

## Cato Institute Policy Analysis No. 267: U.S. "Global Leadership": A Euphemism for World Policeman

February 5, 1997

Barbara Conry

Barbara Conry is a foreign policy analyst at the Cato Institute.

### Executive Summary

"Global leadership" has gained increasing prominence as a guiding principle for American foreign policy. Yet the concept itself remains largely unexamined. Although "leadership" sounds benign, today's proponents of global leadership envision a role for the United States that resembles that of a global hegemon--with the risks and costs hegemony entails.

Global political and military leadership is inadequate, even dangerous, as a basis for policy. The vagueness of "leadership" allows policymakers to rationalize dramatically different initiatives and makes defining policy difficult. Taken to an extreme, global leadership implies U.S. interest in and responsibility for virtually anything, anywhere.

Global leadership also entails immense costs and risks. Much of the \$265 billion defense budget is spent to support U.S. aspirations to lead the world, not to defend the United States. There are also human costs. Moreover, it is an extremely risky policy that forces U.S. involvement in numerous situations unrelated to American national security.

There are no concrete benefits that justify the costs and risks of U.S. global leadership. Advocates' claims that leadership enables Washington to persuade U.S. allies to assume costs the United States would otherwise bear alone and that failure on the part of the United States to lead would cause global chaos do not hold up under scrutiny.

There are several alternatives to global leadership, including greater reliance on regional security organizations and the creation of spheres of influence or regional balance-of-power arrangements. The United States would then act as a balancer of last resort. Such a strategy would preserve U.S. security without the costs and risks of an unrealistic crusade to lead the world.

### *Introduction: From Containment to Leadership*

The U.S. foreign policy community has been grasping for a national security strategy since the end of the Cold War nullified the doctrine of containment. From former president George Bush's proclamation of the "new world order" to the Clinton administration's strategies of "enlargement" and "assertive multilateralism," Washington has found containment a tough act to follow. Gradually, though, a bumper-sticker approach to foreign policy has emerged upon which almost everyone can agree: U.S. "leadership" in world affairs.

Pundits of varying ideological persuasions and high-level policymakers from both parties have embraced the notion of global leadership as a guiding principle of U.S. foreign policy. Former secretary of state Warren Christopher has

written, "America must lead. . . . American leadership is our first principle and a central lesson of this century. The simple fact is that if we do not lead, no one else will." [\[1\]](#) Republican presidential nominee Bob Dole echoed Christopher's sentiments, declaring, "Only the United States can lead on the full range of political, diplomatic, economic, and military issues confronting the world." [\[2\]](#) House Speaker Newt Gingrich has joined the chorus:

We have to lead the world. . . . If we don't lead the world I think that we have a continuing decay into anarchy, I think we have more and more violence around the planet, and I think it is highly unlikely anybody will replace us in leadership roles in the next 30 years. [\[3\]](#)

Christopher, Dole, and Gingrich have at times had serious disagreements about the conduct of foreign policy. Their agreement on the need for U.S. global leadership does not indicate consensus but instead reflects the ambiguity of global leadership as a basis for U.S. strategy. Anyone can invoke the mantra of U.S. global leadership because its meaning is in the mind of the speaker. As Jessica Mathews of the Council on Foreign Relations has pointed out, "Rhetorically, at least, nearly everyone agrees on the undiminished need for American leadership. But the word is used to mask profoundly different views of America's role in the world." [\[4\]](#)

### *Conflicting Definitions of U.S. Leadership*

There is nothing wrong with "leadership" per se. The United States can and should play a leading role in a number of arenas. Washington's leadership since World War II of the global trade liberalization process, for example, has been highly constructive. Such economic leadership should continue. U.S. moral and cultural leadership--the American tradition of commitment to such ideals as democracy, individual liberty, and the other philosophical foundations of the Constitution--should also continue. Such American economic and moral leadership is both beneficial and sustainable.

Today's proponents of "global leadership," however, are advocating something better described as hegemony than as leadership. Unlike moral or economic leadership, global leadership does not envision the United States' leading by example or through diplomacy. Global leadership is essentially coercive, relying on "diplomacy" backed by threats or military action.

Global leadership also entails greater responsibility than does leadership in the economic or moral and cultural arenas. U.S. leadership in trade liberalization does not make the United States responsible for countries that practice protectionism. Nor does economic leadership demand that the United States use any means necessary to maintain its leadership role. Advocates of U.S. political and military leadership, however, have a much more ambitious view of the responsibilities global leadership entails and the actions the United States is obligated to take to preserve its role as global leader.

American political and military leadership can be defined in a number of ways, but two schools of thought dominate today. One school of thought, loosely associated with the Clinton administration and the Democratic Party, advocates exercising U.S. global leadership in a multilateral context to advance humanitarian or Wilsonian objectives. The other school of thought, loosely associated with the Republican Party, advocates unilateral U.S. leadership primarily for traditional realist--power and national security--objectives.

### *Multilateralism vs. Unilateralism*

Clinton has said, "Unilateralism in the world that we live in is not a viable option." [\[5\]](#) Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has explained the administration's position more fully:

We cannot afford to abandon either peace-keeping or a multilateral approach to solving difficult problems. As much as we would wish otherwise, conflicts are going to continue. The world is going to look to the United States for leadership. It will be in our interests to provide that leadership, but we cannot and should not bear the full burden alone. [\[6\]](#)

The multilateralists often condemn the unilateral approach as isolationism. Historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s comment, "The isolationist impulse has risen from the grave, and it has taken the new form of unilateralism," is representative.

[\[7\]](#)

Many Republicans, on the other hand, allege that "multilateralism [has become] something of a cover for U.S. retrenchment," in the words of Sen. Richard Lugar (R-Ind.). [\[8\]](#) House Majority Leader Dick Armey of Texas has warned, "The nation has gone too far in the direction of globalism and lost sight of its essential footings, and we [congressional Republicans] intend to change that." [\[9\]](#) Indeed, the only time unilateralists express enthusiasm about multilateralism is when it means inviting other countries to sign on to a U.S. initiative on Washington's terms, as was the case in the Persian Gulf War. As Dole explains,

The choices facing America are not, as some in the administration would like to portray, doing something multilaterally, doing it alone, or doing nothing. These are false choices. The real choice is whether to allow international organizations to call the shots--as in Bosnia or Somalia--or to make multilateral groupings work for American interests--as in Operation Desert Storm. [\[10\]](#)

