

### 13. Promise Versus Reality

#### Continuity and Change After the Cold War

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The collapse of the Berlin Wall and the demise of the Soviet Union prompted much talk of refashioning U.S. foreign policy to meet the demands of a new era. Politicians from both political parties spoke openly of the need to free government institutions and policies from the mind-sets of the past. Liberals debated how to spend the coming “peace dividend,” while conservatives debated whether the collapse of the Soviet Union signaled the “end of history” (Fukuyama 1989, 1992). Meanwhile, private foundations sponsored conferences and workshops so that scholars could “rethink” and “reconceptualize” U.S. foreign policy.

As a reading of the chapters in this volume show, these expectations of rapid and dramatic change in the structure and substance of U.S. foreign policy proved to be greatly exaggerated. Five years after Mikhail Gorbachev stepped down as the last Soviet leader, the organizational flow-chart of the U.S. foreign policy bureaucracy looked much as it did ten, twenty, and even thirty years earlier. While some programs were canceled and others downsized (or “rightsized” in the parlance of corporate consultants), much of this organizational change appeared to be a case of “old wine in new bottles.” Likewise, while U.S. policies in areas such as trade, security assistance, and human rights were cloaked in a new rhetoric—few political speechwriters missed the opportunity to note that the world had entered a new era—they had far greater continuity with the past than one might gather from public speeches and press releases.

In this chapter we offer some comments that, in effect, help explain

why the amount of post-cold war change—whether in processes, structures, or policies—has been so small.

### Foreign Policy Structures and Policies After the Cold War

We noted in chapter 1 that most observers believed that the end of the cold war presented the United States with a classic case of “problem depletion.” Much of the foreign policy bureaucracy had been constructed in the wake of World War II to contain the Soviet threat. When the Soviet Union disappeared, much of that bureaucracy was presumably rendered obsolete because many of its assigned tasks no longer needed to be performed, or at least, they required major changes to make sense. Moreover, the end of the cold war came at a time of growing “environmental entropy,” as the American public became less willing (at least in the abstract) to bear the costs of big government. With many foreign policy programs made obsolete and many Americans eager to rein in federal spending, all signs pointed to a substantial restructuring of the U.S. foreign policy bureaucracy and a dramatic reordering of U.S. foreign policy priorities.

Yet, despite problem depletion and environmental entropy, U.S. foreign policy witnessed nowhere near the level or extent of change that many had predicted in the first half of the 1990s. In 1993, Secretary of State Warren Christopher (1993a, 137) remarked that “our foreign policy institutions continue in large measure to mirror the Cold War imperatives. . . . Budgets and bureaucracies still reflect the reality of a world that’s passed.” Three years later, Christopher’s observation remained largely accurate.

The lack of fundamental change in the agencies that make up the U.S. foreign policy bureaucracy is perhaps clearest in the case of the State Department. As James Lindsay shows, despite Christopher’s early pledge to remake State to reflect the realities of the post-cold war world, very little changed during his four years at Foggy Bottom. The Clinton administration initially floated proposals to abolish the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) and to kill Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe, but it abandoned both proposals when confronted with congressional opposition. Elsewhere the administration pushed for the creation of the post of undersecretary for global affairs and made a series of long-overdue management changes at the Agency for International Development (AID), but it failed to redirect substantial funds to global affairs and its proposal to rewrite the legislation underpinning U.S. foreign assistance died on Capitol Hill. Moreover, by 1995 the administration had abandoned its earlier reform efforts and instead fought vigorously to defeat a proposal by

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congressional Republicans to merge AID, ACDA, and the U.S. Informa-  
 tion Agency (USIA) into the State Department.

The lack of substantial change was even more pronounced at the Cen-  
 tral Intelligence Agency. As Loch Johnson and Kimberly Zisk show, under  
 Robert Gates, the director of central intelligence during the Bush admin-  
 istration, the agency made some steps toward recognizing the changes  
 that had occurred in the international environment (while still preserving  
 its budget). These changes came to a halt under Gates's successor, R. James  
 Woolsey, who defended traditional intelligence missions and roles and  
 even argued for budget increases in a context of general economic re-  
 trenchment. Woolsey's attachment to the status quo eventually led Con-  
 gress to create an independent commission to review the operations and  
 budgets of the intelligence services, but the commission, which got off to a  
 very slow start, was further hobbled in its work when its chairman, Les As-  
 pin, died suddenly. Woolsey resigned as DCI in December 1994, and his  
 successor, John Deutch, testified at his confirmation hearing that the  
 agency had failed to adapt to a changed world. Nevertheless, when the  
 commission (now chaired by Harold Brown) reported in March 1996, it  
 basically endorsed the existing structure of the CIA and other intelligence  
 agencies. It provided no serious critique.

