

## CHAPTER 19 FOREIGN AND MILITARY POLICY

### Narrative Lecture Outline

*Traditionally, foreign policy and international affairs were primarily about security issues defined in military terms and about countries. Globalization, the fall of the Soviet Union, and the end of the Cold War have made security and foreign policy much broader. The attacks of September 11, 2001 brought home the vital importance of issues related to security and international relations.*

*Today, we have a blend of traditional and new visions of security and foreign policy. In particular, there is a new understanding of how diplomacy and economics affect security. Diplomacy can be proactive as well as reactive in the new system and economics is important not just for domestic purposes, but a strong economy is an important underpinning for military power. Without a strong economy, we would not be able to maintain our military and we would not have a cutting-edge high tech military force either. We are also slowly coming to an awareness of how important it is to understand how the world perceives the United States. The war on terrorism, following the terrorist attacks, has led to much soul searching among policy makers and opinion makers about why al-Qaeda and others hate the U.S. so vehemently. This renewed interest in the domestic politics of other countries will serve the country well if it can be sustained.*

*Before we discuss the history of foreign and military power and U.S. approaches to it, we should define a few terms and ideas. First, the international system is composed of states. A state is a geopolitical entity that has a well-defined territory that it controls and a legitimate government that controls the monopoly on the use of force. Many people—the text included—use the term nation-state. That is a misnomer. States are often driven by the mythology of the nation-state—it is a terribly powerful idea in international relations—that a single ethnic group or nation should govern itself. However, a true nation-state does not exist and so the mythology has been a major cause of tension and conflict in the international system. It is better to use the term country or state to refer to an entity like the United States, Japan, Canada, and so on.*

*States are the most important actor in IR, but not the only one. Today, international governmental organizations (IGOs) are very important. These are institutions, like the United Nations, whose members are states. Plus, international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs or NGOs) are also important, and they include groups like Amnesty International or Greenpeace. Their members are individuals, not governments. And, of course, al-Qaeda and other such groups have also become highly salient in today's foreign and security policy decision making.*

*Power is the single most important concept in international relations and a very complex one. For our purposes, power is the ability to get a state or entity to do something they might not want to do. And power is fungible or issue-dependent. In other words, a country may be powerful in one respect but not in others, such as Japan, that is*

*economically but not militarily powerful. Keeping these definitions in mind, let's talk about U.S. foreign and military policy.*

*The United States today is the single most powerful country in the world. The U.S. economy is twice as large as its nearest competitor (Japan— though the European Union taken as a whole is a serious rival). The U.S. military is the most powerful force in existence, and American culture is sweeping the world despite criticism from numerous corners.*

*Historically, the United States has been graced with an enviable geographic position. Bordered by huge oceans and endowed with an abundance of resources, the U.S. could stand apart from the quarrels of the rest of the world and follow a policy of isolationism; something the U.S. has done from time to time. But even when following such a policy, the United States traded with the world, so it was never totally isolated. The U.S., due to its size, location, and power, has often acted unilaterally—without looking for partners or consulting others. The United States has tended to believe it operated on higher moral grounds than other countries and has been proud of its pragmatism.*

## **The Development of U.S. Foreign and Defense Policy**

### **The Constitution**

The Constitution lays out the institutional framework for foreign and defense policy that is clearly a federal power, not a power of the states. The Framers intended to divide responsibility for foreign affairs between the president and Congress. The president was to be head of state, thus appointing and receiving ambassadors, signing treaties and representing the U.S. abroad. Congress was to fund the army and navy as well as declare war while the president, as commander in chief—would actually wage the war. Congress had the power to regulate commerce and the president had authority to negotiate treaties that were then subject to the advice and consent of the Senate (2/3rds vote). The president appoints key foreign policy and military officials as well as ambassadors, but again, the Senate must consent. Through the doctrines of implied and inherent powers, the president and Congress have exceeded these original grants of power in a number of ways.

### **The Early History of U.S. Foreign and Defense Policy**

During the Revolutionary War, John Adams was directed by the Continental Congress to outline a plan for the new country's foreign policy. Adams advocated free trade and the avoidance of political and military ties. However, American pragmatism won the day. Due to the exigencies of the war, military aid from foreign states was a necessity. France, who had an ongoing struggle with Britain for global power, gave the Americans a substantial amount of military aid. In 1778, France and the North American colonies signed a military alliance—the first and only military alliance until the twentieth century! In the early years of the republic, the U.S. was weak and on the margins of international affairs. Luckily, the U.S. had geopolitics on its side; protected by large oceans and relatively friendly neighbors.

The Framers, having led a revolution against Great Britain, were generally opposed to alliances with European powers. They saw Europe as a bunch of petty squabbling principalities that had been at war for most of the last few hundred years. George Washington warned the country to avoid entangling alliances when he left office. Despite a brief alliance with France to help the U.S. win independence, the U.S. generally avoided alliances with Europe until the twentieth century.