### ***Global Social Worker or Global Cop?***

The other major difference between the two views is the circumstances in which the United States should exercise leadership. The Democrats generally seem more comfortable leading Wilsonian crusades with idealistic objectives--promoting democracy, protecting human rights, or delivering humanitarian assistance--than with using force for traditional security agendas. Thus, they take a hard line on Haitian dictators but favor a conciliatory stance toward North Korea. As Michael Mandelbaum of the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University has said of the Clinton administration's foreign policy,

In [Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia] the administration was preoccupied not with relations with neighboring countries, the usual subject of foreign policy, but rather with the social, political, and economic conditions within borders. It aimed to relieve the suffering caused by ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, starvation in Somalia, and oppression in Haiti. Historically, the foreign policy of the United States has centered on American interests, defined as developments that could affect the lives of American citizens. Nothing that occurred in these three countries fit that criterion. Instead, the Clinton interventions were intended to promote American values. [\[11\]](#)

Republicans, on the other hand, tend to favor law-and-order and realpolitik leadership, advocating intervention to keep the world in line and to preserve America's status as the world's foremost military power. Instead of restoring democracy in Haiti or taking a stand against "genocide" in Bosnia, Republicans advocate tougher policies toward such international villains as North Korea and Iran. Whatever support they have given to the idea of American action in Bosnia has generally been not for humanitarian reasons but to preserve the prestige of the United States and NATO. Lugar, for example, has stated,

The policy dispute over Bosnia is no longer just about Bosnia, but rather about allied unity and the willingness of Europeans and Americans to adjust their Cold War political and security institutions and missions to the changing geo-strategic circumstances in and around Europe. In some ways, the details of such adjustments are less important than the pressing need to demonstrate and convince politicians and publics on both sides of the Atlantic that American leadership on European security issues is both possible and advantageous for Europeans as well as for Americans. [\[12\]](#)

Some on the right also hint that the United States should take a more active role in policing the world generally. Lugar has argued, "We have an unparalleled opportunity to manage the world." [\[13\]](#) Former U.S. senator Malcolm Wallop has been more specific: "If America's presence and purpose in the world can be doubted, if we tolerate vacuums of power, they will be filled by others, and ultimately American blood will be spilled." [\[14\]](#)

It is important to point out that this description of the two approaches to U.S. leadership is extremely general. There are variations within each school of thought, and the two approaches correspond only roughly to the two political parties, with numerous exceptions. [\[15\]](#) And other prominent advocates of U.S. global leadership do not fit into either of

the schools of thought outlined here.

Joshua Muravchik of the American Enterprise Institute, for example, argues in favor of an expansive and costly version of global leadership that encompasses both Wilsonian and realist objectives. His book, *The Imperative of American Leadership*, opens with the proclamation:

This book is an argument. It is an argument for a certain kind of U.S. foreign policy now that the cold war is behind us. It is an argument for a foreign policy that is engaged, proactive, interventionist, and expensive.

This argument flies in the face of the shibboleth that American cannot be the world's policeman. In truth, it must be more than that. A policeman gets his assignments from higher authority, but in the community of nations there is no authority higher than America. . . . America is the wealthiest, mightiest, and most respected nation. At times, it must be the policeman or head of the posse--at others, the mediator, teacher, or benefactor. In short, America must accept the role of world leader. [\[16\]](#)

Muravchik's vision of American global leadership transcends those of both prominent Democrats and Republicans--whose notions of U.S. leadership Muravchik criticizes as disguised isolationism.

The fundamental disagreements about what constitutes global leadership underscore the ambiguity and elasticity of the term. The policy is vulnerable to both honest misinterpretation and deliberate misrepresentation--by the U.S. foreign policy community, the American public, foreign governments, and foreign populations. It is also dangerously easy to manipulate, allowing policymakers to disguise a misguided or foundering policy as a mysterious but necessary way of exercising or preserving American leadership. Vagueness may be useful for propaganda purposes, but basing U.S. foreign policy on such shifting sands is unwise.

### *Translating Leadership into Policy*

The ambiguity of "leadership" is also one of the reasons it is so difficult to translate into policy. At its most extreme, leadership-driven foreign policy suggests that the United States is responsible to some degree for everyone, everywhere. It is unlikely that Washington could or would seek to take the idea to that extreme in terms of policy. The inescapable dilemma, then, is how to determine which situations demand Washington's attention and which can be left to run their course.

The proponents of leadership cannot agree on the proper criteria for making such decisions. Of those who contend that the United States must exhibit leadership by protecting multiethnic Bosnia-Herzegovina against the secessionist Bosnian Serbs, for example, A. M. Rosenthal of the New York Times has asked, "Why only Bosnia?"

All over the world, rebel peoples are at war with their internationally recognized governments. They die to destroy regimes they detest--or just separate from them.

But in only one country has the West gone to war to block anti-government forces: in Bosnia, where the Serbian Christians seek separation from a Government they see as created and held by Serbian Muslims. [\[17\]](#)

Advocating U.S. intervention in the Bosnian war while ignoring other, similar regional wars is random at best. Such selectivity could, however, be perceived as having more sinister motives. Citing more deadly recent conflicts in such places as Sudan, Cambodia, Rwanda, and Angola, syndicated columnist Doug Bandow has observed, "For all of the passion exhibited by those who advocate military intervention to protect Bosnian Muslims, it seems strangely limited. Put bluntly, those who shout the loudest about genocide and war seem to care only when the victims are white Europeans." [\[18\]](#)

The decision about when and where to exercise American leadership--given the impossibility of applying it everywhere American values are offended--is inherently arbitrary unless it is linked to U.S. vital interests. Comments

by Amb. Robert G. Neumann of the Center for Strategic and International Studies on the difficulty of deciding when to intervene against "evil" are especially revealing on that point:

If you decide that intervention by force is needed, a choice of where it is to be placed is always questionable and unfair, but we must not, in my opinion, prevent ourselves from acting at all because then evil really prevails. . . . You have to make a decision who are the guilty parties--never mind the details that others are guilty. There are always others guilty as well. That is an academic discussion. [\[19\]](#)

What Neumann dismisses as an "academic discussion" has tremendous and troubling real-world implications for those parties that are arbitrarily deemed guilty. The troubling moral implications of military action are generally accepted as a necessary evil when national security is at stake. When intervention is contemplated for essentially altruistic reasons, however--to stop "evil," for instance--it would seem that moral implications should take on considerably more importance. For the world's leading power to exercise leadership by combatting "evil" (or "ethnic cleansing," "aggression," or the like) on a random or, at the very least, highly selective basis--which will at times entail punishing innocent parties for the sins of others--is not only ironic, it more closely resembles bullying than leadership.

