



Cato Institute Foreign Policy Briefing No. 33: America's Misguided Policy of Dual Containment in the Persian Gulf

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Executive Summary

The Clinton administration has adopted an ambitious policy in the Persian Gulf: "dual containment" of Iran and Iraq. Though it seeks to avoid previous administrations' ill-fated attempts to cultivate one regime as an alternative to the other, the Clinton approach invites even more problems.

Dual containment is a risky strategy that relies on a vast and precarious network of alliances, assumes Washington can restrict Iranian and Iraqi military buildups, and requires a prolonged U.S. military presence in the Persian Gulf region. Yet the United States has no vital interests in the area to justify a policy that is so costly and entails so great a risk of drawing America into regional conflicts.

If dual containment succeeds, even partially, in isolating Iran and Iraq, the consequences for the United States may be grave. An anti-U.S. alliance between Tehran and Baghdad is not inconceivable. And in the event of either regime's breakdown, many forces in the gulf region will seek to exploit the ensuing chaos, making a regional war--which the United States will have little hope of avoiding--nearly inevitable.

Introduction

President Clinton's early pronouncements on foreign policy and forays abroad were quite ambitious. The administration spoke glowingly of "assertive multilateralism" and a standing United Nations army. In Somalia, American troops embarked on an unprecedented "nation-building" scheme, but a jolt of hard reality--most notably the widely published photograph of a dead American GI being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu--has forced Clinton to moderate his policies, if not his rhetoric and visions.

One of the last vestiges of the president's ambitious approach to foreign affairs is his policy toward the Persian Gulf region, where the administration pursues a bold agenda: "dual containment" of Iran and Iraq. Both National Security Adviser Anthony Lake and National Security Council senior director for Near East and South Asia Martin Indyk, the primary administration spokesmen for the policy, have stated that dual containment seeks to "counter" both Iran and Iraq rather than favor one country to counter the other as previous failed policies attempted to do. Such a strategy contemplates a virtual reorganization of the gulf region's politics and customary balance of power. After the gulf war, Indyk lamented that "the determination President Bush showed in his efforts to liberate Kuwait was not matched by an equal determination to restructure the Middle East in the wake of victory."^[1] As the chief architect of dual containment, Indyk appears determined that President Clinton take belated advantage of the opportunity Bush missed, at least with respect to the Persian Gulf region if not the entire Middle East.

The political restructuring of a region is no small undertaking, so it should come as no surprise that dual containment

would be a costly policy economically and involve the risk of drawing the United States into the Middle East's many parochial conflicts. Moreover, because dual containment is based on a series of dubious assumptions about the region and Washington's ability to manage Middle Eastern affairs, the strategy will probably fail. In the unlikely event the strategy succeeds, even partially, the Washington-led isolation of Iran and Iraq could have disastrous consequences. There is ample reason to expect that dual containment would increase rather than decrease the threats to U.S. interests.

U.S. Interests in the Persian Gulf: Vital or Peripheral?

While it is widely acknowledged that the end of the Cold War has reduced the strategic significance of the Persian Gulf region, there is considerable disagreement about the nature and importance of the remaining American interests there. Proponents of an activist U.S. role argue that America has vital security interests in maintaining unhindered access to gulf oil at a reasonable price, preventing nuclear proliferation in the region, and preserving (or creating, depending on one's viewpoint) regional stability.[2] Those objectives may hold superficial appeal, but a closer examination indicates that none of them is vital to American national security.

That gulf oil is a vital American interest was the chief national security rationale put forth by the Bush administration to stimulate public support for the gulf war. According to Bush, Iraqi control of Middle Eastern oil reserves would pose a threat to the American way of life, a sentiment echoed by his secretary of state, James Baker, who contended that Saddam Hussein could "strangle the global economic order, determining by fiat whether we all enter a recession or even the darkness of a depression." [3] The Clinton administration shares that view. "Despite the end of the superpower rivalry, the Middle East remains of vital interest to the United States," proclaimed Lake, citing oil as one of America's vital interests in the region.[4]

Unhindered access to gulf oil is certainly desirable, but it is not so essential to the American economy that it rises to the level of a vital interest. A large portion-- approximately 65 percent--of the world's known oil reserves is in the gulf region, and those reserves currently account for 25 percent of world oil production.[5] During the Cold War, the possibility that the Soviet Union could gain control of that oil was a formidable threat, primarily because such control would have enabled Moscow to intimidate Washington's European allies, which get most of their oil from the Middle East. No regional power could cause such damage, however, as political scientist Richard K. Hermann has pointed out.