When the first Congress met in 1789, they authorized an army with a maximum strength of 840 men. Most of the nation's military strength came from state militias. Early tariff laws kept tariffs low to keep trade free from government interference. Obviously, foreign policy was not a primary concern.

The country entered into few treaties in the early years. In 1809, the U.S. entered into their first executive agreement—a government to government agreement that is binding only on the current administration. Despite that agreement—called the Erskine agreement—that tried to end problems between the U.S. and Great Britain, such as the impressment of sailors and trade problems, the U.S. and Britain were at war in 1812. The U.S. and Britain decided, after the war, to try and settle future disputes through consultation.

The next big milestone occurred in the 1820s as Latin American countries began to declare their independence from European colonial powers. The U.S. under President Monroe announced that if any country attempted to re-colonize Latin America, or if Russia attempted to move on the western coast of America, the U.S. would respond with force. This became known as the Monroe Doctrine.

### **The United States as an Emerging Power**

For years, the U.S. was concerned primarily with the Western hemisphere and with conquering the continent. Eventually, the country spanned from Atlantic to Pacific that many people referred to it as manifest destiny (a divinely mandated obligation to expand across North America). Along the way, the U.S. accumulated some territories in the Pacific Ocean, including Hawaii and other islands. Plus, in 1898, the Spanish American War was fought over Cuba. When the war was over, the U.S. acquired Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Philippines, and hegemony over Cuba. The war also propelled the U.S. to the status of a world power. Shortly after, in 1899, the Philippines revolted over U.S. rule and three years of war left the country with 5,000 American and tens of thousands of Filipinos dead.

### **Trade Policy and Commerce**

Alexander Hamilton advocated protecting infant industries in 1791 while John Adams, in the 1776 *Plan of Treaties*, recommended trade reciprocity (*this dualism continues today in American trade policy!*). Reciprocity meant that the United States would treat foreign countries the same way they were treated. So if “country A” allowed for tariffs, so would the U.S. in trade with that country. Adams prevailed until the end of the Napoleonic Wars in Europe.

In 1816, Hamilton got his wish and the first protectionist tariff was implemented. Tariffs grew and were a standard of American trade policy until the twentieth century.

## **Interests Beyond the Western Hemisphere**

During the nineteenth century, the United States expanded dramatically taking land from Native Americans and buying territories from Russia, France, and Spain. By the end of the century, the United States spanned the entire continent.

Often, this process of expansion was called Manifest Destiny, arguing that the United States had a divine obligation to tame the continent and control its riches. While other countries were grabbing colonies overseas, the United States expanded in mostly contiguous areas. The differences between how the United States expanded and the process of colonialism by European powers can be argued extensively and is worthy of thought and discussion.

## **The Roosevelt Corollary**

In 1903, Teddy Roosevelt sent the navy to Panama to help it gain independence from Colombia. In 1904, the United States started building the Panama Canal (it opened in 1914). This was the beginning of the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine that stated it was the responsibility of the U.S. to assure stability in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Under this doctrine, the U.S. sent military forces to Nicaragua, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Panama, Mexico, and elsewhere. This history of interventions has left a mark on U.S. relations with Latin America to this day. Many in that region still have animosity towards the heavy handedness of U.S. foreign policy throughout the twentieth century.

The interventions were not always popular domestically either. Nor were the continuing tariffs and trade barriers uniformly approved. The United States had been becoming more industrialized and modernized since at least the mid 1800s. Agriculture was mechanized and farming had become more efficient, industry was more productive, and consequently, trade was and needed to expand. By the turn of the twentieth century, the U.S. was on its way to becoming a world power.

## **World War I and the Interwar Years**

World War I broke out in Europe in 1914. The U.S. wanted to remain neutral, but was eventually forced into the war by the German policy of unrestricted submarine warfare. Woodrow Wilson, who had campaigned for the presidency on an anti-war platform, took the U.S. into the “war to end all wars.” Troops and aid from the U.S. began to arrive in Europe as Britain and France were virtually exhausted. Over 5 million Americans served in WWI. The U.S. also provided huge loans to the allies and massive amounts of war material.

Wilson hoped that an international organization would prevent additional wars, and in that vein, he advocated the League of Nations. However, the domestic politics of the U.S. were not ready for a permanent foreign policy role and the Senate defeated the treaty establishing the League.

The U.S. returned to a policy of high tariffs and isolationism. The war had made the economy boom and the U.S. became the leading economic power in the world. Only the Great Depression and the rise of Adolf Hitler shook the U.S. out of its isolation and back onto the world stage.

## **The United States as a World Power**

In 1939, WWII began. The United States soon found that its grand strategy of isolationism, unilateralism, and strict neutrality failed to make the country secure and keep it out of war. In December 1941, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and Germany declared war on the U.S.

## **World War II and Its Aftermath: 1941-1947**

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt quickly mobilized the country for war. Defense spending helped shake off the lingering Great Depression. Lend-Lease helped provide war material to the Allies and helped American businesses.