### *Promise Now, Pay Later*

Another policy problem involves the grandiose rhetoric that is a hallmark of global leadership and frequently results in policy dilemmas or embarrassing backpedaling. U.S. officials too often succumb to the temptation to make extravagant promises of future U.S. action--usually at times when the likelihood of having to act on those promises seems remote (or at least beyond the next election).

Colorado College political science professor David C. Hendrickson has described the danger of lavish promises. In the 1992 presidential campaign, he writes, Clinton

not only signed on to the idea of a "new world order," but added [other commitments] that, taken together, amounted to a considerably more ambitious agenda. He would press the Chinese on human rights by linking improvements to renewal of China's most-favored-nation trade status, bring democracy to Haiti and Cuba by tightening the trade embargoes against both, and stop Serbian aggression in Bosnia by air strikes and by opposing any settlement that seemed to reward the Serbs for their misdeeds. [\[20\]](#)

One of the results of Clinton's campaign rhetoric, according to Hendrickson, has been a loss of U.S. prestige abroad, "stemming from the realization in foreign capitals that American policy cannot be taken at face value or need not be taken seriously (because, as J. P. Morgan said of the market, it fluctuates)." [\[21\]](#)

### *Extravagant Promises*

Hendrickson's criticism pertained to Clinton's campaign promises, but Clinton's failure to fulfill commitments he reiterated after becoming president is considerably more troublesome. One example is Clinton's decision to link China's most-favored-nation trade status to human rights, a policy he later abandoned. As Dole criticized, "In less than two years, China--and the world--saw a complete reversal of administration policy with an intermediate stop at indecision. The Chinese leadership, our allies, and our adversaries learned an important lesson: the President of the United States does not always mean what he says." [\[22\]](#)

The Clinton administration also was forced to back away from overly ambitious rhetoric about the North Korean nuclear weapons program. Administration officials initially declared that North Korea would not be allowed to develop any nuclear weapons. Later, the administration conceded that Pyongyang may in fact already possess a small number of nuclear devices. [\[23\]](#)

In the cases of both China and North Korea, Washington overestimated both what it needed to do and what the United States was capable of doing. Human rights and nuclear nonproliferation are worthwhile goals, but they are competing with an array of other foreign policy objectives--many of which are more important. Because of China's immense market potential, trade was a higher priority than human rights. And the risks associated with forcibly denying

Pyongyang a nuclear weapons capability--conducting a preemptive strike, for example--were more dangerous than North Korea's possession of a few nuclear devices. The lesson is that U.S. officials should not be seduced by the myth of Washington's omnipotence into making commitments that the United States cannot meet or does not value enough relative to other priorities to meet.

Global leadership, however, demands U.S. involvement in many issues that have little or no impact on American vital interests. Consider the ambitious set of election-year foreign policy goals Christopher, invoking U.S. leadership, set forth in early 1996. Expansion of NATO, achievement of a comprehensive test ban treaty, ratification of START II, and integration of environmental goals into diplomacy were designated as top diplomatic objectives. In addition, Christopher said, the administration would work to repair U.S. relations with China; crack down on narcotics trafficking; prosecute war criminals in Bosnia and Rwanda; end the Arab-Israeli conflict; and "pursue initiatives in such places and Northern Ireland, Haiti, Cyprus, Angola, Burundi, Peru, and Ecuador." [\[24\]](#) As the breathtaking expansiveness of the administration's 1996 agenda suggests, foreign policy based on U.S. leadership perpetuates and encourages the myth that the United States can and should manage the rest of the world.

### *Wars for Credibility*

Global leadership, then, requires both that the United States get involved in numerous conflicts around the globe and that it do whatever is necessary to prevail in order to preserve U.S. credibility. That is often overlooked. Hendrickson dismissed the significance of the failure of the U.S. mission in Somalia because "Somalia involved no great interest on the part of the United States; the intervention there could be abandoned with the same casualness as it was undertaken." [\[25\]](#) Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) displayed a similar attitude during the congressional debates over the U.S. operation in the former Yugoslavia: "We all recognize the mission may fail. But the real failure would be not to try." [\[26\]](#)

On the contrary, if leadership is the *raison d'être* of American foreign policy, and especially if it is the primary rationale for a U.S. military operation, the United States must succeed, even at heavy cost, because preserving American credibility is of paramount importance. Dole stressed that point: "No more overnight reversals, no more conflicting signals, and no more strategic incoherence. Our future security depends on American leadership that is respected, American leadership that is trusted, and, when necessary, American leadership that is feared." [\[27\]](#) The difficulty--if not impossibility--of pursuing a policy that demands U.S. involvement in numerous affairs unrelated to American security while also requiring that the United States do whatever is necessary to succeed in all diplomatic and military endeavors it undertakes is obvious.

The Clinton administration's handling of Bosnia is a striking example of problems associated with making ill-conceived commitments to demonstrate leadership, then having to follow through to preserve credibility. When the UN Protection Force in the former Yugoslavia appeared on the verge of collapse in the spring and summer of 1995, Clinton volunteered U.S. troops to assist in its extraction on the basis of U.S. leadership of NATO: "As the leader of NATO, the United States would have an obligation . . . to assist in that withdrawal, involving thousands of U.S. troops in a difficult mission." [\[28\]](#)

Largely to avoid having to honor that commitment, the United States instead sent Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke to launch an ambitious peace initiative as NATO conducted robust air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs. [\[29\]](#) The final version of Holbrooke's peace plan, the Dayton agreement, is a convoluted measure that few experts believe will endure. [\[30\]](#) Nonetheless, Clinton sent U.S. troops to enforce the precarious accord. In his nationally televised address to the American people, he explained why:

My duty as President is to match the demands for American leadership to our strategic interests and to our ability to make a difference. America cannot and must not be the world's policeman.

. . . We can't do everything, but we must do what we can. There are times and places where our leadership can mean the difference between peace and war. . . .

The terrible war in Bosnia is such a case. Nowhere is the need for American leadership more stark or more immediate than in Bosnia. [\[31\]](#)

Christopher characterized the Bosnia mission as "an acid test of American leadership." [\[32\]](#) Ironically, though, a U.S. failure to establish an independent, peaceful Bosnia--a highly possible outcome--would cause immeasurable damage to U.S. leadership. Holbrooke has conceded as much:

Failure is unthinkable. We cannot afford to fail. NATO's future, the relationship of Central Europe and of Russia to the West, Germany's willingness to take on a more active role in European security, the future of the American people's support for peacekeeping and for international engagement--all of these things are at stake in Bosnia. [\[33\]](#)

### *The Imperatives of Leadership*

U.S. global leadership can be a policy straitjacket even in the absence of extravagant rhetoric, creating "imperatives" where there are none. Zbigniew Brzezinski has said of Bosnia,

[The United States is] fleeing the moral and practical imperatives of its own power. . . . You Americanize the war [in Bosnia] or you Americanize the genocide. Since the United States is the only power in the world that can stop the ethnic cleansing, the United States is responsible if the ethnic cleansing continues. [\[34\]](#)

Washington, to its credit, has not yet accepted responsibility for ending ethnic cleansing around the world. Brzezinski, however, seems to suggest that Washington need not explicitly agree to such a mission; the United States must stop ethnic cleansing because it (supposedly) has the ability to do so.