The one exception to the relative lack of change in the foreign policy  
 bureaucracy seems to be the Defense Department. Paul Stockton and  
 Kimberly Zisk both argue that the Defense Department experienced a  
 great deal of change in its budget and personnel levels. In 1991, President  
 Bush and Congress agreed to cut defense spending by 22 percent and mili-  
 tary personnel by 26 percent over five years. In 1993, President Clinton  
 even proposed slightly deeper cuts in defense spending and military per-  
 sonnel. (Clinton subsequently reversed course and argued for adding to  
 the defense budget.) Yet, as both Peter Hahn and Stockton remind us,  
 those budget cuts were not accompanied by a rethinking of the roles and  
 missions of the individual services. Indeed, military leaders bitterly resist-  
 ed efforts to redefine roles and missions by defining the threats to U.S. se-  
 curity in the post-cold war era in terms equally dire as those used during  
 the cold war. Thus, even in the case of Defense, the pattern has been a re-  
 trenchment around traditional goals and operations more than a restruc-  
 turing that introduces new goals and operations.

The lack of fundamental change in the structure of the foreign policy  
 bureaucracy has been accompanied by a similar lack of fundamental  
 change in the content of U.S. foreign policy. In their chapter on security  
 assistance, Duncan Clarke and Daniel O'Connor show that neither the ex-



executive branch nor Congress rethought the need for security assistance in the wake of the Soviet Union's demise. The amount of aid fell, but the priority list remained unchanged, with most of the aid going to Israel and Egypt. Neither the executive branch nor Congress seemed willing to question the accommodations and priorities reached in an earlier era.

Similar continuity can be seen in the realm of trade policy. As Pietro Nivola argues, such policy certainly received much more media play during the Clinton years than before them. Yet if we leave rhetoric aside, Clinton's approach to trade issues looked much like that of his predecessors. Whereas he pointed to the passage of NAFTA and GATT as the shining achievements of his administration, the substance of both agreements was negotiated largely by the preceding administration. His political contribution, by no means trivial, was engineering congressional approval.

In dealing with complaints of unfair trading practices by Japan, the Clinton trade team followed the customary practice of quarreling over sectoral items while stopping well short of initiating a trade war. And while Commerce Secretary Ron Brown was highly visible in promoting U.S. exports, commercial "boosterism" has a long history in the United States.

Finally, David Forsythe shows that the Clinton administration did little to elevate human rights policy as a foreign policy priority. Like his predecessors, Bill Clinton spoke out about human rights abuses abroad when doing so appeared to be politically attractive. Yet he showed no signs of having a particular vision about the place of human rights in American policy. And because there is no entrenched bureaucracy to push human rights, the issue remained on the periphery of the foreign policy agenda.

### Leadership and Nonleadership in the Post-Cold War Era

Why was U.S. foreign policy so slow to change in the face of dramatic change in the international arena? The authors in this volume all suggest that the answer to this question lies in the lack of political leadership. While perceptions of problem depletion and environmental entropy may create opportunities for dramatic changes in structures and policies, they by no means guarantee change. What is needed to translate the opportunity for change into actual change is leadership. Yet in the first half of the 1990s, no source provided such leadership.

#### The President

Bert Rockman argues persuasively that the conventional wisdom is correct: the main engine for change in U.S. foreign policy has to be the

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Clinton administration did little for policy priority. Like his predecessors, he showed little concern for human rights abuses abroad when Clinton. Yet he showed no signs of concern for human rights in American bureaucracy to push human rights on the foreign policy agenda.

### Post-Cold War Era

Change in the face of dramatic events in this volume all suggest a lack of political leadership. Environmental entropy may have distorted structures and policies, they failed to translate the opportunity. Yet in the first half of the

the conventional wisdom is that the foreign policy has to be the

president. As Rockman shows, presidents can lead in three ways: first, by providing "directional clarity"; second, by centralizing control over foreign policy; and third, by delegating to officials who can be trusted to implement presidential wishes. Of these three, the most important by far is directional clarity. Much of the benefit of centralized control over policy is lost when presidents do not know which direction they wish to go. Key administration officials cannot implement presidential wishes when the president does not know or fails to make clear those wishes.

