CHAPTER 18

Foreign Policy

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Over the last 20 years, the Balkan region of Eastern Europe has been a hot-bed of political and ethnic strife. Recent conflicts there trace back to World War II, when southern Slavs created a Yugoslav federation of six socialist republics, each populated by diverse linguistic and religious groups. For over four decades, strongman Josip Broz Tito managed to keep the federation intact. But in the 1980s the state of Yugoslavia began to unravel, first with Tito’s death and then with the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Ethnic groups from the republics of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia suddenly saw fit to break away from the federation and form their own states.

In 1991, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Croatia declared their independence. Slobodan Milosevic, the president of the largest republic of Serbia, grudgingly accepted Slovenia’s secession after only a ten-day skirmish. But Milosevic was not inclined to recognize Croatia’s or Bosnia’s independence, and there he fueled a much bloodier, four-year war. Both Croatia and Bosnia contained substantial Serb populations who wished to either remain part of the federation or attain Serbian states of their own. As the number of casualties and refugees climbed into the hundreds of thousands, the conflict took on characteristics of genocide, with each side pointing to attacks and counter-attacks based on religion or ethnicity. The vitriol shared by the fighting parties was perhaps best expressed by a leader of Serbia’s far-right Radical Party, who ominously declared a desire to “gouge out the eyes of Croats with a rusty spoon.”

The Balkan wars of the 1990s threatened two U.S. foreign policy goals: continued stability in Western Europe and democratic-capitalist transitions in Eastern Europe. Human rights groups also railed against ethnic cleansing in the region. Still, U.S. politicians were split about what to do. Positioning themselves for the 1996 presidential election, President Bill Clinton (a Democrat) and Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole (a Republican) offered very different plans. Clinton, with support from Democrats, expressed support for using American troops as peacekeepers on the ground. Dole and other Republicans, in contrast, wanted to aid the Bosnian Muslims against the Serbs, but opposed U.S. troop deployments. Ordinary Americans, meanwhile, feared that U.S. troops would be caught between warring ethnic groups with centuries-old grievances against one another.

Eventually, the Clinton administration spearheaded the 1995 Dayton Accords. According to this agreement, forces from the United States and the North American Treaty Organization (NATO) would keep the peace, while Serbs, Croats, and Bosnians divided key areas of the Balkans among themselves. This constituted a turning point for all parties involved. For the first time, NATO moved beyond its Cold War defensive role, instead managing crises outside of its traditional borders. And American forces entered

**THE COSTS OF ETHNIC STRIFE**
The dissolution of Yugoslavia during the 1990s brought considerable violence in the Balkans. In 1999, men carried coffins draped in Albanian flags during a burial procession for 40 ethnic Albanian civilians who allegedly had been massacred by Serbian forces.
the region, explained the U.S. admiral in command, not as “a bunch of cowboys looking for a fight,” but as peacekeepers. The NATO-led intervention, however, was no panacea. For at least two reasons, the Dayton Accords failed to provide lasting peace in the region. First, underlying mismatches of ethnic loyalties and political boundaries continued to fuel rivalries among the former Yugoslav republics. In 1998, a group called the Kosovo Liberation Army—supported by the ethnic Albanian majority of Kosovo, a province of Serbia—openly rebelled against Serbian rule, and reports of ethnic cleansing by Serbs soon followed. In response to Serbia’s inability to quell the hostilities, NATO launched a 78-day air campaign against both Serbia and Kosovo, and then it deployed thousands of troops to address the humanitarian crisis.

By June of 1999, fighting in the region had subsided, and Serbia’s ousted president, Milosevic, was captured and tried for war crimes. Still, important issues in the region remained unresolved. Milosevic died of a heart attack before the trial concluded, and Serbia refused to hand over many of its former leaders to the United Nations war crimes tribunal. Additionally, nearly 17,000 NATO troops, including 1,600 Americans, remained in Kosovo as of early 2008.

The push for regional independence, meanwhile, has not subsided. In a move reminiscent of the events that triggered war in Croatia and Bosnia over a decade ago, in February 2008 the parliament of Kosovo formally voted in favor of secession. Serbia, though, has refused to recognize the province’s independence, highlighting a variety of issues about sovereignty, democracy, and intervention. “The unilateral declaration of the false state of Kosovo,” Serbia’s prime minister proclaimed, “directly endangers Serbia’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, its constitution and legal system, as well as legal and legitimate acts passed by Serbia’s highest state institutions.”

When responding to the unfolding drama in the Balkans, the United States must account for two new developments. First, Russia no longer is reeling from the Cold War’s demise, and the former Soviet republic now is intent upon asserting its own influence in the region. Second, U.S. foreign policy must account for the rise of the European Union. In 1992, the European Union was composed of only 12 countries. Today, it is a 27-state organization with its own foreign policy agenda. Consequently, the United States must carefully weigh the interests of the European Union as it formulates its own policies in the Balkans.

So far, and for the foreseeable future, the policy objectives of the United States and European Union appear to converge. “Our efforts in the Balkans are based on one overarching objective: the integration of the region into Euro-Atlantic institutions,” a spokesman for the George W. Bush administration explained to the House Foreign Affairs Commit-tee. President Bush himself emphasized close collaboration in the timing of Kosovo’s declaration of independence. “This strategy was well planned,” he said. “We had worked out with our European allies the sequencing of it, to make sure that there was a concerted and constant voice supporting this move.” Then presidential hopefuls Barack Obama and John McCain issued statements echoing this desire to integrate the Balkans with the West, with McCain vowing to take a much tougher stance toward Russia’s influence.

Efforts to deal with the tensions in the Balkans reveal a number of enduring themes about U.S. foreign policy. Most obviously, considerable controversy surrounds the United States’ proper role in the world, and the conditions under which it should intervene in foreign crises. Not surprisingly, then, lots of different domestic institutions and organizations attempt to influence the conduct of foreign policy, including presidents, members of their administrations, Congress, and interest groups. The United States also must account for the views of other nations and international organizations like NATO and the United Nations.

This chapter examines the key players in U.S. foreign policy-making. Like domestic policy, foreign policy consists of a diverse set of issues, such as trade, foreign aid, and war. Throughout this chapter, we offer examples of these policies and the domestic political struggles that they engender.
A Brief History of U.S. Foreign Policy

Since its founding, the United States has formulated foreign policies that define its political and economic relationships with other nations. At the heart of foreign policy debates lie concerns about the nation's grand strategy, the larger, organizing principles that define national interests, outline possible threats to those interests, and recommend military and diplomatic policies to protect those interests.

Until the twentieth century, the United States followed a grand strategy of isolationism, a policy of minimizing the nation's involvement in world affairs. The alternative policy, internationalism, is based on the belief that intervention in the affairs of other nations is sometimes necessary to protect one's own interests. The Founding Fathers, however, feared that alliances with European countries could entangle the nation in overseas wars—or even worse, draw European wars to the North American continent. As a result, early American leaders sought to distance the country from European politics and its continuous conflicts. In his farewell address, President George Washington set the tone for this policy, famously urging the country to avoid the mischiefs of foreign intrigue.

Although subsequent presidents stayed out of European affairs, they actively intervened in the Western Hemisphere throughout the nineteenth century. “Manifest Destiny,” the belief that the United States should expand across North America, took hold of the nation. In pursuit of this goal, the United States purchased large portions of land from Spain, France, and Britain. It fought a war with Mexico from 1846 to 1848, which resulted in the gain of California and other territory in the southwest. It tried to seize Canada from Britain in the War of 1812, although this attempt failed. And, in December of 1823, American leaders issued the Monroe Doctrine, a policy statement that warned European countries not to meddle in the Western Hemisphere. By 1900, the United States had become the most powerful country west of the Atlantic Ocean.

In the early twentieth century, U.S. involvement in world politics was sporadic.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, internal and external pressures were forcing American leaders to reconsider their grand strategy of isolationism. Industrialization and the expansion of the financial sector led to increased trade and investment abroad. Economic ties to Europe then grew exponentially with the onset of World War I in 1914. The United States lent money and supplies to Britain and France as they fought Germany in one of the bloodiest wars in modern times. As a result, exports as a share of American national income doubled from 6 percent in 1914 to 12 percent in 1916. In 1916, fully 83 percent of those exports were bound for Britain, France, Italy, and the Russian Empire.

Ultimately, concerns about trade with European allies convinced the United States to enter World War I. The German decision to launch unrestricted submarine warfare in January 1917 jeopardized American shipments to Britain and France. In April, the United States declared war on Germany. The vast resources the United States brought to the war effort sealed the victory over Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire in 1918.

World War I officially concluded with the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. Believing that the United States and its allies should use the historic occasion to reshape the world political order, President Woodrow Wilson urged acceptance of his “Fourteen Points” proposal for peace. Wilson called for a new international system based on the principles of democracy, self-determination, and the rule of law. He
also championed the establishment of the League of Nations, a collective security institution designed to uphold European peace.

This brief turn towards internationalism in American foreign policy, however, did not last. Although Wilson's ideas received support in Europe, they foundered back home. The American public and many of its leaders were unwilling to give up their vision of a United States that remained apart from European power struggles. In the biggest defeat of his presidency, Wilson failed to secure Senate approval of accession to the League of Nations, and a spirit of isolationism once again infused U.S. foreign policy.\(^\text{19}\)

The next 25 years, later called the “interwar period,” saw great political and economic instability in Europe. The Great Depression, discussed in Chapter 17, devastated European economies. Hyperinflation brought ruin to the Weimar Republic, the weak democratic government established in Germany after WWI. Ultimately, the Weimar government could not survive the turmoil unleashed by the Depression, and the ultra-nationalist Nazi party under Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933. Around the same time Italy descended into fascism under Benito Mussolini and Spain became engulfed in civil war. The United States, however, remained largely distant from these developments as it dealt with its own economic difficulties.