The same danger could not arise from any potential regional hegemon. They are heavily dependent on oil revenues for development projects and the purchase of most of their military equipment. They can threaten to increase the price of oil, but the fungibility of oil and the vulnerability of regional economies to financial and trade countermeasures from the advanced industrial economies limit the range of blackmail scenarios. . . . The United States, like other strong industrial powers, does not need control of regional events or even dependent clients to secure its basic energy requirements.[6]

Even if a regional hegemon were to control the oil supply and drive up the price, that would have a relatively minor impact on the American economy. In the highly improbable worst-case scenario put forth during the gulf crisis-- that Saddam would control the oil of Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates--the effect would have been to raise the price of oil from the precrisis level of \$20 per barrel to \$30, perhaps \$40, per barrel. The ultimate cost to the American economy would have been a loss of from one-half of 1 percent to 1 percent of real gross domestic product, or \$30 billion to \$60 billion.[7] Yet the United States was spending nearly \$50 billion per year for defense of the Persian Gulf in peacetime, and mounting the gulf war cost even more.[8] As Nobel laureate Milton Friedman noted at the time, "There is no justification for war on the grounds of oil." [9] Access to Persian Gulf oil is no more valid a justification for war now than it was in 1990.

Another frequently cited vital U.S. interest in the Middle East is the prevention of proliferation of nuclear weapons. Both Tehran and Baghdad appear to have ambitious nuclear weapons programs. It would be more comfortable for the United States if both countries could be persuaded to give up their programs, but experience has demonstrated that there is relatively little the international community can do to deter regimes that are intent on becoming nuclear powers. Israel, India, and Pakistan all acquired nuclear capabilities during the Cold War, against the will of the international community. So did South Africa, even though it was regarded as an international pariah (which suggests that isolation is generally not an effective way to counter nuclear proliferation). Since the dissolution of the Soviet

Union and Moscow's waning control over Soviet nuclear technology, it has become considerably more difficult to prevent nuclear proliferation.[10] Unpalatable though it may be, Washington must adjust to that new reality.

Washington should also recognize that even if Iran and Iraq were to develop nuclear arsenals, they would not necessarily represent an intolerable threat to the security of the United States. Possession of a handful of nuclear weapons does not in itself confer a decisive military or diplomatic advantage. Israel's status as the sole nuclear power in the Middle East, for instance, has never afforded it a measurable advantage in dealing with its nonnuclear Arab enemies.[11] Nuclear arms are useful primarily as deterrents, not as offensive weapons.[12] The magnitude and certainty of retaliation would make a nuclear first strike by Iraq, Iran, or any other renegade state at Israel, Europe, or (assuming the aggressor had managed to acquire a long-range delivery system) the United States suicidal. So while the United States has an interest in preventing nuclear proliferation when possible, failure to do so does not necessarily pose a mortal threat to U.S. security. A nuclear-free Persian Gulf is a peripheral, rather than a vital, American interest.

The final supposedly vital U.S. interest in the Persian Gulf is regional stability. UN ambassador Madeleine Albright, for instance, denounced the Iraqi troop movements near the Kuwaiti border in October 1994 as having "disrupt[ed] the stability of the region," implying that such a disruption justified the Clinton administration's strong response to the Iraqi maneuvers.[13] But the Middle East has never been a stable region, and there is scant reason to believe that the prospects for stability there have improved. Historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., has commented that

stability is not a likely prospect for a region characterized from time immemorial by artificial frontiers, tribal antagonism, religious fanaticisms and desperate inequalities. I doubt that the U.S. has the capacity or the desire to replace the Ottoman Empire, and our efforts thus far have won us not the respect of the Arab rulers but their contempt.[14]

The United States has long survived great instability in the Middle East, even during the Cold War, when the Soviet Union sought to exploit the turmoil. There is no reason to think that instability in the post-Cold War era somehow suddenly represents a threat to American security. It is important to remember, too, that many Middle Eastern states view regional instability as a strategic tool, which they hope to exploit to their benefit. There are a number of intra-Arab disputes in which uncertainty is valued as an alternative to accepting the status quo. As long as Middle Eastern players do not seek regional stability, there is little the United States can do to advance it. Indeed, stability in the Persian Gulf region is so chimerical an objective that it could not even be called a legitimate peripheral interest, much less a vital U.S. interest.