An Atlantic Council working group has reached similar conclusions about American responsibility with respect to ethnic conflicts. The group issued a report that conceded, "None of the ethnic tensions the Working Group analyzed in its case studies challenge American vital interests, i.e., interests which the U.S. would go to war to defend, and it would be an exceedingly rare ethnic conflict that would challenge American vital interests." [\[35\]](#) Nonetheless, the report went on to say, "The United States will often have responsibility to take the lead and will have a unique leadership role to play in regard to ethnic conflicts." [\[36\]](#) Again, the implication appears to be that the United States need not seek or accept a major role in a specific situation to incur obligations; U.S. power and the habitual claiming of the mantle of world leadership make many obligations automatic.

Given the number of ethnic conflicts that are currently raging and are likely to flare up in the near future--the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute counted 30 major armed conflicts in 1995 alone--that imperative puts too great a claim on American blood and treasure to provide the underpinning for a viable foreign policy.

[\[37\]](#) Christopher has commented, "Our strength is a blessing, not a burden." [\[38\]](#) The argument that the United States must take action simply because it has the ability to do so, however, carries the implicit assumption that U.S. strength is indeed a burden rather than a blessing. For those who insist that American power automatically entails far-flung obligations, it may be worthwhile to recall John Quincy Adams's famous words:

America goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy. . . . She well knows that by once enlisting under other banners than her own, were they even the banners of foreign independence, she would involve herself beyond the power of extrication, in all the wars of interest and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy, and ambition, which assumed the colors and usurped the standards of freedom. . . . She might become the dictatress of the world. She would no longer be the ruler of her own spirit. [\[39\]](#)

### *Costs of American Leadership*

Global leadership is a tremendously costly proposition. The question of what resources--economic and human--Americans are willing to devote to ensuring that the United States remains the world's only superpower is seldom

raised. Indeed, it is almost heretical to mention the costs of such leadership, as Mathews has pointed out: "Weirdly, to say now that America's goals should reflect our relatively diminished resources and willingness to spend them is to invite being labeled as a despised `declinist.'" [\[40\]](#)

### ***Leadership's Financial Price Tag***

The costs, though, are real. Gingrich has admitted,

You do not need today's defense budget to defend the United States. You need today's defense budget to lead the world. If you are prepared to give up leading the world, you can have a much smaller defense budget. [\[41\]](#)

The U.S. defense budget today totals approximately \$265 billion--more than \$1,000 each year for every American and more than the combined defense budgets of the other industrial powers. [\[42\]](#) A significant proportion of that spending is linked to American security commitments around the world. NATO costs U.S. taxpayers approximately \$60 billion to \$90 billion per year; U.S. commitments to Japan, South Korea, and other East Asian allies cost approximately \$35 billion to \$40 billion per year; and the American commitment to the Persian Gulf region costs at least \$40 billion per year. [\[43\]](#) Those commitments, which total between \$135 billion and \$170 billion annually, are in place largely to preserve American leadership.

Other major powers, concerned about preserving their own security but not preoccupied with notions of global leadership, spend far less. Consider the 1995 defense budgets of NATO's leading European powers: France, \$40.5 billion; Germany, \$34.02 billion; and Great Britain, \$34.48 billion. [\[44\]](#) Despite the war in the former Yugoslavia and the potential for unrest throughout the former Soviet Union, which have a considerably greater impact on European interests than on American interests, European members of NATO spend only a fraction of what Washington spends. There is a similar pattern in East Asia, where Japan's 1995 defense budget was only \$53.8 billion and South Korea's 1995 budget an anemic \$14.36 billion, despite the North Korean threat and other tensions throughout the region. [\[45\]](#) In the absence of any threat to U.S. vital interests, burdening American taxpayers with a \$265 billion defense budget is a high price to pay for "global leadership."

### ***Blood Sacrifices***

Human costs must also be considered. Leadership cannot be achieved through dollar diplomacy and impressive military spending alone. U.S. troops sometimes will have to go into battle to prove American prowess. The American public has demonstrated a meager tolerance of American casualties, especially since the remarkably low body count in the gulf war seemed to suggest that a war could be fought with little bloodshed.

That aversion to human loss has been the object of considerable criticism. Thomas Friedman, foreign affairs columnist for the *New York Times*, has complained,

We can't lead if we don't put our own people at risk, but few . . . postmodern crises offer the sort of compelling moral or strategic appeal that Presidents traditionally use to justify putting American soldiers in harm's way. Nor do these crises offer the hope of quick, bloodless, video-arcade solutions, † la the gulf war. This is a key reason the Western alliance seems so leaderless in facing the new crises of today. [\[46\]](#)

But the evidence suggests that the American public is not averse to military casualties for the sake of defending vital American interests. The public is intolerant of battlefield losses in military operations that appear to have little or no direct link to U.S. national security. As David Evans of Business Executives for National Security has observed, "The issue really takes on additional sensitivity when there is not a clear and compelling national interest for the government to impose the blood tax on its youth." [\[47\]](#) And, as Friedman conceded, today's crises do not offer the "compelling moral or strategic appeal" that would raise American tolerance for spilled blood. Public skepticism about sending U.S. troops to Bosnia is consistent with this analysis; polls have indicated that Americans do not believe U.S. vital interests are at stake, and consequently support for the operation is weak. [\[48\]](#)

## ***The Alleged Benefits of U.S. Leadership: Burden Sharing and Diplomatic Achievements***

Given the enormous economic and human costs and the troublesome policy implications associated with leading the world, the supposed benefits of leadership deserve close scrutiny. One alleged benefit is that the United States, by taking the lead, can persuade the rest of the world to pay for and accept some of the risks of foreign policy initiatives that the United States would otherwise pursue alone.