The picture that emerges from the chapters in this volume is of two presidents unable to chart a course for the United States in the post-cold war era. George Bush was president when the dramatic events that signaled the end of the cold war occurred. He was very much a figure from the cold war: a longtime public servant inured to the cold war mentality by virtue of his service and experience. A man who openly acknowledged his problem with the "vision thing," he became president precisely at a time when world events called for a new vision. While he spoke earnestly about creating a "new world order," neither he nor his advisers succeeded in breathing any specifics into his vision for the post-cold war era.

In contrast to George Bush, Bill Clinton campaigned in 1992 as the candidate of vision and change. Yet once in office, he gave little evidence of understanding the nature of the challenge to U.S. foreign policy, and engaged in or directed little activity designed to address that challenge. As Vincent Auger points out in his review of the National Security Council, Bill Clinton did not provide strong leadership for the NSC staff, nor did he surround himself with advisers skilled at presenting the administration's policies to either Capitol Hill or the American public. Nor, as Lindsay, Stockton, Johnson, and Zisk indicate in their chapters, did Clinton weigh in on the debates going on within his own administration over whether and how to restructure the foreign policy bureaucracy. Aside from his showing up on the White House lawn in September 1993 to endorse the findings of Vice President Al Gore's national performance review, little was heard from the president on how to redesign foreign policy structures and programs to meet U.S. interests in the post-cold war era.

In short, Bill Clinton campaigned in part on a promise to respond to the changes brought about by the end of the cold war, but he provided neither directional clarity nor centralized control over a foreign policy that could then be placed in the hands of one or a few key subordinates. He filled the principal positions in the foreign and defense policy bureaucratic establishment, but did not seem to know what he wanted or expected of those people, except that they keep him out of trouble. The result was a foreign and defense policy that often wobbled.



One can only speculate why Clinton failed to provide directional clarity. At root, his problems were probably a mix of lack of experience, relative lack of interest, and a political character that seems to shrink from stating clear policies about anything and sticking with them. No doubt these personal characteristics were reinforced by the lack of political benefits to be gained from engineering change in foreign policy institutions and substantive policy. After all, it is a rare voter who will credit a president for revamping the CIA, closing down AID, or reallocating missions at the Defense Department.

### Congress

A spate of recently published research has pointed to the growing importance of the congressional role in foreign policy (see Lindsay 1991, 1994a; Peterson 1994; Ripley and Lindsay 1993; Rosner 1995; Smist 1994; for dissenting views, see Hinckley 1994; Weissman 1995). The authors in this book repeatedly offer evidence of the centrality of Congress. Beginning with the fall of the Berlin Wall and continuing unabated to the present, Congress has made its views on foreign policy matters felt in a variety of ways. In some instances, it pushed the administration to cut programs and spending. This was the case, for example, with spending for the CIA and the Department of Defense before the 104th Congress that began in 1995. Then Congress—controlled by a new Republican majority—shifted gears and added money for defense and for core intelligence functions for fiscal year 1996 (when compared to fiscal year 1995), though it continued to cut spending for other international programs. In other instances, it blocked administration efforts to eliminate or downsize agencies, at times going so far as to broaden the mandate of an agency, as with ACDA in 1993.

In some important ways constitutional structure, precedent, and the simple fact that the executive branch, in contrast to Congress, is headed by a single individual—the president—mean that Congress is always less important in the broad realm of foreign affairs than is the executive branch. That assertion, however, is a long way from the claim that Congress is unimportant, that it is subservient to the executive branch and president, or that its activities have no substantive impact. None of these claims is true.

Congress's influence over how policy is made flows directly from its power of the purse and its power to create, modify, and abolish executive branch agencies. In his chapter on defense reform in the post-cold war era, Stockton nicely lays out the four consequences of these powers:

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First, fear of congressional activism can encourage Pentagon officials to adjust their proposals to forestall or co-opt congressional efforts to change U.S. defense spending and force structure. Second, Congress can shape the patterns of conflict and coalition building within the Pentagon, rewarding end runs by the services or (as in the base force) serving as the tacit ally of Pentagon reformers. Third, Congress can use its power of the purse to legislate changes in force structure and modify efforts by military or civilian officials to reshape the armed services. Fourth, by enacting legislation such as Goldwater-Nichols, Congress can alter the authorities granted to defense policy makers and shift the power relationships between them.

Given the wide-ranging nature of its powers, then, Congress is likely to continue to be central to the process of deciding how to change U.S. foreign policy to meet the needs of the post-cold war era.

