been vastly expanded during the twentieth century. Attention to the issues of war and peace is by no means misdirected, according to proponents of a GS/CI/LI perspective, but concerns for welfare, modernization, the environment, and the like are today
# Table 12.1 Four Models of the International System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of model</th>
<th>Realism</th>
<th>Global Society</th>
<th>Marxism</th>
<th>Constructivism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central problems</strong></td>
<td>Classical: descriptive and normative</td>
<td>Descriptive and normative</td>
<td>Descriptive and normative</td>
<td>Descriptive and normative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causes of war</td>
<td>Causes of war</td>
<td>Causes of war</td>
<td>Causes of war</td>
<td>Causes of war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions of peace</td>
<td>Conditions of peace</td>
<td>Conditions of peace</td>
<td>Conditions of peace</td>
<td>Conditions of peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conception of current international System</strong></td>
<td>Structural anarchy</td>
<td>Global society</td>
<td>World capitalist system</td>
<td>Environment in which states take action is social as well as material; the social gives meaning to the material world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Structure conceived in terms of material capabilities</td>
<td>Complex interdependence (structure varies by issue-area)</td>
<td>Structure conceived in terms of material capabilities</td>
<td>Structure conceived in terms of material capabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key actors</strong></td>
<td>Geographically based units (tribes, city-states, sovereign states, etc.)</td>
<td>Highly permeable states plus a broad range of nonstate actors, including IOs, IGOs, NGOs, and individuals</td>
<td>Classes and their agents</td>
<td>States with socially constructed identities and interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central motivations</strong></td>
<td>National interest</td>
<td>Security and a wider range of human needs and wants</td>
<td>Class interests</td>
<td>Different rather than uniform. Interests based on identities rather than fixed by structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalties</td>
<td>Central processes</td>
<td>Likelihood of system transformation</td>
<td>Sources of theory, insights, and evidence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To geographically based groups (from tribes to sovereign states)</td>
<td>Loyalties to state may be declining to emerging global norms, values and institutions and/or to subnational groups</td>
<td>To class values and interests that transcend those of the state</td>
<td>To states, at least for the intermediate future</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for security and survival</td>
<td>Aggregate effects of decisions by national and nonnational actors How units (not limited to nation-states) cope with a growing agenda of threats and opportunities arising from human wants</td>
<td>Modes of production and exchange International division of labor in a world capitalist system</td>
<td>Actors behave on the basis of socially constructed identities and interests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (basic structural elements of system have revealed an ability to persist despite many other kinds of changes)</td>
<td>Moderate in the direction of the model (owing to the rapid pace of technological change, etc.)</td>
<td>High in the direction of the model (owing to inherent contradictions within the world capitalist system)</td>
<td>Indeterminate; change in social identities is both possible and difficult</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics History Economics (especially modern realists)</td>
<td>Broad range of social sciences Natural and technological sciences</td>
<td>Marxist–Leninist theory (several variants)</td>
<td>Sociology Social psychology Anthropology/cultural studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
no less potent sources of motivation and action. It is important to stress that the potential for cooperative action arises from self-interest, not from some utopian attribution of altruism to state leaders. Institution building to reduce uncertainty, information costs, and fears of perfidy; improved international education and communication to ameliorate fears and antagonisms based on misinformation and misperceptions; and the positive-sum possibilities of such activities as trade are but a few of the ways, according to the GS/CI/LI perspective, by which states may jointly gain and thus mitigate, if not eliminate, the harshest features of a self-help international system. The diffusion of knowledge and technology, combined with the globalization of communications, has vastly increased popular expectations. The resulting demands have outstripped resources and the ability of sovereign states to cope effectively with them. Interdependence and institution building arise from an inability of even the most powerful states to cope, or to do so unilaterally or at acceptable levels of cost and risk, with issues ranging from terrorism to trade, from immigration to environmental threats, and from AIDS and SARS to new strains of tuberculosis.

Paralleling the widening agenda of critical issues is the expansion of actors whose behavior can have a significant impact beyond national boundaries; indeed, the cumulative effects of their actions can have profound consequences for the international system. Thus, although states continue to be the most important international actors, they possess a declining ability to control their own destinies. The aggregate effect of actions by multitudes of nonstate actors can have potent effects that transcend political boundaries. These may include such powerful or highly visible nonstate organizations as Exxon, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, or the Palestine Liberation Organization, and even shadowy ones such as the al Qaeda group that claimed to have carried out the 9/11 terrorist attacks. On the other hand, the cumulative effects of decisions by less powerful actors may also have profound international consequences. For example, decisions by thousands of individuals, mutual funds, banks, pension funds, and other financial institutions to sell securities on October 19, 1987, not only resulted in an unprecedented “crash” on Wall Street but also within hours its consequences were felt throughout the entire global financial system. The difficulties of containing economic problems within a single country were also illustrated by the international consequences of difficulties in Thailand, Mexico and Russia during the late 1990s.

The widening agenda of critical issues, most of which lack a purely national solution, has also led to creation of new actors that transcend political boundaries; for example, international organizations, transnational organizations, nongovernment organizations, multinational corporations, and the like. Thus, not only does an exclusive focus on the war/peace issue fail to capture the complexities of contemporary international life but it also blinds the analyst to the institutions, processes, and norms that self-interested states may use to mitigate some features.
of an anarchic system. In short, according to GS/CI/LI perspectives, analysts of a partially globalized world may incorporate elements of realism (anarchy, self-interest, rationality, etc.) as a necessary starting point, but these are not sufficient for an adequate understanding.

The GS/CI/LI models recognize that international behavior and outcomes arise from a multiplicity of motives, not merely the imperatives of systemic power balances. They also alert us to the fact that important international processes originate not only in the actions of states but also in the aggregated behavior of other actors. These models enable the analyst to deal with a broader agenda of critical issues; they also force one to contemplate a richer menu of demands, processes, and outcomes than would be derived from realist models, and thus, they are more sensitive to the possibility that politics of trade, currency, immigration, health, the environment, or energy may significantly and systematically differ from those typically associated with security issues.

A point of some disagreement among theorists lumped together here under the GS/CI/LI rubric centers on the importance and future prospects of the nation-state. The state serves as the starting point for analysts who focus on the ways in which these self-interested actors may pursue gains and reduce risks and uncertainties by various means, including creation of institutions. They view the importance of the nation-state as a given for at least the foreseeable future.

Other theorists regard the sovereign territorial state as in a process of irreversible decline, partly because the revolution in communications is widening the horizons and thus providing competition for loyalties of its citizens, partly because states are increasingly incapable of meeting the expanding expectations of their subjects; the "revolution of rising expectations" is not limited to less developed countries. Theirs is a largely utilitarian view of the state in which national sentiments and loyalties depend importantly on continuing favorable answers to the question: “What have you done for me lately?” However, these analysts may be underestimating the potency of nationalism and the durability of the state. Several decades ago one of them wrote that “the nation is declining in its importance as a political unit to which allegiances are attached.”22 Objectively, nationalism may be an anachronism but, for better or worse, powerful loyalties are still attached to states. The suggestion that, because even some well-established nations have experienced independence movements among ethnic, cultural, or religious minorities, the territorial state is in an irreversible decline is not wholly persuasive. In virtually every region of the world there are groups that seek to create or restore geographically-based entities in which its members may enjoy the status and privileges associated with sovereign territorial statehood. Events since 1989 in Eastern Europe, parts of the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Iraq, Quebec, Turkey, and elsewhere, seem to indicate that obituaries for nationalism may be somewhat premature.
The notion that such powerful nonnational actors as major multinational corporations (MNCs) will soon transcend the nation-state seems equally premature. International drug rings do appear capable of challenging and perhaps even dominating national authorities in Colombia, Panama, and some other states. But the pattern of outcomes in confrontations between MNCs and states, including cases involving major expropriations of corporate properties, indicate that even relatively weak nations are not always the hapless pawns of MNCs. The 9/11 terrorist attacks demonstrated once again that even the most powerful states that also enjoy a favorable geographical location cannot provide absolute safety for their populations. Perhaps paradoxically, these attacks and the resulting responses also reconfirmed the continuing importance of the state in world politics.

Underlying the GS/CI/LI critique of realist theories is the view that the latter are too wedded to the past and are thus incapable of dealing adequately with change. Even if global dynamics arise from multiple sources (including nonstate actors), however the actions of states and their agents would appear to remain the major sources of change in the international system. The third group of systemic theories to be considered, the Marxist/World System/Dependency (M/WS/D) models, even further downplays the role of the nation-state.

**Marxism, World Systems, Dependency**

Many of the distinctions among M/WS/D theories are lost by treating them together and by focusing on their common features, but in the brief description possible here only common denominators will be presented. These models challenge both the war/peace and state-centered features of realism, but they do so in ways that differ sharply from challenges of GS/CI/LI models. Rather than focusing on war and peace, these theories direct attention to quite different issues, including uneven development, poverty, and exploitation within and between nations. These conditions arise from the dynamics of the modes of production and exchange, and they must be incorporated into any analysis of intra- and international conflict.

According to adherents of these models, the key groups within and between nations are classes and their agents: As Immanuel Wallerstein put it, “in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries there has been only one world system in existence, the world capitalist world-economy.” The “world capitalist system” is characterized by a highly unequal division of labor between the periphery and core. Those at the periphery are essentially the drawers of water and the hewers of wood whereas the latter appropriate the surplus of the entire world economy. This critical feature of the world system not only gives rise to and perpetuates a widening rather than narrowing gap between the wealthy core and poor periphery but also to a dependency relationship from which the latter are unable to break loose. Moreover, the class structure within the core, characterized by a growing
gap between capital and labor, is faithfully reproduced in the periphery so that elites there share with their counterparts in the core an interest in perpetuating the system. Thus, in contrast to many realist theories, M/WS/D models encompass and integrate theories of both the global and domestic arenas.

M/WS/D models have been subjected to trenchant critiques. The state, nationalism, security dilemmas, and related concerns are at the theoretical periphery rather than at the core. “Capitalism was from the beginning an affair of the world-economy,” Wallerstein asserts, “not of nation-states.” A virtue of many M/WS/D theories is that they take a long historical perspective on world affairs rather than merely focusing on contemporary issues. Yet, by neglecting nation-states and the dynamics arising from their efforts to deal with security in an anarchical system—or at best relegating these actors and motivations to a minor role—M/WS/D models are open to question, much as would be analyses of Hamlet that neglect the central character and his motivations.

Finally, the earlier observations about the persistence of nationalism as an element of international relations seem equally appropriate here. Perhaps national loyalties can be dismissed as prime examples of “false consciousness,” but even in areas that experienced two generations of one-party Communist rule, as in China, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, or Estonia, there was scant evidence that feelings of solidarity with workers in the Soviet Union or elsewhere replaced nationalist sentiments.

The end of the Cold War and subsequent events have rendered Marxist theories somewhat problematic, but the gap between rich and poor states has, if anything, become more acute during the past decade. Globalization has helped some Third World countries such as Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan, but it has done little for most African countries. This condition has given rise to two somewhat related explanations for disparities, not only between the industrial west and the rest of the world, but also among countries that gained their independence since 1945.

The first focuses on geography. One analyst notes, for example, that landlocked countries in tropical zones have serious disadvantages in coping with such health problems as malaria and in overcoming the high costs of land transportation for exporting their goods. The second cluster of theories purporting to explain uneven development point to cultural differences. Neither of these theories is new; Max Weber’s The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism is a classic illustration of a cultural explanation for development.

While geographical and cultural theories have enjoyed some revival recently, they have also provoked spirited debates, in part because of highly dubious uses in the past. Unlike Marxist theories, they also appear to place the primary responsibility for under-development on the poor countries themselves, and they seem to offer limited prospects for coping with the problem because neither geography nor culture can easily be changed. Proponents of these theories respond that a
proper diagnosis of the roots of under-development is a necessary condition for its amelioration; for example, through aid programs that target public health and transportation infrastructure needs.

**Constructivism**

Although the theories described to this point tended to dominate debates during the past century, "constructivism" has recently emerged as a significant approach to world politics. Unlike many "post-modernists" (discussed in the next section), most constructivists work within the theoretical and epistemological premises of the social sciences, and they generally seek to expand rather than undermine the purview of other theoretical perspectives. As with other approaches summarized in this essay, constructivists do not constitute a monolithic perspective, but they do share some key ideas, the first of which is that the environment in which states act is social and ideational as well as material. Money provides a good example of the construction of social reality. If money is limited to metals such as gold and silver, then it has value because the metal itself is valuable, and its use constitutes a form of barter. For reasons of convenience and to expand the money supply, modern governments have also designated bits of colored paper and base metals to serve as money although they have little if any intrinsic value; that they are valuable and can be used as a medium of exchange is the result of a construction of economic reality.

In their emphasis on the construction of social reality, its proponents challenge the materialist basis of the approaches discussed above. Because the social gives meaning to the material, many core concepts, including anarchy, power, national interest, security dilemma, and others, are seen as socially constructed rather than as the ineluctable consequences of system structures. Moreover, interests and identities—for example, those who are designated as "allies" or "enemies"—are also social constructs, the products of human agency, rather than structurally determined. The title of a widely-cited work by Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It," provides something of the flavor of the constructionist perspective. Wendt shows that because anarchy can have multiple meanings for different actors, it may give rise to a wider range of behaviors than postulated by realism.

Constructivists have also shown that ideas and norms sometimes compete with, shape, or even trump material interests. Although not labeled as a constructivist analysis, an early study of John Foster Dulles' policies toward the USSR revealed that he constructed a model of the Soviet system, based largely on his lifelong study of Lenin's writings. Brutal Soviet foreign policies during the Stalin era provided ample support for Dulles' model, but the more variegated policies of those who came to power in the Kremlin after the Soviet dictator's death in 1953 were also interpreted in ways suggesting that Dulles' model was
largely impervious to any evidence that might call it into question. The end of the Cold War and disintegration of the Soviet Union have triggered off a lively debate among proponents of ideational and material interpretations of the acceptance by Mikhail Gorbachev of domestic reforms and collapse of the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe.

At this point, constructivism is less a theory than an approach. It has been used to analyze the origins, development, and consequences of norms and cultures in a broad range of settings. It might offer an especially fruitful contribution to the persisting debates, described below, on the “democratic peace” thesis. The constructivist approach is of relatively recent vintage, but it bears considerable resemblance to the venerable social science dictum that we all perceive our environment through the lenses of belief systems, and thus that, “It is what we think the world is like, not what it is really like, that determines our behavior.” This also illustrates the tendency for each generation of political scientists to reinvent, if not the whole wheel, at least some parts of it.

**Decision Making**

Many advocates of realism recognize that it cannot offer fine-grained analyses of foreign policy behavior and, as noted earlier, Waltz denies that it is desirable or even possible to combine theories of international relations and foreign policy. Decision-making models challenge the premises that it is fruitful to conceptualize the nation as a unitary rational actor whose behavior can adequately be explained by reference to the system structure—the second, fourth, and fifth realist propositions identified earlier—because individuals, groups, and organizations acting in the name of the state are also sensitive to domestic pressures and constraints, including elite maintenance, electoral politics, public opinion, interests groups, ideological preferences, and bureaucratic politics. Such core concepts as “the national interest” are not defined solely by the international system, much less by its structure alone, but they are also likely to reflect elements within the domestic political arena. Thus, rather than assuming with the realists that the state can be conceptualized as a “black box”—that the domestic political processes are unnecessary for explaining the sources of its external behavior—decision-making analysts believe one must indeed take these internal processes into account, with special attention directed at policymakers.

At the broadest level of analyses within the “black box,” the past two decades have witnessed a burgeoning literature and heated controversies on the “democratic peace” arising from the finding that, while democracies are no less likely to engage in wars, they do not fight each other. The literature is far too vast to discuss in any detail in this brief essay. Some of the debate is about minutiae (does Britain’s pro forma declaration of war on Finland during World War II constitute a crucial disconfirming case?), but parts of it engage such central
issues as the role of institutions (transparent policymaking) in allaying fears of perfidy or of norms (the culture of compromise) in reducing or eliminating wars between democracies. Suffice it to say that proponents and critics of the democratic peace thesis line up mostly along realist-liberal lines. The democratic peace thesis is especially troubling to realists for at least three reasons. It runs counter to a long tradition, espoused by Alexis de Tocqueville, Hans Morgenthau, George Kennan, Walter Lippmann, Henry Kissinger, and other notable realists, that depicts democracies as seriously disadvantaged in conducting foreign affairs. Moreover, the thesis that democracies may behave differently directly challenges a core premise of structural realism. As Waltz notes, “If the democratic peace thesis is right, structural realist theory is wrong.” At the policy level, few realists are comfortable with espousal by the first Bush and Clinton administrations of “democracy promotion” abroad as a vital goal of American diplomacy, at least at the rhetorical level, usually denouncing it as an invitation to hopeless crusading, or as “international social work” worthy of Mother Theresa but not of the world’s sole superpower.

To reconstruct how nations deal with each other, it is necessary to view the situation through the eyes of those who act in the name of the state: decision makers and the group and bureaucratic-organizational contexts within which they act. Table 12.2 provides an overview of three major types of decision-making models, beginning with the bureaucratic-organizational models.