Even before the end of the war, FDR and the allies created the United Nations to guarantee the security of member nations and promote economic prosperity around the globe. The five great powers—U.S., Soviet Union, China, France, and Great Britain—were to have seats on the Security Council and any of them had veto power over UN actions. Plus, a new era began in August 1945 when the United States dropped the first atomic bombs on Japan, helping to end the war in the Pacific.

As the war ended, the allies also created new international economic organizations to promote trade and economic growth. No one wanted to repeat the mistakes made after WWI that led to the Great Depression and a second world war. Among the institutions the allies created were the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. These organizations would regulate exchange rates, provide funds to rebuild war-torn economies, and lower trade barriers thus increasing the likelihood of economic growth. These new institutions represented a shift in American strategy from isolation and unilateral action to engagement and multilateral action.

## **The Cold War and Containment: 1947-1960**

During WWII, the United States was allied with Great Britain and the Soviet Union. As the war was ending, cracks had already become visible in the relations between western allies and the USSR. Joseph Stalin, leader of the USSR, attempted to encourage the spread of communism through eastern and central Europe and into the Balkans. When he got to Greece and Turkey, the U.S. and Great Britain took notice. At Yalta, given that the Red Army had liberated eastern Europe, western powers did not do too much when they became fully communist. But Greece and Turkey were a different story. The British declared that they could not afford to defend these countries and asked the U.S. to do it.

President Truman responded with the Truman Doctrine to contain the expansion of communism. This was the beginning of a bipartisan consensus in foreign affairs to resist communism and oppose the Soviet Union, that lasted until the late 1980s.

Truman also got Congress to pass the European Recovery Program, or the Marshall Plan, to rebuild Europe with huge infusions of American aid. The idea was to prevent communism by making strong vibrant economies in western Europe. For the first time, the U.S. joined a political and military alliance in peacetime, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Soon, Truman was confronted with a new crisis in Asia. After WWII, Korea had been partitioned into two zones, with one in the North occupied by the Soviet Union and the other in the South by U.S. troops.

The Marshall Plan, NATO, and Korea are examples of the strategy of containment. A U.S. diplomat, George Kennan, had argued that we must stop communism and deter it at every opportunity. If the allies could not do that, Kennan argued, the system would collapse. In practice, this meant limiting trade (particularly of technology) and surrounding the USSR with military forces and American allies. The strategy was criticized from the left as too hostile, and from the right as too soft.

### **Containment, Cuba and Vietnam, 1961-1969**

In retrospect, containment did seem to limit Soviet expansion, and the Soviet Union did eventually collapse. More importantly, there was not another world war. The policy seemed to promote political and military stability in the world (at least the developed world). International economic institutions focused on economic development, and western Europe recovered from the war very quickly.

The policy of containment and the Cold War made the military a much more important and central institution in the U.S. Prior to WWII, the highest expenditure on the military budget had been 17.5 percent of the budget and 1.7 percent of GDP. Between 1947 and 1987, defense spending averaged 39.9 percent of the budget and 7.7 percent of a much larger GDP! The U.S. also became a major supplier of arms to the rest of the world. Eisenhower, in his last public address, called this the military-industrial complex and warned of its dangers.

The post-WWII era was also the nuclear era. Until 1949, the U.S. had a monopoly on nuclear weapons. Then, the Soviet Union exploded their bomb and the race was on. During the nuclear arms race, both sides were motivated by the idea of deterrence. Deterrence meant that each side had enough nuclear weapons to survive a first strike by the other side and still retaliate—this came to be known as mutually assured destruction or MAD. Many scholars assert that MAD prevented a nuclear war and direct conflict between the superpowers.

After the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, in which the USSR attempted to station nuclear missiles in Cuba, ninety miles from U.S. soil, both sides began to look for ways to limit the nuclear and military tension between the two countries. A “hotline” was installed between the leaders for improved communication and we began to seek ways to control the growth of nuclear weapons through test ban and nonproliferation treaties. Both sides also began to negotiate limits on the growth of their own arsenals and eventually arms control became arms reduction in the 1980s.

There were a number of other world crises during the Cold War, many of which were really proxy battles between the superpowers in many ways. There were wars in the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, but the most important for our purposes was Vietnam. The U.S. got involved in Vietnam for several reasons: to bail out the French colonial power, to promote “democracy,” and most of all to contain communism. However, our understanding of the conflict was highly flawed. The South Vietnamese were not “democrats,” the North Vietnamese were not controlled from Moscow and Beijing, and the war was mostly about nationalism and independence. By the time the U.S. extracted itself from Vietnam in 1973, there were 57,000 dead and 300,000

casualties. Plus, the lying and deceit of the military and the Johnson administration had eroded trust in government. The war—and wars in general—became hugely unpopular, and many began to see limits to the ability of the U.S. to project power in the world. The experience had a huge impact and continues to have an impact today. You often hear commentators say such-and-such a conflict has the potential to be another Vietnam. The fiasco also led many citizens and leaders to question the role and effectiveness of U.S. foreign intervention. This debate continues today.