Yet to indicate that Congress had a say in the debate over the future of U.S. foreign policy is not to claim that Congress provided the sort of directional clarity that was missing in both the Bush and Clinton White Houses. As observers have pointed out almost since the founding of the republic, the ideological, institutional, partisan, and regional divisions that beset Capitol Hill make it hard for Congress to endorse consistent policies, let alone display leadership. Indeed, while the chapters in this volume offer evidence that the 103d Congress (1993–1994) weighed in on a variety of foreign policy issues, its often unrelated actions did not amount to a consistent or coherent vision of the future of U.S. foreign policy.

Did the 104th Congress prove to be the exception to the rule? History tells us that periods of clearly identifiable policy preferences and wide-ranging action occur rarely in Congress and almost always in concert with presidential leadership, not as a substitute for it. In the twentieth century only the years 1913–1914, 1933–1934, 1964–1965, and 1981 fit this description, and those cases involved domestic policy almost exclusively. In January 1995 the Republicans took control of Congress with ambitious plans in both the domestic and foreign realms. In the latter arena, they stated their intent to remake the State Department Complex and to revamp spending on international affairs. By mid-1996, it was clear that the Republicans could not deliver on their early promises. While the House of Representatives acted quickly on its new agenda for U.S. foreign policy, the Senate showed much greater reluctance to challenge the status quo. And, of course, President Clinton did not agree with much of what the House majority proposed. Eventually, little happened substantively in the foreign policy realm, as quarrels between Congress and President Clinton over



foreign policy became adjuncts to the overall 1996 campaign strategies of both Clinton and the Republicans.

### The Public

Unsurprisingly, the American public provided no clearer guide to the future of U.S. foreign policy in the post-cold war 1990s than did either the president or Congress. What stands out in many of the chapters in this volume is the relative absence of the public from much of the debate over the future of U.S. foreign policy structures and policies. While narrowly based interest groups weighed in at times on proposals to restructure foreign policy agencies—the effort to save Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe is perhaps the most pointed example—these issues never engaged the broader public. Indeed, the near total absence of specific foreign policy issues from the 1992 presidential election campaign suggests that most Americans simply preferred not to think about such matters. The 1994 congressional campaign—which had more issue coherence nationally than most congressional elections—was fought almost entirely on domestic issues. Neither party sought to inject significant discussion of foreign policy into the 1996 presidential campaign. Public interest in foreign policy was at low ebb. When a July 1996 *Wall Street Journal*-NBC News poll asked voters to rank sixteen issues that might help them decide how to vote in the presidential race, foreign policy was ranked last (Seib 1996).

As Richard Herrmann and Shannon Peterson show in their chapter, the ambivalence of the American public over the future of U.S. foreign policy is especially pronounced when it comes to the use of force. The end of the cold war removed the last clear justification for “just war.” Ambivalence about the legitimate use of force in pursuit of American national interests became even more pronounced. Discussion in the run-up to the use of force in the Persian Gulf against Iraq displayed such ambiguity even though Saddam Hussein was clearly accepted as a villain. The paralysis over the use of American or even United Nations force in Bosnia, even though most Americans would agree that the Serbs were villains, was an even more dramatic illustration of the inability of leaders, foreign policy elites, and the mass public to agree on what made sense and was morally justified.

Of course, disagreements among American citizens over the future course of U.S. foreign policy are hardly surprising. “The people” rarely speak clearly without sustained prompting from political leaders (Zaller 1992). Yet the lack of anything approaching a foreign policy consensus among the American public in turn made it easier for both the president and Congress to put off having to grapple with the tough issues raised by

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the end of the cold war. Thus leaders content to drift with inherited policies could claim to reflect the public mood. In doing so, of course, they abdicated any responsibility to lead.

### Bureaucratic Resistance to Change

Given the absence of strong presidential or congressional leadership, it is not surprising that, according to the authors in this volume, the agencies that make up the foreign policy bureaucracy displayed little interest in rethinking how they defined and pursued their missions. In chapter 1 we offered the hypothesis that organizations will resist changes that require them to forfeit missions and to accept smaller budgets. Thus, while almost every agency undertook what it claimed was a thoroughgoing review of the need for its programs in the post-cold war era, relatively little came of these reviews in terms of either structural or programmatic change.

The lack of political leadership, especially leadership from the White House and the president's principal advisers and appointees, hampered the few efforts that were made by lower-ranking officials (whether for reasons of good policy or from a desire for greater political influence) to shut down or expand existing programs. Thus, efforts by officials in the State Department to abolish ACDA and the radio services faltered because of Warren Christopher's lack of sustained interest in rethinking the structure of his agency. Without Christopher's political weight behind them, officials seeking to revamp the structure of the State Department could not overcome the forces of resistance at Foggy Bottom.