As the 1930s wore on, increasingly aggressive Japan, Germany, and Italy brought Europe and Asia to the brink of war. Japan’s invasion of China, Italy’s invasion of Ethiopia and Albania, and German expansion into Austria and Czechoslovakia raised serious concerns in the United States. Yet many hoped that the strong coalition of Russia, France, and Great Britain could contain Germany, Italy, and Japan.

This hope, however, did not materialize. World War II officially began on September 1, 1939, when Germany invaded Poland, provoking a declaration of war from Britain and France. In 1940 Hitler’s forces quickly overran France, “divert[ing] the flow of history into darker channels.”\(^\text{20}\) British forces then departed from the continent at Dunkirk, leaving Western Europe to Hitler’s devices. To humiliate the French, who had lost to the Nazis despite superior manpower and materiel, Hitler forced the country’s leaders to formally capitulate in the same railcar in which the Germans had surrendered in 1918.\(^\text{21}\) The following year, Nazi armies invaded deep into the Soviet Union.

The U.S. president, Franklin Roosevelt, was highly sympathetic to the plight of the British, French, and Soviets.\(^\text{22}\) He recognized that a Europe dominated by Hitler posed a great threat to American national security. If Hitler conquered all of Europe, he could readily secure the resources needed to challenge U.S. supremacy in North America. Still, the American public had little appetite for war. Roosevelt was able to assist the allies through his lend-lease program, which provided war materiel to the British, and eventually, the Soviets and the Chinese. But even this aid faced resistance in Congress. Many representatives feared being dragged into a war in which they felt America had few interests at stake.

This all changed with Japan’s surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in the early morning hours of December 7, 1941—a day that President Roosevelt said would “live in infamy.” During the battle, Japanese planes damaged or destroyed 347 of the roughly 400 American aircraft stationed on Oahu, Hawaii. In all, 2,400 American servicemen and women were killed and 1,200 were injured. Most of the destruction had occurred within a scant 30 minutes.\(^\text{23}\)

The attack on Pearl Harbor catapulted the United States into World War II. The United States spent the next four years fighting Germany, Italy, and Japan.
Yet, the impact of Pearl Harbor reached far beyond American entry into the war. It ushered in a new era of American leadership in world affairs.

The United States enters the world stage for the long term.

In 1945, the United States and its allies emerged victorious after years of war in Europe and Asia. The war transformed American foreign policy. Politically, isolationism was no longer generally viewed as a viable option. Even though the United States and the Soviet Union had collaborated to defeat Hitler, goodwill between the countries quickly evaporated after the war. The looming presence of the Soviet army in Europe raised fears that an American departure from the continent would lead to Soviet domination. Economically, the United States was the only country to survive the war with its major industries intact. World War II had reduced Europe to shambles. Through the Marshall Plan, the United States supported vast reconstruction efforts in Western Europe, helping its worn-torn allies to rebuild their economies, with an eye towards bolstering their security against the Soviet communist threat.

Over time, there emerged a new type of conflict that divided Europe along ideological lines. In the East, the Soviet Union established communist satellite governments in Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia. This alliance was formalized by the Warsaw Pact. In Western Europe, the United States constructed a web of democratic allies, including Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Italy, and West Germany. In 1949, the United States and its allies created the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to solidify their common defense. Signatories to the NATO treaty pledged to come to each other’s aid if attacked by the Soviet Union. Through NATO, the United States maintained a strong combat presence in Europe for over 40 years.

In the late 1940s the United States adopted a grand strategy of containment, which is a particular type of internationalism, and is meant to counter the threat the Soviet Union posed to Europe and America. Hitler’s near takeover of Europe convinced Washington that the United States could not afford the rise of a hostile power that spanned the Eurasian continent. Such a country would possess vast economic resources and could threaten the American homeland. Advocated by State Department diplomat George F. Kennan, containment sought to guard against Soviet expansion by adopting policies that checked Soviet power. Kennan thought that the Soviets could not be negotiated with, but that the Soviet economic system bore within itself “the seeds of its own decay, and...the sprouting of these seeds is well advanced.” The United States needed only to bide its time until the Soviet system of government inevitably faltered. So, while the U.S. would not directly confront the Soviets or their allies, American foreign policy would meet Soviet challenges at every turn.

Tensions ran high between America and the Soviet Union for the better part of 40 years, from the end of WWII until the revolutionary year of 1989. This period has been dubbed the “Cold War.” The name signified a state of diplomatic and economic hostility between the superpowers, but not open, “hot” warfare. Both sides consistently accused the other of unprovoked aggression as they competed for allies and influence throughout the world. This competition, however, never erupted into direct military confrontation. After nearly 50 years of political upheaval, Europe returned to an era of stability not seen since the early nineteenth century.
While Europe remained in a state of fragile peace, the rest of the world was not so fortunate. Indeed, the first major conflict between the East and West arose in Korea in 1950, when the Soviet-backed government of North Korea invaded South Korea, an American ally. The Korean War, which lasted from 1950 to 1953, confirmed the fears of many Americans that the Soviet Union was determined to spread its power and ideology across the globe. From the standpoint of American foreign policy, the Korean War was the final nail in the coffin of isolationism. Containment was widely viewed as a necessary policy that would require an extensive investment of American blood and treasure.

The United States vastly expanded its involvement in international affairs over the next several decades. The government sponsored coups in Iran (1953), Guatemala (1954), and the Dominican Republic (1956). It aided governments fighting communist insurgencies in the Philippines (1954), Chile (1964), and El Salvador (1980s). And, it funded anti-communist insurgencies in Chile (1973), Ghana (1961), Cuba (1960s), and Nicaragua (1980s). American policy-makers viewed nearly every problem through the lens of the Cold War. International politics became a zero-sum game between Soviet interests and American ones.

The largest and most extensive conflict in the developing world would unfold in Vietnam, a former French colony. Throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s, the United States sent military aid to South Vietnam in an effort to curb the influence of Soviet-backed North Vietnam and an insurgency group called the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam. So doing, South Vietnam’s leaders became completely dependent on American military support for their power. This turned much of the population of South Vietnam against its own government. In 1964, after a purported attack by the North on American military personnel,
known as the Gulf of Tonkin incident, President Lyndon Johnson asked Congress for the authority needed to conduct “all necessary action to protect our Armed Forces.” Congress granted Johnson’s request and the Vietnam War began in earnest. At its height, the war would involve over half a million American troops. The war would last until 1973.

The Vietnam War was a watershed event for American foreign policy. It is, after all, the first major foreign war that the United States is perceived to have lost. Many Americans questioned the strategic interests in sending young men and women to fight and die in a distant land. And with television crews showing the carnage wrought by the war, protests mounted against the emergence of an “imperial presidency” in foreign affairs. Congress, the media, and the public sought ways to restrict the president’s foreign policy powers, lest America find itself mired in another unpopular, seemingly unwinnable war.

In the aftermath of Vietnam, both the Soviet Union and the United States started to rethink whether fighting wars in far-off lands was worth the steep costs in money and lives. Many in the United States began to question whether the Soviets presented such a large threat. Meanwhile, the financial costs of the Cold War were taking their toll on the Soviet economy. In response to these changes in both states, a move towards more peaceful relations took place. This period of easing of tensions, known as détente, fostered Soviet-American cooperation on issues ranging from agricultural trade to space exploration.

While the 1970s were marked by declining tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States, the era of cooperation would not last forever. The 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan soured relations between the two superpowers. American leaders, especially President Ronald Reagan, viewed the Soviets as aggressively pursuing expansion at the expense of the United States and its allies. Referring to the Soviet Union as the “evil empire,” Reagan’s administration launched a military buildup that nearly doubled Pentagon spending from 1980 to 1985. This resurgence of Cold War hostilities, however, did not last long.

The Cold War ends, but new conflicts surface.

Nearly as quickly as détente faded, the Cold War came to a close. In 1985, a young reform-minded leader named Mikhail Gorbachev took over as Soviet premier. Over the next four years, Gorbachev passed numerous political and economic reforms intended to shore up the flagging Soviet economy. He withdrew Soviet troops from Afghanistan, agreed to arms control with the United States, and permitted democratic reform in the member states of the Warsaw Pact. By the end of 1989, the Berlin Wall, which had long divided communist East Berlin from capitalist West Berlin, had fallen. And by the end of 1991, East and West Germany had reunited and the Soviet Union had dissolved.

Scholars continue to argue about why the Cold War ended in the way that it did. Some, echoing Kennan, claim that the demise of the Soviet Union was inevitable. A system of centralized government and tight economic controls simply was not sustainable. Others argue that the inability of the Soviet Union to keep pace with American ingenuity proved decisive. According to this line of argumentation, left to its own devices the Soviet Union might have persisted indefinitely. Competition from the West, however, provided the needed pressure to topple the communist regime. Whatever the precise cause, the peaceful revolutions of 1989–1991 were the most important international events since Pearl Harbor. For four decades, American foreign policy had focused almost exclusively on the Soviet threat. Now the United States was suddenly the world’s lone superpower.
The dramatic end of the Cold War spurred a vigorous debate among scholars and policymakers over what America's new grand strategy should be. Four main options arose from this debate. Some proposed a return to isolationism, arguing that the United States' geography and nuclear arsenal made it secure enough to disengage from Europe. Others advocated a strategy of selective engagement, whereby the United States would monitor Europe and the Middle East and intervene only if a clear threat emerged. A third option was cooperative security, which envisioned the United States as the leader of a “new world order” that would check aggression anywhere in the world. Finally, some recommended a strategy of American primacy, designed to maintain America's overwhelming military and economic power advantage.