In the absence of any vital national security interest in the Persian Gulf, there is no justification for undertaking a policy as ambitious and costly as dual containment. America's only legitimate peripheral interests--access to gulf oil and preventing nuclear proliferation--do not merit allowing the United States to be drawn into regional turmoil or another Persian Gulf war.

The Miscalculations behind Dual Containment

The conditions necessary for the pursuit of dual containment, as set forth by Indyk, evidence of the policy's extraordinary ambition and scope.

The coalition that fought Saddam Hussein remains together, and as long as we are able to hold that coalition together and maintain our military presence in the region, as long as we succeed in restricting the military ambitions of both Iraq and Iran, and as long as we can rely on our regional allies--Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia, the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council], and Turkey--to preserve a balance of power in our favor in the wider Middle East region, we will have the means to counter both the Iraqi and Iranian regimes.[15]

Despite Indyk's apparent nonchalance--he seems to take for granted that the four prerequisites are more or less assured--a close examination of each of the conditions reveals that dual containment is high cost and high risk. In fact, it is questionable whether the Clinton administration actually has the capability to implement the policy in any meaningful sense.

First, it is increasingly apparent that the gulf war coalition no longer exists as a cohesive alliance. The divisions among

the allied nations, first evident soon after the end of the gulf war, became unmistakably clear in October 1994 after Iraqi troops massed on the Kuwaiti border in a move similar to that which preceded Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Even before October 1994, Russia, France, China, and several other countries had advocated a more cooperative policy toward Iraq, while some of the gulf states and, especially, the United States were adamantly opposed to conciliatory measures.[16] In the aftermath of the October 1994 incident, however, the rift became considerably more obvious and the exchanges (particularly between the United States on the one hand and Russia and France on the other) quite heated.

French defense minister François Lçotard suggested that Clinton's intransigence on the question of lifting sanctions was driven by domestic political concerns, an accusation that brought forth a stinging rebuttal from Albright. Russia dispatched Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev to Iraq to seek a diplomatic solution, a move that U.S. officials--who had demanded that Saddam comply with all relevant UN resolutions before any negotiations began--strongly opposed. Iraq expert Laurie Mylroie (perhaps voicing the sentiments of much of official Washington) declared, "We should be able to ask the Russians to stay out of this." [17] As Washington pressed for ever-stricter controls on Iraq, it became clear that the other major world powers that had participated in the coalition in 1990-91 were not enthusiastic about the United States' preferred course of action in 1994.

There is even less will on the part of the international community to isolate Iran. Although most of the GCC states remain wary of Iran's regional hegemonic ambitions, they appreciated Iran's good behavior during the gulf war, and relations between Tehran and GCC capitals have thawed considerably in the past several years. The GCC states also recognize that Iran is the natural regional counterweight to Iraq.[18] The European Union and Japan have refused to adopt the U.S. policy of isolating Iran economically, having enjoyed over \$10 billion and \$2.5 billion, respectively, in exports to Iran in 1992, while Russia and China have gone even further, providing Iran with nuclear power plants and other assistance for its civilian nuclear program.[19] Even American companies are loath to isolate the Islamic state: while the United States prohibits imports from Iran, American oil companies legally support the Iranian economy by buying oil for resale outside the United States.[20]

To be sure, administration officials have emphasized that dual containment should not be misconstrued as duplicate containment and that they realize that containing Iran poses different challenges. Lake has conceded that "the administration is not backed by an international consensus reflected in UNSC [United Nations Security Council] resolutions, as in Iraq's case. And it does not have broad sanctions in place to effect changes in Iran's unacceptable behavior." [21] Yet the United States by itself cannot isolate or contain a country. Containment and isolation are by definition activities that require cooperation among many countries.