Bureaucratic and Organizational Politics

Traditional models of complex organizations and bureaucracy emphasized the benefits of a division of labor, hierarchy, and centralization, coupled with expertise, rationality, and obedience. They also assumed that clear boundaries should be maintained between politics and decision making, on the one hand, and administration and implementation on the other. Following pioneering works by Chester Barnard, Herbert Simon and James March, and others, more recent theories depict organizations quite differently. The central premise is that decision making in bureaucratic organizations is not constrained only by the legal and formal norms that are intended to enhance the rational and eliminate the capricious aspects of bureaucratic behavior. There is an emphasis upon rather than a denial of the political character of bureaucracies, as well as on other “informal” aspects of organizational behavior. Complex organizations are composed of individuals and units with conflicting perceptions, values, and interests that may arise from parochial self-interest (“what is best for my bureau is also best for my career”), and also from different perceptions of issues arising ineluctably from a division of labor (“where you stand depends on where you sit”). Organizational norms and memories, prior policy commitments, inertia, and standard operating procedures may shape and perhaps distort the
### Table 12.2 Three Models of Decision Making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptualization of decision making</th>
<th>Bureaucratic politics</th>
<th>Group dynamics</th>
<th>Individual decision making</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Premises</td>
<td>Decision making as the result of bargaining within bureaucratic behavior</td>
<td>Decision making as the product of group interaction</td>
<td>Decision making as the result of individual choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central organizational values are imperfectly internalized</td>
<td>Most decisions are made by small elite groups</td>
<td>Importance of subjective appraisal (definition of the situation) and cognitive processes (information processing, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizational behavior is political behavior</td>
<td>Group is different than the sum of its members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Structure and SOPs affect substance and quality of decisions</td>
<td>Group dynamics affect substance and quality of decisions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constraints on rational decision making</td>
<td>Imperfect information, resulting from: centralization, hierarchy, and specialization</td>
<td>Groups may be more effective for some tasks, less for others Pressures for conformity Risk-taking propensity of groups (controversial) Quality of leadership “Groupthink”</td>
<td>Cognitive limits on rationality Information processing distorted by cognitive consistency dynamics (unmotivated biases) Systematic and motivated biases in causal analysis Individual differences in abilities related to decision making (e.g., problem-solving ability, tolerance of ambiguity, defensiveness and anxiety, information seeking, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizational inertia Conflict between individual and organizational utilities Bureaucratic politics and bargaining dominate decision making and implementation of decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of theory, insights, and evidence</td>
<td>Organization theory Sociology of bureaucracies Bureaucratic politics</td>
<td>Social psychology Sociology of small groups</td>
<td>Cognitive dissonance Cognitive psychology Dynamic psychology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
structuring of problems, channeling of information, use of expertise, the range of options that may be considered, and implementation of executive decisions. Consequently, organizational decision making is essentially political in character, dominated by bargaining for resources, roles and missions, and by compromise rather than analysis.41

An ample literature of case studies on budgeting, weapons acquisitions, military doctrine, and similar situations confirms that foreign and defense policy bureaucracies rarely conform to the Weberian “ideal type” of rational organization.42 Some analysts assert that crises may provide the motivation and means for reducing some of the nonrational aspects of bureaucratic behavior: crises are likely to push decisions to the top of the organization where a higher quality of intelligence is available; information is more likely to enter the top of the hierarchy directly, reducing the distorting effects of information processing through several levels of the organization; and broader, less parochial values may be invoked. Short decision time in crises reduces the opportunities for decision making by bargaining, log rolling, incrementalism, lowest-common-denominator values, “muddling through,” and the like.43

Even studies of international crises from a bureaucratic-organizational perspective, however, are not uniformly sanguine about decision making in such circumstances. Graham Allison’s analysis of the Cuban missile crisis identified several critical bureaucratic malfunctions concerning dispersal of American aircraft in Florida, the location of the naval blockade, and grounding of weather-reconnaissance flights from Alaska that might stray over the USSR. Richard Neustadt’s study of two crises involving the United States and Great Britain revealed significant misperceptions of each other’s interests and policy processes. And an examination of three American nuclear alerts found substantial gaps in understanding and communication between policymakers and the military leaders who were responsible for implementing the alerts.44

Critics of some organizational-bureaucratic models have directed their attention to several points.45 They assert, for instance, that the emphasis on bureaucratic bargaining fails to differentiate adequately between the positions of the participants. In the American system, the president is not just another player in a complex bureaucratic game. Not only must he ultimately decide but he also selects who the other players will be, a process that may be crucial in shaping the ultimate decisions. If General Matthew Ridgway and Attorney General Robert Kennedy played key roles in the American decisions not to intervene in Indochina in 1954 and not to bomb or invade Cuba in 1962, it was because Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy chose to accept their advice rather than that of other officials. Also, the conception of bureaucratic bargaining tends to emphasize its nonrational elements to the exclusion of genuine intellectual differences that may be rooted in broader concerns, including disagreements on what national interests, if any, are at stake in a situation. Indeed, properly managed, decision
processes that promote and legitimize “multiple advocacy” among officials may facilitate high-quality decisions.46

These models may be especially useful for understanding the slippage between executive decisions and foreign policy actions that may arise during implementation, but they may be less valuable for explaining the decisions themselves. Allison’s study of the Cuban missile crisis does not indicate an especially strong correlation between bureaucratic roles and evaluations of the situation or policy recommendations, as predicted by his “Model III” (bureaucratic politics), and recently published transcripts of deliberations during the crisis do not offer more supporting evidence for that model.47 Yet Allison does present some compelling evidence concerning policy implementation that casts considerable doubt on the adequacy of traditional realist conceptions of the unitary rational actor.

Small Group Politics

Another decision-making model used by some political scientists supplements bureaucratic-organizational models by narrowing the field of view to foreign policy decisions within small group contexts. Some analysts have drawn upon sociology and social psychology to assess the impact of various types of group dynamics on decision making.48 Underlying these models are the premises that the group is not merely the sum of its members (thus decisions emerging from the group are likely to be different from what a simple aggregation of individual preferences and abilities might suggest), and that group dynamics can have a significant impact on the substance and quality of decisions.

Groups often perform better than individuals in coping with complex tasks owing to diverse perspectives and talents, an effective division of labor, and high-quality debates on definitions of the situation and prescriptions for dealing with it. Groups may also provide decisionmakers with emotional and other types of support that may facilitate coping with complex problems. Conversely, they may exert pressures for conformity to group norms, thereby inhibiting the search for information and policy options, ruling out the legitimacy of some options, curtailing independent evaluation, and suppressing some forms of intragroup conflict that might serve to clarify goals, values, and options. Classic experiments have revealed the extent to which group members will suppress their beliefs and judgments when faced with a majority adhering to the contrary view, even a counterfactual one.49

Drawing on historical case studies, social psychologist Irving Janis has identified a different variant of group dynamics, which he labels “group-think” to distinguish it from the more familiar type of conformity pressure on “deviant” members of the group.50 Janis challenges the conventional wisdom that strong cohesion among group members invariably enhances performance. Under certain conditions, strong cohesion can markedly degrade the group’s performance
in decision making. Members of a cohesive group may, as a means of dealing with the stresses of having to cope with consequential problems and in order to bolster self-esteem, increase the frequency and intensity of face-to-face interaction, resulting in greater identification with the group and less competition within it; “concurrence seeking” may displace or erode reality-testing and sound information processing and judgment. As a consequence, groups may be afflicted by unwarranted feelings of optimism and invulnerability, stereotyped images of adversaries, and inattention to warnings. Janis’s analyses of both “successful” (the Marshall Plan, the Cuban missile crisis) and “unsuccessful” (Munich Conference of 1938, Pearl Harbor, the Bay of Pigs invasion) cases indicate that “groupthink” or other decision-making pathologies are not inevitable, and he develops some guidelines for avoiding them.51

Individual Leaders

Still other decision-making analysts focus on the individual policymaker, emphasizing the gap between the demands of the classical model of rational decision making and the substantial body of theory and evidence about various constraints that come into play in even relatively simple choice situations.52 Drawing upon cognitive psychology, these models go well beyond some of the earlier formulations that drew upon psycho-dynamic theories to identify various types of psychopathologies among political leaders: paranoia, authoritarianism, the displacement of private motives on public objects, etc.53 Efforts to include information-processing behavior of the individual decision maker have been directed at the cognitive and motivational constraints that, in varying degrees, affect the decision-making performance of “normal” rather than pathological subjects. Thus, attention is directed to all leaders, not merely those, such as Hitler or Stalin, who display symptoms of clinical abnormalities.

Many challenges to the classical model have focused on limited human capabilities for objectively rational decision making. The cognitive constraints on rationality include limits on the individual’s capacity to receive, process, and assimilate information about the situation; an inability to identify the entire set of policy alternatives; fragmentary knowledge about the consequences of each option; and an inability to order preferences on a single utility scale.54 These have given rise to several competing conceptions of the decision maker and his or her strategies for dealing with complexity, uncertainty, incomplete or contradictory information and, paradoxically, information overload. They variously characterize the decision maker as a problem solver, naive or intuitive scientist, cognitive balancer, dissonance avoider, information seeker, cybernetic information processor, and reluctant decision maker.

Three of these conceptions seem especially relevant for foreign policy analysis. The first views the decision maker as a “bounded rationalist” who seeks satisfac-
tory rather than optimal solutions. As Herbert Simon has put it, "the capacity of the human mind for formulating and solving complex problems is very small compared with the size of the problem whose solution is required for objectively rational behavior in the real world—or even a reasonable approximation of such objective rationality." Moreover, it is not practical for the decision maker to seek optimal choices; for example, because of the costs of searching for information. Related to this is the concept of the individual as a "cognitive miser," one who seeks to simplify complex problems and to find short cuts to problem solving.

Another approach is to look at the decisionmaker as an "error prone intuitive scientist" who is likely to commit a broad range of inferential mistakes. Thus, rather than emphasizing the limits on search, information processing, and the like, this conception views the decision maker as the victim of flawed decision rules who uses data poorly. There are tendencies to underuse rate data in making judgments, believe in the "law of small numbers," underuse diagnostic information, overweight low probabilities and underweight high ones, and violate other requirements of consistency and coherence.

The final perspective emphasizes the forces that dominate the policymaker, forces that will not or cannot be controlled. Decisionmakers are not merely rational calculators; important decisions generate conflict, and a reluctance to make irrevocable choices often results in behavior that reduces the quality of decisions. These models direct the analyst's attention to policymakers' belief systems, images of relevant actors, perceptions, information-processing strategies, heuristics, certain personality traits (ability to tolerate ambiguity, cognitive complexity, etc.), and their impact on decision-making performance.

Despite this diversity of perspectives and the difficulty of choosing between cognitive and motivational models, there has been some convergence on several types of constraints that may affect decision processes. One involves the consequences of efforts to achieve cognitive consistency on perceptions and information processing. Several kinds of systematic bias have been identified in both experimental and historical studies. Policymakers have a propensity to assimilate and interpret information in ways that conform to rather than challenge existing beliefs, preferences, hopes, and expectations. They may deny the need to confront tradeoffs between values by persuading themselves that an option will satisfy all of them, and indulge in rationalizations to bolster the selected option while denigrating others.

A comparison of a pair of two-term conservative Republican presidents may be used to illustrate the point about coping with tradeoffs. Both came to office vowing to improve national security policy and to balance the federal budget. President Eisenhower, recognizing the tradeoff between these goals, pursued security policies that reduced defense expenditures—for example, the "New Look" policy that placed greater reliance on nuclear weapons, and alliance policies that permitted maintenance of global commitments at lower cost. Despite widespread
demands for vastly increased defense spending after the Soviet satellite Sputnik was successfully placed in orbit around the earth, Eisenhower refused to give in; indeed, he left office famously warning of the dangers of the "military-industrial complex." The result was a period of balanced budgets in which surpluses in some years offset deficits in others. In contrast, President Reagan denied any tradeoffs between defense expenditures and budget deficits by positing that major tax cuts would stimulate the economy to produce increases in government revenues. The results proved otherwise as the Reagan years were marked by annual deficits ranging between $79 billion and $221 billion.

An extensive literature on styles of attribution has revealed several types of systematic bias. Perhaps the most important for foreign policy is the basic attribution error—a tendency to explain the adversary's behavior in terms of his characteristics (for example, inherent aggressiveness or hostility) rather than in terms of the context or situation, while attributing one's own behavior to the latter (for example, legitimate security needs arising from a dangerous and uncertain environment) rather than to the former. A somewhat related type of double standard has been noted by George Kennan: "Now is it our view that we should take account only of their [Soviet] capabilities, disregarding their intentions, but we should expect them to take account only of our supposed intentions, disregarding our capabilities?"59

Analysts also have illustrated the effect on decisions of policymakers' assumptions about order and predictability in the environment. Whereas a policymaker may have an acute appreciation of the disorderly environment in which he or she operates (arising, for example, from domestic political processes), there is a tendency to assume that others, especially adversaries, are free of such constraints. Graham Allison, Robert Jervis, and others have demonstrated that decision makers tend to believe that the realist "unitary rational actor" is the appropriate representation of the opponent's decision processes and, thus, whatever happens is the direct result of deliberate choices.60

Several models linking crisis-induced stress to decision processes have been developed and used in foreign policy studies.61 Irving Janis and Leon Mann have developed a more general conflict-theory model that conceives of man as a "reluctant decisionmaker" and focuses upon "when, how and why psychological stress generated by decisional conflict imposes limitations on the rationality of a person's decisions."62 One may employ five strategies for coping with a situation requiring a decision: unconflicted adherence to existing policy, unconflicted change, defensive avoidance, hypervigilance, and vigilant decision making. The first four strategies are likely to yield low-quality decisions owing to an incomplete search for information, appraisal of the situation and options, and contingency planning, whereas vigilant decision making, characterized by a more adequate performance of vital tasks, is more likely to result in a high-quality choice. The factors that will affect the employment of decision styles are information about
risks, expectations of finding a better option, and time for adequate search and deliberation.

A final approach we should consider attempts to show the impact of personal traits on decision making. Typologies that are intended to link leadership traits to decision-making behavior abound, but systematic research demonstrating such links is in much shorter supply. Still, some efforts have borne fruit. Margaret Hermann has developed a scheme for analyzing leaders’ public statements of unquestioned authorship for eight variables: nationalism, belief in one’s ability to control the environment, need for power, need for affiliation, ability to differentiate environments, distrust of others, self-confidence, and task emphasis. The scheme has been tested with impressive results on a broad range of contemporary leaders. Alexander George has reformulated Nathan Leites’s concept of “operational code” into five philosophical and five instrumental beliefs that are intended to describe politically relevant core beliefs, stimulating a number of empirical studies and, more recently, further significant conceptual revisions. Finally, several psychologists have developed and tested the concept of “integrative complexity,” defined as the ability to make subtle distinction along multiple dimensions, flexibility, and the integration of large amounts of diverse information to make coherent judgments. A standard content analysis technique has been used for research on documentary materials generated by top decision makers in a wide range of international crises.

Decision-making approaches permit the analyst to overcome many limitations of the systemic models described earlier, but they also impose increasingly heavy data burdens on the analyst. Moreover, there is a danger that adding levels of analysis may result in an undisciplined proliferation of categories and variables. It may then become increasingly difficult to determine which are more or less important, and ad hoc explanations for individual cases erode the possibilities for broader generalizations across cases. Several well-designed, multicase, decision-making studies, however, indicate that these and other traps are not unavoidable.

Post-Modern Challenges

The field of international relations has gone through three “great debates” during the past century. The first, pitting the venerable realist tradition against various challengers, was summarized above. The second, centered on disagreements about the virtues and limitations of quantification (“if you can’t count it, it doesn’t count” versus “if you can count it, that ain’t it”) and, more recently, on “formal modeling.” Although those arguments persist in various guises, they have been bypassed in this essay.

The most recent debate, in many respects the most fundamental of the three, is the “post-modern” challenges to all of the theories and models described above.
The intellectual foundations of post-modernism are largely in the humanities, but the current debates extend well beyond issues of humanistic versus social science perspectives on world politics. They are rooted in epistemology: What can we know? Rather than addressing the validity of specific variables, levels of analysis, or methodologies, most post-modernists challenge the premise that the social world constitutes an objective, knowable reality that is amenable to systematic description and analysis.

Although realism has been a prime target, all existing theories and methodologies are in the cross-hairs of post-modern critics who, as Pauline Rosenau noted, "soundly and swiftly dismiss international political economy, realism (and neorealism), regime theory, game theory, rational actor models, integration theory, transnational approaches, world system analysis and the liberal tradition in general." Nor are any of the conventional methodologies employed by political scientists or diplomatic historians spared.

Some versions of post-modernism label "evidence" and "truth" as meaningless concepts, and they are critical of categories, classification, generalization, and conclusions. Nor is there any objective language by which knowledge can be transmitted; the choice of language unjustifiably grants privileged positions to one perspective or another. Thus, the task of the observer is to deconstruct "texts" (everything is a "text"). Each one creates a unique "reading" of the matter under consideration, none can ultimately be deemed superior to any other, and there are no guidelines for choosing among them.