In practice, the American grand strategy during the 1990s consisted of a mix of all these policies. The Gulf War, for instance, combined elements of selective engagement and cooperative security. In 1990, Iraq, then led by President Saddam Hussein, invaded and occupied oil-rich Kuwait. The invasion surprised the international community and drew criticism from nearly every country in the world. By conquering Kuwait, Hussein controlled 20 percent of the world's oil reserves. If he conquered Saudi Arabia next, that number would jump to 40 percent—allowing Hussein to manipulate world oil prices and threaten American interests. The invasion also constituted an act of naked aggression, setting a troubling precedent for the post–Cold War world.

In response to the invasion, the United States led a United Nations-sponsored military force to liberate Kuwait and drive back Hussein's Iraqi forces. For many, this successful military campaign signaled the beginning of a new collective security system led by the United States and the United Nations. Japan, Russia, and European Union members all participated in some fashion. Many hoped that a newly empowered United Nations could put a stop to territorial aggression, civil wars, and humanitarian disasters. This had been the organization's founding purpose, and in the Gulf War it succeeded.

Unfortunately, cooperative security proved to be short lived. For decades, tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States had kept regional conflicts in check. Local populations dared not provoke either superpower in their desire for independence or domination over other populations. With the Cold War's demise, however, these tensions quickly flared, and the United States found itself involved in regional wars in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Serbia, Croatia, and Kosovo.

It was not until September 11, 2001, however, that U.S. foreign policy would fundamentally redefine its grand strategy. The simultaneous attacks on Washington, D.C., and New York that day changed the course of American foreign policy.

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**Bush Doctrine** a grand strategy pursued after September 11, 2001, that emphasized an aggressive posture towards nations that provide safe haven for terrorists, preemptive action, and a willingness to unilaterally launch military actions.
lowers had benefited from ties to the Taliban government, which sympathized with their cause. The Taliban allowed the terror group to recruit and train members, as well as plan attacks, from their bases in the country. America’s allies and the U.S. public strongly supported the war in Afghanistan, which they saw as a necessary response to September 11.

America’s next choice of target, however, stirred controversy. In the spring of 2003, President Bush launched a war against the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq. The Bush administration based its case for war on intelligence suggesting that Hussein had weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and ties to al-Qaeda operatives. The president and his advisors raised the possibility that Iraq could hand off nuclear weapons to terrorists, leading to a deadlier version of the September 11 attacks. In an October 2002 speech, Bush warned that a preventive war against Iraq was necessary, claiming, “we cannot wait for the final proof—the smoking gun—that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud.” Critics argued that the administration was manipulating intelligence, that Hussein had no relationship with al-Qaeda, and that he could be contained through diplomacy.

The initial invasion of Iraq went quite well for the Americans. However, the process of rebuilding the country and achieving political stability there proved far more difficult. Over the first four years of occupation, American forces suffered nearly 4,000 casualties—this after losing only 138 during the initial invasion. Moreover, extensive investigations failed to find any evidence of WMDs in Iraq, suggesting that the rationale for the invasion was misguided. The lack of WMDs and the struggle to stabilize Iraq led to dissatisfaction with the Bush administration over the war. In January 2008, polls showed that only 30 percent of the American public approved of Bush’s handling of Iraq.

Even as the United States continues its efforts to stabilize Iraq, new threats and challenges have emerged. These include domestic instability in Pakistan, a nuclear nation and a major American ally in the “war on terror”; concerns over the rising power of a non-democratic China; the ongoing hostilities in Afghanistan; Russia’s backsliding toward totalitarianism; and continued violence between Israelis and Palestinians. At the end of this chapter, we further examine a handful of the many daunting challenges that now face the United States.

The Role of the Foreign Policy Bureaucracy

No other individual dominates U.S. foreign policy-making as much as the president. As discussed in Chapter 14, presidents exercise extraordinary power in foreign affairs. As commander-in-chief, the president regularly decides when troops will be deployed, for how long, and what their mission will be. As chief diplomat, the president often holds summits with foreign heads of state about the major issues of the day. And as chief administrator, the president appoints
many of the individuals who are charged with developing and implementing foreign policy. Serving the president in these various roles is a massive foreign policy bureaucracy. This bureaucracy plays crucial roles in both the definition of grand strategies and the development of particular policies that dictate U.S. relations with particular nations.

The National Security Council advises the president.
Thousands of individuals within the executive branch oversee foreign affairs, as discussed in the chapters on the presidency and the bureaucracy. In many ways, the executive agency closest to the president on issues of foreign policy is the National Security Council (NSC). Formed in 1947, the NSC coordinates the activities of the armed forces and other executive agencies (e.g., State, Defense, the CIA) to increase national security cooperation. The NSC assists the president in gathering advice from agencies and departments.

By law, the NSC must include the vice president, the National Security Advisor (NSA), the Secretary of State, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Secretary of Defense. In practice, most presidents have chosen to include more individuals than these. In addition to the formal council, the NSC also includes staff assistants, whose roles have grown in size and importance over the years. Indeed, over time, the formal decision-making council of the NSC has declined in importance, while the staff’s centrality to the decision-making process has grown.

The State Department oversees U.S. diplomacy.
At its core, foreign policy is about diplomacy—the ongoing negotiation of economic and political relationships between countries. Historically, the State Department has held primary responsibility for U.S. diplomacy. The State Department is the agency home of diplomats, embassies, and most foreign aid programs run by the U.S. government. The primary job of the State Department is to represent U.S. interests overseas and in various international organizations. In so doing, it communicates with foreign governments and publics, and it provides analysis on events abroad and their implications for American foreign policy. The State Department also negotiates treaties and agreements, makes policy recommendations, and takes steps to implement them. Finally, the department coordinates with the Agency for International Development (USAID) to oversee American foreign aid.

As Figure 18-1 on pages 620 and 621 highlights, State operates hundreds of foreign embassies and consulates all over the globe. Roughly 30,000 employees, of which 3,500 are Foreign Service Officers (FSOs), work in these outposts. These FSOs work alongside personnel from other federal departments and agencies including Defense, Commerce, Agriculture, Homeland Security, USAID, and the Peace Corps.

State is very hierarchical. The Secretary of State leads the State Department, and is the most visible and notable figure of American diplomacy. Beneath the Secretary is the Deputy Secretary and then several Undersecretaries in charge of planning and coordination. State Department bureaus are organized in two ways: by issue and by region. Some bureaus focus on particular regions, while others are tasked with particular issues cutting across regions (such as AIDS policy or counterterrorism). Bureaus charged with regions then coordinate desk officers and personnel who focus on particular countries.
Figure 18-1. The State Department maintains embassies, consulates, and other administrative outposts in virtually every nation around the globe.
Do Economic Sanctions Work?

Effective diplomacy includes the right blend of carrots and sticks. Carrots typically consist of things like foreign aid, preferential trade agreements, and promises of military assistance that are meant to reward other governments for doing things that the United States supports. Sticks, by contrast, consist of various forms of punishment that are meant to discourage certain kinds of behaviors and policies.

In foreign affairs, economic sanctions are some of the most frequent sticks employed by the U.S. government against either single countries or groups of countries. Common sanctions include trade blockades, taxes placed on imports, and quotas on the amount of goods that are traded between countries. Through sanctions, the State Department can pursue objectives ranging from signaling its displeasure toward other countries to undermining domestic support for another government. But while sanctions have a long history, do they achieve their intended goals? How do we know?

During the 1990s and 2000s, the United States levied sanctions against countries ranging from Iran to Cuba to Iraq to India. And as we discuss in further detail below, in 2002 the George W. Bush administration imposed tariffs on imported goods from China and India, leading the World Trade Organization to organize sanctions of its own against the United States. If sanctions are ineffective, though, then other more aggressive tactics might be called for, at the possible expense of U.S. lives and treasure. However, a primary goal of sanctions is to avoid military action.
How might we determine whether sanctions are effective tools of foreign policy? Scholars began to assess the effectiveness of sanctions by building a large data set that cataloged incidents of sanctions, their goals, and their effects. This initial work, by Gary Hufbauer, Jeffrey Schott, and Kimberly Elliot, found 116 episodes of economic sanctions placed by all states in the world from World War I to 1990. These scholars concluded that sanctions could be effective as long as the goals were modest. Sanctions that were designed to change aspects of a foreign government’s trade policies, for instance, stood some chance at success. But sanctions put in place to achieve more difficult goals, such as unseating stable regimes, have not performed as well. Moreover, Hufbauer and his colleagues argued that more recent sanctions have been less successful overall—likely owing to increasing globalization and the ease with which states can find new trade partners to replace those cut off by sanctions.

Numerous scholars, however, have questioned these conclusions. Daniel Drezner has argued that the key to success is the threat of future conflict between the sanctioner and the sanctioned. If sanctions are part of a larger pattern of conflict between states (that is, they are placed after a war or years of disagreement), they are unlikely to work. Drezner used the Hufbauer et al. data set to show that allies, who are unlikely to have a long history of differences, were more likely to successfully sanction each other, and that sanctions were rarely successful when the opposing states were adversaries before the sanctions began.

Later, Dean Lacy and Emerson Niou challenged the earlier scholars, claiming the sanctions data used was incomplete. They argued that potential targets of sanctions, hoping to prevent damage to their economy, may give in to international pressure prior to sanctions’ taking effect. If this is common, then we are likely to see sanctions levied only in the most difficult cases, when the target state does not back down on the threat of sanctions. Lacy and Niou therefore used several historical case studies to show how foreign governments, anticipating future sanctions, might change their behavior; and so doing, these governments made the actual imposition of sanctions unnecessary. Because unneeded sanctions are never levied, they are not cataloged in the sanctions data set; therefore, scholars did not account for those instances when the threat of sanctions is sufficient to cause change.

Even if a complete data set of sanctions were assembled, though, it would remain difficult to systematically evaluate their success. How, after all, should one go about determining whether sanctions achieved their stated goals? On the one hand, this seems straightforward—states adopt sanctions to force other states to change their behavior in reasonably clear ways and scholars observe whether target states change their behavior or not. Things are more complicated, however.