U.S. reliance on the regional allies Indyk mentioned-- notably Egypt, the GCC states, and Turkey--is also problematic. In each case, significant domestic factors (in addition to the usual instability in the Middle East) make depending on regional alliances a risky strategy.

Egyptian friendship and stability--crucial to U.S. Middle East policy since the Camp David agreement in 1979-- have been uncertain for some time. Although president Hosni Mubarak has sought to minimize the threat posed by Islamic fundamentalists, continued internal terrorism and Mubarak's own increasingly authoritarian crackdown indicate that Egypt's quasi-democratic government remains in jeopardy. Israeli intelligence sources are reported to have warned the Clinton administration as recently as June 1994 that there is increasing potential for an Egyptian military coup.[22] If extremists take power, Egypt will probably become one of Washington's primary enemies, rather than allies, in the region. (Indeed, an Islamic regime in Cairo could be expected to ally itself with Tehran, compounding Washington's problems immensely.) Even if Mubarak remains in control, the prospects for U.S.-Egyptian relations are less than rosy. As one U.S.-Egyptian working group has concluded, the two countries "no longer share either a common threat or a common vision for the future--a situation that could endanger their future friendship." [23] To the extent that the dual containment policy is contingent on Egyptian stability and friendly relations between Washington and Cairo, it rests on a precarious foundation.

U.S. relations with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are also somewhat uncertain. Both authoritarian regimes, along with those of several other GCC countries, face domestic discontent and have come under fire for human rights violations and resistance to democratization.[24] Several Saudi officials have recently defected to the United States and Britain

after speaking out against the regime.[25] Although Washington has historically evaded the issue of human rights and democracy in "friendly" states--even as U.S. officials have condemned similar offenses in "unfriendly" countries-- the increasingly public outcry against the gulf regimes and the emergence of high-level dissent does not bode well for U.S. relations with the GCC states.

Turkey is an especially unreliable ally in the context of dual containment. Saddam's mistreatment of the Kurdish population in Iraq provides important moral underpinning for Washington's punitive policy toward Baghdad, yet the Turkish government is in a state of virtual civil war with its own Kurdish minority (approximately one-fourth of Turkey's total population). Indeed, the Kurdish problem prompted Ankara to call for normalizing Turkish-Iraqi relations as early as August 1992, significantly earlier than other coalition members advocated easing pressure on Iraq.[26] More recently, the economic burden--Ankara claims that sanctions have cost Turkey \$20 billion--of the embargo has intensified Turkish calls to end the isolation of Iraq.[27]

Furthermore, there is growing concern that Turkey may be drifting away from the Western orbit altogether. Turkey's foreign minister, Mumtaz Soysal, has stated bluntly, "I'm not going to spend my life making the U.S. comfortable." [28] The schism between the two allies has been especially apparent in the debate over whether to allow continued American access to Turkish airbases, from which many U.S. missions to aid Iraqi Kurds and monitor Iraqi compliance with UN resolutions are flown. Since 1991 the Turkish parliament has voted every six months to renew the agreement that allows use of the bases, but many experts believe that the agreement will not be extended after the December 1994 vote.[29] It is apparent, then, that Indyk's confidence in Turkish cooperation may be misplaced. As Bulent Aliriza, director of Turkish studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, has warned, "If I were in the U.S. government, I'd certainly not want to put [Turkish support] to the test." [30]

Indyk's conviction that the United States is capable of limiting Iran's and Iraq's military buildups also invites skepticism. Quantitatively and qualitatively, the militaries of many Middle Eastern countries are superior to those in other parts of the Third World and even to those of some industrialized countries. The asymmetrical military strength of Middle Eastern countries, the numerous perceived security threats from both within and outside the region, and the many suppliers of arms have all contributed to a chronic regional arms race, which Washington should not assume regional players are inclined to end.[31] Retired U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Edward B. Atkeson has pointed out that "the Arabs do not generally share the Western perception of arms control as an objective good. . . . To many of them it smacks of a deceitful means for foreign (Zionist and `imperialist') interests to disarm the Arabs and to perpetuate perceived injustices." [32] His assessment of the Arab attitude toward arms control is also applicable to Iran.