### ***The Burden-Sharing Illusion***

The preeminent example of such burden sharing is the gulf war. Much of the foreign policy community agrees that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and threats to Saudi Arabia posed an intolerable risk to U.S. national security and that therefore the United States would have and should have gone to war over the matter with or without assistance from other countries. But because of President Bush's adroit display of U.S. leadership, it is said, the United States was able to gain the cooperation and financial support of other countries. Former Reagan and Clinton administration official David Gergen has written,

The president wisely decided to internationalize the opposition to Iraq. While it was obvious that the United States was calling the shots, the fact that the UN Security Council gave its blessing to American policy at each step along the way provided a stamp of international legitimacy. . . . the fact that other members of the coalition were willing to defray the costs borne by U.S. taxpayers also made the effort much more appealing. [\[49\]](#)

As *Foreign Policy* editor Charles William Maynes noted at the time of the crisis, however, international support was not freely given. Washington provided economic aid to the Soviet Union; forgave Egypt's debt; and ignored human rights abuses in China, Ethiopia, and Syria. [\[50\]](#) Moreover, Japan and the West European powers had a significant interest of their own at risk--gulf oil, on which those countries rely far more than does the United States. Their meager contributions to the U.S.-led military operation against Saddam Hussein were not burden sharing; on the contrary, Japan and Western Europe were "free riding" on U.S. efforts in order to preserve their own security interests during the gulf war. [\[51\]](#)

### ***An Invitation to Free Riders***

The free-rider problem has long been an issue in U.S. security relations with its allies. Early in the Cold War Washington made massive security commitments to Western Europe, Japan, and South Korea. In light of those countries' postwar economic and military weakness--which the Soviet Union almost certainly would have exploited--those commitments were justifiable in the context of U.S. interests. Today, however, given the demise of the Soviet Union and the economic strength of Washington's NATO and East Asian allies, there is no reason for American taxpayers to underwrite those countries' security.

Yet even as they cut their own defense budgets, U.S. allies insist that the American contribution to their defense--the presence of U.S. troops and (appealing to the vanity of American policymakers) Washington's political leadership--is indispensable to their security. The French, for example, are notorious for having resented Washington's dominance of European security throughout the Cold War, and they still insist on the need for a strong European defense identity independent of the United States. Paris has nonetheless made clear that Washington must never abandon its obligations to European security. As Pierre Lellouche, a member of the cabinet of French president Jacques Chirac (who, within his first year in office, announced dramatic cuts in defense spending) has emphasized,

The maintenance of a strong U.S. commitment to post-Cold War Europe benefits both countries [the United States and France]. The United States needs to remain strongly attached to Europe for its own political, economic, and strategic interests. . . . France needs a strong American commitment to the post-Cold War Europe in which nationalism, border questions, and structural imbalances have been resuscitated. [\[52\]](#)

Other European NATO members, many of which are also cutting their defense budgets, have made similar protestations of their inability to provide for their security without U.S. assistance--as have Japan and South Korea. By doing so, they flatter the United States into paying defense-related costs they would otherwise have to assume.

The argument that, because of U.S. leadership, Washington can secure international cooperation and assistance for activities that the United States would otherwise undertake and pay for alone is false. The reality is that America's leadership role enables other powers to transfer costs and risks to the United States.

### ***Leadership and Diplomatic Successes***

Specific diplomatic achievements are also sometimes cited as benefits of U.S. political and military leadership. But the link between a successful diplomatic initiative and U.S. leadership is often tenuous or nonexistent. Clinton has boasted of "the benefits of America's leadership at the White House [in October 1995] where leaders from all over the Middle East gathered to support the agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority." [\[53\]](#) But, as syndicated columnist and former National Security Council staffer Stefan Halper has pointed out, "If anyone has the right to claim credit for the current state of Arab-Israeli relations, it is the Norwegians--who negotiated the agreement--not us." [\[54\]](#)

Indeed, despite Herculean efforts by every U.S. president since Carter, Israel and the Palestinians were unable to make concrete progress toward peace until the United States got out of the way. Not only was the agreement reached without U.S. leadership, the evidence suggests that negotiations would have been fruitless as long as Washington ran the show. The scrutiny that accompanies high-profile American diplomatic initiatives is often more than delicate negotiations can withstand. In the past, U.S.-sponsored Arab-Israeli peace talks often got derailed on procedural matters, whose importance was magnified by U.S. officials and Washington's media establishment. It was only in the relative obscurity of Norway, free from the pressure of negotiating under the auspices of the world's leading power, that symbolism could be put aside so that substantive negotiations could take place.

It is important to point out, too, that the Middle East peace agreements probably owe more to the end of the Cold War than to the brilliance of Norwegian or U.S. diplomacy. If the Arabs and Israelis could have continued their Cold War practice of exploiting the U.S.-Soviet rivalry--in particular, if the Arab states had not lost Soviet military and economic patronage--peace agreements might not have been signed. Absent the powerful motive of self-interest, any amount of leadership from an outside party would probably not have had a decisive impact on negotiations.

Nor does U.S. leadership guarantee that the peace agreements will endure. Washington has been unable to end violence since the peace agreements were signed, although Clinton administration officials have made numerous attempts to do so. Until the parties themselves decide that genuine peace is worthwhile, there is little the United States can do.

### ***A World without U.S. Leadership: The Myth of the Impending Apocalypse***

Other proponents of U.S. political and military leadership do not point to particular benefits; instead, they warn of near-certain disaster if the United States relinquishes its leadership role. Christopher paints a bleak picture:

Just consider what the world would be like without American leadership in the last two years alone. We would have four nuclear states in the former Soviet Union, instead of one, with Russian missiles still targeted at our homes. We would have a full-throttled nuclear program in North Korea; no GATT agreement and no NAFTA; brutal dictators still terrorizing Haiti; very likely, Iraqi troops back in Kuwait; and an unresolved Mexican economic crisis, which would threaten stability at our border. [\[55\]](#)

Gingrich has pronounced a future without American leadership "a big mess." [\[56\]](#) And former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher has warned,

What we are possibly looking at in 2095 [absent U.S. leadership] is an unstable world in which there are more than half a dozen "great powers," each with its own clients, all vulnerable if they stand alone, all

capable of increasing their power and influence if they form the right kind of alliance, and all engaged willy-nilly in perpetual diplomatic maneuvers to ensure that their relative positions improve rather than deteriorate. In other words, 2095 might look like 1914 played on a somewhat larger stage. [\[57\]](#)

In other words, if America abdicates its role as world leader, we are condemned to repeat the biggest mistakes of the 20th century--or perhaps do something even worse.