Sanctions, it bears emphasizing, are often multilateral—that is, they are levied by multiple states, often with different goals. For example, were the sanctions placed on Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait successful? They did not bring about a withdrawal from Kuwait—that took a war led by the United States and a large coalition of states. After the war, many states continued the sanctions in order to pressure Saddam Hussein not to attack Kurds and Shites, to undermine his ability to rebuild his army, and, ultimately, to unseat him. While states differed in their justifications for the sanctions, they also differed in their assessments of whether the sanctions were working, leading some to lift sanctions against Iraq long before others were willing to do so. Much of the existing scholarship on sanctions has not dealt with this complication. Rather, most scholars continue to use the Hufbauer et al. data, which treats each sanction episode as one unified sender and target, even if multiple states are senders or targets.
The debate over the effectiveness of economic sanctions is complex, but important. Given the frequent use of sanctions by foreign policymakers, it is crucial to be able to evaluate their effectiveness. The general conclusion is that, under certain circumstances, sanctions can be effective: namely, when the goals are modest, when the sanctions are against an ally, and when the costs to the sanctioned state are very high. Research continues in this area and future studies will no doubt further refine our knowledge of the conditions under which economic sanctions are likely to be successful.42

The Defense Department focuses on the military.
The primary responsibility of the Defense Department is to defend the nation from external attack. Increasingly, though, the United States also has relied upon the Defense Department to pursue a wide variety of other objectives. In just the last two decades, the military has conducted counterterrorism efforts in the Middle East, provided assistance to war-torn areas in Africa, trained other militaries for anti-drug operations in South America, and, as we saw at this chapter’s outset, enforced peace agreements in Eastern Europe. This expansive set of missions has increased the importance of the American military and raised conflicts between the military and its civilian leaders over the appropriate uses of American military personnel.

As shown in Figure 18-2, expenditures by the Department of Defense far eclipse expenditures by the Department of State. Although Defense spending has varied

Figure 18-2. The Defense Department has always been bigger than the State Department.
Shown here are the annual Defense and State Department outlays between 1962 and 2006. The Defense Department has always had a larger budget than the State Department, but the discrepancy between the two increased substantially during the Reagan administration.
with historical events—such as the escalation of the Vietnam War in the mid-1960s and the Reagan buildup of the 1980s—it trends clearly upwards. State Department spending has also grown over time, but at a much slower rate. As a result, these two agencies’ budgets have increasingly diverged over the past several decades.

At the end of the Cold War, military spending fell significantly, creating a small “peace dividend” brought by declining superpower tensions. This trend, however, quickly reversed with the terrorist attacks of 2001. Military expenditures now outstrip even those observed during the Cold War, surpassing $400 billion annually, not even counting the costs of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. In 2006, the United States accounted for 46 percent of the world’s total military expenditures. America now spends more on its military than the next 14 nations combined.33

Despite its size, the Defense Department is relatively young. It was created in 1947 to replace the Department of War, a weak institution that did not include the U.S. Navy and usually lay dormant until a major conflict arose. In the Cold War era, when the United States sought to meet any threat presented by the Soviet Union, a more permanent military establishment was needed. Thus began the growth of the Department of Defense into the largest executive branch agency—an agency that employed over 35 percent of all federal government workers in 2007.44

One of the most influential Secretaries of Defense to serve in the post–World War II era was Robert McNamara, who served under presidents Kennedy and Johnson. As the former head of Ford Motor Company, McNamara brought a business mentality to the Defense Department. He cut waste, streamlined information systems, and introduced cost-benefit analysis into the budgetary process. Although he attracted internal criticism for treating Defense like a business and external criticism for escalating the Vietnam War, many consider McNamara one of the most influential Secretaries in modern times.

A more recent but no less controversial Secretary was Donald Rumsfeld, who served under George W. Bush. Rumsfeld argued that recent changes in military technology made large armies less important to military victory. He thus pressured the military to give up its conception of war as battles of attrition and instead focus on becoming a smaller, more mobile, but highly lethal fighting force. Military leaders resisted this goal, as well as Rumsfeld’s tendency to micromanage. Rumsfeld resigned in November 2006, the day after Democrats regained control of Congress in that year’s midterm election.

Numerous executive agencies provide intelligence services.

To formulate U.S. foreign policy, the government needs reliable information about goings-on around the globe—about the activities and objectives of other states, the creation of new alliances between states and the dissolution of old ones, possible threats to U.S. economic and political interests, and many other things besides. This “intelligence” crucially facilitates the State Department’s diplomatic efforts and the Defense Department’s war planning.

Since World War II, the **Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)** has had primary responsibility for collecting and analyzing foreign intelligence. The CIA is a fairly large organization, although the exact size of its budget and staff are classified. The popular conception of the CIA depicts the agency’s employees as shadowy figures staging cloak-and-dagger operations to overthrow foreign governments. This reputation is not altogether undeserved. In the immediate aftermath of World War II, for instance, the CIA engaged in activities as diverse as influencing election out-
comes, sponsoring coups, and assassinating foreign leaders. The CIA’s success in these endeavors led to its increased use as an operational foreign policy tool, sometimes replacing traditional military forces.

For the most part, though, CIA employees undertake far more mundane operations—monitoring overseas news for signs of crises, reading and analyzing reports from field offices abroad, briefing executive branch members or Congress of looming threats to American interests, or simply distilling the massive amounts of information it gathers. Historically, the CIA has enjoyed tremendous power and latitude to conduct such operations. Yet, it is subject to considerable scrutiny and occupies a challenging role. When a surprise event occurs, Congress often holds the CIA accountable for neglecting to anticipate it. If the CIA fails, all Americans see the outcome—a revolution, bombing, or other incident that harms American interests. Yet, when the agency succeeds in thwarting secret threats, it receives no public accolades. The CIA must walk a fine line between “crying wolf” too often and keeping the White House prepared for potential problems.

It is not surprising, then, that the agency received substantial blame for failing to foresee the September 11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C. Some criticisms, though, were perhaps unwarranted. After all, the CIA had been taking steps since the late 1990s to capture al-Qaeda ringleader Osama bin Laden. According to journalist Bob Woodward, CIA Director George Tenet worried obsessively about the prospect of a major terrorist attack on the homeland. During...
the summer of 2001, American intelligence had intercepted 34 al-Qaeda messages referencing an upcoming event. This “chatter” indicated something was brewing, but did not provide the date or location of the attack.45

The CIA, however, is not the only agency charged with collecting and analyzing national security intelligence. In fact, a veritable alphabet soup of agencies has such responsibilities. The National Security Agency (NSA) is one of the more prominent ones. Formed in 1952, the NSA monitors communications coming into and out of the United States. The NSA also specializes in cryptography—the making and breaking of secret codes.46 For decades, the agency’s existence was denied by the U.S. government, leading many to quip that NSA stood for “No Such Agency.”

The Departments of State and Defense also include their own intelligence arms. The Defense Department operates the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). Founded in 1961, the DIA is supposed to supply intelligence and analysis to the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs. Similarly, each military service branch conducts its own intelligence activities. The Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines regularly contribute to the development of foreign policy strategies. In the State Department, the Bureau for Intelligence and Research (INR) does not gather intelligence directly, but creates intelligence reports for the Secretary of State based the knowledge of its area experts. Even the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), which is supposed to focus on domestic security issues, is involved in intelligence. The FBI tracks international terror suspects who travel to the United States, and keeps tabs on any terrorist group that may attempt to find resources in America.

With so many different agencies pursuing overlapping mandates, the foreign policy bureaucracy is neither as efficient nor as effective as many would like. In the aftermath of September 11, therefore, the Office of National Intelligence (ONI) was created to oversee the many intelligence agencies in the federal government. In theory, the ONI coordinates the analysis of intelligence from all sectors of the intelligence community, including the CIA, FBI, INR, and all Defense agencies. In practice, this is difficult since each agency attempts to protect its turf (and thereby its budget). After all, if one agency could claim to have stopped a September 11-type incident, it would stand to gain tremendous prestige and resources. Although the Office of National Intelligence has worked hard to coordinate the activities of all these executive branch agencies, it continues to encounter significant resistance.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was also created in the aftermath of September 11. Like the ONI, DHS coordinates the work of agencies involved in preventing and responding to attacks on the United States. The Director of Homeland Security is a cabinet-level official who, in theory, has the power to coordinate intelligence, analysis, and response to strikes against the United States. Creation of the DHS merged 22 agencies with over 177,000 employees. It combined agencies as varied as the Secret Service, U.S. Customs, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the Coast Guard. It has yet to be seen whether ONI and DHS, in combination, can effectively coordinate the efforts of their respective agencies charged with collecting the information needed to formulate U.S. foreign policy.

The Role of Congress

Presidents stand front-and-center in debates about foreign policy. Congress, nonetheless, often appears as a worthy adversary. True, legislators may be less
involved in foreign policy than in domestic policy, but it would be incorrect to claim, even during the Cold War, that Congress has sat silently by, ceding all authority to the president. As we survey the various foreign policy powers of Congress, we will highlight historical examples of Congress attempting to check presidential influence over foreign policy.

**Congress enacts foreign policy statutes.**

Congress legislates on a variety of foreign policy topics: weapons programs, foreign aid, environmental standards, and numerous other issues. Sometimes Congress wields influence by crafting legislation. The energy bill that became law in December 2007, for instance, sought to reduce America’s dependence on foreign oil by mandating conservation measures, greater fuel efficiency in vehicles, and funding for alternative energy sources. At other times, Congress uses appropriations bills to provide more or less funding than the president has requested for specific projects, ranging from military operations in the Middle East to humanitarian ventures in Southeast Asia.

Members of Congress tend to pay special attention to foreign trade, for it has immediate implications for the nation’s economic growth, unemployment, and the cost of goods to the average citizen. The key issue in trade policy concerns **tariffs**, which are taxes upon goods exchanged between nations. High tariffs tend to discourage trade, while lower tariffs tend to promote it.