Foreign aid policies are often controversial for these and other reasons. The U.S. gives low-interest loans, technical assistance, food, weapons, and grants to foreign countries on a regular basis. Most U.S. assistance and grants come through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The aid is less than one half of one percent of the budget. Most Americans think it is much higher (when asked they often cite figures like 15-20 percent). During the Cold War, most aid went to anti-communist forces in countries like El Salvador, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Turkey. Israel and Egypt have been the largest recipients of foreign aid since the 1970s due to efforts to bring about peace in the Middle East. In the 1990s, Ukraine became the third on the list for geopolitical reasons. We also give a substantial amount of humanitarian aid and economic development money.

Due in part to the Vietnam War, American economic power declined in the 1960s. Another part of the equation, though, was the rise of Europe and Japan following the destruction of their economies in WWII. Often called the Economic Miracle, in reality, the Marshall Plan investments, U.S. subsidies and trade preferences, and lots of hard work by the people and governments of those countries led to incredible economic growth, particularly in Germany and Japan. Since their economies had been destroyed, they had no aging machinery, recalcitrant workers, or problem infrastructure—all problems the U.S. faced. In addition, American savings and investment since WWII had plummeted and massive consumerism had taken hold. This limited the capital available for retooling and rebuilding infrastructure. And perhaps, the global superpower was also a little complacent?

### **Détente and Human Rights, 1969-1981**

President Nixon announced that the time for confrontation was over and a new era of negotiation was in order in 1969. This new era was called détente. This period was characterized by summit meetings of U.S. and Soviet leaders and arms control agreements such as the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM).

*The culmination of détente was the achievement of the Helsinki Accords in 1975. The heads of government of virtually every European state, Canada, and the United States met in Finland. It is important to remember that there had not yet been any true European peace treat. The Soviets hoped that Helsinki would recognize their control of Eastern Europe and other conquered territories and the western powers wanted the USSR to agree to human rights and other protections for all citizens. Both got what they wanted, and to a degree, Helsinki changed international relations. The inviolability of borders was made an important point in international law and human rights, previously a domestic-level concern, was elevated to the international level. Some argue that this*

*meant a serious deterioration in the notion of sovereignty. Until the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification agreement in Germany, the Helsinki Accords were as close as we came to a European peace from WWII.*

*Détente required a substantial amount of presidential attention, and due to Watergate, the Nixon administration could no longer heartily pursue the policy. In the Soviet Union, Brezhnev was involved in other intrigues as well—including some domestic unrest following the signing of the Helsinki Accords as well as rising nationalism in Poland and other Eastern European states. So it waned for a few years. There were civil wars in Africa (Angola and Mozambique) and other proxy wars, but U.S.-Soviet relations did not deteriorate to pre-détente levels.*

In 1977, Jimmy Carter expressed his desire to make human rights the cornerstone of his foreign policy. In 1979, the Iranian hostage crisis erupted and undermined Carter's domestic support. A failed rescue attempt left the administration with little credibility and open to Republican charges that Carter and the Democrats had made America weak. Détente finally died when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979. Carter cut off deliveries of wheat, pulled the U.S. out of the 1980 Moscow Olympics, and increased U.S. defense spending. Carter also promulgated the Carter Doctrine—that the Persian Gulf was an area of vital U.S. interest and the U.S. would fight to maintain its interests there.

### **Containment Revisited and Renewed, 1981-1989**

When Ronald Reagan was elected, U.S.-Soviet relations deteriorated rapidly. He called the USSR an evil empire, stepped up defense spending, announced an activist foreign policy designed, once again, to contain Soviet expansion, and began funding the Afghan opposition.

By 1983, relations were at their worst since the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Soviets had shot down a Korean passenger airplane, the U.S. had invaded or intervened in numerous Latin American and Caribbean countries with pro-Soviet leanings, NATO deployed intermediate range nuclear missiles in Europe, and the U.S. and Soviets were in a very hot proxy war in Afghanistan.

However, the next year, things began to get better. The Soviets had a dying caretaker as leader, Konstantin Chernenko (the second Soviet leader since Brezhnev's death in 1982. He would last only about a year). It was an American election year and the American public seemed to be insisting on cooler rhetoric. Reagan was more secure in his office and didn't need an enemy to propel him into a second term. In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev became General Secretary of the USSR Communist Party.

Gorbachev announced a number of new reforms ranging from more openness (glasnost) and economic reforms (perestroika) to new thinking in foreign policy that renounced class struggle and the idea of confrontation as the sole way of dealing with other countries. Gorbachev and Reagan met at several summits. Gorbachev, in desperate need of reallocating his country's resources from military to domestic uses, kept up his spate of reforms and attempts at reducing tension. By the third summit meeting, the leaders seemed to have hit a recipe for dealing with each other, and they signed an agreement to get rid of all intermediate range nuclear forces in Europe.