With the political leadership to a great extent sitting on the sidelines, bureaucracies, not surprisingly, turned much of their attention to foiling changes they believed were inimical to their interests. The specific strategies they employed varied from moment to moment and from agency to agency. At times, agencies sought to stonewall those pushing for change, in a straightforward test of political influence. At other times, however, agencies sought to co-opt the forces of change, either by redefining the nature of the problem in ways that served bureaucratic self-interest or by proposing their own, preemptive changes. Individual agencies behaved differently from one another, in part because of their different bureaucratic cultures.

### Stonewalling

Agencies may resist change by seeking allies and confronting the forces pushing for change directly in a test of political will and, above all, political strength. An example of such behavior was the battle over the future of



Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe. As Lindsay shows in his chapter on the State Department Complex, the radio services responded to proposals for their abolition by mobilizing political support both at home and abroad. The op-ed articles by former American officials and the testimonials of foreign heads of state paid off; although the budgets for Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe were cut substantially, they both continued operation.

In 1995 there was a brief alliance of views between Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Republican leaders in Congress. They all wanted to consolidate AID, ACDA, and USIA into the State Department. The three smaller agencies all opposed the proposal and put pressure on the White House to change Christopher's mind and to oppose the initiatives of congressional Republicans, especially Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), the new chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The administration succumbed to this pressure, Christopher complied, and the administration successfully stonewalled.

The CIA under James Woolsey took a similarly confrontational approach to dealing with Capitol Hill. The FY 1994 budget request that the agency submitted to Congress in February 1993 sought to add \$1 billion to the intelligence budget, even though congressional sentiment favored deep cuts in spending on intelligence activities and even though Bill Clinton had promised during his presidential campaign that he would cut intelligence spending by \$7 billion over four years. Eventually, Woolsey had to settle for an authorization that froze intelligence spending at fiscal year 1993 levels. Only an alliance between Democratic congressional leaders and Republican members of Congress staved off even deeper budget cuts. The following year, Woolsey again resisted congressional efforts to streamline the intelligence community. Irritated by his obstructionism, Congress essentially bypassed Woolsey by creating an independent commission to review U.S. intelligence operations.

Whereas the radio services and the CIA confronted proposals for budget cuts from the start, the Department of Defense began directly to resist budget cuts only after first accepting sizable reductions in its funding and personnel. By 1994, however, military officers began to complain loudly that the defense budget had been cut too deeply, thereby jeopardizing the ability of the services to carry out their missions. In particular, the military services and their allies on Capitol Hill began to warn that the United States faced a "readiness gap" in its ability to meet potential threats to the nation. Whether military readiness was in fact in dire straits is a matter of much dispute. Lawrence Korb (1995b), a former assistant secretary of defense in the Reagan administration, argues that the readiness gap



was simply a ploy by the services to fend off budget reductions. Whatever the merits of the contending arguments, opposition among the uniformed military to deeper budget cuts convinced the Clinton administration to abandon proposals for further downsizing the Department of Defense.

#### Co-optation through Problem Redefinition

Although agencies from time to time tried to stare down efforts to slash their budgets or cut their programs, perhaps more common were efforts to co-opt the forces of change. One way agencies accomplished this was by trying to redefine the consequences of the end of the cold war. Whereas commentary on the end of the cold war tended to focus on the declining threat to the United States, agencies often argued that at least for them the collapse of the Soviet Union created more and not fewer problems. By arguing that the United States faced new and pressing problems that were central to their missions, agencies sought to redefine the situation as "problem expansion" rather than "problem depletion."

In some respects, the quintessential example of an agency attempting to co-opt change by redefining problem depletion as problem expansion was the CIA under James Woolsey. As Johnson discusses in his chapter, Woolsey pushed for a larger CIA budget on the grounds that the collapse of the Soviet Union meant that "we live now in a jungle filled with a bewildering variety of poisonous snakes" (Woolsey 1993b). The job of tracking all these new snakes would belong to the intelligence community. Thus, the end of the cold war did not make the intelligence agencies less important, as the conventional wisdom had it; rather, it made them all the more important and all the more deserving of government funding.

The Defense Department also sought to protect its roles and missions by redefining the threats facing the United States. Hahn, Stockton, and Zisk in their chapters all show that the Defense Department reacted to the end of the cold war by defining the new threat to its own advantage. In particular, the highly trumpeted "bottom-up review" was predicated on a seven-scenario assessment of the post-cold war foreign threat and required a force structure quite similar to the one the United States had built during the cold war. As one critic of the bottom-up review put it, the review "maintains the U.S. planning perspective that existed during the cold war: it focuses on the near-term future, and on the most *familiar* threats, as opposed to the *greatest* or *most likely* threats to the national security, which will probably appear in the next decade, at the earliest" (Krepinevich 1994, i).