The most significant trade agreement in recent history is the **North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)**. NAFTA’s roots lie in the 1988 Canada–U.S. Free Trade Agreement, which aimed to steadily decrease tariffs and other barriers to trade and investment between the two countries. In the early 1990s, Mexican President Carlos Salinas expressed strong interest in extending the agreement to his own country. Salinas, U.S. President George H.W. Bush, and Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney worked to build domestic support for the trilateral measure, and the three executives signed NAFTA in December 1992. Bush’s failed reelection bid could have derailed congressional ratification, but instead the incoming president, Bill Clinton, took up the cause in 1993. In November 1993, NAFTA passed in both the House and the Senate.47

How has NAFTA affected the U.S. economy? Some areas of the country benefit from freer trade because their industries produce goods that are export-oriented—that is, most of the goods made are sold overseas. Given that free trade agreements also mean that the other countries in the agreement will cut their own tariffs, this decreases the price of American goods overseas, leading to more sales. This can increase revenue, create jobs, and cut the costs of goods to consumers. Other industries, though, may suffer from free trade. The increased competition inspired by NAFTA means that domestic factories that are less efficient may close, jobs may be lost, and economic growth may falter. Further, different countries and districts have different specializations, which NAFTA also stands to disrupt. Thus, free trade can be seen as good or bad, depending on the particular district in question and the country with which the United States is signing the agreement.

Congress also influences the foreign policy-making process through procedural legislation—legislation that changes how institutions in the executive branch are structured or operate on a day-to-day basis. For example, after a number of high-profile military operations were carried out in a haphazard manner, Congress passed the Goldwater-Nichols Act, which mandated that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff be the primary military advisor to the president and be in charge of long-term military planning and budget coordination. It also required...
that the staff of the Joint Chiefs serve only the Chairman, rather than the commanders of the individual service branches. With this act, members of Congress hoped to give the Chairman more institutional powers, thereby reducing inter-branch competition for budget and operations and leading to better military advice and performance.

Finally, Congress occasionally enacts symbolic resolutions that have implications for foreign policy. In the fall of 2007, the House passed a resolution labeling as a “genocide” the killing of thousands of Armenians in Turkey during World War I. Normally, such resolutions turn few heads. This resolution, however, came at a time when the Bush administration was attempting to secure Turkish cooperation in the northern regions of Iraq, where Kurdish guerrillas were operating. Insisting that Armenians had died as a part of the war and not as a result of systematic killing, Turkey responded to the resolution by recalling its ambassador. Though eventually tabled before going to the Senate, the proposed resolution caused quite a diplomatic row.

Congress retains the power to declare war.

Congress’s constitutional authority to declare war places it in the middle of debates over proposed uses of force by the American military. Perhaps no area of congressional–presidential politics has received more attention than the question of who has the ultimate authority to initiate and oversee the conduct of war. One reason for the pitched debate is that the Constitution is vague by design: while Congress is given the power to declare war, the president is the commander-in-chief of the military. Consequently, leadership of the military and its mission is divided. By
constitutional design, Congress and the president must share the power to initiate and sustain armed conflict against an adversary.

Undoubtedly, the president maintains important advantages over Congress in the realm of military policy. For example, while Congress can call hearings to gather information about a potential or actual military conflict, the president has the NSC, including all the major military and civilian figures, at his or her beck-and-call at a moment’s notice. As a result, the president is able to respond to foreign crises more quickly—and with more information—than Congress.

Congress, however, occasionally challenges the president’s war powers. In response to what many argued was a failed deployment in Vietnam, Congress passed the War Powers Act in 1973. The law, passed over Nixon’s veto, placed several legal constraints on the executive’s ability to initiate international conflict. First, the president must consult with Congress before committing armed forces into hostile situations. Second, the president must report to Congress within 48 hours after troops are introduced into an area where hostilities exist or are imminent. Third, and most important, the troops must be withdrawn within 60 days unless Congress authorizes them to stay longer.

On paper, the War Powers Act would appear to be a significant constraint on executive authority. In practice, though, the act has constrained the president less than its designers had hoped. Never has the act been used to end a military venture. Indeed, the 60-day clock has been started only once, after the 1983 invasion of Lebanon. But in that case, Congress immediately approved an 18-month extension. The infrequency of its use has led some scholars to condemn the War Powers Act as “a sellout, a surrender.” Other scholars, however, argue that the act has caused at least some presidents to limit military actions to shorter, smaller campaigns.

Congress confirms nominees for foreign policy positions.

As explained in Chapter 13, the Senate has the power to confirm individuals nominated to various cabinet-level and ambassadorial posts. Although the vast majority is confirmed, the hearings often reveal pointed disagreements over aspects of foreign policy. Controversy is especially likely when a nominee seems underqualified or espouses views that substantially diverge from the policy positions held by members of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, which must first approve the nomination.

Occasionally, a high-profile nominee is rejected or held up to such scrutiny that a president opts to withdraw the nomination. In 1989 President George H.W. Bush withdrew the nomination of John Tower as Secretary of Defense, and in 1997 President Clinton withdrew the nomination of Anthony Lake as director of the CIA. In August 2005 President George W. Bush took advantage of a congressional recess to appoint John Bolton as ambassador to the United Nations until the sitting Congress concluded its business in January 2007. Bolton had faced five months of strong opposition from Senate Democrats, who expressed concern over his confrontational temperament and allegations that he had manipulated intelligence while working at the State Department. The Bush administration cited the large number of recess appointments made by other presidents and portrayed the Bolton decision as a necessary move to avoid further “partisan delaying tactics.” Nevertheless, recess appointments for such high-level positions have been rare. Foreign states and international organizations, after all, want to have assurances that the U.S. officials with whom they negotiate have the full backing of the U.S. government.
Congress provides “advice and consent” on international treaties.

The Senate also has the power to ratify treaties signed by the president. There have been several high-profile instances of the Senate rejecting treaties signed by the president, thus dealing a blow to the ongoing conduct of foreign policy. In the most famous instance, as mentioned earlier, the Senate rejected American involvement in the League of Nations after World War I, returning the United States to a course of isolationism for another two decades. In 1999, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was rejected by the U.S. Senate after Republicans objected to several provisions.

Rejection is quite rare, however. In fact, the Senate itself reports that it rejected only 21 of the approximately 1,500 treaties it has considered since 1789. Still, if they are worried about Congress’s reaction, presidents can bypass the treaty ratification process by signing an executive agreement, which automatically is binding on state signatories. Indeed, of the 18,000 international agreements entered into by the U.S. between 1789 and 2000, only 2,000 have been in the form of a treaty requiring consent of the Senate. As discussed in Chapter 14, the ratio of executive agreements to treaties has steadily increased during the past half century. Presidents have made executive agreements involving security alliances, trade, finance, and a variety of other areas.

Executive agreements, however, do not allow presidents to do exactly as they please. Congress may pass a law that rescinds an executive agreement, or it may refuse to appropriate the funds needed to implement it. In addition, executive agreements tend to survive for shorter periods of time, as future presidents are free to overturn them unilaterally.

Congress oversees foreign policy bureaucracies.

Congress also influences foreign policy through oversight. At any point, either chamber can convene hearings on topics related to the conduct of foreign policy. While legislation may or may not result from these fact-finding exercises, the hearings themselves sometimes generate tremendous publicity about issues. This power of investigation can be highly influential in setting the stage for new laws or simply bringing the public’s attention to a particular issue.

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**treaty** an international agreement in which the United States becomes a party once the president has signed, and two-thirds of the Senate has ratified.

**executive agreement** an international agreement in which the United States becomes a party once the president has signed, without requiring approval from two-thirds of the Senate.
In September 2007, for example, General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker provided much-anticipated testimony concerning the ongoing war in Iraq. Democrats and Republicans alike used the hearings to trumpet their positions. Ike Skelton (D-MO), chair of the House Armed Services Committee, complained that the troops in Iraq “are not available to go into Afghanistan to pursue Osama bin Laden and other Al Qaeda leaders who ordered an attack on us one day short of six years ago.” Meanwhile, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), the senior Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, decried the differences between “those of us who are inspired by this new ‘greatest generation’ and believe that we should confront and defeat Al Qaeda and other jihadists on the Iraqi battlefield, and those of us who believe that we should simply retreat.” Through the hearings, the American public also learned of some nagging uncertainties. Asked whether ethnic reconciliation in Iraq appeared likely, Ambassador Crocker pointed to encouraging signs but admitted, “How long that is going to take and... whether it will succeed, I can't predict.” When Senator John Warner (R-VA) inquired whether Petraeus's proposed troop surge would make the U.S. safer, the general replied, “Sir, I don't know, actually.”

The Role of Interest Groups

The federal government does not create foreign policy in a vacuum. Indeed, numerous interest groups weigh in with advice of their own. And given their organization and funding, foreign policy interest groups often exert a tremendous amount of influence. They include three major types: ethnic lobbies, business groups, and think tanks.
Ethnic lobbies advocate foreign policies that concern a specific country.

Some of the most prominent foreign policy interest groups are ethnic lobbies. These groups advocate policies that focus on specific foreign states. In some instances, ethnic lobbies encourage U.S. assistance to a foreign state. In other instances, they pressure the federal government to take a hard line against the foreign state's governing regime.

One of the more controversial interest groups in American foreign affairs is the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Founded in 1953, AIPAC promotes close ties between Israel and the United States. Detractors have long criticized it for pressuring American decision-makers to support and aid Israel even when its policies disrupt American relations with other Middle Eastern countries. However, the close relationship between the United States and Israel would likely have developed and prospered without AIPAC. After all, the United States began sending large quantities of weapons to Israel in the mid-1960s, well before AIPAC was a major player in U.S. politics. Even then, U.S. decision-makers saw Israel as one of the few stable, pro-Western allies in a hostile region. The Soviet Union had garnered staunch allies such as Syria and Egypt, and other pro-Western states such as Lebanon and Jordan faced consistent internal threats.