## **Searching for a New International Order, 1989-2001**

George Bush came to power in 1989 promising to follow in Reagan's footsteps, but the world was changing fast. The Iron Curtain fell when Eastern Europe rebelled in 1989, and the USSR let them go. Communism was also rapidly collapsing in the Soviet Union itself. These events caught the administration unaware. That same year, Bush faced the conundrum of what to do over the crackdown on peaceful pro-democracy protesters in Beijing's Tienanmen Square. And Bush also had to deal with a coup in the Philippines, as well as an anti-American dictator in Panama, Manuel Noriega.

In 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait and the U.S. led a U.N.-approved operation to expel Iraqi troops from Kuwait. The operation was lauded as a great success and President Bush's approval ratings skyrocketed. Shortly thereafter, the Soviet Union was wracked by a coup in August 1991 and then the collapse of the USSR. The Cold War and Communism were gone. What would the new order be like?

The U.S. had to rethink its approach. Military force would still be useful, but how and when? In 1992 and 1993, the U.S. intervened on behalf of the United Nations in Somalia to deliver relief supplies and maintain order—it ended in disaster for U.S. troops. However, the U.S. intervened in the former Yugoslavia with NATO and succeeded. And what to do about Russia? Does the U.S. help Russia and how? What about the former republics like Ukraine and Estonia?

President Clinton inherited a much different world order than his predecessor. He followed policies of engagement, not isolation. And Clinton pursued more multilateral approaches to world problems than previous administrations. Clarity was seriously lacking though. Without the Communist threat and the doctrine of containment, how does one know when and how to intervene and when to hang back? This is a question with which American policy makers still grapple.

When George W. Bush became president, these issues had still not been resolved. Bush placed a high priority, initially, on Mexico and Latin America. His first foreign visit was to Mexico in a highly symbolic gesture to that country. He decided to abandon the ABM treaty and pursue a missile defense shield for the United States and announced that the U.S. would not abide by the Kyoto environmental agreements.

## **The War On Terrorism: 2001 to Present**

But whatever plans he might have had, Bush's foreign and military policy agenda were overcome by events. The al-Qaeda terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 forced the government to respond to that threat and other potential threats. Almost 3,000 people died in the attacks on New York's World Trade Center towers, the Pentagon, and in the plane crash in Pennsylvania that didn't reach its target due to the heroism of its passengers. The civil aviation system was shut down for days and small planes/airfields for even longer. The New York Stock Exchange closed. U.S. leaders were sent to "undisclosed locations" for safety. Thousands more had their lives disrupted by the attacks and the economy took a major hit that had worldwide repercussions.

Bush declared a war on terrorism. He proposed a new Office of Homeland Security and took the country to war against the Taliban regime of Afghanistan that had harbored and protected al-Qaeda. By the end of 2001, the Taliban were defeated and 17 countries had troops in Afghanistan. Many more had pledged aid to rebuild the country

shattered by the Soviet invasion, then civil war, then the Taliban rule, and finally the war on terrorism. But the war on terror was broader than one country. Internationally, security agencies were cooperating to find cells of al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations.

As the Bush administration confronted the aftermath of 9-11, the policies of the United States changed from the reactive strategies of containment and deterrence to a more proactive policy of preemptive military action. In March 2003, Bush launched a war in Iraq in the belief that Iraq was developing weapons of mass destruction (WMD). WMD are nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. The administration argued that Iraq was a safe haven for terrorists and needed regime change. The United Nations did not approve of the invasion.

Regime change came quickly. Saddam Hussein was overthrown and he was captured in December 2003. Coalition forces found no evidence of WMD. The Bush administration then changed its justification for the war to the goal of promoting democracy and remaking the Middle East. Bush declared “mission accomplished.” But violence escalated. By the end of 2006, almost 3,000 soldiers and numerous Iraqi civilians had died. In addition, Iraq had elected a new government but the insurgency (some say civil war) continued. And as 2007 began, Bush was responding to the bipartisan Iraq Study Group Report and working on a new strategy for the conflict.

The September 11th attacks brought about a change in foreign and defense policy priorities. Defense of the homeland and pursuing a global war on terror became the dominant goals of U.S. foreign policy.

### **The Executive Branch and Foreign Policy-making**

The Constitution divides the powers in foreign policy just as it divides powers throughout the government system. (Remember from the chapters on Congress and the presidency?) However, the president has been preeminent in foreign affairs and has gotten even more powerful in recent years.

### **The Executive Branch**

Presidential supremacy in foreign relations dates back to Alexander Hamilton who argued that foreign policy was different than domestic policy in several ways. Foreign policy requires:

- accurate and comprehensive knowledge of the world
- a steady and systematic adherence to the same view
- a uniform sensibility to the national character
- decision, secrecy, and dispatch.

The 535 members of Congress seem unable to do things quickly, decisively, and secretly. The president and his small body of advisors usually do better. Often, the executive has information not available to others—secret information gathered by the NSC, the CIA, and diplomatic cables among other sources.