The final necessary condition for Indyk's strategy for countering Iran and Iraq is continuation of the U.S. military presence in the region. That proposition is not only costly, it introduces problems of its own. Anti-imperialism and anti-Americanism are strong forces in the Middle East; leaders and populations are wary of opening the door to further American influence by inviting U.S. troops into their countries. Even during the gulf war, Saudi Arabia was reluctant to permit U.S. troops on its soil, fearing the impact the soldiers' presence would have on conservative Saudi society. As Columbia University political scientist F. Gregory Gause III has concluded, "The higher the American military profile in [Saudi Arabia and the other GCC countries], the greater the risk that it would become a lightning rod for domestic discontent, as has happened many times in past decades in the Middle East." [33]

The administration's means of pursuing dual containment represent a tremendous commitment that will place the United States at great risk of becoming entangled in regional conflicts. The extent of U.S. involvement in Persian Gulf affairs became glaringly clear in October 1994. Even though Saddam's troops stayed within Iraqi territory--they did not even venture into the demilitarized zone that separates Iraq and Kuwait--Clinton ordered a major deployment of U.S. troops to the region. After the crisis receded, U.S. officials transformed the mission (estimated to cost between \$500 million and \$1 billion) into an elaborate training exercise. Discussions about prepositioning additional troops and equipment in the region, to expedite anticipated future deployments, were soon under way. At the very least, the enhanced American presence increases the costs and risks of U.S. policy toward the Persian Gulf and aggravates popular resentment of U.S. meddling in regional affairs. Unfortunately, though, if the administration successfully pursues its strategy and succeeds in containing the Iranian and Iraqi regimes, the cost in American lives and treasure may be even greater.

The Dangers of Linkage

In keeping with its contention that dual containment should not be misunderstood as duplicate containment, the administration has set different objectives for Iran and Iraq. The regimes of both countries are viewed as dangerous because their policies are hostile to American interests. The administration hopes that isolation of Iran will persuade Tehran to change its outlaw behavior, but Washington does not advocate the overthrow of the Islamic regime. Administration leaders have espoused a more ambitious agenda for Iraq, however, since they view Saddam as incorrigible. Indyk has said that the administration does not "seek or expect a reconciliation with Saddam Hussein's regime" and considers it "irredeemable." [34] The foreign policy team barely disguises its desire for a coup in Baghdad and apparently believes that dual containment will prompt democratic forces to overthrow the government.

Critics have charged that it is misleading to link two such disparate objectives under the banner of "dual containment." As Robin Wright and John Broder of the Los Angeles Times have pointed out, toppling Saddam's regime and replacing it with a democracy is "much more than containment," and pressuring Tehran to change certain specific policies is "less than containment." [35] The problem is not merely semantic; the policies, though different, have been linked in such a way that a failed policy vis-Ö-vis one country will inevitably adversely affect the other and, by extension, American interests in the gulf region.

The specific Iranian behavior that the administration seeks to curb includes Tehran's pursuit of nuclear ambitions, links with terrorism, violent opposition to the Arab- Israeli peace process, threats against neighboring states, and human rights abuses. [36] Those types of behavior may be undesirable, but they would not normally warrant a vigorous campaign of isolation. According to Indyk, the rationale for so drastic a measure is partly preventive. "If we fail in our efforts to modify Iranian behavior, five years from now Iran will be much more capable of posing a real threat to Israel, the Arab world, and Western interests in the Middle East." [37] More telling, though, is the other justification he offers:

To the extent that the international community . . . succeeds in containing Iraq but fails to contain Iran, we will have inadvertently allowed the balance of power in the Gulf to tilt in favor of Iran, with potentially dangerous consequences. The imbalance therefore argues for a more energetic effort to contain Iran and modify its behavior even as we maintain the sanctions regime against Iraq. [38]

Indyk is probably correct in his assessment that weakening one regime tends to strengthen the other. His error is thinking that it is possible to maintain an inherently unstable status quo in which two traditionally strong regional powers are kept artificially weak. That miscalculation could have a number of unpleasant consequences.