Taken at face value, the ability of these post-modernist perspectives to shed light on the central issues of world affairs seems problematic, and thus their contributions to either political science or diplomatic history would appear to be quite modest. Indeed, they appear to undermine the foundations of both undertakings, eliminating conventional research methods and aspirations for the cumulation of knowledge. Moreover, if one rejects the feasibility of research standards because they necessarily "privilege" some theories or methodologies, does that not also rule out judgments of works by Holocaust deniers or of conspiracy buffs who write, for example, about the Kennedy assassination or the Pearl Harbor attack?

Even more moderate versions of post-modernism are skeptical of theories and methods based on reason and Western logic, but works of this genre have occasionally offered insightful critiques of conventional theories, methodologies and concepts. The proclivity of more than a few political scientists for reifying a false image of the "scientific method" and for overlooking the pervasiveness of less elegant methodologies offers an inviting target. However, such thoughtful critical analyses are certainly not the unique province of post-modern authors; critiques of naive perspectives on scientific methods, for example, have abounded in political science and history journals for several decades.
Finally, most post-modernists are highly critical of other approaches because they have failed to come up with viable solutions for mankind’s most pressing problems, including war, poverty, and oppression. Though some progress has been made on all these fronts, not even a modern-day Pangloss would declare victory on any of them. But what does postmodernist nihilism offer along these lines? Jarvis makes the point nicely:

In what sense, however, can this approach [post-modernism] be at all adequate for the subject of International Relations? What, for example, do the literary devices of irony and textuality say to Somalian refugees who flee from famine and warlords or to Ethiopian rebels who fight in the desert plains against a government in Addis Ababa? How does the notion of textual deconstruction speak to Serbs, Croats, and Muslims who fight one another among the ruins of the former Yugoslavia? How do totalitarian narratives or logocentric binary logic feature in the deliberation of policy bureaucrats or in negotiations over international trade or the formulation of international law? Should those concerned with human rights or those who take it upon themselves to study relationships between nation-states begin by contemplating epistemological fiats and ontological disputes?71 Quite aside from the emptiness of its message for those with a concern to improving the human condition, the stylistic wretchedness of most post-modern prose ensures that it will have scant impact on the real world.

Conclusion

The study of international relations and foreign policy has always been an eclectic undertaking, with extensive borrowing from disciplines other than political science and history72 At the most general level, the primary differences today tend to be between two broad approaches. Analysts of the first school focus on the structure of the international system, often borrowing from economics for models, analogies, insights, and metaphors, with an emphasis on rational preferences and strategy and how these tend to be shaped and constrained by the structure of the international system. Decision-making analysts, meanwhile, display a concern for internal political processes and tend to borrow from psychology and social psychology in order to understand better the limits and barriers to information processing and rational choice. For many purposes both approaches are necessary and neither is sufficient. Neglect of the system structure and its constraints may result in analyses that depict policymakers as relatively free agents with an almost unrestricted menu of choices, limited only by the scope of their ambitions and the resources at their disposal. At worst, this type of analysis can degenerate into Manichean explanations that depict foreign policies of the “bad guys” as
the external manifestation of inherently flawed leaders or domestic structures, whereas the "good guys" only react from necessity.

Conversely, neglect of foreign policy decision making not only leaves one unable to explain fully the dynamics of international relations, but many important aspects of a nation's external behavior will be inexplicable. Advocates of the realist model have often argued its superiority for understanding the "high" politics of deterrence, containment, alliances, crises, and wars, if not necessarily for "low" politics. But there are several rejoinders to this line of reasoning. First, the low politics of trade, currencies, and other issues that are usually sensitive to domestic pressures are becoming an increasingly important element of international relations. The George W. Bush administration came into office vowing to replace the "mushy" policies of its predecessor with "hard-headed realism" based on self-defined national interests. Yet its actions have shown a consistent willingness to subordinate those interests to those of such favored domestic constituencies as the energy, steel and soft lumber industries, and the National Rifle Association. Second, the growing literature on the putative domain par excellence of realism, including deterrence, crises, and wars, raises substantial doubts about the universal validity of the realist model even for these issues.73 Finally, exclusive reliance on realist models and their assumptions of rationality may lead to unwarranted complacency about dangers in the international system. Nuclear weapons and other features of the system have no doubt contributed to the "long peace" between major powers.74 At the same time, however, a narrow focus on power balances, "correlations of forces," and other features of the international system will result in neglect of dangers—for example, the command, communication, control, intelligence problem or inadequate information processing—that can only be identified and analyzed by a decision-making perspective.75

At a very general level, this conclusion parallels that drawn three decades ago by the foremost contemporary proponent of modern realism: The third image (system structure) is necessary for understanding the context of international behavior, whereas the first and second images (decisionmakers and domestic political processes) are needed to understand dynamics within the system.76 But to acknowledge the existence of various levels of analysis is not enough. What the investigator wants to explain and the level of specificity and comprehensiveness to be sought should determine which level(s) of analysis are relevant and necessary. In this connection, it is essential to distinguish between two different dependent variables: foreign policy decisions by states, on the one hand, and the outcomes of policy and interactions between two or more states, on the other. Political scientists studying international relations are increasingly disciplining their use of multiple levels of analysis in studying outcomes that cannot be adequately explained via only a single level of analysis.77

A renowned diplomatic historian asserted that most theories of international relations flunked a critical test by failing to forecast the end of the Cold War.78
Theories of International Relations • 339

The end of the Cold War has also led some theorists to look outside the social sciences and humanities for appropriate metaphors and models, but these are beyond the scope of the present essay. This conclusion speculates on the related question of how well the theories discussed above might help political scientists and historians understand global relations in the post-Cold War world. Dramatic events since the late 1980s have posed serious challenges to several of the system level theories, but we should be wary of writing premature obituaries for any of them, or engaging in “naive (single case) falsification.” Further, in 2003, only a little more than a decade after disintegration of the Soviet Union and less than a year after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, some caution about declaring that major events and trends are irreversible seems warranted.

The global society/complex interdependence/liberal institutionalism theories have fared relatively better than either structural realism or various Marxist theories. For example, creation of the World Trade Organization and progress toward economic unification of Europe, although not without detours and setbacks, would appear to provide significant support for the view that, even in an anarchic world, major powers may find that it is in their self-interest to establish and maintain institutions for cooperating and overcoming the constraints of the “relative gains” problem. Woodrow Wilson’s thesis that a world of democratic nations will be more peaceful has also enjoyed some revival, at least among analysts who attach significance to the fact that democratic nations have been able to establish “zones of peace” among themselves. Wilson’s diagnosis that self-determination also supports peace may be correct in the abstract, but universal application of that principle is neither feasible nor desirable, if only because it would result in immense bloodshed; the peaceful divorces of Norway and Sweden in 1905 and of the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1992 are unfortunately not the norm. Although it appears that economic interests have come to dominate nationalist, ethnic, or religious passions among most industrial democracies, the evidence is far less assuring in other areas, including parts of the former Soviet Union, Central Europe, the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa.

Recent events appear to have created an especially difficult challenge for structural realism; although it provides a parsimonious and elegant theory, its deficiencies are likely to become more rather than less apparent in the post-Cold War world. Its weaknesses in dealing with questions of system change and in specifying policy preferences other than survival and security are likely to be magnified. Moreover, whereas classical realism includes some attractive prescriptive features (caution, humility, warnings against mistaking one’s preferences for the moral laws of the universe), neorealism is an especially weak source of policy-relevant theory. Indeed, some of the prescriptions put forward by neo-realists, such as letting Germany join the nuclear club or urging Ukraine to keep its nuclear weapons, seem reckless. In addition to European economic cooperation, specific events that seem inexplicable by structural realism include...
Soviet acquiescence in the collapse of its empire and peaceful transformation of the system structure. The persistence of NATO, more than a decade after disappearance of the threat that gave rise to its creation, has also confounded realist predictions that it would not long survive the end of the Cold War; in 1993, Waltz asserted: “NATO's days are not numbered, but its years are.” The problem cannot be resolved by definition: asserting that NATO is no longer an alliance because its original adversary has collapsed. Nor can the theory be saved by a tautology: claiming that the Cold War ended, exactly as predicted by structural realism, “only when the bipolar structure of the world disappeared.” These developments are especially telling because structural realism is explicitly touted as a theory of major powers. Although proponents of realism are not ready to concede that events of the past decade have raised some serious questions about its validity, as distinguished a realist as Robert Tucker has characterized structural realism as “more questionable than ever.”

More importantly, even though the possibility of war among major powers cannot be dismissed and proliferation may place nuclear weapons into the hands of leaders with little stake in maintaining the status quo, national interests and even conceptions of national security have increasingly come to be defined in ways that transcend the power balances that lie at the core of structural realism. The expanded agenda of national interests, combined with the trend toward greater democracy in many parts of the world, suggests that we are entering an era in which the relative potency of systemic and domestic forces in shaping and constraining international affairs is moving toward the latter. The frequency of internal wars that have become international conflicts—the list includes but is not limited to Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Rwanda, Congo, and several parts of the former Yugoslavia—suggests that “failed states” may compete with international aggression as the major source of war. Such issues as trade, immigration, the environment, and others can be expected to enhance the impact of domestic actors—including legislatures, public opinion, and ethnic, religious, economic, and perhaps even regional interest groups—while reducing the ability of executives to dominate the process on the grounds, so frequently invoked during times of war and crises, that the adept pursuit of national interests requires secrecy, flexibility, and the ability to act with speed on the basis of classified information.

If that prognosis is anywhere near the mark, it should enhance the value of decision-making models, some of which were discussed above, that encompass domestic political processes. Whatever their strengths and weaknesses, these models seem less vulnerable to such major events as the end of the Cold War. Most policymaking will continue to be made by leaders in small groups, with supports and constraints from bureaucracies. Moreover, even if nation-states are having to share the global center stage with a plethora of nonstate actors, decision-making concepts such as information processing, satisficing, bureau-
cratic politics, groupthink, and many of the others described above can be applied equally well to the World Trade Organization, NATO, OPEC, and the like.

Which of these models and approaches are likely to be of interest and utility to the diplomatic historian? Clearly there is no one answer: political scientists are unable to agree on a single multilevel approach to international relations and foreign policy; thus they are hardly in a position to offer a single recommendation to historians. In the absence of the often-sought but always-elusive unified theory of human behavior that could provide a model for all seasons and all reasons, one must ask at least one further question: a model for what purpose? For example, in some circumstances, such as research on major international crises, it may be important to obtain systematic evidence on the beliefs and other intellectual baggage that key policymakers bring to their deliberations. Some of the approaches described above should prove very helpful in this respect. Conversely, there are many other research problems for which the historian would quite properly decide that this type of analysis requires far more effort than could possibly be justified by the benefits to be gained.

Of the systemic approaches described here, little needs to be said about classical realism because its main features, as well as its strengths and weaknesses, are familiar to most diplomatic historians. Those who focus on security issues can hardly neglect its central premises and concepts. Waltz's version of structural realism is likely to have more limited appeal to historians, especially if they take seriously his doubts about being able to incorporate foreign policy into it. It may perhaps serve to raise consciousness about the importance of the systemic context within which international relations take place, but that may not be a major gain; after all, such concepts as “balance of power” have long been a standard part of the diplomatic historian's vocabulary.

The Global-Society/Complex-Interdependence/Liberal Institutionalism models will be helpful to historians with an interest in the evolution of the international system and with the growing disjuncture between demands on states and their ability to meet them, the “sovereignty gap.” One need not be very venturesome to predict that this gap will grow rather than narrow. Historians of international and transnational organizations are also likely to find useful concepts and insights in these models.

It is much less clear that the Marxist/World System/Dependency theories will provide useful new insights to historians. If one has difficulty in accepting certain assumptions as true by definition—for example, that there has been and is today a single “world capitalist system”—then the kinds of analyses that follow are likely to seem flawed. Most diplomatic historians also would have difficulty in accepting models that relegate the state to a secondary role. Finally, whereas proponents of GS/CI/LI models can point with considerable justification to current events and trends that would appear to make them more rather than less relevant in the future, supporters of the M/WS/D models have a much more
difficult task in this respect. The declining legitimacy of Marxism-Leninism as the basis for government does not, of course, necessarily invalidate social science theories that draw upon Marx, Lenin, and their intellectual heirs. It might, however, at least be the occasion for second thoughts, especially because Marx and his followers have always placed a heavy emphasis on an intimate connection between theory and practice.

Although the three decision-making models sometimes include jargon that may be jarring to the historian, many of the underlying concepts are familiar. Much of diplomatic history has traditionally focused on the decisions, actions, and interactions of national leaders who operate in group contexts, such as cabinets or ad hoc advisory groups, and who draw upon the resources of such bureaucracies as foreign and defense ministries or the armed forces. The three types of models described above typically draw heavily upon psychology, social psychology, organizational theory, and other social sciences; thus for the historian they open some important windows to these fields. For example, theories and concepts of “information processing” by individuals, groups, and organizations should prove very useful.

Decision-making models may also appeal to diplomatic historians for another important reason. Political scientists who are accustomed to working with fairly accessible “hard” information such as figures on gross national products, defense budgets, battle casualties, alliance commitments, UN votes, trade, investments, and the like often feel that the data requirements of decision-making models are excessive. This is precisely the area in which the historian has a decided comparative advantage, for the relevant data are usually to be found in the paper or electronic trails left by policymakers, and they are most likely to be unearthed by archival research. For purposes of organization this essay has focused on some major distinctions between theoretical perspectives. This should not be read, however, as ruling out efforts to build bridges between them, as urged in several recent essays.86

Perhaps the appropriate point on which to conclude this essay is to reverse the question posed earlier: Ask not only what can the political scientist contribute to the diplomatic historian but ask also what can the diplomatic historian contribute to the political scientist. At the very least political scientists could learn a great deal about the validity of their own models if historians would use them and offer critical assessments of their strengths and limitations.

A Note on Sources

Contributions to and debates about theories of international relations take place within both books and journals. While it is impossible to forecast the books that may, in the future, be useful in this respect, it may be helpful to identify some journals that are likely to be especially fruitful sources of theoretical develop-
ments and controversies. This list is limited to U.S.-based journals. Many others published in Europe, Japan, Israel, South Korea and elsewhere may also include relevant articles.

The top mainline political science journals include *American Political Science Review*, *Journal of Politics*, and *American Journal of Political Science*. APSR has published some major articles in international relations and foreign policy, especially in recent years, and each issue has a section devoted to book reviews. However, all three of these journals tend to place greater emphasis on American politics. That is especially true of *JP* and *AJPS*.

*International Organization*, *International Security*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *Security Studies*, and *World Politics* are the most important sources of articles that bear on theoretical issues. Many of the authors are political scientists, but diplomatic historians, economists, sociologists and other social scientists are also frequently represented on their pages. These journals are indispensable for anyone interested in following theoretical developments and debates. Of the six, only *World Politics* regularly features extended book reviews.

*Foreign Affairs* and *Foreign Policy* are largely focused on current affairs, but on occasion essays in these journals have been authored by major contributors to current debates about theoretical issues. Both include book reviews, but they are often relatively brief.

The best source of book reviews is *International Studies Review*, which, along with *International Studies Quarterly*, is a publication of the International Studies Association. It features both extended review essays and shorter critical assessments of single books. *ISR* regularly includes reviews of books published in languages other than English.

Acknowledgments

The author has greatly benefited from helpful comments on earlier versions of this chapter by Peter Feaver, Alexander George, Joseph Grieco, Michael Hogan, Kal Holsti, Bob Keohane, Timothy Lomperis, Roy Melbourne, James Rosenau, and Andrew Scott, and also from reading K. J. Holsti, *The Dividing Discipline: Hegemony and Diversity in International Theory* (London, 1985).
Concluding Thoughts on American Foreign Policy

[2005]

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.” The opening sentence of Charles Dicken’s classic novel of the French Revolution, *A Tale of Two Cities*, could also serve as an apt description of American foreign policy at the end of 2005.

By conventional measures of power and status, the United States unquestionably sits at the apex of the international pecking order. Its armed forces outstrip those of any potential challenger or, indeed, those of any potential coalition of challengers. Because the Pentagon’s annual budget is higher than that of the next sixteen countries combined, the American position at the top of the world’s military hierarchy seems certain to persist into the foreseeable future.1

When our attention turns to the economic realm, the picture is much the same. In 2000 the United States accounted for 29.3 percent of the world gross domestic product, a figure that is estimated to rise to 29.5 in 2005 and to decline only slightly to 28.8 percent in 2025, while the countries that two decades ago were sometimes identified as challengers to American economic superiority—the Soviet Union, Japan, and Germany—have either disintegrated (the Soviet Union) or have suffered serious economic difficulties (Japan and Germany) that have all but eliminated their chances of approaching, much less surpassing the United States. To be sure, reckless American tax policies have resulted in unprecedented budget and trade deficits that will almost surely have serious consequences at some point in the future. It is also possible, though by no means inevitable, that China’s economy will surpass that of the United States in several decades, but for the time being the American position as the world’s top economy is beyond serious debate.2 Even analysts who two decades ago were forecasting that as a result of “imperial overreach,” the United States would follow a declining path of...
previous hegemonic powers—Spain, the Netherlands, France, and Great Britain among them—have come to rethink their views.