In the 1930s, Congress granted the president broad powers in international affairs and specifically granted the power to prohibit arms shipments to participants in foreign wars. In *U.S. v. Curtiss-Wright Export Corporation* (1936), the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of this congressional grant of power. In this ruling, the Court

explicitly recognized the primary importance of the president in foreign affairs and the concept of inherent powers in those affairs.

WWII and the Cold War helped solidify presidential control of foreign policy. Congress supported a larger role for the U.S. in international relations and the primacy of the president through the National Security Acts of 1947 and 1949. These acts consolidated the armed forces into the Department of Defense, set up the CIA, and the National Security Council. The NSC was composed of the president, vice president, secretaries of state and defense, chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the director of Central Intelligence. This group would become the president's major advising body on foreign issues.

### **The Departments of State and Defense**

These two departments have primary responsibilities for the day-to-day affairs of foreign relations and their implementation. The State Department has 30,000 employees and runs embassies and trade consulates abroad and at its headquarters in Washington, D.C., an area called Foggy Bottom; most of the State Department employees are responsible for collecting and providing information on specific issues or countries. The U.S. has consulates or embassies in 162 countries, which shows how global U.S. interests really are. In 1999, the State Department underwent significant changes. It has absorbed several formerly independent agencies: USAID, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and the U.S. Information Agency.

The Defense Department has military units and bases worldwide. Since the Cold War, the military has become far more reliant on high tech equipment and the type of mission (or usage) of the military has changed. Missions like Bosnia and Kosovo—making and keeping peace—and the war against insurgents in Iraq have become some of the more common missions today. Rapid deployment and minimum casualties are the watchwords of today's military due to political considerations. Special forces and rapid deployment have definitely increased in their importance since the terrorist attacks and this importance will only increase. The military also does substantial amounts of disaster relief, as they did in the December 2004 tsunami that hit several Asian countries.

### **The Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Council**

Both the CIA and the NSC were established by Congress in 1947 to solve perceived problems with the gathering and analysis of intelligence data. Both advise the president, but are not alone. There are thirteen agencies in the government that have intelligence gathering as a primary mission including the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, the National Reconnaissance Office, the National Imagery and Mapping Agency, the intelligence branches of all four military branches and other agencies. There are also lots of other departments who are secondary parts of the intelligence apparatus.

After September 11<sup>th</sup>, the whole intelligence community was criticized for failing to predict and prevent the attacks and for relying too heavily on technical means (satellites and electronics) and not enough on human intelligence (spies). As a result of these criticisms and the work of the 9-11 Commission, a new position was created in 2004, Director of National Intelligence (DNI). The DNI is the principal intelligence

advisor to the president, controls the presidential daily briefings, and is designed to coordinate U.S. intelligence gathering and analysis.

### **The Department of Homeland Security**

In late 2002, Congress converted the Office of Homeland Security, established in response to the 9-11 terrorist attacks, into a Cabinet-level department. It is tasked with detecting, preparing for, preventing, protecting against, responding to and recovering from terrorist attacks. The new department merged 22 agencies and has over 180,000 employees.

### **Groups that Influence Foreign Policy**

The president is powerful, but not omnipotent. He must still deal with domestic constraints and international pressures.

### **Congress**

Congress has some constitutional powers in foreign relations and sometimes seeks to assert them. They particularly like to exercise their oversight role to hold the administration accountable for its foreign policy.

### **Congressional Leadership**

While the president usually takes the lead on foreign policy, the Congress can develop and implement policy too. Examples of this include the creation of NASA and the National Defense Education Act.

### **Congressional Oversight**

Since the 1960s, Congress has used oversight more often. Congress has challenged the administration on controversial weapons systems (sometimes in favor, sometimes against). They also investigate policies after they are completed, as in Iran-Contra. But under President Bush, the Republican led Congress practices little oversight. The 2006 midterm elections brought both houses of Congress back under Democratic control and that may lead to more oversight.

### **Treaties and Executive Agreements**

The Constitution gives the president power to negotiate treaties and the Senate power to approve them. They have only rejected seventeen treaties in history—the most recent one, the Test Ban Treaty in 1999. But the president can avoid the Senate role altogether by concluding an executive agreement instead of a treaty. It has all the force of a treaty but is only valid during the administration that concluded it.

### **Appointments**

The president appoints ambassadors and others in foreign affairs. The Senate provides “advice and consent.” In recent years, and particularly in periods of divided government, the Senate has withheld confirmation or even denied hearings on a nominee through the hold process.

## **Appropriations**

Congress's most influential power in foreign affairs is the power of the purse. They can fund or not fund programs, projects, or military forays.

## **The War Powers Act**

The War Powers Act (WPA) was passed near the end of the Vietnam War and was designed to reassert congressional war powers. The Constitution gives the president the power to make war and Congress, the power to declare war. The last declared war the U.S. was involved in was WWII. And there have been many "wars" since, but without formal congressional consideration. The WPA was an attempt by Congress to prevent future foreign interventions without their approval. The Act limits presidential deployment of troops to sixty days without a congressional vote. The period could be extended thirty days to allow for withdrawal of troops. The president would be allowed to respond to an emergency, but not wage a war without Congress. In reality, this Act has not hindered presidents very much at all.