Such thinking is seriously flawed, however. First, to assert that U.S. leadership can stave off otherwise inevitable global chaos vastly overestimates the power of any single country to influence world events. The United States is powerful, but it still can claim only 5 percent of the world's population and 20 percent of world economic output. Moreover, regardless of the resources Americans might be willing to devote to leading the world, today's problems often do not lend themselves well to external solutions. As Maynes has pointed out,

Today, the greatest fear of most states is not external aggression but internal disorder. The United States can do little about the latter, whereas it used to be able to do a great deal about the former. In other words, the coinage of U.S. power in the world has been devalued by the change in the international agenda. [\[58\]](#)

Indeed, many of the foreign policy problems that have confounded Washington since the demise of the Soviet Union are the kinds of problems that are likely to trouble the world well into the next century.

"Failed states," such as Somalia, may not be uncommon. But, as the ill-fated U.S. and UN operations in that country showed, there is very little that outside powers can do about such problems. External powers usually lack the means to prevent or end civil wars, such as those in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, unless they are willing to make a tremendous effort to do so. Yet those types of internecine conflicts are likely to be one of the primary sources of international disorder for the foreseeable future.

Despite the doomsayers who prophesy global chaos in the absence of U.S. leadership, however, Washington's limited ability to dampen such conflicts is not cause for panic. Instability is a normal feature of an international system of sovereign states, which the United States can tolerate and has tolerated for more than two centuries. If vital American interests are not at stake, instability itself becomes a serious problem only if the United States blunders into it, as it did in Somalia and Bosnia. [\[59\]](#)

### *Toward a Sustainable Foreign Policy*

The nebulous benefits of U.S. global leadership do not justify its immense costs, and it is unlikely that the United States is even capable of pursuing such a strategy over the long term. Scholars Jonathan Clarke and James Clad have observed, "As American leverage in the world (aid, effective military power, or diplomatic sway) continues to decline, America increases its conditions and demands. . . . Such bluster counts for little." [\[60\]](#) And while trying to lead the world is costly enough now, a strategy that holds as its highest objective the exercise and preservation of American leadership seems likely to lead inexorably to an increase in commitments and costs over the long term.

Instead of trying to lead the world, the United States should concentrate on the protection of its vital national security interests. It can do so better by behaving as the "first among equals" in the community of great powers than by insisting that the United States, as the world's only superpower, can and should take responsibility for events all over the globe. Great power status does, after all, confer not only the ability to get involved in conflicts around the world but also the power to remain aloof from lesser quarrels.

It is conceivable, for example, that Macedonia or Albania could have been drawn involuntarily into the Balkan war if Serbia had been intent on widening the war. It is much more difficult to envision more powerful European countries, such as Germany or France, being drawn into the conflict against their will. Ill-conceived intervention by Germany or France (or the United States, for that matter) could trap any of those countries in a Balkan quagmire, but a scenario in which Serbia or some other Balkan power could force any of those countries to enter the war is difficult to imagine.

American strength is important, but strength is far more than military or diplomacy budgets. The largest military and

diplomatic establishments in the world are useless if they are not used properly. Political strength--credibility--is also crucial. Policies undertaken on the basis of abstract ideas of American leadership are unlikely to enjoy much credibility around the world. Even though Washington may not always back down from overly ambitious rhetoric, potential adversaries will be more inclined to take their chances if the United States develops a record of making empty threats and promises.

A national security strategy based on the protection of U.S. vital interests would be far more credible. The United States would then have no reason to make promises or threats it did not fully intend to keep. In the relatively unlikely event that the United States were to face a challenge to its vital interests, a potential adversary would be taking a grave risk if it chose to disregard warnings from Washington, given the certainty of the United States' responding immediately and strongly to any trespass. Ideally, U.S. credibility and strength would be adequate to counter potential threats without military action. In the event that military action were required to defend U.S. national security interests, however, such action would probably command the support of Congress and the American public. As is evident from the debate over Bosnia, military action for the sake of U.S. leadership does not command that support.

### *A World without U.S. Military Leadership*

If Washington renounces world leadership, is the United States condemned to stand idly by while villains and irredentists around the world terrorize helpless populations? It is unfortunate but true that brutal civil or subregional conflicts are likely to mar the future--as they do the present and have the past. There are many nasty parochial wars that simply cannot be settled by outside powers at an acceptable cost to those powers, whether or not the United States claims the mantle of world leadership.

A more critical issue is the evolution of the international system after U.S. hegemony. Washington can exert considerable influence (though not full control) over the development of that system. Although a number of different scenarios may be acceptable to the United States, Washington should make certain that any global system that succeeds American hegemony has two important characteristics. First, international power and responsibility must be decentralized; the transfer of U.S. global influence and responsibilities to another state, alliance, or global organization such as the United Nations should not be permitted. It is as unrealistic to base the international system on the illusion that some other country or international organization can effectively lead the world as it is to depend on U.S. global leadership. Second, the international system must include a means of checking aspiring hegemon.

### *Regional Security Organizations*

Such a system could take several forms. One possibility is the strengthening of regional security organizations, such as the Western European Union. Regional security organizations are an effective way of keeping order among member states and can also take care of contingencies in their general areas. Had the European countries not been so dependent on NATO, for example, the WEU should have been able to subdue the crisis in the former Yugoslavia if the conflict had been perceived as a wider threat to Europe. Regional organizations could also serve as potential partners to the United States in the event of a serious threat to their mutual interests elsewhere in the world.

Unfortunately, regional security organizations require a high degree of cohesion among member states and therefore are not possible in many parts of the world. The WEU is probably the only such organization that is viable in the near future, although effective regional security organizations encompassing some Latin American and Asian countries are not inconceivable. In much of the rest of the world, however, there is little evidence of the cohesion and common interest that would be a precondition for a functioning regional security organization.

### *Spheres of Influence*

An alternative to regional security organizations is the creation of spheres of influence. The notion of spheres of influence has in the past carried a rather sinister connotation and could still be troublesome if a dominant regional power sought to subvert its neighbors, especially if it subsequently aspired to challenge other major powers. But as long as dominant powers restrict their activities to typical "great power" behavior--which would generally mean shoring up security and prestige but not expansionism--there is nothing inherently evil about spheres of influence.