Cuban-Americans make up another powerful ethnic lobby. Following Fidel Castro’s 1959 communist revolution, many Cubans fled to the United States, particularly to Florida. Initially, the exiles hoped to return to their homeland once democracy had been restored. As Castro solidified one-party communist rule, however, the focus turned to isolating Cuba in the international arena. By 1962, the United States had enacted an economic embargo against its neighbor to the south, and in 1996 the embargo was bolstered by the Helms-Burton Act, which placed even more stringent restrictions on U.S. relations with Cuba.

To be sure, the Cuban-American ethnic lobby exhibits a number of characteristics that could contribute to foreign policy influence: it is well-organized, geographically concentrated, well-funded, and motivated by involuntary exile. However, in light of the anti-communism atmosphere of the Cold War, one could question whether the lobby was decisive in the United States’ efforts to isolate Cuba. The key pitfall in considering the role of interest groups is witnessing the outcome of a foreign policy decision and assuming groups were involved in that process. Just because American foreign policy choices support the interests of a pressure group does not mean the pressure group was instrumental in the outcome. Consider the classic political science definition of power paraphrased from the political scientist Robert Dahl: power is the ability to convince others to do things they would otherwise not do. To show an interest group has power or influence, one must show that a policy would have been different without the group’s pressure. This is difficult to determine, for it requires us to intuit how the world would differ in the absence of a particular interest group.

Business groups increasingly attempt to influence foreign policy.

Perhaps the most powerful set of foreign policy pressures arises from multinational business and defense firms. Traditionally, some of the more powerful lobbying groups in America have been those involved in the production and sale of military goods. In his farewell address, President Eisenhower warned against “the acquisition of unwanted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial
complex." The “military-industrial complex” has become a pejorative catch-phrase used by those who oppose the influence of big business, especially in the realm of national security policy.

The phrase suggests a handful of business and military elites conspiring to drive up (possibly unnecessary) defense spending. The fact is, though, that numerous segments of American society—including Congress, academia, business, and the military establishment—have aligned interests concerning defense spending. Various interests clearly benefit from defense spending: the military can be ready to defend the national interest, businesses can make money and spur economic growth, individuals can find and keep jobs, and each of these benefits helps members of Congress get reelected. One analysis of defense spending during the Cold War concluded that 1 in 10 jobs in the U.S. relied, either directly or indirectly, on federal defense spending. At a time when defense budgets are nearing $500 billion, the dependence of many businesses on defense spending is clearly enormous.

Other businesses lobby the government on a host of foreign policy issues, but perhaps no issue is more common than trade. As previously discussed, because so many individuals benefit and suffer from trade, thousands of industry-based groups have formed to lobby Congress and the president for more or less protection. Each time free trade discussions begin with a new country, lobbying groups support or oppose the proposals, based on whether their industries will be helped or harmed. In 2002, for example, while the United States and Chile haggled over free trade proposals, the National Association of Manufacturers estimated that the lack of an agreement had resulted in $800 million in foregone exports to Chile. U.S. farm lobbies, on the other hand, worried that the negotiations would affect American agricultural subsidies. The resulting bilateral agreement, which was ratified in July 2003, reduced tariffs on tractors and other machinery items, while leaving agricultural subsidies intact.

Think tanks offer foreign policy advice.

Think tanks support and publicize the work of scholars, many of whom have significant foreign policy expertise. Drawing on their government experience or academic research, these scholars contribute to newsletters, magazines, journals, and opinion pieces advocating particular policies. And under certain circumstances, their opinions resonate widely.

One of America’s most prominent think tanks is the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), which publishes the influential journal Foreign Affairs. Founded in 1921, the CFR grew out of an informal band of foreign policy experts who advised President Woodrow Wilson toward the end of World War I. In planning for a postwar world, this group helped to formulate Wilson’s Fourteen Points initiative, planting the seed for the United Nations and other innovations in international relations. Following World War II, the CFR again demonstrated its influence. In an anonymous Foreign Affairs article, George Kennan—a Council member and State Department official—made the case that the United States should limit the Soviet Union’s expansionist tendencies. Containment, as discussed above, became the key American grand strategy during the Cold War.

The Council on Foreign Relations is not alone in offering foreign policy insights. In July 2007, two members of the Brookings Institution, a left-of-center
think tank based in Washington, D.C., published a striking op-ed in the New York Times. Following an eight-day visit to Iraq, Michael O’Hanlan and Kenneth Pollack praised the “surge” in U.S. troop levels and chided opponents for ignoring encouraging changes. “We are finally getting somewhere in Iraq, at least in military terms,” they declared.63 The opinion piece drew attention to improvements that numerous observers had overlooked. And because it was written by critics of George W. Bush’s prior handling of the Iraq War, the opinion piece had a dramatic influence on Washington debates about the war.

Case Study: Interest Groups Call for Funds to Combat AIDS in Africa

In early 2003, President George W. Bush announced a major effort to fight AIDS overseas. The president’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief focused on 15 countries: Botswana, Cote d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Haiti, Guyana, and Vietnam. The initiative, which called for $15 billion over five years to fund prevention, treatment, and orphan care, surpassed the aid of any previous administration.64 Five years later, in 2008, Congress enthusiastically exceeded Bush’s request by another $4 billion.65

Congress is not always so eager to provide such generous allotments of foreign aid. Only a few years earlier, the Clinton administration fought with Congress to secure just $225 million in global AIDS spending.66 What explains such a remarkable turn of events? Interest groups, it seems, put pressure on the president and congressional leaders to do something about the spread of AIDS in developing countries. The most prominent of these interest groups, however, were not ethnic lobbies, business groups, or think tanks. Rather, they consisted of Christian organizations and an especially entrepreneurial rock star.

In February 2002, Franklin Graham—the son of evangelist Billy Graham and founder of the charity Samaritan’s Purse—sponsored the first “international Christian

Bono is greeted at a school in South Africa. In May of 2006, the Irish rock star toured six African nations in an attempt to draw attention to the issues of HIV and AIDS.
FOREIGN POLICY

conference on HIV/AIDS.” Graham announced that it was his Christian duty to “bring healing, to bring love, to bring compassion” to the sick and dying.67

Bono, the lead singer of the Irish rock band U2, subsequently advocated for combating AIDS, framing the issue as a moral imperative for Christians. In a meeting with conservative Senator Jesse Helms (R-SC), Bono pointed out that 2,103 verses of Scripture pertain to the poor, but Jesus mentions judgment only once.68 Helms was moved by such arguments. In March, the influential senator published an op-ed piece in the Washington Post renouncing his lifelong skepticism of foreign aid and arguing for increased federal government spending on programs to combat AIDS abroad. This development was “like Nixon going to China,” according to Patrick Cronin, a former assistant administrator at the Agency for International Development.69

Other conservative politicians also played instrumental roles. Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL) held two congressional hearings about the role of unsafe healthcare in spreading the disease.70 Senator Bill Frist (R-TN), a physician, co-sponsored a bill offering millions of dollars to prevent mother-to-child transmissions. In addition, key members of the Bush administration embraced the issue. Chief of Staff Josh Bolten and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice supported expanding foreign aid to fight AIDS.71 Treasury Secretary Paul O’Neill ended his fact-finding trip to Africa by concluding that “there could no longer be any excuse for failure to address the basic needs of the world’s poorest people.”72 President Bush himself compared AIDS to genocide, implying that fighting it was a moral imperative.73 Expressing solidarity with his religious constituents, he declared that “everybody has worth, everybody matters, everybody was created by the Almighty.”74

The president also had strategic reasons for backing the policy. In 2002, Bush highlighted the danger of allowing Africa to become a haven for terrorists.75 Bush further hoped that AIDS relief would improve America’s tarnished international reputation. Among members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United States had ranked last or near last in terms of foreign development aid as a percentage of gross national income (GNI) for many years. While countries such as Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, and Luxembourg donated around 1 percent of their GNI, the United States contributed only about one-tenth of 1 percent.76

The administration and its congressional allies brought more than rhetoric to the table. Republican leaders introduced an ambitious 5-year, $15 billion plan that moved beyond mother-to-child transmission and the traditional focus on prevention. The resulting legislation—the U.S. Leadership against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003—allocated 55 percent of the funds to treatment, 20 percent to prevention, 15 percent to care for the dying, and 10 percent to orphans.77 It aimed to treat 2 million people, provide care for 10 million, and prevent 7 million new infections.78

The increase in foreign assistance to combat AIDS shows how the preferences of an interest group can align with broader strategic goals held by the executive or legislative branch. Would AIDS have become a major priority without pressure from religious organizations? Possibly, but this pressure certainly helped.

Thinking Critically

1. What other opportunities are there for religious organizations to join forces with other interest groups in order to further influence U.S. commitments of foreign aid?

2. What are some other ways in which religious organizations affect U.S. foreign policy?

Contemporary Foreign Policy Challenges

The United States continues to face extraordinary foreign policy challenges. It oversees a remarkably complex and dangerous international environment. And because the United States is the world’s only superpower, foreign nations regularly look to it to formulate solutions. This section highlights recent efforts of presidents, the foreign policy bureaucracy, Congress, interest groups, and other domestic political actors to confront three of the many critical foreign policy challenges faced by the U.S. today: how to reduce the threats of a North Korean nuclear program; how to balance the costs and benefits of free trade; and how to handle individuals who are suspected of terrorist activities.
**Diplomatic efforts to halt North Korea’s nuclear program have not proceeded smoothly.**

On August 6, 1945, an atomic bomb code-named “Little Boy” leveled the Japanese city of Hiroshima, killing tens of thousands almost immediately. The United States had become the first—and to date, the only—country to use a nuclear weapon against another country. The demonstration of such weapons’ devastating strength, coupled with the crystallizing Cold War, fueled international competition for nuclear weapons. In 1949, the Soviet Union tested bombs of its own. By 1964, the United Kingdom, France, and China acquired nuclear capabilities. Developments in rocket science made the specter of nuclear-armed states, able to project their power to far corners of the globe, much more real. And U.S. foreign policy needed to contend not only with the ramifications of America’s own nuclear capability, but also that of its allies and rivals.