## **The Bureaucracy**

The bureaucracy also exercises a check on the president. Career bureaucrats have expertise and information that is necessary to good policy making. They can also ignore or delay implementation of policy or leak information to Congress, the media, or the people to raise issues on the agenda or embarrass the president.

## **The News Media**

The press can also check foreign policy powers. They investigate policies, expose scandals and inefficiencies, and affect public opinion. But most importantly, the media can place an issue on the public radar screen. Ethiopia's famine in the 1980s was not new, but media coverage made it an agenda item in the United States. Bosnian intervention, as well as the Kosovo campaign was probably prompted by media coverage that made the average American pay attention, therefore gaining the attention of elected officials.

## **The Public**

Public concerns are always of importance to anyone dependent upon election by that public. Foreign affairs are not always of vital concern to most Americans but can have an electoral impact in a number of ways. Wilson was elected on a peace platform, FDR for his pursuit and success in war, LBJ did not run in 1968 because of Vietnam, and many more. Sometimes the public's interest is galvanized by human interest, student protest, media coverage, personal tragedies (Iran hostage crisis for example) or other events can motivate the public to pay attention and then demand action or inaction.

## **Twenty-first Century Challenges**

As the twenty-first century began, the United States was the world's sole superpower, with the largest economy, most powerful military, and most influential culture in the world. However, that does not mean that the U.S. had no challenges. Actually, the U.S. faces many difficult challenges in the new century. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 have led to additional security measures at home and to

fighting a global war on terrorism overseas. The conflict between Israel and the Palestinians rages on even after the death of Yassir Arafat. The United States is still involved around the globe with key interests, like the health crisis in Africa and others.

### **Identifying Policies to Pursue in the National Interest**

The post-WWII consensus that surrounded the Cold War era is gone. The Cold War with the Soviet Union had been the dominant fact that helped the U.S. to determine its national interest. With that gone, the equation for what constitutes the national interest becomes much more complex and threats are sometimes more difficult to find and fight.

Prosperity, security, and protecting American values all remain important but there is no consensus about how to reach those goals. How large should the military be? Should we be prepared to fight several enemies in land battles? Should we be able to fight numerous low-intensity guerrilla wars? Will the next war be in Asia? Latin America? Europe? In the U.S.? Are human rights in other countries a legitimate U.S. concern? If so, how should we work on that? If economic instability creates political instability, should we give more foreign aid to poverty-stricken countries? Many Americans oppose foreign aid, should we stop sending help? These and many other questions face policy makers today.

### **Balancing Foreign and Domestic Affairs**

In the twenty-first century, the distinction between foreign and domestic is even more artificial than it was in the twentieth century. However, most Americans are of the impression that we should focus almost exclusively on domestic issues, except for issues of homeland defense and the war on terrorism. They don't want total isolationism, but minimal U.S. involvement. Striking the appropriate balance—especially with limited time and resources—is quite difficult.

### **Meeting Threats from Weapons of Mass Destruction and Information Warfare**

Nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons are called weapons of mass destruction. They constitute a significant threat to the United States and other countries. So does information warfare—attacks on information and communications. These threats are more difficult to see and fight than a traditional battlefield enemy.

### **Addressing Drug and Environmental Problems**

Drugs complicate our relations with many countries. Poor countries and rich alike seem to traffic in drugs. Our relations with Mexico, Colombia, Thailand, and other countries go up and down depending on our drug policies. We also spend enormous quantities of resources interdicting drugs and trying to help other countries curtail production.

Environmental issues are also becoming more important. Nuclear accidents, a hole in the ozone layer, acid rain, desertification, pollution, and the loss of biodiversity affect countries and do not respect political boundaries. Solutions to environmental problems require cooperation among countries.

### **Deciding When to Intervene Overseas**

We still do not have specific criteria on when we ought to intervene. Often, policy makers are pushed into intervention by coverage of atrocities by international news organizations like CNN. Babies are seen starving in Africa and Americans demand that we help. CNN reports rape is used as a weapon of war in Bosnia; Americans are outraged and demand the government to step in. We are reacting instead of acting in our national interest and this will continue until we determine what our post-Cold War national interests are.

### **Unilateralism or Multilateralism?**

Often, the U.S. could go it alone as the most powerful economic and military power in the world. But 9-11 reinforced the vulnerability of even the most powerful country. And since the attacks, the emphasis has been on more multilateral approaches. But this will remain a political issue and the emphasis will likely change from policy area to policy area as it always has.

### **Building a Grand Strategy**

Back to broader issues, the anti-communist consensus is gone and a new consensus on homeland defense, and the war on terrorism is taking hold. However, a grand strategy requires answering three broad questions that are not adequately addressed by the newly forged consensus:

- What should grand strategy be? “Grand” implies a very broad set of principles that two critical issues cannot possibly subsume. Grand strategy can’t leave out large sectors of policy or portions of the globe. Two possibilities would be that the U.S. should pursue unilateral preeminence or that the U.S. should pursue a multilateral approach based on cooperation and the greatest good for the greatest number.
- How can consensus be built around the grand strategy? What techniques can be used?
- Leadership? Who will lead? Most likely the president. So the question becomes how will the president lead?