These figures clearly point to “the best of times” for the material bases of American foreign policy. How, then, can the phrase “the worst of times” possibly be used in any sentence or paragraph that deals with American foreign policy? By another measure of power—the ability to get others to do one’s bidding—the situation is somewhat less clear. Recent years have witnessed an increasing number of episodes in which the United States found itself unable to achieve its foreign policy goals as other countries have balked at following America’s lead. That the United States has been unable to gain the cooperation of China on such issues as the future of Taiwan or North Korea’s nuclear weapons program is not especially surprising, given the history of Sino-American relations and China’s own status as a nuclear-armed major power and, perhaps, as an emerging superpower. But in many cases the foreign policy setbacks have come at the hands of much less powerful countries, some of which have long been among America’s allies in such organizations as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Organization of American States (OAS). A few examples illustrate Washington’s recent difficulties in translating its exceptional reservoir of “hard power” into effective influence on some important foreign policy issues.

• In the summer of 2002, as the Bush administration was gearing up a full-scale effort to gain congressional and international support for military action to overthrow the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq, Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder faced a very difficult reelection campaign. Schroeder publicly declared that Germany, which had sent troops to assist in the U.S.-led campaign against the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan, would not in any circumstances join in military action against Iraq. That promise was probably sufficient to ensure his reelection.

• During the run-up to the Iraq war the United States put intense pressure on the recently-elected Turkish government to permit deployment of the U.S. 4th Infantry Division there to open a northern front against Iraq. Despite American use of both carrots (aid and loans) and sticks (possible withdrawal of support for Turkey’s bid for European Union membership), in a close vote the recently elected Turkish Parliament rejected the U.S. demands, thereby faithfully reflecting overwhelming public opposition to the U.S. plan.

• Apparently at the insistence of Secretary of State Colin Powell and against the advice of other key foreign policy officials, including Vice President Dick Cheney, and Defense Department officials Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz, the Bush administration reluctantly took its case for the use of force against Iraq to the U.N. Security Council. Washington realized that France or Russia might well veto an American resolution authorizing the
invasion of Iraq and it was all but certain that Germany would not support it, but the United States expected to obtain support from at least nine of the fifteen Security Council members, thereby gaining policy legitimacy while simultaneously isolating nay-sayers in Paris, Moscow and Berlin. The issue never came to a vote because preliminary canvassing revealed that it would result in an embarrassing American defeat. The United States was unable to gain the support of even Mexico or Chile, hemispheric neighbors with which it has special trade relationships. Only seven of thirty-three Latin American and Caribbean countries supported military action against Iraq.4

After the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, President George H. W. Bush was able to gain Security Council authorization to use force against Iraq should it fail to withdraw from Kuwait, and he put together a coalition of twenty-six countries to contribute to the war effort against Iraq. That coalition notably included two important Islamic regional powers—Egypt and Turkey. In contrast, President George W. Bush not only failed to gain Security Council support for the invasion of Iraq in 2003, but his “coalition of the willing” included significant contributions of armed forces only from Great Britain, with much smaller, mostly symbolic military units from Poland and Australia and, later, from Italy, Spain and several other countries. Notably missing were any Arab or Muslim countries.

Even after the war successfully toppled the brutal Saddam Hussein regime that had committed aggression against two neighbors—Iran and Kuwait—predictions by administration cheerleaders that an awesome display of American military power would lead to at least grudging support from Islamic countries and their publics (the so-called Arab street) proved to be wildly off the mark.

After President Bush announced the end of hostilities in Iraq on May 1, 2003—“Mission Accomplished” as a banner at an aircraft carrier photo opportunity famously proclaimed—many countries, including those that opposed the war, were informed that they were expected to make significant financial contributions toward rebuilding post-Saddam Iraq and arranging for the transition to a stable democratic government. Such contributions were not forthcoming, perhaps in part because the administration also made it clear that contracts for rebuilding Iraq would not be issued to firms from countries that failed to join the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

As the June 30, 2004 deadline for a partial handover of sovereignty to an interim Iraqi government approached, the administration once again demanded that NATO members contribute more troops to help quell the Iraqi insurgency and to maintain security during the transition period leading up to full sovereignty for Iraq. At the June 2004 Group of Eight meeting at Sea Island, Georgia it became clear that such additional assistance would
not be forthcoming; President Bush conceded that it was an "unrealistic expectation" to count on additional NATO troops. France, Germany and other hesitant NATO members apparently saw no advantage in becoming involved in Iraq, probably in part because of the growing toll inflicted by insurgents. Both later offered to help train Iraqi military personnel, but not in Iraq.

- South Korea has been a long-time American ally and U.S. troops have been stationed there since the July 1953 armistice that brought to an end the Korean War. For various reasons, including misbehavior by U.S. troops stationed in Korea, anti-American sentiments have risen, especially among the younger generation who did not experience the international effort, led by the United States, to repel the North Korean aggression during the bloody 1950–1953 war. North Korea has openly boasted of violating agreements to terminate its nuclear weapons program, but how to deal with the issue has divided rather than united Washington and Seoul. In his 2002 State of the Union address, President Bush included North Korea in the "axis of evil," whereas South Korea has generally followed a softer line, perhaps fearing a flood of refugees across the 38th parallel should the totalitarian North Korean regime collapse. In presidential elections on December 19, 2002, liberal candidate Roh Moo-hyun won by taking a very critical stance toward the United States, even in the face of nuclear threats from North Korea. According to one analyst: "In the past, security threats from the North would have made Koreans favor a conservative candidate and seek solidarity with the United States. In 2002, however, a pro-U.S. image was a burden in the election."

- Although Canada has not always followed Washington's lead in foreign affairs—for example, it maintains diplomatic relations with Cuba—it has generally been a faithful ally of the United States and Britain on major international issues. Canada fought alongside the United States and Great Britain as allies in every war through the end of the twentieth century, but it declined to join them in the "coalition of the willing" for the invasion of Iraq in March 2003. Canada also served as an integral part of NORAD and the DEW Line, the air defense systems erected during the Cold War, but in 2005 the government in Ottawa pulled out of the missile defense system, one of the centerpieces of Bush administration defense planning. Perhaps the long record of test failures of the missile defense system contributed to the withdrawal but, like the decision not to participate in the invasion of Iraq, it may also have been rooted in opposition of the Canadian public. "Polls have shown the system to be unpopular with the public, particularly in Quebec."

- In June 2005 the United States proposed a resolution that would authorize the OAS to appraise the state of democracy among member countries as a
way of putting some teeth in the “Democratic Charter” adopted four years earlier. The American effort met strong resistance among other members, in part because they feared that the resolution might be used by the United States against Venezuela, whose populist president, Hugo Chavez, has used strongly anti-American rhetoric to bolster his popularity at home. OAS members had earlier broken precedent by declining to support an American-backed candidate for Secretary-General of the organization, electing Jose Miguel Insulza instead.10

These and many similar examples suggest that there are limits on the goals that even a hegemonic country can achieve with threats and inducements, backed the kinds of “hard power” that the United States possesses in plenitude. “Soft power” constitutes a less direct means by which a country can achieve its foreign policy goals: “A country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries want to follow it, admiring its values, emulating its examples, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness.”11 In contrast to hard power, the base of soft power resides in the “hearts and minds” of other countries, especially among the leaders of its political, economic, military, cultural, and other major institutions. There are also reasons to believe that, especially in countries with regular competitive elections, the opinions and preferences of the general public may be of some consequence because in at least some instances their leaders may harbor concerns that they will be held accountable for their foreign policy decisions. Although it is not always possible to establish a causal link between public opinion and government policy, in the episodes cited above, leaders in Germany, South Korea, Mexico, Turkey, Canada and elsewhere who chose to defy Washington acted in ways that were consistent with the preferences of their publics. The extent to which publics abroad want to follow the United States, admire its values and institutions, and agree with its foreign policy goals may have an impact on the willingness of their governments to cooperate with the United States. But because governments do not conduct their foreign affairs by plebiscite, the impact of public views of the United States is a question to be explored rather than a relationship to be assumed.

Many of these episodes in which Washington failed to get its way were also linked directly or indirectly to the American-led war in Iraq. The September 11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington gave rise to an almost unanimous outpouring of sympathy and support from leaders and publics abroad. For the first time in its history, NATO invoked Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty: “The parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack on all of them.” The subsequent American invasion of Afghanistan to capture the al Qaeda leaders who openly claimed responsibility for the September 11 attacks and to oust the Taliban regime that had given sanctuary to al Qaeda received widespread support. Numerous
countries, including but not limited to NATO allies, provided troops, equipment, intelligence, basing rights, over-flight rights and the like. The American military action was generally regarded as a legitimate response to a barbaric terrorist attack in which there was no ambiguity about the identity or purposes of the perpetrators.

Shortly after expulsion of the Taliban government in Afghanistan, President Bush identified Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as an “axis of evil” in his 2002 State of the Union address. Later that summer he initiated a campaign to gain congressional and international support for a military campaign to oust Saddam Hussein, alleging that Iraq had accumulated an arsenal of weapons of mass destruction and, moreover, that Iraq was implicated in the September 11 attacks by virtue of close links to al Qaeda. The United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1441, requiring that Iraq re-admit UN inspectors to determine whether it had violated agreements not to acquire weapons of mass destruction. In the absence of compelling evidence of Iraqi violations or of ties between Baghdad and al Qaeda, Washington’s proposal to use force against Iraq generated widespread opposition abroad. The debates on Iraq coincided with an unprecedented amount of international polling. These surveys revealed that most publics abroad held increasingly unfavorable views of the United States and its foreign policies.

Even the militarily successful U.S.-led campaign against Iraq’s ragtag armed forces, followed by the capture of Baghdad and the ouster of Saddam Hussein’s Baathist regime, did little to resuscitate America’s sagging reputation abroad. Shortly after the fall of Baghdad when the first stirrings of an insurgency suggested that at least some Iraqi elements were not prepared to welcome Americans as liberators, President Bush famously replied, “bring them on.”

These displays of military prowess did play well in the domestic political arena but they did little to revive America’s sagging reputation abroad. Following the September 11 attacks, President Bush appointed former ambassador Edward Djerejian to chair a committee with a mandate to explore rising anti-Americanism abroad. When he presented their findings in 2003, Djerejian summarized the problem, “The bottom has indeed fallen out of support for the United States.” His doleful appraisal was based mostly on widespread anti-American views in Arab and Muslim countries, but it could also serve as an accurate summary of the precipitous decline in support for the United States throughout much of the world.

A full review of the mountains of international poll data about how the United States is viewed abroad generated during the past four years cannot be undertaken here, but a brief summary will at least convey some dimensions of the problem.

- When asked whether they had favorable or unfavorable opinions of the United States, publics in most countries selected the latter option. Although
recent polls reveal a few exceptions—India stands out as 71 percent of respondents to a 2005 Pew survey judged the United States favorably—the overall picture is one of very negative appraisals, including among many of America’s oldest and most important allies in NATO. Among countries with substantial Muslim populations, including Turkey, Indonesia, Pakistan, Jordan, and Lebanon, only in the latter did as many as 40 percent express a favorable view of the United States.

- In response to the question "Is America having mainly a positive influence in the world," respondents in most countries answered in the negative. In the 2004–2005 Program in International Policy Attitudes surveys, for example, only in Poland, India, South Africa, and the Philippines did a majority of respondents agree. Publics in NATO countries (other than Poland) and in Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico) were among the many others who took a very dim view of American influence.

- Although Americans generally believe that Washington is attentive to the vital interests of other countries, with very few exceptions publics abroad disagree. Only in India did as many as 20 percent of respondents state that the United States pays a "great deal" of attention to their country’s vital interests. Even in Great Britain, a long-time ally that joined the “coalition of the willing” in Iraq, only 8 percent of the public expressed the same view about American attentiveness.

- Whereas the Bush administration has consistently insisted that the invasion of Iraq was an integral part of the "war against terrorism," that view is not widely shared. Many publics abroad believe that military action is in fact an appropriate way to fight terrorism and thus they supported the invasion of Afghanistan in the weeks following the September 11 attacks. But the Iraq war is widely judged to be a distraction rather than as an important step in coping with the very real challenge of terrorism.

Despite widespread doubts about the United States and the policies of the current administration, the news from these polls is not all bad. Indeed, the data give lie to those who dismiss the views of most publics abroad as being permanently stuck in a “hate America” mindset and, therefore, not worthy of any serious consideration. For example, even in countries that are generally critical of American foreign policy in Iraq and elsewhere, relatively few believe that the emergence of another country equal in power to that of the United States would result in a safer world. When asked in a 2005 Pew survey about their views of "Americans"—as distinct from their appraisals of the United States and its policies—respondents in most countries other than those with predominantly Muslim populations offered a favorable judgment. In addition, reports that consumers abroad are shunning American goods as a expression of opposition to the Iraq war have proven to be inaccurate, as least in the case of three major
American multinationals—Coca Cola, McDonald’s, and Nike—whose sales in Europe rose during the five years ending in 2004.\(^\text{17}\)

Moreover, some aspects of American society are widely admired abroad. American science and technological innovation consistently receive exceptionally strong report cards, even in predominantly Muslim countries that have otherwise expressed highly critical views about the United States and its policies; for example, Turkey (67 percent admire American science and technology), Indonesia (81 percent), Kuwait (94 percent), Jordan (64 percent), Morocco (85 percent), Nigeria (90 percent), Lebanon (86 percent), and areas under control of the Palestinian Authority (62 percent).\(^\text{18}\) These responses are somewhat ironic inasmuch as the Bush administration and some of its most dedicated supporters have not only attacked significant aspects of American science—on the sources and consequences of global warming, on the potential therapeutic benefits of stem cell research, and on the teaching of evolution—but also funding for the National Science Foundation declined by almost 2 percent in fiscal year 2005.\(^\text{19}\)

American entertainment products and the economic opportunities for people in this country are also accorded favorable judgments by many publics abroad, especially among younger respondents.

But at this point it is appropriate to ask, “So what?” While it is always nice to be liked by everyone, given America’s unquestioned status as the world’s only superpower, does it really matter very much if publics and governments in long-time allies France, Canada, Turkey, South Korea and elsewhere harbor growing doubts about the United States and are unwilling to toe Washington’s line on all of its policies? In any case, don’t the benefits of acting swiftly without the need to consult, cooperate, and compromise with other countries or within international institutions outweigh whatever contributions they might make to major international undertakings?

The argument here is that it does indeed matter and will continue to do so. During coming decades the United States will confront a complex agenda of international issues, ranging from immigration, trade imbalances, energy dependence, and environmental degradation to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and genocidal wars within and between “failing states.” It requires no great leap of imagination to include international terrorism among the top threats to American security. Although the “war on terrorism” resembles “the war on cancer” in that it will never be possible to declare an outright victory, progress in coping with the threat during the years since the September 11 attacks has been rather spotty.\(^\text{20}\)

An effective American policy for dealing with global issues—and most assuredly with the terrorist threat—will be materially enhanced if the United States is able to mobilize strong international support through NATO, the United Nations, and other multinational venues. Few contemporary international problems lend themselves to unilateral solutions, even if undertaken with all the resources of the
world’s only superpower. At minimum, any progress on terrorism will depend on gaining widespread sharing of intelligence. A week after the September 11 attacks, a senior statesman with a lifetime of experience in foreign affairs asserted: “Just as Pearl Harbor awakened this country from the notion that we could avoid the call to duty and defend freedom in Europe and Asia in World War II so, too, should this most recent surprise attack erase the concept in some quarters that American can somehow go it alone in this fight against terrorism or in anything else for that matter.” The author of those words was former President H. W. Bush, but his son’s administration has, in many respects, followed a quite different path. In doing so, it has left the United States in a situation that was succinctly summarized in the previously cited warning from Djerejian about a precipitous collapse of support.

In short, the United States will face great difficulties in dealing effectively with a challenging foreign policy agenda unless it is able to persuade other countries that their vital interests are best served by cooperation with rather than balancing against the United States; that is, soft power will be needed to supplement its immense hard power resources and to mitigate fears that American material resources represent a threat to the interests of others. To date there are few indications of balancing against the United States, at least in part because of America’s past reputation for using its power in relatively benign ways; for example, heretofore it has rarely initiated aggressive wars outside the Western hemisphere. The invasion of Iraq in 2003 could change that because it is widely seen abroad as, at best, a misguided diversion from the central task of confronting terrorist organizations or, at worst, as a twenty-first century example of traditional imperialism.

Repairing America’s sinking reputation abroad is not the only important task that needs to be confronted in order to enhance the prospects for effective diplomacy. As demonstrated in chapters 5 through 11, most significant contemporary issues have given to sharp cleavages that are often rooted in partisan and ideological differences. Foreign affairs are no exception. “Politics stops at the water’s edge,” a favorite slogan of countless presidents and other leaders eager to cut off debate on their policies, has rarely been an accurate description of American foreign policy making, but even by standards of previous contentious periods, current divisions stand out as exceptionally deep.

Bipartisanship is not an important virtue in its own right, nor does agreement across party lines guarantee high quality foreign policy decisions. In an impressive display of bipartisan consensus, the Senate passed the “Gulf of Tonkin Resolution” in August 1964 with little debate and only two dissenting votes, and the House of Representatives quickly followed suit by a vote of 416–0. Presidents Johnson and Nixon subsequently cited these congressional actions to justify rapid escalation of American forces in Vietnam which, in turn, led to what was arguably the most disastrous undertaking in the history of American foreign affairs.
That said, just as support from the UN Security Council in 1990 for military action against Iraq to expel its invading forces from Kuwait made it easier for other countries to join the coalition against Iraq, a degree of bipartisan agreement can provide an important element of “policy legitimacy” in the domestic political arena. During much of the Cold War, top leaders in both parties were in broad agreement on many core elements of American policy, even though they might engage in vigorous debates, especially during presidential campaigns, about the most desirable and feasible strategies and tactics for implementing them.