Some observers saw this as a benefit for U.S. foreign policy. Perhaps the overwhelming might of nuclear weapons actually made them integral for deterring open hostilities between the East and the West. By pursuing certain tactics—such as dividing up arsenals and placing warheads in underground facilities—nuclear powers could maintain second-strike capabilities. Thus, states would think hard about offensive moves, for while the instigator might wreak havoc on its enemy, it would bring similar devastation through retaliation upon itself. This notion of “mutually assured destruction” may be one of the key reasons why the Cold War remained cold.

Diplomatic efforts to stem the proliferation of nuclear weapons were codified in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which opened for signature in 1968. The United States, United Kingdom, and Soviet Union signed almost immediately. The treaty stipulates that non-nuclear countries will not seek nuclear capabilities, pre-existing nuclear states will not facilitate proliferation to more states, countries can acquire nuclear technology for peaceful uses such as energy, and all will work toward a somewhat vague disarmament goal. Currently, 189 different countries are signatories.

Still, considerable uncertainties persisted. Miscalculations, laxity, or accidents in any of the five nuclear-capable states promised dire consequences. Moreover, non-nuclear countries reacted strongly. While some called for total disarmament, others were eager to obtain nuclear power for themselves. During the 1970s, ’80s, and ’90s, countries such as South Africa, Libya, and Iraq launched, and then subsequently abandoned, efforts to acquire nuclear weapons. But more recently, other countries such as Iran and North Korea have been accused of concealing weapons development behind civilian energy programs.

Since the end of the Cold War, concerns about nuclear proliferation have only intensified. The break-up of the USSR scattered a massive stockpile among the newly independent countries. Even though much of the arsenal has been returned to Russia, part remains missing. And ensuring the stability of nuclear states such as Pakistan, as well as ascertaining the motivations of “rogue states,” are key priorities in U.S. foreign policy.

North Korea represents a key challenge for U.S. efforts to hinder the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Since the Korean War, relations between the United States and North Korea have vacillated between strained and non-existent. In 1990, satellite photos revealed a facility that appeared capable of producing weapons-grade plutonium from fuel rods. North Korea refused to cooperate fully with inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Deeply concerned, the United States, South Korea, and a number of other countries pushed for United Nations sanctions. The Clinton administration also engaged
North Korean president Kim Il-Sung diplomatically, reaching a pact called the
program and comply with IAEA inspectors. In exchange, the United States
pledged to provide light-water reactors (which could not produce plutonium), oil
for interim energy supplies, and later, humanitarian assistance.80

Neither side, however, fulfilled all of its obligations. In the aftermath of the
terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, new intelligence indicated that North
Korea was still pursuing a nuclear weapons program. In his 2002 State of the
Union speech, Bush denounced the developments, and designated North Korea (as
well as Iraq and Iran, which also were suspected of developing nuclear weapons) as
a lynchpin of the “Axis of Evil.”81 A year later, North Korea announced its with-
drawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, declaring that it absolutely
needed nuclear weapons to protect itself from Washington’s “hostility.”82

The country, then led by Kim Il-Sung’s son Kim Jong-Il, demanded a dialogue
with the United States, even while issuing threats against America and its regional
allies, Japan and South Korea. Disappointed by the diplomatic approaches embod-
ied in the Agreed Framework, Bush refused. Instead, he insisted on multilateral
discussions in which North Korea and the United States would be joined by
China, Japan, Russia, and South Korea. Eventually, Kim relented. The Six-Party
Talks commenced in August 2003 and continue to this day.

The Six-Party talks—like the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the
Agreed Framework before them—did not compel North Korea to immediately
abandon its weapons program. In October 2006, North Korea detonated a
nuclear bomb in an underground test. The issue became even more
urgent in September 2007, when Israel conducted a strike against a Syr-
ian facility that may have received nuclear material from North Korea.
The following month, in return for 950,000 metric tons of fuel oil or
its financial equivalent, North Korea agreed to dismantle its facilities
and disclose all past and present nuclear programs by the end of the
year. In December, President Bush held out the prospect of nor-
malized relations with North Korea, and with it the possibility
of open trade and political engagement, if the country
upheld its promise.83

On January 4, 2008, however, North Korea
rejected Bush’s offer. At the time, some observers
suspected that Kim hoped to wait out the Bush
administration in the hopes of a sweeter
agreement with the next president. For its
part, though, the Bush administration
appeared divided on how best to respond.
Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, along
with lead negotiator Christopher Hill,
expressed interest in continuing the Six-
Party Talks. Vice President Dick Cheney
and former UN ambassador John Bolton,
however, condemned what they saw as a
conciliatory stance. “They’re in the classic
North Korean role of deception,” Bolton
asserted. “It’s like groundhog day; we’ve
lived through this before.”

Several months later, though, small
signs of progress surfaced. In June 2008,
North Korea invited international reporters to witness the destruction of the cooling tower at the country’s main nuclear weapons plant—a visible indication that Kim Jong-Il was willing to back off from his nuclear program. President Bush called the event “a moment of opportunity for North Korea,” and, presumably, the United States as well. Whether the two countries seize the opportunity has yet to be seen.

**Domestic lobbying groups push for protective tariffs.**

International trade affects every one of us in material ways. Chances are that the clothes you are wearing now, the meal you ate a few hours ago, and the vehicle that you drove to school this morning became available to you with the aid of inputs from other countries. And foreign materials and labor contribute to much more than consumer goods—they are used in every part of society, from military deployments to domestic businesses to government offices.

The United States has been a vocal advocate of “free trade,” which involves lowering or eliminating tariffs and other mechanisms that impede the movement of goods and services. Certainly, freer trade increases consumer choices, but there is a precise economic rationale as well. In his 1776 book *The Wealth of Nations*, the economist Adam Smith argued that countries should export according to their relative advantage. Thus, if Britain was the lowest-cost producer of wool while Portugal was the lowest-cost producer of port wine, then the former should export wool in exchange for the latter’s wine, and both parties would be better for it.

As Smith makes clear, free trade has a powerful economic justification. But political realities complicate matters. Widespread exchange, after all, involves reliance on other countries. Some sectors, most obviously weapons producers, raise important security concerns that can prompt governments to entertain less-efficient domestic production in order to avoid such dependence. Furthermore, even when gains from trade outweigh losses, those gains and losses may not be equally distributed across different populations. Widespread unemployment in a particular part of the country, for instance, can affect everything from crime rates to electoral fortunes. And when politically connected groups sustain significant losses, they make sure that politicians take notice.

As a result, even countries that advocate free trade may pursue selective protectionism—that is, the imposition of specific tariffs to protect the interests of domestic industries. The case of U.S. steel tariffs illustrates this well. In the late 1990s, a number of countries in Asia and elsewhere suffered financial crises that diminished the value of their currencies. The devaluation made exports from those countries relatively cheap and encouraged companies to sell their products quickly before their home currencies fell even further. Many tried to sell to the world’s largest economy, the United States, which relies upon steel to manufacture all sorts of products. This abundance drove down steel prices, benefiting steel consumers but hurting U.S. steel producers.

Economists estimated that low steel prices resulted in higher gains than losses for the economy as a whole. Lots of consumers enjoyed small gains, but a reasonably small, but well-organized, group of producers suffered substantial losses. Labor (represented by unions) and capital (represented by producers’ associations) in the steel sector teamed up to petition the Clinton administration for help. They accused South Korea, Russia, and others of “dumping,” an outlawed practice in which countries sell exports for less than their production cost or home-market price. Politicians from steel-producing states also joined the chorus, frequently advancing concerns about national security. “This is an industry
that has significant national security implications,” declared Senator Rick Santorum (R-PA). “Allowing the industry to be liquidated would put this country on a path to overdependence, similar to oil, on foreign sources.” Senator Carl Levin (D-MI) agreed, telling a cheering crowd of steelworkers: “We go to war with what you make.”

The president, however, remained unconvinced that the steel producers had a strong legal case, and he declined to take action. Given traditional alliances between blue-collar labor and the Democratic Party, many lobbyists felt betrayed by Clinton and his vice president, Al Gore. In the closely contested 2000 presidential election, some citizens used their vote to punish the Democrats. The Republican candidate, George W. Bush, defeated Gore in steel-producing states such as Indiana, Ohio, and West Virginia.

In the spring of 2001, just months after Bush took office, the steel lobbyists launched another political offensive. The lobbyists demanded protection from imports, federal aid in paying workers’ health and pension benefits, and assurances that the government would not challenge proposed industry mergers. This time, the lobbyists met with greater success. The Bush administration anticipated political payoffs from siding with steel-producers—including inroads with traditionally Democratic voters and 2002 midterm election support in key states such as Pennsylvania and Ohio.

In June, the president initiated a case under Section 201 of U.S. trade law, claiming that a glut of foreign steel was injuring domestic producers. This move gave the International Trade Commission, an independent American panel, six months to investigate the allegations and provide recommendations to the White House. The president also sent Treasury Secretary Paul O’Neill on an international trip to convince countries such as Russia, South Korea, China, and Japan to reduce global output by removing their subsidies for steel-producers.

In December, the American steel production was still hemorrhaging. Prices had dropped by about one-third during 2001, and numerous companies were declaring bankruptcy. The International Trade Commission, having determined that imports had injured the U.S. industry, recommended that the president impose import quotas, as well as tariffs ranging from 15 to 40 percent.