Several prominent foreign policy scholars have pointed out the feasibility of spheres of influence. Ronald Steel of the University of Southern California has written,

Regional disturbances that do not threaten the world power balance should be dealt with by the major powers of the region, ideally with the endorsement of the international community. Instead of seeking an ephemeral global security, we should, as Charles William Maynes has argued in *Foreign Policy*, encourage a policy of "regional self-reliance [that] would recognize that certain powerful states in each area will inevitably play a special security role." In other words, we must accept the reality of the longstanding tradition of spheres of influence--a tradition that we scrupulously insist upon in the Western Hemisphere under our unilaterally imposed Monroe Doctrine. [\[61\]](#)

Spheres of influence make sense because the world's major powers have an interest in, and usually the ability to maintain a degree of order in, their regions. There is always some risk that the leading power in a particular sphere of influence may abuse its position or develop expansionist ambitions. The decentralization of international power, however, should ensure that the United States, other major powers, or regional security organizations--acting alone or in concert--could check unacceptable behavior on the part of a dominant regional power.

### ***Balance of Power***

Yet another alternative is the establishment of regional balance-of-power arrangements, which may be appropriate in the Middle East, for example. There are serious obstacles to the creation of a viable regional security organization in that area--as demonstrated by the problems the Gulf Cooperation Council has faced--and there is no clear dominant power around which a sphere of influence is likely to develop. Instead, the locus of power tends to shift among the larger states. The United States has in the past sought to manipulate the balance of power by bolstering certain countries as a means of checking others. That risky strategy had disastrous consequences with respect to Iran and Iraq, and, given the unpopularity of the regimes in Egypt and Saudi Arabia and those regimes' close identification with Washington, it may well backfire again.

Allowing the balance of power in the region to evolve without U.S. interference would help shield the United States from the consequences of violent and sudden shifts in the balance but could still be expected to prevent a regional hegemon from rising. As University of Chicago political scientist Stephen M. Walt pointed out in *The Origins of Alliances*,

Compared with the other hypotheses examined in this book, the general hypothesis that states choose allies in order to balance against the most serious threat was the clear winner. Its merits were shown in two important ways. First, balancing was far more common than bandwagoning, and bandwagoning was almost always confined to especially weak and isolated states. Second, the importance of ideological distinction declined as the level of threat increased; ideological solidarity was most powerful when security was high or when ideological factors and security considerations reinforced each other. [\[62\]](#)

The tendency of states to balance against a prospective hegemon, instead of "bandwagoning," has been evident in the Middle East. As Walt observed, "Despite the fact that the Middle East lacks an established tradition of balance of power statecraft . . . , the advantages of seeking allies in order to balance against threats have obviously been apparent to the various actors in the Middle East. . . . the ascendancy of ambitious regional powers (such as Iraq under Nuri al-Said and Egypt under Nasser) consistently led other regional actors to join forces . . . to resist the attempt." [\[63\]](#)

The strategic environment of the Middle East of the 1990s remains conducive to balancing, as an assortment of similarly sized powers--Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Iran--continue to share an interest in preventing the rise of any single power to primacy. The United States may have to tolerate a degree of instability as power shifts among those states, but American vital interests should be reasonably safe as long as power remains diffused throughout the region. If a hegemon were to arise, especially if it were clearly hostile to U.S. interests, the United States would still have the option of acting alone or joining forces with European and other powers to deal with that problem.

### ***Rational Change Now or Involuntary Change Later?***

The United States cannot dictate the precise nature of the global system that succeeds U.S. hegemony, but it can exert considerable influence. In the final analysis, any of the above scenarios, or a combination of them--say, a stronger WEU in Europe and spheres of influence or regional balance-of-power arrangements in other regions--should be tolerable. As long as no single power or group of powers emerges with the capability and intent to challenge U.S. vital interests, the United States should be reasonably secure. To further enhance its security, the United States should always maintain sufficient military strength so that it could influence the distribution of power if serious imbalances were to arise. It should do so as a balancer of last resort, however, and allow smaller scale shifts to be addressed at the regional level.

There are risks associated with any of the above scenarios, to be sure, but a strategy of U.S. global leadership entails an equally high or even higher level of risk and much higher costs. Moreover, it is probably unsustainable in the long term.

If the United States makes the transition to a sustainable foreign policy in the near future, it should be able to do so on its own terms. By ceding extraneous global responsibilities in a reasoned and orderly fashion, Washington will be in a good position to influence the redistribution of global power. Conversely, policymakers can continue to pursue a world leadership strategy and face the crises that are likely to result from that overextension. When such crises arise, the United States may be forced to make abrupt shifts in policy and may have little ability to influence the subsequent redistribution of power and responsibility in the international system. The benefits of voluntarily scaling back American global responsibilities sooner instead of being forced to do so later are obvious. It is not a formula for utopia, but it is far more realistic than a crusade to lead the world.

---

### *Notes*

- [1]. Warren Christopher, "America's Leadership, America's Opportunity," *Foreign Policy* 98 (Spring 1995): 8.
- [2]. Robert Dole, "Shaping America's Global Future," *Foreign Policy* 98 (Spring 1995): 36.
- [3]. Newt Gingrich, "Remarks Delivered at Center for Strategic and International Studies," Washington, July 18, 1995, Federal News Service transcript, p. 6.
- [4]. Jessica Mathews, "What It Means to Lead," *Washington Post*, March 13, 1995, p. A15.
- [5]. Bill Clinton, "Remarks to Freedom House," October 6, 1995, White House, Office of the Press Secretary, p. 9.
- [6]. Madeleine Albright, "Building a Consensus on International Peace-keeping," Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, October 20, 1993, U.S. Department of State Dispatch 4, no. 46 (November 15, 1993): 792.
- [7]. Arthur Schlesinger Jr. "Back to the Womb?" *Foreign Affairs* 74, no. 4 (July-August 1995): 5.
- [8]. Quoted in Robert S. Greenberger, "As Global Crises Mount, More Americans Want America to Stay Home," *Wall Street Journal*, October 28, 1993, p. A1.
- [9]. Quoted in Eric Schmitt, "House Votes Bill to Cut U.N. Funds for Peacekeeping," *New York Times*, February 17, 1995, p. A9.
- [10]. Dole, "Shaping America's Global Future," p. 37. Emphasis in original.
- [11]. Michael Mandelbaum, "Foreign Policy as Social Work," *Foreign Affairs* 75, no. 1 (January-February 1996): 17.
- [12]. Richard G. Lugar, "NATO: Out of Area or Out of Business: A Call for U.S. Leadership to Revive and Redefine the Alliance," Remarks delivered to the Open Forum of the U.S. Department of State, August 2, 1993, Press release, p. 1.