Policies for dealing with terrorist threats have and will continue to involve serious questions about priorities, costs, acceptable infringements on individual freedoms, and the like. If discussions of such important issues become little more than perceived opportunities for scoring partisan debating points, the quality and legitimacy of the outcomes will surely suffer. For example, an outburst by Karl Rove in which he accused liberals of merely wanting to “prepare indictments and offer therapy and understanding for our [September 11] attackers” brings to mind Senator Joseph McCarthy’s charges during the early 1950s that communists in the State Department had “lost” China.23

In part owing to the acrimonious debates among leaders in Washington and elsewhere, survey data reveal that a partisan divide—perhaps partisan chasm would be a more accurate description—of almost unprecedented dimensions may also be found among the general public, especially on the Iraq war. For example, a June 2005 survey revealed that, when asked if the United States did “the right thing in taking military action against Iraq, or should it have stayed out,” only 45 percent of the overall sample selected the “right thing” option, but that masked deep partisan divisions among Republicans (78 percent “right thing”), Democrats (22 percent), and Independents (40 percent). Sharp partisan differences emerged even when the survey shifted from normative questions and asked, “How would you say things are going for the United States in its effort to bring stability and order to Iraq?” Forty percent of the entire sample judged that things are going “well.” Whereas 69 percent of Republicans expressed that view, only 20 percent of Democrats and 36 percent of Independents agreed.24

Bipartisanship is not the natural state of affairs on foreign policy, as George Washington, James Madison, Woodrow Wilson and many otherwise able leaders have learned. Cooperation across party lines requires skilled and thoughtful presidential leadership.

Appointments to key positions are among the tools available to presidents who seek to mitigate the impact of partisanship. In selecting the American delegation to the Versailles Conference following World War I, Woodrow Wilson could have included any of several distinguished Republicans who were on record as favoring the creation of international organization as part of the peace settlement. Even if personal animosities had ruled out including Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, former president William Howard Taft might have been appointed. Or,
with an eye toward the treaty ratification process, Wilson might have selected a leading Republican senator other than Lodge. By failing to include a leading Republican on the American delegation, Wilson went a long way toward framing the question of American membership in the League of Nations as a partisan issue, thereby materially reducing the chances that the Versailles Treaty would gain approval of the Republican-dominated Senate.

Some of Wilson's successors have demonstrated greater political acumen. After the collapse of the French army in 1940, anticipating that the United States would be drawn into World War II, Franklin Roosevelt fired his isolationist secretaries of war and navy and replaced them with Frank Knox (Republican vice-presidential candidate in 1936) and Henry L. Stimson (among the most distinguished Republican foreign policy officials of the twentieth century, who had served as secretary of war and state in the cabinets of Presidents Taft and Hoover). When faced with negotiating a peace treaty with all the countries that had been at war with Japan and then guiding it through the U.S. Senate, Harry Truman turned to Republican stalwart John Foster Dulles, who would soon thereafter serve as President Eisenhower’s secretary of state. And, after winning a close election in 1960, John F. Kennedy appointed Republicans Douglas Dillon and Robert McNamara to head the treasury and defense departments. These appointments certainly did not ensure Republican support for all administration foreign policies, but they represented significant steps in eliciting bipartisan cooperation on some important issues during World War II and the ensuing Cold War.

Whether the current partisan divide on Iraq and other issues can be bridged probably depends at least in part on how events play out on the ground in Iraq, and also on whether the second Bush administration makes even token efforts to reach out to Democrats in order to establish some semblance of bipartisan foundations for American foreign policy. Early signs on the latter point are not especially auspicious as the official who might have worked most effectively with the opposition party, Secretary of State Colin Powell, was fired within days of the president’s reelection. In general, members of the president’s team who have questioned any aspects of his policies, including Army Chief of Staff Eric Shinseki (who presciently warned that several hundred thousand U.S. troops would be required to maintain order in postwar Iraq), Chair of the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Brent Scowcroft (who publicly opposed the invasion of Iraq), Treasury Secretary Paul O’Neill (who was not sufficiently enthusiastic about impending tax cuts because they would result in huge budget deficits), and Director of the National Economic Council Lawrence Lindsey (who had the temerity to state that the impending war against Iraq would cost $100–200 billion rather than the administration’s figure of $50–60 billion), were quickly shown the door. O’Neill and Lindsey fared better than Shinseki, who was subject to repeated and humiliating public rebukes, as both received at least “lukewarm thanks” for their services. Thus, it would take a major change of mindset for the
president to reach out to those who may not always have been vocal cheerleaders. However, the president made it clear in a long interview that his victory in the 2004 election essentially settled all issues relating to the Iraq war, including accountability for any mistakes and misjudgments.\textsuperscript{26}

Openings at the World Bank and the American delegation to the United Nations provided President Bush with an opportunity for minor gestures toward bipartisanship, especially as neither the World Bank nor the UN plays a central role in the administration’s foreign policy calculations. Instead of grasping this chance, the president appointed two of the most partisan and ideological officials of his first administration—Paul Wolfowitz and John R. Bolton—to serve as president of the World Bank and U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

\textbf{Conclusion}

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.” The United States enjoys unprecedented superiority in the material bases of its foreign policies, and post-September 11 events do not cast doubt on the realist premise that power structures remain a vital element of global politics. Yet the invasion of Iraq, while successfully ousting a vicious tyrant, has come at a cost far higher than its key architects had considered possible or had even been willing to contemplate. American armed forces are confronted with a violent insurgency that, by mid-2005, showed few signs of abatement and that might overshadow such successes as the 2005 elections in Iraq.

The entire Iraq venture has also come at a high price in support from most governments and publics abroad. Those anti-American sentiments raise the possibility, though not the inevitability, that Iraq-based doubts about the United States and its policies could spill over into hesitation to cooperate with Washington on other vital issues.

This brief and necessarily incomplete overview of current American foreign policy brings us full circle. Chapter 2, the study of John Foster Dulles’s images of the Soviet Union, was predicated on the assumptions that “ideas matter” and that the beliefs and perception of top policy makers are often of special importance in understanding the making of American foreign policy because they provide the lenses through which reality is perceived and interpreted.

Some of the current difficulties that the United States faces in Iraq and elsewhere are a direct outgrowth of ideas zealously espoused by many top officials in the Bush administration. Four examples will illustrate the point. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and his top deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, believed and acted on the unshakeable conviction that the vast majority of Iraqis would view American invasion forces as liberators rather than conquerors. Army Chief of Staff Eric Shinseki had warned Congress that several hundred thousand troops would be required to maintain order in postwar Iraq. Two days later, Wolfowitz
interrupted his testimony before a House Committee with a slashing attack on Shinseki’s estimate, describing it as “quite outlandish.” He went on to say: “I am reluctant to try to predict anything about what the costs of a possible conflict in Iraq might be . . . But some of the higher-end predictions that we have been hearing recently, such as the notion that it will take several hundred thousand U.S. troops to provide stability in post-Saddam Iraq, are wildly off the mark.”

Wolfowitz’s belief not only made it possible to undertake the invasion and postwar administration of Iraq with relatively limited forces, but it also served another of their important goals—to drive a stake through the heart of the (Colin) “Powell Doctrine” dictum that any intervention abroad should be undertaken with massive forces and with a carefully developed “exit strategy.” When asked later about the increasingly violent insurgency in Iraq, Rumsfeld deflected questions about his own judgments by blaming Turkey for its March 2003 decision to disallow an American strike into northern Iraq.

A second important premise was that a quick military victory would “shock and awe” most Arab and Muslim populations into “bandwagoning” with the Americans rather than viewing the intervention as evidence of a “clash of civilizations” between the West and Islam. Numerous international surveys reveal that even in Muslim countries with which the United States has traditionally maintained good relations—Turkey, Indonesia, Morocco, and Jordan are examples—large majorities in fact frame the Iraq conflict as a war on Islam.

Third, these officials dismissed concerns about achieving effective regime change in Iraq, citing the example of American success in Japan following World War II. The crucial facts that Japan was an island nation with a long history as a culturally unified country, important conditions that differed sharply from those in Iraq, were overlooked or dismissed. A $5 million prewar State Department study that spelled out some of the probable postwar problems in Iraq was largely ignored.

Fourth, most officials in the Bush administration believed that American possession of massive military power and its use in Iraq would be applauded by governments and publics abroad as important contributions to international stability and global justice rather than as potential threats to their own vital interests. Charles Krauthammer, one of the administration’s most faithful media cheerleaders, stated the point succinctly: “…we are not just any hegemon. We run a uniquely benign imperium. This is not mere self-congratulation, it is a fact manifest in the way others welcome our power.” In the abstract, each of these beliefs may have some merit, but recent events would seem to suggest that they fall rather short of qualifying as “iron laws” of post-September 11 global politics. They have, instead, laid the foundations for a series of major policy miscalculations.

Finally, as indicated in chapter 4, during the Eisenhower-Dulles era, the conventional wisdom was that public opinion is a volatile and ill-informed constraint
to be overcome by leaders but, in the final analysis, it is of little relevance in the real world of policy making. Indeed, even such established polling organizations as Gallup paid far less attention to foreign affairs than to domestic issues during the 1950s.

The vast number of surveys undertaken in recent years, both in the United States and in many countries abroad, are impressive testimony to a sea change in the significance attributed to the political views espoused by “the man or woman in the street,” whether in New York, New Delhi, Nairobi, or Moscow, Madrid, or Melbourne. Critics will no doubt continue to cite the mountains of evidence that members of the general public, both in the United States and abroad, lack the factual knowledge and theoretical sophistication found in presidential or prime ministerial suites, foreign offices, and other important venues for policy making. Perhaps it is not being excessively churlish to point out, however, that many of the same critics often resist calls for greater transparency in the foreign policy process, timely release of relevant information to the public, and media that define their roles as something more than mere transmission belts for government handouts.

Promotion of democracy has been identified as a top priority on the agenda of American foreign policy by several recent administrations, including that of George W. Bush. If the coming years bring some successes in achieving that commendable though difficult goal it would likely enhance the impact of public opinion. British Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin was no doubt excessively optimistic when he stated, “There never has been a war yet which, if the facts had been put calmly before ordinary folk, could not have been prevented. The common man is the greatest protection against war.” There may nevertheless be more than a grain of truth in the proposition that the public can sometimes make useful contributions to the quality of foreign policy. Students of American public opinion have recently described it as “rational,” “reasoning,” and “pretty prudent.” Could the same be said of the leaders whose plans for postwar Iraq seem likely to provide future leaders with textbooks of negative lessons about conducting a military campaign and its aftermath?

Despite a massive administration effort to generate public support for the Iraq war and largely compliant media, surveys through mid-2005 indicate that, on balance, the American public has shown itself to be sensible. Recent polls reveal that the public has come to believe that the war was a mistake, that it was deliberately misled about Iraq’s possession of weapons of mass destruction, and that it has made the country less safe from terrorism. Yet, the same surveys also indicate public recognition of the “Pottery Barn” rule: Because we broke it, we now own it and, therefore, it would be irresponsible to withdraw before Iraqi police and military forces are able to maintain a decent degree of security for the long-suffering Iraqi people. Nevertheless, there are some signs that, with an eye to the 2006 U.S. elections, the administration may be preparing to draw down
American troops in Iraq even in the absence of firm evidence that local forces are capable of maintaining order. Should the result be a full-scale civil war in Iraq, history suggests that moderates who are willing to seek accommodation and peaceful resolution of key issues will be swept aside by radicals who are unwilling to do so. That would almost surely doom hopes for even a modest semblance of democracy in post-Saddam Iraq.

More generally, the data in chapter 10 provide scant evidence that the American public is fulfilling Arthur Schlesinger’s forecast of a decade ago: “The isolationist impulse has arisen from the grave, and it has taken the new form of unilateralism.”34 That said, the fact the administration led the country into war in Iraq on the basis of faulty arguments and flawed intelligence may well color how the United States is able to respond to future situations in which the alleged threat to vital national interests lacks the clarity of a Pearl Harbor or September 11 type of attack. Leaving aside constraints arising from evidence that American armed forces are stretched very thin, unmet military recruitment quotas, and the gigantic budget deficits of the past several years, the willingness of the American public to “rally ‘round the president” in support of military interventions is unlikely to be limitless.35 At some point significant numbers among the public and opinion leaders may well recall the story of the boy who cried wolf too often. While that may prevent unwise interventions, one of the long-term costs of the Iraq invasion may be that it also serves as a constraint when the threats are in fact real.
Notes

Chapter 1

5. Because the 1914 project did not include the much later U.S. decision to enter World War I, the findings are not included here. They are reported in Holsti, Crises, Escalation, War (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1972).
14. Unbeknownst to us, at about the same time the Chicago Council of Foreign Relations launched the first of its important quadrennial surveys. They included small samples—approximately 350—of opinion leaders, but they omitted some important groups of leaders such as military officers.


20. David Kay, “Statement by David Kay on the Interim Progress Report on the Activities of the Iraq Survey Group Before the House Permanent Committee on Intelligence.” (October 2, 2003); “Kay: No Evidence Iraq Stockpiled WMDs” (http://www.CNN.com; January 26, 2004); and Charles Duelfer, *Comprehensive Report of the Special Adviser to Director of Central Intelligence on Iraq’s Weapons of Mass Destruction*, 3 volumes (September 30, 2004). On November 6, 2003, President Bush declared that the spread of democracy to the Middle East is a vital American interest, and that success in Iraq is a key part of achieving that goal.


31. See chapter 8 on democracy promotion abroad.


Chapter 2

1. The author wishes to express his deep gratitude to Professors Robert C. North, James T. Watkins, IV, and Thomas A. Bailey for their advice and encouragement on the larger study from which this paper is derived; to Charles A. McClelland and Richard Fagen for their useful comments on this paper; and to Mrs. Helen Grace for preparing the figures.

2. Although in the literature the terms "belief system" (Rokeach, 1960, pp. 18–9), "image" (Boulding, 1956, pp. 5–6), and "frame of reference" (Snyder et al., 1954, p. 101) have frequently been used synonymously, in this paper "belief system" will denote the complete world view, whereas "image" will denote some subpart of the belief system.

3. The author has corresponded with a number of Dulles’ close associates. They almost unanimously stated that Dulles’ public assessments of various characteristics of the Soviet regime were identical with his private beliefs.

4. The method involves the translation of all statements into one of two common sentence structures.

   1. Attitude Object (AO1)/Verbal Connector (c)/Common-meaning Evaluator (cm)
   2. Attitude Object1 (AO1)/Verbal Connector (c)/Attitude Object2 (AO2)

   For example, the sentence, "The Soviet Union is hostile, opposing American national interests," is translated to read:

   1. The Soviet Union/is/hostile (form 1).
   2. The Soviet Union/opposes/American national interests (form 2).

   The value of AO1’s are computed on the basis of values assigned to the cm’s, c’s and AO2’s. These range from + 3 to – 3, depending upon their direction and intensity.

5. "Dulles was an American Puritan very difficult for me [Albrecht von Kessel], a Lutheran, to understand. This partly led him to the conviction that Bolshevism was a product of the devil and that God would wear out the Bolsheviks in the long run, whereas many consider it a perversion of Russian qualities” (Drummond and Coblentz, 1960, p. 15).

6. “There is no dispute at all between the United States and the peoples of Russia. If only the Government of Russia was interested in looking out for the welfare of Russia, the people of Russia, we would have a state of non-tension right away” (Dulles, 1958a, p. 734).

7. "The time may come—I believe it will come—when Russians of stature will patriotically put first their national security and the welfare of their people. They will be unwilling to have that security and that welfare subordinated to the worldwide ambitions of international communism” (Dulles, 1955b, p. 329).

8. "The ultimate fact in the Soviet Union is the supreme authority of the Soviet Communist Party…. That fact has very important consequences, for the State and the Party have distinctive goals and they have different instruments for getting those goals…. Most of Russia’s historic goals have been achieved…. But the big, unattained goals are those of the Soviet Communist Party” (Dulles, 1948, pp. 271–2).

9. Correlations, based on rank ordering of variables, were computed using Spearman’s formula:

   \[ r = 1 - \frac{6 \sum D^2}{N(N^2 - 1)} \]

   (McNemar, 1955, p. 208).

10. “It is that [United States] policy, and the failure of the Soviet Union to disrupt it, and the strains to which the Soviet Union has itself been subjected which undoubtedly require a radical change of tactics on the part of the Soviet Union” (Dulles, 1955a, p. 914).
“Today the necessity for [Soviet] virtue has been created by a stalwart thwarting of efforts to subvert our character. If we want to see that virtue continue, I suggest that it may be prudent to continue what produced it” (Dulles, 1955c, p. 8).

“The fact is, [the Soviets] have failed, and they have got to devise new policies…. Those policies have gradually ceased to produce any results for them…. The result is, they have got to review their whole creed, from A to Z” (U.S. Senate, 1956, p. 19).