Attempting to weaken either regime would encourage collusion between Tehran and Baghdad against the common enemy--the United States--despite the fact that the administration is cavalier about the potential for cooperation between the two countries. Even as Lake acknowledged that Iran and Iraq had "engaged in limited cooperation over the past year," he dismissed the prospects for significant reconciliation between the two states because "they mistrust each other more than they mistrust the United States." [39] But sworn enemies--Germany and the Soviet Union in the 1922 Treaty of Rapallo and the 1939 Nazi-Soviet pact--have been known to join forces to advance their own interests. And if Washington continues to advocate complete isolation of Iran and Iraq, thwarting their military and economic development, it is risky to assume that their hostility toward one another will continue to exceed their hostility toward the United States.

Be Careful What You Wish for: Iraq without Saddam

A more alarming result would ensue if dual containment were to meet one of its key objectives--the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. During the gulf war the allied forces wisely stopped short of ousting him, which probably would have entailed a long-term occupation of Iraq. Middle East analyst Daniel Pipes has described the probable conditions of such an occupation.

Like the Israelis in southern Lebanon . . . American troops would find themselves quickly hated, with Shi'ites taking up suicide bombing, Kurds resuming their rebellion, and Syrian and Iranian governments plotting to sabotage American rule. Staying in place would become too painful, leaving too humiliating. [40]

Having ruled out military options to remove Saddam, Washington for a time hoped for a palace coup. The Clinton administration, however, has supplemented the political and military policies of dual containment with contacts with one of the major opposition groups, the Iraqi National Congress. But the INC is no more than an umbrella organization dominated by Kurdish opposition groups--it is not a government in exile, and the groups it encompasses do not represent a unified, democratic opposition that could credibly step in to replace Saddam and prevent Iraq from disintegrating into civil war.

Absent a viable regime with a broad political base to step in after Saddam's ouster, chaos and civil war would be highly probable. And as Thomas L. McNaugher of the Brook ings Institution has observed, "A balkanized Iraq is a formula for enhanced Iranian power in the Gulf." [41] Hence the attainment of one of dual containment's primary goals-- getting rid of Saddam--would bring about one of the very scenarios it was designed to prevent--stronger Iranian influence. Moreover, because Iran is just one of many regional players that would be eager to exploit Iraq's demise, a wider regional war would be likely to follow. The United States would have little chance of avoiding such a war because, as McNaugher points out, American involvement in the overthrow of Saddam "makes us responsible for whatever happens next." [42] Whether Washington openly sided with one faction or attempted to maintain a fiction of impartiality, the destabilization in the gulf region (with repercussions for the Middle East as a whole) that would accompany the dissolution of the Ba'athist regime in Iraq would be cause for alarm.

An Alternative to Dual Containment

Washington cannot control the volatile Persian Gulf region. Fortunately, it does not need to attempt such a feat. With no vital American interests at stake, the United States has the option of letting events in the area run their course. The most important step toward disengagement would be to bring home the military units that have been in the region since the end of the gulf war. That would not only eliminate many costs and risks, it would greatly diminish popular resentment of the presence of U.S. troops.

There are no real barriers to removing the U.S. forces. The rich gulf states they protect clearly have the financial ability to develop strong militaries of their own. Moreover, the withdrawal of U.S. troops would provide all states in the region with an incentive to work toward a more stable regional balance of power. Countries such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait could no longer rely on the Americans as a substitute for self-defense, as they have in the past. As London University's Charles Tripp has commented,

The GCC states have sought in public to pay lip- service to the principle of self-reliance, whilst seeking and accepting security assistance of one kind or another from outside sources . . . the [invasion of Kuwait] made it easier to acknowledge and exploit in a systematic way the military assistance available from the West.[43]

Iran and Iraq, on the other hand, would not want to provoke Washington into redeploying troops. Any degree of regional stability that could be brought about by states' acting in their own self-interest is bound to be more durable than that established by a policy of carrots and sticks from Washington. And in the event of a breakdown in the regional balance, it will be much harder for local demagogues to blame the United States.