The various agencies that make up the State Department Complex made similar arguments that the end of the cold war had made their work more important than ever. As Lindsay discusses in his chapter, Warren Christopher sought to increase the State Department's budget by \$3 billion with the argument that the demise of the Soviet Union would put an even greater strain on diplomatic resources. Likewise, ACDA argued that the demise of the Soviet Union made the threat of nuclear proliferation more pronounced, and AID argued that its expertise was needed to help encourage democracy in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Even Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, which had been founded specifically to undermine communism in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe, refused to declare victory and close up shop. Instead, the radio services argued they had a crucial role to play in helping democratic institutions and practices take root in what was once the Soviet empire.

### Preemptive Changes

In chapter 1, we noted that bureaucracies may propose or even make changes on their own to ward off externally imposed changes that would be worse. By doing so, they hope to make changes they can live with and that do not threaten their core values or functions, thereby staving off more threatening changes imposed by "outsiders," such as the president or Congress.

Examples of such preemptive behavior dot the post-cold war landscape. Perhaps the best example is the work of Gen. Colin Powell during his tenure as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. As Stockton and Zisk argue, Powell recognized that cuts in defense spending were inevitable. He, in turn, acted to preempt truly threatening change by sacrificing the peripheral needs of the services while still protecting their core missions. In practice, this meant agreeing to accept sizable cuts in funding and personnel while preserving the traditional allocation of roles and missions among the four services. To judge by presidential and congressional efforts in 1995 to increase the defense budget—despite repeated public opinion polls showing that a majority of Americans favored deeper cuts in defense spending—Powell's willingness to seize the initiative on defense spending helped to inoculate the Defense Department against further cuts.

Other agency heads seemed less inclined to use or less adept at using the preemptive change strategy. In the State Department, Secretary Warren Christopher in January 1995 proposed absorbing AID, ACDA, and USIA into State. A subhead in the *New York Times* story covering Christo-

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pher's position caught the essence of the reason for the initiative: "Sweeping Before the Republican Broom Hits the Floor" (Sciolino 1995c). But he—unlike Powell—declined to fight for consolidation. As already mentioned, Secretary Christopher subsequently repudiated his proposal, primarily because of fierce opposition from the affected agencies, who successfully co-opted the White House.

Democrats in Congress continued to press Christopher for some preemptive action to fend off proposals they knew would be forthcoming from Republicans in Congress, particularly from Senator Helms. Christopher eventually responded with a plan to cut about five hundred jobs in the Department of State from a total workforce of about twenty-six thousand. Again, a *New York Times* subhead made the central point: "Effort Is Intended to Avert Overhaul" (Greenhouse 1995a).

Efforts to preempt change were equally fitful in the intelligence community. As Johnson details in his chapter, Robert Gates recognized that Congress would revamp the CIA if he totally ignored calls for change, and to that end he reallocated resources within the agency (again, while preserving the preexisting level of spending). While the practical import of this reallocation is subject to debate—Dan Glickman (D-Kans.), chair of the House Intelligence Committee, complained in 1994 that under Gates the CIA rushed to do any task "simply to preserve its infrastructure" (quoted in Engelberg 1994). Gates's willingness to talk about the need for change helped forestall efforts to cut the CIA's budget. In contrast, James Woolsey failed to respond to congressional demands that he streamline and reorient the intelligence community for the post-cold war era. As one White House adviser described Woolsey's tenure as DCI: "He had an opportunity to be a new broom, and instead he was a defender of the status quo" (quoted in Weiner 1994b).

While Woolsey chose to resist rather than preempt congressional pressure, his successor, John Deutch, showed himself to be much more attuned to sentiment on Capitol Hill. Upon succeeding Woolsey in May 1995, Deutch immediately made major changes in senior staff and promised he would revamp the workings of the agency. Presumably, he hoped these changes would be sufficient to prevent external forces—both legislative and executive—from making even more dramatic changes. The depth and pervasiveness of Deutch's proposed changes remain to be seen. It is worth remembering that in the 1970s the CIA successfully resisted change despite severe buffeting over illegal domestic activities. The instincts of the agency, despite the pledges of Deutch, remain the same. "Preemptive changes" could turn out to be purely cosmetic.



### Change After the Cold War: Where Do We Stand?

This volume has addressed questions involving the presence and absence of both substantive and structural change in U.S. foreign policy and the foreign policy bureaucracy following the end of the cold war. What do the preceding chapters tell us about U.S. foreign policy in those years?