11. “Nor was the Secretary of State, in either his thinking or his decisions, much affected by what the Department of State knew and did. Dulles devised the foreign policies of the United States by drawing upon his own knowledge, experience and insight, and the Department of State merely implemented these policies” (Morgenthau, 1961, p. 305).

“He was a man of supreme confidence within himself…. He simply did not pay any attention to staff or to experts or anything else. Maybe in a very subconscious way he did catalogue some of the information given him but he did not, as was characteristic of Acheson and several others of the Secretaries of State with whom I have worked, take the very best he could get out of his staff” (Anon., 1961).

12. “Herein lies the terrible danger of the distorted mirror image, for it is characteristic of such images that they are self-confirming: that is, each party, often against its own wishes, is increasingly driven to behave in a manner which fulfills the expectations of the other…. Seen from this perspective, the primary danger of the Soviet-American mirror image is that it impels each nation to act in a manner which confirms and enhances the fear of the other to the point that even deliberate efforts to reverse the process are reinterpreted as evidence of confirmation” (Bronfenbrenner, 1961, p. 51).

Chapter 3

1. Observations and examples throughout the paper tend to be drawn from studies of foreign policy decision-making. Although circumstances under which cognitive process models are useful may occur with greater frequency in the foreign policy issue area, many of the observations on the utility, problems, and prospects of this perspective would apply with equal force to decision-making in other issue areas or in other political contexts (cf. Converse, 1964; Bennett, 1971; Cobb, 1973; Kirkpatrick, 1975; Hammond, 1975).

2. Belief systems and cognitive processes should be distinguished from ideology or mere policy preferences. “Belief system” refers to a more or less integrated set of beliefs about man’s physical and social environment. Cognitive processes refer to various activities associated with problem-solving, including perception, appraisal, interpretation, search, information-processing, strategies for coping with uncertainty, decision rules, verification, and the like. These cognitive activities are assumed to be in an interactive relationship with the individual’s belief system as well as with the environment.

3. Structural uncertainty describes circumstances in which “not only are probability distributions not known (as in the constrained rational theories), but even the possible states of the world are imperfectly specified” (Steinbruner, 1968: 216).

4. Recent studies advocating greater attention to decision-makers’ beliefs and decisional premises, and doing so on the basis of empirical evidence, include Art (1973), Steinbruner (1968, 1974), Stassen (1972), Krasner (1972), Ball (1974), Cottam (1977) and Lowenthal (1972). See also the essay by Cottam (1973). Among broader assessments of alternative approaches to international politics, compare Alker (1973) and Boulling (1972). The prominent foreign policy role played by Henry A. Kissinger appears to have heightened interest in decision-makers’ beliefs. Among studies that deal with Kissinger’s beliefs are those by Brenner (1973), Eldridge (1975), Graubard (1973), Hendricks (1975), Isaak (1975), Landau (1972), and Walker (1975).

5. Critiques of the premises, methodologies, or specific research results that have been employed in or emerged from various cognitive process studies include Haas (1967), Hilton (1969), Jervis (1969), Mueller (1969a, 1969b), Goldman (1971), and Brodin et al. (1972).

6. See Kaplan (1968: 694-695). Prominent efforts by psychologists to deal with problems of foreign policy and international politics include de Rivera (1968), Frank (1967), Janis (1972), Kelman (1965), Klueber (1964), Milburn (1972), Osgood (1959b, 1962), Stagner (1967), and White (1970). Psychologists are themselves in less than complete agreement about the relevance of their theories; see, for example, the exchange between Ralph K. White (1971) and Fred A. Bernstein (1971).

7. Empirical support for this list may be found in many studies, including Art (1973), Ball (1974), de Rivera (1968), C. Hermann (1969, 1972), Holsti (1967, 1972), Holsti and George (1975), Janis
Notes  •  365


Chapter 4
1. Recent research has found that the foreign policies of democracies are indeed different from those of other polities and, further, that democracies do not engage in war against each other.
2. Just before President Roosevelt left for the Yalta Conference in 1945, Hadley Cantril gave the president a memo which stated: "Although the overwhelming majority of the American people now favor a strong international organization necessarily dominated by the big powers, it is unrealistic to assume that Americans are international-minded. Their policy is rather one of expediency, which, at the moment, takes the form of internationalism. The present internationalism rests on a rather unstable foundation: it is recent, it is not rooted in any broad or long-range conception of self-interest, it has little intellectual basis" (Cantril, 1967:76).
3. Almond's use of the term "mood" differs from that of Frank Klingberg. Almond refers to sudden shifts of interest and preferences, whereas Klingberg has used the term to explain American foreign policy in terms of generation-long societal swings between introversion and extraversion. For the latter usage, see Klingberg (1952, 1979, 1983) and Holmes (1985).
4. By 1960, Almond himself was backing away from his most pessimistic diagnoses. See his new preface to a reprinting of The American People and Foreign Policy.
5. "During the summer of 1965, as the Johnson Administration was moving toward fateful decisions regarding Vietnam, George Ball warned: 'We can't win,' he said, his deep voice dominating the Cabinet Room. 'The war will be long and protracted, with heavy casualties. The most we can hope for is a messy conclusion. We must measure this long-term price against the short-term loss that will result from withdrawal.' Producing a chart that correlated public opinion with American casualties in Korea, Ball predicted that the American public would not support a long and inconclusive war" (Clifford, 1991:412).
8. Among six conditions that should be met before the United States commits combat forces abroad, according to Weinberger, there must be some reasonable assurance we will have the support of the American people (New York Times, November 26, 1984, A5:1). There is also evidence that General Schwarzkopf was reluctant to fight in the Persian Gulf without appropriate public support (Hinckley, 1992:20).
9. If congressional moods are more generally viewed by the executive as expressions of public opinion, then it opens up another large body of evidence on intervening variables between public opinion and foreign policy. For recent studies that explore these linkages on the Strategic Defense Initiative, weapons procurement, and sanctions on South Africa, see Lindsay (1990, 1991) and Hill (1992).

Chapter 5
1. This point is developed further in Seyom Brown (1968) and May (1973).
2. A representative sample of the enormous literature of this genre includes: Schlesinger et al. (1977); Moynihan (1978); most foreign policy articles in Commentary; editorials in Wall Street Journal; and the writings of Paul Nitze, Chairman of the Committee for the Present Danger.
3. Thompson (1977: 35). This phrase, or its equivalent, appears in most of the Cold War Internationalist writing.
4. This viewpoint is effectively represented by Hoffmann (1978); Keohane and Nye (1976); and Brown (1974).
5. In the introduction to a book published by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, entitled Perceptions: Relations Between the United States and the Soviet Union (1978).
7. See, for example, Robert Conquest in “The Human Rights Issue” (1977).
9. Compare, for example, *New York Times* (1979: A20) with *Wall Street Journal* (1979: 8). The latter ends with the assertion, “These [New York Times] perceptions are so removed from our own it is almost impossible to find common ground on which to argue.”

**Chapter 6**

3. We recognize that there are a number of drawbacks to the use of mailed questionnaires. There is validity in the observation that elite interviews may provide more revealing information about attitudes and beliefs than questionnaires. This point is particularly relevant when the population of interest can be clearly defined, when it is quite limited in number, and when it is geographically concentrated rather than dispersed. However, our goal was to gain access to the occupants of a broad range of top leadership roles; for that purpose, interviews seemed out of the question. Given limited research resources, the trade-off is between a small number of interviews and much broader coverage by means of a mailed questionnaire. Choice of the latter strategy does not, of course, preclude interviews of a small sample in the future.
7. Philip E. Converse, “The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics,” in David E. Apter, ed., *Ideology and Discontent* (New York: Free Press 1964), 207. It might well be argued that, since the hypotheses all pertain to the single issue of Vietnam, neither they nor the data used to test them are sufficient to justify the derivation of coherent belief systems—that, while the issue is an important one, the internal consistency of beliefs will break down once analysis moves beyond the issue of Vietnam. This argument is valid, but we have attempted to answer it elsewhere: our questionnaire included a number of items on foreign policy issues other than Vietnam that are analyzed in Holsti and Rosenau, “America’s Foreign Policy Agenda: The Post-Vietnam Beliefs of American Leaders,” in Charles W. Kegley and Patrick J. McGowan, eds., *Challenges to America: U.S. Foreign Policy in the 1980s* (Beverly Hills: Sage International Yearbook of Foreign Policy Studies, IV, 1979), 231–68.
8. Virtually all of these hypotheses were formulated before the questionnaire was mailed out. Some examples may be found in Holsti and Rosenau (fn. 4).
9. Although the data have been subjected to various statistical tests, we shall avoid burdening the reader with more than the minimum discussion of them. To determine whether differences among the seven groups identified in Tables 3, 5, and 7 are statistically significant, we have undertaken analyses of variance (ANOVA). The choice of a criterion of significance is always an arbitrary one. Because our sample is large, the familiar .05 or .01 levels seemed too lax. We therefore selected the more stringent .001 level—that is, we accept differences among the groups as significant if such results could have occurred by chance less than once in a thousand times. The .001 level corresponds to an $F$ ratio of 3.47. Because the use of parametric statistics on these data will not evoke universal approval, we have also done the same analyses using a non-parametric test (chi square). Both the analysis of variance and the chi square tests only indicate whether the differences between groups are sufficiently great to meet a specific level of significance (.001 in this case). Since our hypotheses also specify a direction of difference among the groups, they are rejected unless they meet both the statistical and directional criteria. The results of these tests are summarized in Table 9.
10. This theme may be found in Kennan’s *American Diplomacy, 1900–1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1951), and continues through his writings up to his most recent book, *The Cloud of Danger* (Boston: Atlantic-Little Brown 1977).
11. It should be noted that the Paris Peace Agreement was signed in January 1973, some time before the Nixon Administration’s cover-up of the Watergate scandal started to unravel.
Notes

12. That is, they did not meet both the substantive and statistical criteria (based on correlations and factor analysis) used to determine whether we were justified in treating items together. For a fuller discussion, see the conference paper cited in the acknowledgment footnote.
13. Recall the phrase “a decent respect for the opinion of mankind” in the Declaration of Independence.
15. It should be noted, however, that a much smaller proportion of the respondents (56%) believed that the United States should operate with a scaled-down conception of its leadership role (see Table 7).
16. On January 26, 1976, two hundred members of the House of Representatives signed a resolution opposing American aid to Angola, and on February 18 the Senate passed a foreign aid bill that included a prohibition of covert military aid to any forces in Angola. The Senate vote was 60-30. Our questionnaires were distributed during the first week of February.
17. The Supporters appear to have been more consistent than the Critics in appraising Soviet goals and Soviet uses of detente. As noted earlier, however, this may be the result of ambiguities about the meaning of the term.
18. The overwhelmingly favorable response to this proposition perhaps confirms, in part, another of the lessons (discussed below): “The American people lack the patience for foreign policy undertakings that offer little prospect for success in the short run.”
21. The terms “grand design,” “grand strategy,” and “tactics” are borrowed from Alexander L. George of Stanford University.
22. We do not wish to imply, however, that analyses of these and other background attributes would not contribute to an understanding of policy preferences toward Vietnam, as well as of other issues. Presumably such analyses would enhance comprehension, but perforce they must await treatment in future papers.
24. For a similar conclusion based on different kinds of data, see James Chace, “Is a Foreign Policy Consensus Possible?” Foreign Affairs, Vol. 57 (Fall 1978), 1–16.
25. That is not to say that belief systems only change suddenly and as a result of great calamities. Alexander L. George has shown that the beliefs of Harry Truman and many of his advisers during the early postwar years changed gradually, and initially at the level of beliefs about tactics—for example, on how best to secure Soviet postwar cooperation. It was only many months after the end of the war that Truman and his advisers came to question and then discard some of the more optimistic elements of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s “grand design” for postwar cooperation among the United States, Russia, England, and China. See Alexander L. George, “The Role of Cognitive Beliefs in the Legitimation of a Long-Range Foreign Policy: The Case of F. D. Roosevelt’s Plan for Postwar Cooperation with the Soviet Union” (paper presented at the Conference on Approaches to Decision-Making, Oslo, August 9–12, 1977).

Chapter 7

1. The 1976 and 1980 surveys did not include questions on domestic issues. They are thus excluded from the present analysis.
2. The precise wording of and responses to items in the militant and cooperative internationalism scales in the five surveys are reported in Holsti and Rosenau (1993), Tables 1 and 2.
3. For a fuller analysis of the 1992 data, see Holsti (1994).
4. But even on this issue there were sharp differences among the four domestic politics groups. For evidence on this point, see Holsti (1994).
5. None of the FPLP surveys sought information about marital status, race, religion or income.
6. The questionnaire presented respondents with a seven-point ideology scale. Because relatively few opinion leaders identified themselves as “far left,” they are grouped with the “very liberal” leaders. Similarly, the few “far right” respondents are included in the “very conservative” category.
7. Data supporting some of the conclusions in this paragraph are reported in Holsti (1994).

Chapter 8
1. Tom Lehrer, That Was the Year That Was (Reprise Records RS 6179), recorded July 1965. These themes may be found in President Bush’s State of the Union addresses in 1990, 1991, and 1992, and in those by President Clinton in 1994, 1995, and 1996. For example, in 1994 the latter stated: ‘Ultimately, the best strategy to ensure our security and to build a durable peace is to support the advance of democracy elsewhere. Democracies don’t attack each other. They make better trading partners and partners in diplomacy.’
4. See Michael Doyle and Randall Schweller in this volume for a theoretical discussion of liberalism and realism.
Notes • 369


10. Gholz et al., 'Come Home America', p. 43. Because the term 'democracy' is hardly self-evident, an important part of the debate on this issue concerns the conception of democracy being promoted. In addition to previously cited chapters in this volume by Thomas Carothers and Steve Smith, see also the chapter by Georg Sorensen.


14. The seminal essay on this issue is Michael Doyle, 'Liberalism and World Polities', American Political Science Review, 80 (1986), pp. 1151–70. See also Doyle's chapter in the present volume. Doyle's original essay has stimulated a huge literature that generally finds liberals arrayed against realists. Many of the contributions to this spirited debate may be found in the pages of International Security, International Organization, American Political Science Review, and International Studies Quarterly.


17. Several surveys, including those conducted by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, have asked whether respondents would favour or oppose the use of US troops in various hypothetical scenarios. Support for doing so is consistently higher, among both elites and the general public, if the victims of aggression are democracies (for example, western Europe or Israel) rather than autocracies (for example, Saudi Arabia). But the extent to which these responses reflect support for democracies, formal alliance commitments, or traditional friendships is not clear. In short, differences in public support for using US troops in these scenarios may be overdetermined.

18. See the comments on Russia by Jason Ralph and Peter Rutland in this volume.


20. Respondents in opinion surveys often are offered only two starkly different options, thus excluding the possibility of uncovering the strength of public support for other options. It would be impossible to list all possible approaches to complex foreign policy issues, but in the case of the questions on China, it would have been useful to have offered at least one additional response option: 'To press Chinese leaders on human rights issues, but only in private discussions.'

21. On this point, see I. M. Destler, Leslie H. Gelb, and Anthony Lake, Our Own Worst Enemy (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994); Wittkopf, Faces of Internationalism; and Holsti, Public Opinion and Foreign Policy.

22. For evidence on this point, see Ole Holsti, 'Public Opinion and Human Rights in American Foreign Policy', in David P. Forsythe (ed.), The United States and Human Rights: Looking Inward and Outward (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2000).


370 • Notes


26. Evidence on public assessments of major American institutions may be found in the annual General Social Survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. For a recent summary, see Americans Rate Their Society: The NORC Series on Confidence in Leaders of National Institutions, *The Public Perspective*, 8/2 (1997), pp. 2–5.

Chapter 9


7. On April 18, 1998, ABC News reported that in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing, the armed forces rather than local law-enforcement authorities have received the lion’s share of funding for antiterrorist training. On May 21, 1998, the House of Representatives approved an amendment to the defense bill authorizing the military to patrol U.S. borders against drug smuggling and illegal immigration.


10. Although this article is primarily concerned with the second of Ricks’s points, the evidence from the surveys discussed in the next section supports his thesis that a declining proportion of civilian leaders have had any military experience. Fifty-nine percent of the civilians taking part in the 1980 survey reported having served in the armed forces; by 1996 the figure had fallen to 45 percent.

16. Th e cutting points for the fi ve generational groups in Tables 3 and 4 are based on two prem-
15. Huntington,
17. Eugene R. Wittkopf,
18. Janowitz,
21. For the MI scale, correlations among the items have ranged between .26 and .45, and the

Driven versus Data-Driven Assessment in a Crisis,” Journal of Confl ict Resolution, Vol. 34, No. 4 (December 1990), pp. 694–722; Bruce M. Russett and Elizabeth C. Hanson, Interest and Ideology: The Foreign Policy Beliefs of American Businessmen (San Francisco, Calif.: W.H. Freeman, 1975); and Sam C. Sarkesian, John Allen Williams, and Fred B. Bryant, Soldiers, Society, and National Security (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Riener, 1995). Generally, these have been one-time studies, excluding the possibility of trend analyses. Th e Koopman, Snyder, and Jervis surveys included 79 military oﬃcers among the 604 respondents, but neither of the cited articles reports analyses based on occupation.


reliability coefficients (alpha) have exceeded the conventional requirement of .70, ranging between .71 and .76. The corresponding figures for the CI scale are correlations (.33 to .40) and alpha (.77 to .81).