Furthermore, the United States would not be automatically involved if a regional breakdown were to degenerate into a wider regional war. Without the Soviet Union to exploit the conflict, Washington could even afford to view the events with a certain detachment. Although there is little reason to expect that a gulf conflict would represent a threat to the West (as long as Western powers refrained from meddling in the area), Israel and the West European powers would have the capability to intervene if their interests were in jeopardy, which would happen long before U.S. security would be at risk. It is difficult to conceive of a scenario in which American intervention would be required to rescue U.S. vital interests from a Persian Gulf war.

As long as U.S. forces remain in the region, however, American lives and interests are in danger. Further meddling in the Persian Gulf's affairs--such as the administration's strategy of dual containment--invites disaster.

Notes

- [1] Martin Indyk, "Watershed in the Middle East," *Foreign Affairs: America and the World* 1991-92 71, no. 1 (1992): 71-72.
- [2] For examples of those arguments, see the president's 1991 national security strategy quoted in Edward B. Atkeson, "A Military Assessment of the Middle East 1991-96," *Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College*, December 7, 1992, p. 1.; Anthony Lake, "The Middle East Moment," *Washington Post*, July 24, 1994, p. C1; and James A. Phillips, "Containing Iran," *Heritage Foundation Backgrounders* no. 980, March 9, 1994.
- [3] Quoted in Gerald F. Seib and Robert S. Greenberger, "Bush Wants U.S. to Forgive Egypt Debt; Prolonged Presence in Gulf Is Indicated," *Wall Street Journal*, September 5, 1990, p. A3.
- [4] Lake, "The Middle East Moment."
- [5] Richard K. Hermann, "The Middle East and the New World Order," *International Security* 6 (Fall 1991): 44.
- [6] *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.
- [7] David R. Henderson, "The Myth of Saddam Hussein's Oil Stranglehold," in *America Entangled: The Persian Gulf Crisis and Its Consequences*, ed. Ted Galen Carpenter (Washington: Cato Institute, 1991), pp. 41-45.
- [8] Earl C. Ravenal, *Designing Defense for a New World Order: The Military Budget in 1992 and Beyond* (Washington: Cato Institute, 1991), p. 51.
- [9] Quoted in Jonathan Marshall, "Economists Say Iraq's Threat to U.S. Oil Supply Is Exaggerated," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 29, 1990.
- [10] The July-August 1994 discoveries in Germany of plutonium that had been smuggled from Russia are indicative of the near-impossibility of keeping nuclear weapons technology from falling into the "wrong" hands. After the initial smuggling incidents, Russian physicist Igor P. Matveyenko admitted that "it's possible to buy anything [in Russia], including weapons and samples." Quoted in Michael R. Gordon and Matthew L. Wald, "Russian Controls on Bomb Material Are Leaky," *New York Times*, August 18, 1994, p. A1. See also Jimmy Burns, Michael Lindemann, and Leyla Boulton, "Plutonium Find Adds to Nuclear Smuggling Fears," *Financial Times*, July 23-24, 1994, p. 22; and Jamie Dettmer, "Germany Hunts 5 Iraqis Linked to Plutonium Seizure," *Washington Times*, July 29, 1994, p. A1.
- [11] Bruce Fein, "Myopic Nuclear Weapons Hysteria," *Washington Times*, July 13, 1994, p. A17.
- [12] Charles William Maynes, "Dateline Washington: A Necessary War?" *Foreign Policy* 82 (Spring 1991): 168. Other scholars have also made that point. See, for example, Kenneth Waltz, "Stability," in *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Be Better*, Adelphi Paper no. 171 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981); and John Mearsheimer, *Conventional Deterrence* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983).
- [13] Quoted in Samuel Francis, "In Defense of Stability or Oil Prices?" *Washington Times*, October 14, 1994, p. A21.
- [14] Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "White Slaves in the Persian Gulf," *Wall Street Journal*, January 7, 1991, p. A14.
- [15] Martin Indyk, "Special Report: Clinton Administration Policy toward the Middle East," *Washington Institute for Near East Policy Policywatch* no. 84, May 21, 1993, p. 2.
- [16] John M. Goshko, "U.S., Gulf States: Keep Limits on Iraq," *Washington Post*, April 28, 1994, p. 21.
- [17] Quoted in Carol Giacomo, "Russia, France Break Ranks with U.S. on Saddam Strategy," *Washington Times*, October 15, 1994, p. A14.
- [18] Shahram Chubin, "Post-Gulf War Security," *Survival* 33 (March-April 1991): 148.
- [19] On the European Union and Japan, see F. Gregory Gause III, "The Illogic of Dual Containment," *Foreign Affairs*

73 (March-April 1994): 61. On Russia and China, see Phillips, p. 8.