On balance, the authors suggest that the United States is confused and unsure of itself as it grapples with its place in the world. Despite a plethora of blue-ribbon reports and an abundance of political oratory on the need to adapt to a changed world, the structure and substance of U.S. foreign policy changed remarkably little between 1989 and 1996. This lack of change stemmed in large part from the fact that no clear and sustained guidance on goals or strategies came from any source: not from the White House, any individual bureaucracy, the bureaucracy collectively, Congress, or from the public. In fact, the signs of drift and confusion were present in all these entities. Such coherence as existed came primarily from the bureaucracy and that coherence opposed rather than supported significant changes.

When the Berlin Wall fell, when the eastern European Soviet satellite nations threw off both their communist governments and their subordination to the Soviet Union, and when the Soviet Union itself first weathered a coup and then vanished as a single entity, the cold war in classic form quickly became a thing of the past. Most commentators and public officials seemed to assume—and stated their assumptions aloud—that these changes simply compelled the United States to make major changes in its foreign policies and the bureaucratic structure engaged with those policies.

In fact, the collapse of the Soviet empire and the end of the cold war did not irresistibly produce change in U.S. policy and bureaucracy. Few external events compel either bureaucratic or policy change. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was a compelling event. The United States could not ignore it and, in fact, it virtually guaranteed President Roosevelt's immediate call for war and total victory. But very few external events are like that; most do not compel change. They may create the opportunity for change. They may present constraints that rule out some specific changes or a total lack of response. Some external events may even be ignored altogether; they may provoke no U.S. response aimed at changing either bureaucratic organization or the content of policy.

Without a clear-cut external challenge or threat, it is very difficult for the American political system to generate an overall vision of foreign poli-



cy. There are too many distractions: different interests, different opinions, indifference, defensiveness in support of the status quo, and admittedly, an incredibly complex external world that does not change at the beck and call of the United States, no matter how powerful it is.

The end of the cold war presented and still presents the United States with opportunities for meaningful change. But the costs of little change do not appear unacceptably high to the president, to the foreign policy bureaucracy, to Congress, or to the concerned part of the public. Individual observers may predict dire consequences because of missed opportunities. But these arguments have not mobilized the political system to act.

American history has demonstrated again and again that only the president can produce a sustained, clear focus in U.S. foreign policy. Likewise, the president is ultimately the primary engine of a change in that focus. To be sure, he develops relationships with other players in the complex process that leads to the content of policy and also to the structure of the foreign policy bureaucracy. But none of the other players can successfully substitute for the president over the long term. They can provide momentary leadership and can certainly provide goads to and constraints on presidential action. Generally speaking, the reaction of foreign policy bureaucracies, Congress, and public opinion to presidential initiatives falls somewhere between hostility and support. Occasionally, these players can inject new issues or new ways of looking at familiar issues into the policy debate. But the fact remains that a relatively stable, clear focus on a global scale requires an articulate, interested, focused president.

In the absence of a broad presidential vision of overall U.S. foreign policy goals, the pieces of the foreign policy bureaucracy are almost inevitably led to pursue the survival of their core functions, personnel, and views, along the lines Halperin has delineated and chapter 1 of this volume summarizes. Sporadic challenges to that survival can usually be fended off in one way or another. Thus change—rarely initiated by the bureaucracy itself—is minimal.

The task of designing meaningful change is of course neither easy nor trivial. Gen. John Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, points out that in his view the United States took ten years to settle on its major policies after World War II, even though everyone knew for the last year or two of the war that it would end in victory for the allies (Dreifus 1995). On the other hand, he says, no one expected the series of events that marked the end of the cold war, and therefore there was no advance planning for a postcommunist Europe and a post-Soviet world. The discus-

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sion started from scratch. His prognosis is that it will take at least as long to redirect policy now as it did after World War II.

With the demise of the cold war, more U.S. agencies beyond those traditionally involved in foreign and defense policy have an enhanced role to play. This fact might produce confusion in the short run but might also help reduce the power of the entrenched bureaucracies. For example, a variety of economic agencies—the Treasury, the Office of the Trade Representative, and the Department of Commerce—all have a more visible foreign policy role to play as economic and trade issues loom as large as military ones. This could create competition for policy leadership that, *if orchestrated by the president and his close staff*, might produce deep and pervasive changes within the bureaucracy and in the substance of policy. Without presidential leadership the increased importance of these new players might simply produce added confusion.