22. Hinckley, People, Polls, and Policy-Makers; and Chittick, Billingsley, and Travis, "A Three-Dimensional Model of American Foreign Policy Beliefs."

23. Correlations for the items in the multilateral-unilateral scale ranged between .10 and .62. Alpha was .81.


25. Huntington, The Soldier and the State; and Ricks, "The Widening Gap between the Military and Society."

26. The correlations among responses to the items on the economic issues scale were uniformly positive, between .28 and .34, in all four surveys. Alpha ranged between .70 and .75. The comparable figures for the social issues scale were slightly higher, with correlations between .33 and .38, and alpha coefficients of .74 to .78.

27. The correlation (phi) between placement in the domestic issues scheme and ideological self-identification was .77.

28. This question is drawn for the General Social Survey conducted annually by the National Opinion Research Center.

29. This item has appeared in all six FPLP surveys. Without exception, the military officers were significantly more inclined than the civilians to express higher trust in the government than in the press.

30. It might be argued that a more relevant analysis would have restricted the comparison of military officers to civilian government officials rather than to the larger samples that included leaders in such organizations as business, labor unions, the media, academia, health care, law, churches, and the like. Had the foregoing analyses been limited to three of the FPLP subsamples—the military, public officials, and State Department and Foreign Service officers—the results would have revealed somewhat larger civilian-military gaps, in part because the subsamples would have excluded from the civilians another group of leaders who are overwhelmingly conservative Republicans—business executives.

More specifically, when compared to the entire sample of civilians, respondents from the State Department and Foreign Service officers subsample in 1996 tended to be somewhat more Democratic, slightly less conservative, quite similar on the MI-CI scheme, and more liberal and populist on the domestic issues classification scheme. Compared to all civilians taking part in the 1996 survey; respondents in the public officials subsample (which included leaders at the state and federal levels) tended to be slightly more Democratic, slightly less conservative, and quite similar on the MI-CI and domestic issues classification schemes.

31. Peter Feaver of Duke University and Richard Kohn of the University of North Carolina are principal investigators for the TISS project, but more than a dozen scholars at other institutions are also involved. Further information is available at http://www.duke.edu/web/poli/tiss_civil_mil/cm.html.

32. See, for example, Janowitz, The Professional Soldier.

33. For examples, see Kohn, "Out of Control"; and Ricks, "The Widening Gap between the Military and Society."

34. Huntington, The Soldier and the State.


36. Ricks is among those supporting a return of the draft, but he recognizes that it is "unlikely in the foreseeable future." Making the Corps, p. 296.


38. Opponents would include members of the Huntington school of thought on the proper role of the military.
According to a U.S. Air Force colonel, "Many officers privately expressed delight" that as a result of the controversy over gays in the military, the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program is producing "fewer officers from the more liberal campuses to challenge (the Air Force officers’) increasingly right-wing philosophy." Quoted in Ricks, "The Widening Gap between the Military and Society," p. 72.

In a response described as "typical" by Sarkesian, Williams, and Bryant, a military officer stated: "I had one professor that I guess could loosely be referred to as a Marxist historian. By the second year he would invite my wife and me over to dinner and show me his Sandinista revolutionary posters and the next week I would have him over to my house for dinner and we would go down to my den where I had a eight-inch howitzer that said, 'Peace through firepower.' ... Many of the graduate students that were in the program we still correspond with. Many of them are far left but we found being able to sit down and talk with each other that not all military officers were war mongers." Quoted in Soldiers, Society, and National Security, pp. 169, 77–78.

Chapter 10
1. Responses to survey items are highly sensitive to their wording. Thus, identically worded questions posed repeatedly over an extended period by the CCFR (1974–1998) and FPLP (1976–1996) studies are especially useful for analyzing continuity and change in public opinion.
2. According to Steven Kull, if the question about assistance to Poland includes the phrase "as part of a multilateral force," a clear majority favors U.S. action in support of Poland. Private Communication, October 2000.
3. These figures are drawn from various Gallup polls conducted between 1984 and 1999. With a few exceptions—aid to the Contras, NAFTA, and the peace agreement in Yugoslavia—majorities of Democrats supported one position, whereas majorities of Republicans favored the opposite position.
4. The national security policy features of the Contract with America are discussed in 1994 CQ Almanac, 46D–49D.
5. According to Allen Alter, foreign editor for The CBS Evening News, "We assumed during the Cold War that there was a secure market for international news. Now it’s difficult to figure out who our clients are and what foreign stories they want, if any." Quoted in Hadar, 1994.
6. According to a study of post–Cold War public opinion in the Netherlands, "In this connection one is struck by the facile way in which the body bag argument is used by politicians and the media. There is a tendency to parrot one another and to anticipate on situations, which may indeed be caused by such talk. Frequent statements of politicians and observers about the expected body bag effects on public support may turn out to be self-fulfilling prophecies" (Everts, 2000).

Chapter 11
1. The U.S. has taken the position that the captured members of the Taliban and al-Qaeda who have been incarcerated at the Guantanamo Naval Base in Cuba are trained terrorists and thus are not entitled to protections accorded to prisoners of war under the Geneva Convention.
3. The domestic issues scales and operational definitions of conservatives, liberals, populists, and libertarians are described in Holsti (1996), 120–125.
4. According to a Financial Times analysis, the president and his closest advisers decided in mid-December that military action against Iraq was inevitable. Thus, the findings of UN weapons inspectors and debates in the Security Council were largely a charade that had little bearing on the course of events (Financial Times, May 27, 2003). Paul Wolfowitz, deputy defense secretary, in an effort to downplay the importance of the weapons of mass destruction issue, stated almost two months after the war ended that the administration chose to emphasize the allegation that Iraq possessed WMDs for bureaucratic reasons. According to a Defense Department release of Wolfowitz’s interview with Vanity Fair magazine, he asserted: “For bureaucratic reasons, we settled on one issue, weapons of mass destruction, because it was the one reason everyone could agree on.” These officials were also probably aware that, in the run-up to the Gulf War of 1991, the charge that Iraq was in the process of acquiring nuclear weapons had the most significant impact on American public opinion.
Chapter 12


13. Kenneth Waltz, Theory of International Politics (Reading, MA, 1979); idem, Man, the State, and War (New York, 1959).
14. For a debate on whether neorealism may be extended to cover foreign policies as well as international politics, see Colin Elman, "Horses for Courses: Why Not Neorealist Theories of Foreign Policy," Security Studies 6 (Autumn 1996): 7–53; and a rejoinder by Waltz, "International Politics is Not Foreign Policy," in the same issue of Security Studies, 54–57.
18. Gilpin, War and Change, 10–11.
39. There are also models that link types of polities with foreign policy. Two of the more prominent
42. The literature is huge. See, for example, Samuel R. Williamson, Jr., The Politics of Grand Strat-


53. See, for example, Harold Laswell, *Psychopathology and Politics* (Chicago, 1931).


56. Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, “The Framing of Decisions and the Psychology of Choice,” *Science* 211 (January 30, 1981): 453–58; Daniel Kahneman, Paul Slovic, and Amos Tversky, *Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases* (Cambridge, UK, 1982). Daniel Kahneman, a psychologist, won the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2002 for demonstrating in the works cited above and many others that humans often violate the rules of rational decision making posited by standard economic theory. His frequent collaborator, Amos Tversky, died in 1996 and thus was ineligible for sharing the Nobel Prize. Kahneman and Tversky were jointly awarded the 2003 Grawemeyer Prize for their contributions to psychology.


65. Integrative simplicity, on the other hand, is characterized by simple responses, gross distinctions, rigidity, and restricted information usage.


70. Prominent post-modern students of world affairs include Hayward Alker, Jim George, Richard Ashley, Michael Shapiro, James Der Derian, Christine Sylvester, and R. B. I. Walker.


72. The classic overview of the field and the disciplines that have contributed to it is Quincy Wright, *The Study of International Relations* (New York, 1955).

73. In addition to the literature on war, crises, and deterrence already cited see Richard Betts, *Nuclear Blackmail and Nuclear Balance* (Washington, DC, 1987); Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and


76. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*, 238.


80. Although the concept of self-determination is generally associated with liberals, in the wake of civil wars within the former Yugoslavia, two prominent realists have suggested redrawing the map of the Balkans to reflect ethnic identities. John Mearsheimer and Stephen Van Evera, "Redraw the Map, Stop the Killing," *New York Times* (April 19, 1999), p. A27.


83. Waltz, "Structural Realism after the Cold War," 19, 39.


**Chapter 13**


2. According to Department of Energy projections, China’s share of the world gross domestic product will rise from 3.5 percent in 2000 to 7.6 percent in 2025. Data on American and Chinese contributions to the world gross domestic product are drawn from Energy Information Administration, *Annual Energy Outlook*, 2004, Washington, DC, 2004, Table 4. These figures are based on U.S. dollars and would be somewhat different if based on the Chinese yuan.


6. For a recent overview of differences between U.S. and South Korean approaches to North Korea, see James Brooke, “South Korea Sidesteps U.S. to Forge Political and Pragmatic Links.” New York Times, August 26, 2004, A1. C. Kenneth Quinones, a U.S. expert on Korea is quoted: “South Koreans have gone the full circle. Ten years ago anyone who went north was painted pink. Today, anyone who does not go north is not a real Korean.”


16. For example, Charles Krauthammer, “To Hell With Sympathy: The Goodwill America Earned on 9/11 Was Illusory. Get Over It.” Time, November 17, 2003, 156, as well as many subsequent columns by the same author.


20. Three events in mid-2005 drove home that point. The invasion of Afghanistan shortly after the September 11 attacks removed the Taliban regime and drove surviving al Qaeda leaders into hiding, but the downsing on June 28 of an American rescue helicopter near the Pakistan frontier with the loss of sixteen lives indicates that it might be premature to close the book on the situ-
ation in Afghanistan as a victory over terrorists. It also gives credence to critics who believe that premature diversion of American attention from Afghanistan to Iraq was another of many miscalculations in Washington. And while it would have been impossible to deter or predict the suicide bombings in London and Egypt, those tragic events also underscore the urgency of dealing with the terrorist threat as a global phenomenon requiring effective international cooperation.

22. Holsti, “American Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: Did the September 11 Attacks Change Everything?”
24. CBS/New York Times poll conducted June 10–15, 2005. Very similar findings emerge from the many other surveys that include questions about Iraq.
33. These results emerged from 2005 polls by ABC News/Washington Post (June 23–26); Gallup (August 5–7); CNN/USA Today/Gallup (July 22–24); Fox News/Opinion Dynamics (June 8–9); and the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press (July 13–17).
A
Abelson, Robert P., 37, 42, 44, 47, 377
Abramson, Paul R., 71, 83
Accommodationists, 161–177
Achen, Christopher H., 64, 66, 83, 153, 177
Adams, John Quincy, 182
Adams, Sherman, 29, 31
Adelman, K.L., 93, 102
Advisory Committee on Public Diplomacy, 380
Aggarwal, Vinod K., 379
Andrews, Edmund L., 66, 87, 153, 178
Anderson, Kristi H., 66, 87, 153, 178
Andrews, Edmund L., 381
Arol, 106–107
Approaches to peace, 172–173
Arnstein, Fred, 47, 363
Aron, Raymond, 314, 374
Aronson, Elliot, 37, 47
Art, Robert J., 40, 47, 364, 377
Asch, Solomon, 377
Ashley, Richard, 378
Axelrod, Robert, 7, 43–47, 361, 377

B
Bacevich, Andrew J., 16, 278, 308, 362
Bacon, K.H., 93, 102
Bailey, Thomas A., 2, 4, 7, 58–60, 83
Baldwin, David A., 375
Ball, Desmond J., 47, 364, 377
Ball, George, 365
Barber, James David, 44, 47
Barde, Barbara Ann, 67, 84
Barnard, Chester, 328, 376
Bartels, Larry M., 72, 84
Barton, Allen H., 63, 76, 84, 154, 177, 366
Bauer, Raymond A., 23–25, 29–31, 74, 84
Baxter, Sandra, 79, 84
Beal, Richard S., 71, 84
Becker, Elizabeth, 282, 308
Belief systems, 23–31, 105–150, 364
Bennett, Stephen E., 47, 69, 84, 364–365
Bentham, Jeremy, 56, 181
Berelson, Bernard R., 79, 84, 152, 178
Berger, P., 102, 365
Berry, Jeffrey M., 362
Betts, Richard, 378
Bevin, Ernest, 381
Billington, James, 68, 84
Bin Laden, Osama, 18–19, 280
Black, G., 63, 88
Blair, Bruce, 379
Blight, James G., 70–71, 84, 377
Bolton, John R., 279, 308
Bonham, Matthew, 38, 43–50
Index

Borgida, Eugene, 71, 83
Boulding, E., 47, 364
Boulding, Kenneth, 4, 23, 31, 361, 363, 376
Bouton, Marshall, 308
Bowman, Karlyn H., 264, 268, 305, 309
Bracken, Paul, 379
Brecher, Michael, 44, 47
Brenner, M.J., 47, 364
Brim, Orville, 43, 48
Brinkley, Joel, 380
Britton, Rebecca L., 246, 267, 369–370
Brodin, K., 48, 364
Brody, Richard A., 63, 73, 84, 88
Bronfenbrenner, Urie, 24, 31, 364
Brooke, James, 380
Brooks, Stephen G., 376
Brown, Chris, 378
Brown, Seyom, 102, 365
Bruck, H.W., 23, 32–36, 39, 50, 361, 363
Brunner, J.S., 23, 32
Brunt, Frank, 308
Brzezinski, Zbigniew, 143
Buchan, Alastair, 367
Buchanan, Patrick, 167, 208, 220, 271, 275–276, 308, 372
Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, 374
Bull, Hedley, 314, 374
Bumiller, Elizabeth, 380–381
Bundy, McGeorge, 70–71, 84, 377
Bureaucratic and organizational politics, 328–331
Burgess, P.M., 43, 45, 48
Burgos, Russell A., 16, 362
Bush, George H.W., 12, 266–267, 271, 305, 347, 353
Bush, George W., 12, 264–266, 284, 338, 347–348, 380
Bush administration policies, 275–308
Buss, Claude, 2
Buzzanco, Robert, 370
Byers, Michael, 280, 308
Byron, John L., 372

C
Campbell, Angus, 61, 79, 84, 152, 178
Canada, 282–283, 348–349
Cantril, Hadley, 57, 71, 84, 237, 264, 266, 306–308, 365
Carnot, Catherine, 86
Carothers, Thomas, 368
Carr, Edward Hallett, 181, 314, 374
Carter, Jimmy, 98–100, 184, 190, 270, 369
Caspar, William, 63, 84
Chace, James, 367
Checkel, Jeffrey, T., 376
Cheney, Dick, 280, 346
Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (CCFR), 13, 77, 82, 154, 170, 185–199, 238–246, 248, 252, 272, 275, 291–297, 362, 373
Christopher, Warren, 276, 309
Civil-military gap, 13–16, 207–235
Claude, Inis L., 374
Clifford, Clark, 84, 254, 267, 365
Clinton, William, 12, 208, 305
Coakley, Robert W., 370
Cobb, R.W., 48, 364
Coblentz, Gaston, 31, 363
Cockroft, James, 375
Cognitive process research, 42–46
Cohen, Bernard C., 7, 61–62, 75, 84, 361
Cold War, end of, 16–17
Cold War internationalism, 92–94
Cole, Ronald H., 370
Committee on the Present Danger, 92–93
Conover, Pamela Johnston, 69, 80, 84
Conquest, Robert, 102, 365
Conservatives, 158–177, 227, 373
Constructivism, 326–327
Cottam, R.W., 48, 364
Cotter, Cornelius P., 361
Cottrell, Alvin J., 41, 50
Cuban missile crisis, 70–71
Cummins, H.W., 44, 48

D
Daalder, Ivo, 282
Davis, James A., 77, 84, 362
Davis, S.R., 29, 31
deRivera, Joseph, 37, 48, 361, 364
Decision making, 327–333
Decision making, cognitive process approaches, 33–47
Deibel, Terry L., 368
Democracy promotion, 12–13, 179–205, 358
Dempsey, G.R., 87, 365
Denemark, Robert A., 375
Dependency, 324–326
Desch, Michael C., 370, 376
Destler, I.M., 80, 84, 151–152, 175–178, 246–256, 264–268, 272, 292, 296, 309, 362, 369
Deutsch, Karl, 317, 375
Devine, Donald J., 76, 84
Dexter, Lewis A., 74, 84
Diesing, Paul, 378
Djerejian, Edward P., 350, 353, 380
Dobson, James, 16
Domestic issues scales, 155–160, 224–230, 373
Domestic policy beliefs, 151–177
Domestic politics typology, 11–12
Dorrien, Gary, 280, 309
Douherty, James E., 41, 50
Douglas, Stephen, 61
Doyle, Michael, 368–369, 376
Drummond, Roscoe, 31, 363
Dueler, Charles, 362
Dulles, John Foster, 3–7, 24–31, 326, 356, 361–364