[20] Elaine Sciolino, "Iran's Difficulties Lead Some in U.S. to Doubt Threat," *New York Times*, July 5, 1994, p. A1.

[21] Anthony Lake, "Confronting Backlash States," *Foreign Affairs* 73 (March-April 1994): 53.

[22] "Inside Washington," *National Journal*, July 2, 1994, p. 1555.

[23] Institute for National Strategic Studies, "U.S. Egyptian Relations after the Cold War: Egypt's Growing Challenges," *Strategic Forum*, no. 4 (August 1994): 3.

[24] Amnesty International has documented many incidents in which Kuwaiti authorities were involved in torture, "disappearances," and arbitrary detentions of people who had been arrested for various crimes against the state. See "Amnesty Reports Kuwaiti Crimes," *Civil Society*, March 1994, p. 12.

[25] Geraldine Brooks, "Saudi Arabia Is Facing Debts and Defections That Test U.S. Ties," *Wall Street Journal*, October 25, 1994, p. A1.

[26] Robert Olson, "Turkey and Iraq: Towards Normalisation?" *Middle East International*, August 7, 1992, p. 19.

[27] Kelly Couturier, "Turkey Takes Steps to Bolster Iraqi Authority over Kurds," *Washington Post*, October 1, 1994, p. A18; James Dorsey, "Turkey Defies Sanctions in Bid to Trade with Iraq," *Washington Times*, August 30, 1994, p. A11.

[28] Quoted in Robert S. Greenberger, "Turkey, Stalwart Ally in Gulf War, Is Asserting Its Independence from U.S.," *Wall Street Journal*, October 3, 1994, p. A16.

[29] Umit Enginsoy and Barbara Opall, "Politics Alter Turk Stance on Gulf War," *Defense News*, October 17-24, 1994, p. 92.

[30] Quoted in *ibid.*

[31] Geoffrey Kemp, "Cooperative Security in the Middle East," in *Global Engagement: Cooperation and Security in the 21st Century*, ed. Janne Nolan (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1994), pp. 391-418; and Carol Migdalovitz, "Middle East Peace and Security Issues," *Congressional Research Service Issue Brief* no. IB92024, July 14, 1992, p. 5.

[32] Atkeson, p. 91.

[33] Gause, p. 62.

[34] Indyk, "Special Report," p. 2.

[35] Robin Wright and John Broder, "How the United States Can Free Itself from a Costly, Unrewarding Gulf Policy," *Los Angeles Times*, August 11, 1993, p. M2. It is also telling that some State Department officials have expressed reluctance to use the term "dual containment" in testimony to Congress, and Robert H. Pelletreau, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, agreed with House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Lee Hamilton's (D-Ind.) comment that the phrase is "confusing." U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, *Developments in the Middle East: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, Committee on Foreign Affairs, 103rd Cong., 2d sess., March 1, 1994* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1994), p. 20.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 38.

[37] Indyk, "Special Report," p. 3.

[38] *Ibid.*

[39] Lake, "Confronting Backlash States," p. 54.

[40] Daniel Pipes, "Why American Can't Save the Kurds," Wall Street Journal, April 11, 1991, p. A15.

[41] Thomas L. McNaugher, testimony, in U.S. House Committee on Armed Services, Defense Policy Panel, Options for Dealing with Iraq: Hearings before the Defense Policy Panel of the House Committee on Armed Services, 102d Cong., 2d sess., August 10-11, 1992 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1993).

[42] Ibid.

[43] Charles Tripp, "The Gulf States and Iraq," Survival 34 (Autumn 1992): 44.