In seeking to provide policy leadership, presidents will no doubt face constraints on the courses of action they may choose. One such constraint is the environmental entropy that characterizes American politics at present. The new Republican majority in the 104th Congress both resulted from and contributed to a political climate hostile to government deficits, tax increases, and spending on international affairs. In their plan for balancing the federal budget by 2002, the Republicans proposed cutting international affairs spending by more than a third (before taking inflation into account) over seven years. Yet Congress approved the blueprint outlining these deep cuts in the international affairs budget in large part because President Clinton made almost no effort to protect international affairs spending.

In charting a new course for the United States in the post-cold war era, presidents also face the constraint created by public opinion. Yet even here presidents may enjoy more freedom to maneuver than is commonly acknowledged. Contrary to much recent commentary, a mood of isolationism has not gripped the American public. Americans are skeptical about risking the lives of American troops in far-off places, and they are still worried, but less so, about risking American capital in pursuit of foreign policy ends. But they do not want the United States to retreat within itself and ignore the world. In February 1995, for example, the Times Mirror Center reported that 65 percent of those surveyed agreed with the statement: "The United States should cooperate fully with the United Nations." Only 29 percent disagreed ("Opinion Outlook" 1995a, 642).

The 1994 survey sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (Rielly 1995b, 6) reported a similar finding. In response to the ques-



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tion: “Do you think it will be best for the future of the country if we take an active part in world affairs or if we stay out of world affairs?” 65 percent chose “active part” and 29 percent chose “stay out.” Of those in a “leadership” sample, 98 percent chose “active part” and 1 percent chose “stay out.” The proportion of the general public choosing “active part” has fluctuated between 54 percent and 66 percent in the six quadrennial Chicago Council on Foreign Relations surveys dating back to 1974. The 1994 response supporting an active U.S. role in the world was near the top of the twenty-year range. The leaders were consistently either 97 percent or 98 percent on the side of “active part.”

In analyzing the results of the 1994 Chicago poll, Rielly (1995b, 40) offers the following summary:

The overall results of this survey show that the American people are now confident about the present and future role of their country, despite the perceived absence of strong foreign policy leadership from their president. The end of the Cold War has not shaken America’s fundamental commitment to maintaining an active role in world affairs, as recognition of global economic competition and interdependence has grown. Relief from the long competition with the Soviet Union and the lack of a clear external threat have made Americans more reluctant to use force abroad and become involved in the affairs of other countries. But they want to maintain current levels of defense in an uncertain world and are committed to diplomatic engagement through alliances and multilateral organizations.

In short, there is no popular mandate to dismantle either the U.S. role in the world or the agencies that conduct the business implied by that role. There is skepticism about some programs—foreign aid is a very good example—and great concern about protecting American jobs, factors that put some limits on acceptable policies. And the fear of U.S. casualties also inhibits policy makers. But the state of public opinion in the mid-1990s does not dramatically hamstring creative leaders who want to advance U.S. interests in the world arena.

In sum, while events overseas may create the opportunities for dramatic change in the structure and substance of U.S. foreign policy, they do not by themselves guarantee change. Whether U.S. foreign policy adapts to its new challenges or continues yearning for a past that is no more depends ultimately on a commitment by political leaders to fashion a new political blueprint for the United States. Above all, the president must have the will to change and the capacity to articulate a vision of change and to work to achieve it. He may not always succeed, but clear and purposeful change is surely unlikely at best—and perhaps impossible—without such presiden-



tial leadership. Indeed, only with forceful presidential leadership, some supporting conditions, and no doubt some good luck, does planned change become a possibility.

The United States has lived much of its collective life without a coherent and all-encompassing foreign policy. Before 1918 that made almost no difference to anyone in the United States or the rest of the world. From 1918 to 1939 it began to make a difference. Since 1945 the state of U.S. foreign policy makes considerable difference both to our own condition and to that of the rest of the world. The republic will not crumble without a coherent global policy, but the republic may well suffer embarrassments that could be avoided if we have such a policy. Nor would the world be better ordered just because the United States developed a coherent policy. On the other hand, the rest of the world would know what to expect, because our concrete actions would be derived from a few well-articulated, clear principles. Predictability of behavior—at least for rational players in the foreign policy arena—has its own virtues.

But such predictability has not emerged since the end of the cold war. American foreign policy has no new shape, nor do the institutions that develop and deliver it. Details will be debated, small changes will occur, blunders will be made, some successes will be had, but we will not be in a position to know if some general entity called “foreign policy” is in general succeeding or not. We can proclaim or analyze success in some ventures, failure in others, and mixed results in still others—but we will not know how to aggregate the overall record. Nor will we or anyone else know quite how to measure the overall impact of the United States in world affairs.