The greatest challenge currently facing the U.S. is how the country can combine the current interest in homeland security and fighting terrorism into a grand strategy that can offer a guiding vision to policy makers and confront all foreign and defense policy issues.

<b>Web Sites for Instructors</b>
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Official Web site of the **Air Force**:

[www.af.mil](http://www.af.mil)

**U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency:**

[dosfan.lib.uic.edu/acda/](http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/acda/)

Official Web site of the **U.S. Army**:  
[www.army.mil](http://www.army.mil)

**Center for Defense Information** is a nonprofit public policy center with a somewhat “liberal” perspective. “Founded in 1972 as an independent monitor of the military, the Center for Defense Information is a private, nongovernmental, research organization. Its directors and staff believe that strong social, economic, political, and military components and a healthy environment contribute equally to the nation’s security. CDI seeks realistic and cost-effective military spending without excess expenditures for weapons and policies that increase the danger of war. CDI supports adequate defense by evaluating our defense needs and how best to meet them without wasteful spending or compromising our national security.”  
[www.cdi.org](http://www.cdi.org)

**Center for Strategic and International Studies** has several programs related to military and foreign policy. Their Web site includes policy papers, links, and more.  
[www.csis.org](http://www.csis.org)

**Federal Web Locator** links to many DoD and other defense related sites.  
[www.lib.auburn.edu/madd/docs/fedloc.html](http://www.lib.auburn.edu/madd/docs/fedloc.html)

**Foreign Military Studies Office** at Fort Leavenworth has analysis, papers, links and more related to security and foreign policy issues.  
[fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/](http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/)

Official Web site of the **Joint Chiefs of Staff**:  
[www.dtic.mil/jcs/](http://www.dtic.mil/jcs/)

Official Web site of the **U.S. Marine Corps**:  
[www.hqmc.usmc.mil](http://www.hqmc.usmc.mil)

**National Center for Policy Analysis** is a nonprofit public policy research institute from a “conservative” perspective.  
[www.ncpa.org](http://www.ncpa.org)

Official Web site of the **U.S. Navy**:  
[www.navy.mil/](http://www.navy.mil/)

Official Web site of the **Pentagon** and **U.S. Department of Defense**:  
[www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pentagon/](http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pentagon/)

**U.S. Army War College** at Carlisle Barracks has student and faculty research links and more. Also see the Strategic Studies Institute housed there for working papers.  
[carlisle-www.army.mil/](http://carlisle-www.army.mil/)

## Web Activities for Classes

- 1) Have students do some research on businesses in your area that are involved in international trade. They should use the Internet or library to find out what kinds of businesses are doing business where and why. Have them address the following questions: Are there more international ties in your area than you thought? What kinds of impact does this trade have on you, your town/city, and the country?
- 2) Assign the following:  
Choose a foreign policy crisis (either contemporary or historical) and do some research on the Web to determine what issues were at hand, what actors were making the decisions, and what the outcome was. Did public opinion matter? Was the president the strongest actor in the crisis? How did the various interests play themselves out?
- 3) Have students research the issue of homeland security and civil liberties. What are the trade-offs? What are the goals? Are the two principles necessarily antithetical?

## General Class Activities and Discussion Assignments

- 1) American news, be it press or broadcast media, tends to skim on international news. The argument is that Americans are not interested. Have students address the following: Is that true? Find public opinion polling data, ask friends and colleagues, etc. about their interest in international relations. Next, test the hypothesis that the media ignore foreign affairs. Watch several different types of media (network TV, newspapers, cable TV, news magazines) and determine if this is true. Now that you know more about U.S. foreign policy, are you more interested in such news? Discuss these issues or structure a debate about them.
- 2) Have students choose one week and get copies of the following weekly news magazines: *Newsweek*, *Time*, *The Economist*, and *McLean's*. The students should compare their coverage of a number of international issues and write a paper explaining the differences.
- 3) As a class, discuss what the grand strategy of the U.S. ought to be now that the Cold War is over and given the new obligations of the war on terrorism.
- 4) What are U.S. national interests? Should we have intervened in Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda, etc. and why or why not? What about Afghanistan and Iraq? What is our national interest in that case? Trade and aid policy—with whom should we trade and to whom should we give aid? Are there limits to U.S. generosity? What are they?

- 5) Have students discuss whether and how the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 changed U.S. foreign policy.

### **Possible Simulations**

- 1) Have students research and reenact the congressional debate over establishing the Department of Homeland Security and the new Intelligence Tsar.
- 2) Hold a debate on a current topic in foreign affairs. Have students argue both pro and con. They can choose to do it on a partisan basis (Republican-Democrat) or on a thematic basis (isolation vs. engagement, unilateral vs. multilateral action) and so on.

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