E
Eckstein, Harry, 378
Economic issues scale, 225
Eichenberg, Richard C., 81, 84, 297, 309
Eisenhower, Dwight D., 207, 210, 333–334, 370
Ekirch Jr., Arthur A., 370
Ekman, Paul, 63, 88
Eldridge, A.F., 48, 364
Elman, Colin, 374–375
Elman, Miriam Fendius, 374–376
Emery, Michael, 263, 267, 305, 309
English, John, 374
English, Robert D., 376
Etheredge, Lloyd, 44, 48
Etzioni, Amitai, 35, 48
Evaluative assertion analysis, 26–29
Everts, Philip, 267, 373

F
Fagan, Richard R., 74, 84, 361
Fairbank, John K., 105, 366
Fallows, James, 381
Farrell, Theo, 379
Feaver, Peter D., 14, 252, 255, 267, 362, 370, 372
Feldman, Stanley, 69
Ferguson, Yale H., 375
Festinger, Leon, 23, 31
Finlay, David J., 361
Finnemore, Martha, 376
Fiorina, Morris P., 71, 84
Fite, David, 79, 84
Fletcher, Michael, 381
Ford, Gerald, 9, 98, 149
Foreign Economic Assistance, 249–250
Foreign policy
beliefs, 151–177
consensus, breakdown of, 89–102, 105–150
goals, 170–172, 185–190, 243–246
issues scales, 161–162
opinions, sources of, 78–80
Foreign Policy Leadership Project (FPLP),
Foster, H. Schuyler, 78, 85
Fox News, 282
Foyle, Douglas, 369, 374
Frank, Andre Gunder, 375
Frank, J.D., 48, 364
Frankel, Joseph, 36, 48
Free, Lloyd A., 85, 365
Friedland, Edward, 367

G
Gaddis, John Lewis, 374, 379
Galanter, Eugene, 24, 31
Gallup Organization, 208
Gallup poll, 13, 82, 238, 275, 292, 301
Gallup Jr., George, 370
Garnham, D.C., 43, 48
Gelb, Leslie H., 80, 84, 151–152, 175–178, 256, 267, 272, 309, 369
Gelpi, Christopher, 252, 255, 267
Gender, impact of, 79–80
Generation, impact of, 79, 101–102
George, Juliette L., 44, 48
Genco, Stephen J., 76, 85
Genest, Marc, 79, 84
Gholz, Eugene, 368–369
Gilpin, Robert, 313–314, 319, 374–375
Gingrich, Newt, 208
Ginsburg, Benjamin, 73, 85
Glad, Betty, 44, 48
Glass, David C., 43, 48
Global society, 319–324
Globalization, 246–249
Goldman, Jerry, 362
Goldman, K., 48, 364
Goldstein, Laurie, 362
Goodman, Norman, 43, 48
Graebner, Doris A., 73–74, 85
Graebner, Norman A., 62, 85, 314, 374
Graham, Thomas W., 74–75, 81, 85, 365
Graubard, Stephen, 48, 364
Green, Joshua, 299, 309
Gronke, Paul, 362
Group–think, 331–332
Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, 353
Guttieri, Karen, 378

H
Haas, Ernst B., 374
Haas, M., 48, 364
Hadar, Leon, 267, 373
Halperin, Morton H., 41, 46–48, 376
Hammond, T., 48, 364
Hanson, Elizabeth C., 63, 76, 79, 88, 154, 178, 366, 371
Hard-liners, 161–177
Harrison, Lawrence, 376
386 • Index

Hart, Paul, 377
Hausmann, Ricardo, 376
Hendricks, J.W., 48, 364
Hermann, Charles F., 43, 48, 364, 377–378
Hermann, Margaret G., 43–48, 335, 377–378
Hero Jr., A.O., 66, 85, 153, 178
Herz, John, 374–375
Hilderbrand, Robert, 74, 85
Hilton, G., 49, 364
Hinckley, Ronald H., 68, 73, 84–85, 365, 368–372
Holbrooke, Richard, 84, 254, 267
Holmes, Jack E., 85, 365
Holsti, Kal J., 2–3, 374, 379
Hopf, Ted, 376
Hughes, Barry B., 73–74, 85, 256, 267
Hughes, H. Stuart, 2
Hughes, Thomas L., 68, 85
Hunwitz, Jon, 63–68, 82–87, 365
Hussein, Saddam, 13, 281, 289, 300–306, 347, 350

I
Ideology and democracy promotion, 195–203
Ikenberry, G. John, 307, 309, 368, 374
Ilke, Fred, 93
Individual leaders, as decision makers, 322–335
Inske, Chester A., 37, 49
Institutionalism, 319–324
Interdependence, 319–324
International Criminal Court, 277–278, 291
Internationalism, 239–241
Internationalists, 161–177
Iraq, 289, 301, 351, 353
Isolationism, 95–98, 239–241, 269–308
Isaak, Robert A., 49, 364
Isolationism defined, 274
Isolationists, 161–177

J
Janda, Kenneth, 362
Janowitz, Morris, 207, 211, 370–372
Jarvis, D.S.L., 378
Jefferson, Thomas, 61
Jennings, M. Kent, 79, 85
Jentleson, Bruce W., 65, 86, 246, 267, 297, 309, 369, 381
Jervis, Robert, 7, 43–49, 63, 76, 86, 334, 361, 364, 370, 378
Johnson, Chalmers A., 309
Johnson, Dale L., 375
Johnston, David Kay, 279, 309
Joyner, Christopher, 277–279, 309
Judis, John B., 275, 309
K
Kagan, Robert, 308–309
Kahneman, Daniel, 377
Kant, Immanuel, 56, 181
Kaplan, Morton A., 49, 316–317, 364–365
Kaplan, Robert, 379
Kattenburg, Paul M., 90, 103
Katzennstein, Peter, 375–376
Kay, David, 362
Kegley, Charles W., 366, 375
Kelman, Herbert C., 35, 49, 364
Kennedy, David, 254, 268
Kennedy, John F., 70, 127, 355
Kennedy, Paul, 375, 379
Keohane, Robert, 103, 363–366, 374–375, 378–379
Key Jr., V.O., 79, 86, 152, 178
Kinder, Donald, 66, 86, 153, 178, 378
King, Gary, 378
Kinnard, Douglas, 370
Kintner, William R., 41, 50
Kirkpatrick, S.A., 49, 364
Kissinger, Henry, 3, 9, 26, 31, 99, 103, 330, 361, 364, 369, 376
Klineberg, O., 49, 364
Klingberg, Frank L., 86, 365
Klotz, Audie, 376
Kluton, J.N., 35, 49
Koch, Howard, 30–31
Koenig, Donald, 77, 88
Kohn, Richard H., 14, 362, 371–372
Kohut, Andrew, 268, 306, 309, 362
Koopman, Cheryl, 63, 76, 86, 370
Kornbluth, Peter, 73, 87
Krasner, Stephen D., 49, 315, 364–365, 374–377
Kratovl, Friedrich, 376
Krauss, Clifford, 380
Krauthammer, Charles, 178, 276, 281, 292, 303, 309, 380–381
Kreisinger, Martin, 76, 86
Kristol, I., 94, 103
Krosnick, Jon A., 86, 365
Kugler, Jacek, 90, 103
Index • 387

Kull, Steven, 246, 255, 264, 268, 292, 296, 309, 362, 369, 373
Kupchan, Charles A., 368
Kurth, James, 368
Kusnitz, Leonard A., 72, 86
Kuwait, Iraq's invasion of, 297, 354
Kyoto Protocol, 266–267, 277, 291

L
LaFeber, W., 62, 86
Lake, Anthony, 80, 84, 151–152, 175–178, 256, 267, 272, 309, 369
Lampton, D.M., 45, 49
Landau, D., 49, 364
Landes, David, 376
Lange, C., 48, 364
Lansing, Marjorie, 79, 84
Lansing, Robert, 5
Lapid, Yoeph, 376, 378
Larson, Deborah Welch, 374
Larson, Eric V., 255, 268
Lasswell, Harold, 377
Laurie, Clayton D., 370
Lavin, David E., 43, 48
Layne, Christopher, 275, 310
Lazarsfeld, Paul F., 79, 84, 152, 178
Lebow, Richard Ned, 377, 378
Lehman, John, 371
Leigh, Michael, 74, 86
Leites, Nathan, 335, 378
Lenin, V.I., 5–6
Levering, Ralph B., 62, 78, 86
Levi, A., 377
Levy, Jack S., 374, 379
Lewis, Neil A., 278, 309
Liberals, 158–177, 227, 373
Lipset, Seymour Martin, 62, 86
Lippman, Walter, 7–8, 57–62, 119, 181, 239, 268, 314, 328, 368, 374
Lipset, Seymour Martin, 62, 86, 264, 268, 305, 309
Livingston, Steven, 305, 310
Logan, Carolyn L., 255, 268
Lomperis, Timothy, 374
Los Angeles Times, 293
Lott, Trent, 208
Lownthall, Abraham F., 40, 45, 49, 364–365
Low, Theodore, 377
Luttbeg, N.R., 77, 86, 154, 178
Luttwak, Edward N., 254, 268

M
Machiavelli, Niccolo, 316
Mahajan, Harpreet, 79, 88
Mandelbaum, Michael, 67, 87, 101–103, 184, 254, 268, 276, 309, 362, 369, 376
Mann, Leon, 334, 377, 378
Mannheim, Karl, 79
Mansbach, Richard W., 375
Mansfield, Edward, 376
March, James G., 4, 34, 49, 328, 361, 376–377
Mansfield, Edward, 376
Marcus, George E., 66, 88, 153, 178
Margolis, Michael, 73, 87
Marquis, Christopher, 380
Marra, R.A., 73, 87
Marshall, George, 210
Marxism, 324–326
Mauser, Gary A., 73, 87
May, Ernest R., 45, 49, 103, 365, 374, 377
Mayer, William G., 372
McCarthy, Joseph, 113, 354
McClam, Charles A., 24, 31
McClam, Herbert, 36, 49
McClure, R.D., 51
McCormick, James M., 362
McCormick, Thomas J., 368
McFarlane, Robert, 75
McGovern, George, 95–96
McGowan, Patrick J., 366
McGuire, J., 37, 47
McMaster, H.R., 370
McNemar, Q., 31, 363
McPhee, William N., 79, 84, 152, 178
Meany, George, 96
Mearsheimer, John J., 379
Mennis, B., 43, 49
Metz, Charles, 57, 86
MI/CI scheme, 286
Middleton, Drew, 93–94, 103
Milburn, T.W., 49, 364–365
Miller, George A., 24, 31
Miller, Warren E., 61, 72, 79, 84, 87, 152, 178
Monroe, Alan D., 72, 87
Moo-hyun, Roh, 348
Morris, Edward, 375
Moy, China, 101, 103, 365
Mueller, John E., 49, 63–64, 81, 87, 268, 364
Mugabe, Robert, 19
Multilateralism, 68
Muravchik, Joshua, 368
Murray, Shoon, 154, 178, 272
Index • 389

Rokeach, Milton, 23–32, 363
Roosevelt, Franklin D., 71, 355, 365, 367
Roosevelt, Theodore, 70
Root, Elihu, 56–57, 88, 181, 368
Rosati, Jerel, 377
Rosecrance, Richard, 317, 375
Rosenau, Pauline, 336, 378
Rosenberg, Milton J., 37, 47
Roskin, Michael, 79, 88, 101, 103
Rosner, Jeremy D., 253, 268
Ross, Andrew L., 371
Rothchild, D., 103
Rothstein, Robert, 377
Rove, Karl, 354
Ruggie, John Gerard, 369
Rummel, Rudolph J., 376
Rumsfeld, Donald, 277–280, 346, 356–357
Rutland, Peter, 369
Saad, Lydia, 253–254, 268
Safer, William, 276, 282, 292
Sanger, David E., 380
Sapin, Burton M., 23, 32, 39, 50, 361, 363
Sapolsky, Harvey, 368
Saporta, S., 26–31
Sarkesian, Sam C., 371–373
Schlesinger, James R., 103, 161, 178, 310, 365
Schneider, William, 67, 77, 87–88, 101, 103
Schoorber, Paul, 379
Schwarz, Benjamin, 275, 310
Schweller, Randall, 368
Scott, Andrew, 375
Scowcroft, Brent, 280, 355
Seabury, Paul, 367
Searle, John R., 376
Sears, David O., 66, 85, 153, 178
Security council, 346, 350
Seelye, Katherine Q., 277
Semmel, A., 43, 50
September 11 terrorist attacks, 16–17, 272–273, 304
Shafer, Mark, 378
Shanker, Thom, 381
Shapiro, Catherine R., 73, 84
Shapiro, Michael J., 38, 43–50
Shapiro, Robert Y., 64–65, 72, 79, 87–88, 365, 368, 381
Shinseki, Eric, 355–357
Shneidman, E.S., 44, 50
Shultz, George P., 75, 262, 268, 280, 304, 310
Simon, Bernard, 283, 310
Simon, D.M., 73, 87
Simon, Herbert, 4, 34, 49–50, 328, 333, 361, 376–377
Singer, J. David, 38, 40, 50, 317, 375
Small Arms Control Pact, 279, 282
Small group politics, 331–332
Smith, Louis, 370
Smith, M.B., 23, 32
Smith, Steve, 368
Smith, Tony, 368, 375
Smoke, Richard, 378
Sniderman, Paul M., 66, 88, 153, 178
Snyder, Glenn H., 378
Snyder, Jack, 63, 76, 86, 370, 376, 379
Snyder, Richard C., 23, 32–36, 39, 50, 361–365
Sobel, Richard, 73, 88, 253, 268
Social issues scale, 225
Soft power, 20, 349
Sook-jung, Lee, 380
South Korea, 348
Soviet Union, 25–31
Spykman, Nicholas, 314, 374
Stagner, R., 50, 364
Stassen, G.H., 40, 45, 50, 364–365
Stein, Janice G., 379
Steinbruner, John D., 7, 39, 45, 50, 361–365
Sterling-Folker, Jennifer, 379
Stern, Eric, 377
Sternheimer, S., 93, 103
Stevenson, Richard W., 380
Stokes, Donald E., 61, 72, 79, 84, 87, 152, 178
Strausz-Hupe, Robert, 41, 50
Stuhler, Barbara, 77, 88
Stupak, R.J., 44, 50
Suefeld, Peter, 378
Sundelius, B., 377
Sussman, Barry, 76, 88, 366
T
Talbott, Strobe, 368
Talibin, 283, 349, 373
Tannenbaum, P.H., 37, 47
Tetlock, Philip E., 66, 88, 153, 178, 361, 377–378
Thachuk, Kimberly L., 279, 310
Theories of international relations, 17–20, 313–343
Thomas, Kenneth O., 375
Thompson, W.S., 103, 365
Threats to vital U.S. interests, 239–241
Thucydides, 314
Times Mirror survey, 247, 251
de Tocqueville, Alexis, 119, 181, 318, 328
Toth, Robert C., 267
Trade and protectionism, 245–248
Index

Travis, Martin, 2
Travis, Rick, 67, 77, 84, 368, 372
Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS), 14–16
Trotter, R.G., 40, 50
Truman, Harry, 355, 367
Tucker, Robert W., 340, 367, 379
Turkey, 283–284, 346
Tversky, Amos, 377

U
Unilateralism, 68, 269–308
Unilateralism defined, 274
Unilateralism-multilateralism scale, 220–221, 286–289
United States and system change, 89–102
U.S. House of Representatives, 32
U.S. interests and roles, 165–169
U.S. Senate, 32
U.S. troops abroad, 250–255

V
Van Evera, Stephen, 379
VandeHei, Jim, 381
Vandenberg Jr., Arthur H., 16, 270, 281, 310, 362, 366
Vasquez, John A., 375
Verba, Sidney, 29, 35, 50, 63, 66, 87–88, 153, 380
Vezzburger, Yaacov, 377
Vietnam, consequences of, 121–129
lessons of, 8–10, 129–144
sources of failure in, 113–121
Vietnam policy, preferences, 11
position, 13, 110–150
Vietnam War, impact of, 105–150

W
Walker, Stephen G., 50, 364, 378
Wall Street Journal, 282
Wallace, Michael, 378
Wallerstein, Immanuel, 324, 375
Walt, Stephen, 264, 268, 305, 310, 379
Walter, Barbara, 379
Washington, George, 307
Watts, William, 85, 365
Weart, Spencer, 376
Weber, Max, 325
Weinberger, Caspar, 75
Weiss, J.R., 378
Welch, David A., 377
Wendt, Alexander, 326, 376
Weyl, Nathaniel, 376
Wheeler, H., 23–32
White, Ralph K., 23, 32, 50, 364
White, Stacy Ann, 361
Weekly Standard, 282
Wilcox, Clyde, 79, 84
Wildavsky, Aaron, 367
Wight, Martin, 314, 374
Will, George, 208, 276, 282, 292
Williams, John Allen, 371, 373
Williamson Jr., Samuel R., 376
Wilson, Woodrow, 56–57, 181, 339, 354
Wohlfarth, William C., 376
Wolfers, Arnold, 314, 374
Wolfowitz, Paul, 346, 356–357, 373
World systems, 324–326
Wright, Gordon, 2
Wright, Quincy, 2, 23–24, 32, 378

XYZ
Yankelovich, D., 70, 88
Yoffie, David B., 379
Young, Michael, 378
Zakaria, Fareed, 368
Zaller, John, 310
Zelikow, Philip, 374, 376
Zinnes, Dina A., 30–31, 43–44, 51, 374
Zolberg, Aristide, 375
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