- [13]. Quoted in "Lugar: Let States Manage Safety Net," USA Today, January 4, 1996, p. 9A.
- [14]. Malcolm Wallop, "Beyond the Water's Edge," Policy Review 74 (Fall 1995): 70.
- [15]. For example, Rep. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) is often closely identified with Lugar on foreign policy matters; Sen. Nancy Landon Kassebaum (R-Kans.) is less hostile than most Republicans and conservatives to allowing U.S. troops to serve under UN command, while Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-Ind.) is somewhat more critical of the United Nations generally than are most of his Democratic colleagues. Eighteen House Democrats voted for the National Security Revitalization Act, part of the GOP "Contract with America," while four House Republicans voted against it. Those are only a few of the exceptions to the Republican/Democratic approaches described in this analysis.
- [16]. Joshua Muravchik, *The Imperative of American Leadership* (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1996), p. 1.
- [17]. A. M. Rosenthal, "Why Only Bosnia?" New York Times, May 30, 1995, p. A17.
- [18]. Doug Bandow, "Why Are We in Bosnia?" Human Events 51, no. 35 (September 15, 1995): 7.
- [19]. Robert G. Neumann, "Peace-Imposing Intervention," in *U.S. National Interests in the 21st Century*, Proceedings of a conference organized by the DACOR Bacon House Foundation, Washington, October 7, 1994, ed. Robin M. Gurley (Washington: Diplomatic and Consular Officers Retired, n.d.), p. 78.
- [20]. David C. Hendrickson, "The Recovery of Internationalism," *Foreign Affairs* 73, no. 4 (September-October 1994): 27.
- [21]. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.
- [22]. Robert Dole, "America and Asia: Restoring U.S. Leadership in the Pacific," Remarks delivered at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, May 9, 1996, p. 3.
- [23]. Hendrickson, p. 34.
- [24]. Quoted in *Ibid.*
- [25]. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
- [26]. Quoted in "Impassioned Words in the Senate: National Interest or Deadly Quagmire?" New York Times, December 14, 1995, p. A14.
- [27]. Dole, "America and Asia," p. 5.
- [28]. Bill Clinton, "The Risk of 'Americanizing' the War," Newsweek, August 7, 1995, p. 40.
- [29]. Officially, the air strikes were unrelated to the peace negotiations, but as Roberts Owen, the lawyer in Holbrooke's delegation, admitted, "There is no question in my mind that we bombed the Serbs to the bargaining table." Quoted in Roger Cohen, "Taming the Bullies of Bosnia," New York Times Magazine, December 17, 1995, p. 78.
- [30]. The peace-enforcement mission in Bosnia is a highly uncertain enterprise. As a Washington Post editorial put it, "The leaders of Serbia and Croatia and of Bosnia's Serbs and Croats are extreme nationalist and irredentist politicians. It was always a long shot that they would keep open the idea of an independent Bosnia--this was the core political idea of the Dayton accord. Still, it was worth it--it was right--for outside actors to take a chance and to try to end the slaughter and the ethnic cleansing." "Dayton II," Washington Post, February 20, 1996, p. A10.
- [31]. "Clinton's Words on Mission to Bosnia: 'The Right Thing to Do,'" New York Times, November 28, 1995, p. A14.
- [32]. Warren Christopher, "Bosnia: An Acid Test of U.S. Leadership," U.S. Department of State Dispatch 6, no. 48

(November 27, 1995): 870.

[33]. Quoted in Jim Hoagland, "To Holbrooke, It's Goodbye for Now," *Washington Post*, February 25, 1996, p. C11.

[34]. Quoted in George Will, "Worthy of Contempt," *Washington Post*, August 3, 1995, p. A31.

[35]. Atlantic Council of the United States, "Ethnic Conflicts: Old Challenges, New Dimensions," July 1995, pp. 21-22.

[36]. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[37]. See Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, "SIPRI Yearbook 1996," Press release, June 13, 1996.

[38]. Warren Christopher, "Leadership for the Next American Century," Address at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., January 18, 1996.

[39]. Quoted in George F. Kennan, "On American Principles," *Foreign Affairs* 74, no. 2 (March-April 1995): 118.

[40]. Mathews, p. A15.

[41]. Gingrich, p. 10.

[42]. For fuller critiques of the size of the post-Cold War defense budget, see Lawrence Korb, "Shock Therapy for the Pentagon," *New York Times*, February 15, 1994, p. A21; and "The Military Budget," *Cato Handbook for Congress: 104th Congress* (Washington: Cato Institute, 1995).

[43]. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

[44]. International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1995/96* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 44, 48, 64.

[45]. *Ibid.*, pp. 181, 185.

[46]. Thomas L. Friedman, "The No-Dead War," *New York Times*, August 23, 1995, p. A24.

[47]. Quoted in Chris Black, "U.S. Options Seen As Fewer As Military Avoids Risk," *Boston Globe*, July 23, 1995, p. 12.

[48]. For examples of the polling data on Bosnia, see "Opinion Outlook: Views on National Security," *National Journal*, December 23, 1995, p. 3174; and Elaine Sciolino, "Soldiering On, without an Enemy," *New York Times*, October 29, 1995, p. E1.

[49]. David Gergen, "America's Missed Opportunities," *America and the World 1991/92*, *Foreign Affairs* 71, no. 1 (1992): 6.

[50]. Charles William Maynes, "Dateline Washington: A Necessary War?" *Foreign Policy* 82 (Spring 1991): 165.

[51]. For a more detailed discussion of the benefits the European powers derive from U.S. security efforts in the Persian Gulf, see Shibley Telhami and Michael O'Hanlon, "Europe's Oil, Our Troops," *New York Times*, December 30, 1995, p. A27.

[52]. Pierre Lellouche, "France in Search of Security," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 2 (Spring 1993): 130.

[53]. Clinton, p. 2.

[54]. Stefan Halper, "GOP's Policy Hiatus," *Washington Times*, October 19, 1995, p. A17.

[55]. Warren Christopher, "Overview of the FY 1996 International Affairs Budget," U.S. Department of State Dispatch 6, no. 7 (February 13, 1995): p. 85.

[56]. Gingrich, p. 4.

[57]. Margaret Thatcher, "Why America Must Remain Number One," National Review, July 31, 1995, p. 25.

[58]. Charles William Maynes, "What the United States Must Do to Regain the Respect of the World," Philadelphia Inquirer, April 14, 1995, p. 23.

[59]. For more detailed analysis of the global stability issue, see Barbara Conry, "The Futility of U.S. Intervention in Regional Conflicts," Cato Institute Policy Analysis no. 209, May 19, 1994.

[60]. Jonathan Clarke and James Clad, "Demented Uncle Sam," Washington Post, June 18, 1995, p. C4.

[61]. Ronald Steel, "The Domestic Core of Foreign Policy," Atlantic Monthly, June 1995, p. 92.

[62]. Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986), p. 263.

[63]. *Ibid.*, p. 152.