The administration, however, struggled to determine its course of action. Commerce Secretary Donald Evans and senior advisor Karl Rove backed higher tariffs, while chief economic advisor Lawrence Lindsey advocated free-trade principles. Additionally, a number of high-profile members of Congress (including John McCain) railed against protectionism. In March 2002, the president finally decided on three-year tariffs as high as 30 percent (depending on the type of steel) against countries such as Japan, China, South Korea, Russia, Ukraine, and Brazil. He asserted that the action was within the World Trade Organization (WTO) allowance for temporary “safeguard provisions” and exempted many developing nations, in addition to NAFTA trading partners Canada and Mexico.

This action, however, did not permanently resolve matters. In fact, an all-out trade war loomed. Almost immediately, China—the world’s largest steel producer—filed a complaint with the World Trade Organization. Then the European Union, Japan, and China threatened to impose tariffs on other U.S. goods without waiting for the WTO’s ruling, accurately pointing out that U.S. steel imports had in fact declined rather than risen over the past three years. Russia hinted that the tariffs would reduce its willingness to cooperate in the war on terror.
In November 2002, the WTO rejected the U.S. government’s protectionist policies, authorizing other countries to impose countervailing tariffs as punishment. The following month, the Bush administration relented. Facing a full-blown trade war, Bush repealed the tariffs 15 months before their scheduled expiration. In an effort to save face, though, the president noted that “I took action to give the industry a chance to adjust to the surge in foreign imports and to give relief to the workers and communities that depend on steel for their jobs and livelihoods. These safeguard measures have now achieved their purpose, and as a result of changed economic circumstances it is time to lift them.”

This episode reveals important lessons about the politics of trade. Despite the economic rationality of free trade, political realities may lead to selective protectionism. The steel case highlights a number of reasons for this: national security concerns, powerful interest groups, and the difficulties of transferring workers from one industry to another. As Gary Hufbrauer of the Institute for International Economics points out, a free-trade president who seeks quotas and tariffs may be anomalous, “but it’s a way of trying to keep moving on the bigger goal while dealing with the truly squeaky wheels—and steel is truly a squeaky wheel.”

The president, Congress, and the courts argue about the legal status of “enemy combatants.”

The September 11 terrorist attacks spurred the Bush administration into a new kind of war, the ongoing “global war on terrorism” (GWOT). President Bush has called GWOT “a different kind of conflict with a different kind of enemy,” a war “without battlefields or beachheads.” As a multi-faceted initiative, GWOT has included diplomatic efforts to freeze terrorist assets overseas, tougher law enforcement at home and abroad, and heightened homeland security.

Many aspects of GWOT have garnered broad support. A few, however, have provoked significant political controversy. One of the most heated debates concerns the legal rights of U.S. citizens who are accused of plotting terrorist attacks or fighting for al-Qaeda, the organization responsible for the attacks on September 11, 2001. The Bush administration contends that these individuals should be recognized as “enemy combatants” who can be detained indefinitely under the auspices of military law. Critics of the Bush administration, however, claim that the “enemy combatant” designation deprives suspects of their civil right to due process, and that they should be tried in civilian courts under the U.S. criminal justice system.

This debate has provoked ongoing legal battles that have made it all the way to the Supreme Court, with members of the president’s administration, the foreign
policy bureaucracy, Congress, and numerous interest groups all weighing in. One of the first important cases was the 2004 ruling on *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*. At issue was the fate of Yaser Esam Hamdi, an American citizen who was captured in Afghanistan in November 2001. Government officials claimed he was carrying an assault weapon when he surrendered to the Northern Alliance, an ally of the United States. But his father, Esam Fouad Hamdi, insisted that his son had traveled to Afghanistan only for religious study and humanitarian work.

Originally sent to the U.S. Navy base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Hamdi was transferred to a military brig in Norfolk, Virginia, upon confirmation of his U.S. citizenship. There he was held for years without any charges filed against him. Hamdi’s case entered the U.S. court system when his father filed a petition for a writ of habeas corpus on his behalf, requesting a chance for Hamdi to contest his designation as an “enemy combatant” in court. In 2004, the case came before the Supreme Court.96

The administration’s case rested on a few key claims. First, government lawyers insisted that the president’s constitutional war powers gave Bush the right to declare citizens as “enemy combatants” and detain them. Second, the 2001 congressional Authorization on the Use of Military Force (AUMF) explicitly delegated authority to the president to exercise “all necessary and appropriate force” against “persons” and organizations involved in terrorist actions against the United States. The government counsel claimed the AUMF authority included the detention of citizens. Finally, the administration and its supporters insisted that national security concerns dictated the selective use of military detentions.

Hamdi’s public defender vehemently objected to the claim that an American citizen could be denied both access to an attorney and a habeas review simply by being declared an “enemy combatant.” He further argued that if the AUMF permitted the president to hold suspects without trial indefinitely, “we could have people locked up all over the country tomorrow without any due process, without any opportunity to be heard. There is no indication that Congress intended any such thing.”97 Several civil liberties groups and lawyers’ organizations also backed Hamdi. In an amicus brief to the Court, the American Bar Association called the administration’s arguments “circular and unprecedented. In Hamdi’s case, where the deprivation of liberty is complete, ongoing, potentially without end, and based entirely upon a secret record, the need for counsel could not be more compelling.”98

In its decision in *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*, the Court ruled against the administration.99 The justices found that suspects retained the right to contest the charges against them before a “neutral decision maker.” The Court, however, set aside deeper questions about the limits of presidential power in wartime. It argued that AUMF did in fact permit the president to detain enemy combatants, but said nothing about whether that authority held in absence of an explicit congressional authorization. Hamdi himself, however, never got his day in court. Following the Supreme Court ruling, the administration released Hamdi to Saudi Arabia in exchange for renouncing his U.S. citizenship.100

The Court’s decision in *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*, while significant, was far from the last word in the conflict between national security and civil liberties. The following year, Congress got involved through the passage of the Detainee Treatment Act of 2005. The law sought to reaffirm the president’s wartime power by limiting the judiciary’s ability to intervene in matters involving military tribunals, and by preventing it from hearing habeas petitions filed by Guantanamo detainees.
The Detainee Treatment Act faltered under legal challenge just one year later, in yet another landmark Supreme Court ruling. The central protagonist in *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld* was a Yemeni citizen, Salim Ahmed Hamdan, who had been captured in Afghanistan and was suspected of being Osama bin Laden’s bodyguard and driver. Hamdan was among the first Guantanamo Bay prisoners to be tried in a military commission. But before the commission issued a ruling, Hamdan appealed to the U.S. civilian court system by filing a writ of habeas corpus that claimed the special military courts were illegal. Eventually, his case made its way up to the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court found that the 2005 Detainee Treatment Act could not strip the Court of jurisdiction over cases, including Hamdan’s, that were already pending in the federal courts system at the time the law was passed. Moreover, the Court found that the 2001 AUMF declaration by Congress did not give the president authority to try detainees under military tribunals. In his concurring opinion, Justice Breyer stated, “The court’s conclusion ultimately rests upon a single ground: Congress has not issued the executive a blank check.” The Court also rebuffed the administration’s arguments that military necessity justified use of the tribunals. Because “no emergency prevents consultation with Congress,” wrote Breyer, “judicial insistence upon that consultation does not weaken our Nation’s ability to deal with danger. To the contrary, that insistence strengthens the Nation's ability to determine—through democratic means—how best to do so.”

The Court’s ruling appeared to present the president with two options: try the detainees using the regular process of military court-martial, or get express permission from Congress to use different means. In its wake, the administration and its supporters opted to collaborate with Congress. “We believe the problems cited by the court can and should be fixed,” vowed Senators Lindsey Graham (R-SC) and Jon Kyl (R-AZ), two staunch White House supporters. “Working together, Congress and the administration can draft a fair, suitable, and constitutionally permissible tribunal statute.” And a few months later, Congress enacted the Military Commissions Act, which specifically granted presidential authority to try detainees under special military commissions.

But again, the Supreme Court halted the administration in its tracks. In an extraordinary case involving Lakhdar Boumediene, a detainee from Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Court went farther than it ever had before in challenging the system of military commissions. The Court in June 2008 decided that the Military Commissions Act amounted to unlawful suspension of habeas corpus, and paved the way for Guantanamo prisoners to challenge their detainment in civilian courts. *Boumediene v. Bush* dealt a heavy blow to the administration’s anti-terrorism policies. As one detainee’s defense lawyer, Lt. Cmdr. William C. Kuebler put it, the ruling “appears to demolish this argument that the Constitution does not apply in Guantanamo Bay.” Immediately after the court’s ruling, the defense lawyers for several other detainees filed legal challenges in U.S. civilian courts.

The appropriate tradeoff between national security and civil liberties continues to attract widespread attention in the war on terror. And considering the long period the United States expects to be engaged in GWOT, the question of legal status of detainees will loom large for some time to come. Without a doubt, we can expect members of all three branches of government, as well as a wide variety of organized interest groups, to continue to participate in the ongoing debate.
Throughout the nineteenth century, U.S. foreign policy was guided by a grand strategy of isolationism. After fighting two world wars in the first half of the twentieth century, the country was gripped by a new spirit of internationalism. During the Cold War, the United States sought to contain the spread of communism, but it never fought directly against the Soviet Union. Since the Cold War ended in 1989, the United States has been the world’s only superpower, with economic and military interests that span the globe.

As commander-in-chief, chief diplomat, and chief administrator, the president has extraordinary powers and responsibilities in foreign policy. Moreover, a vast network of agencies and departments assists the president in formulating and implementing his foreign policy agenda. Congress has a variety of means at its disposal to influence U.S. foreign policy-making. By enacting statutes, retaining the power to declare war, confirming bureaucratic nominees, ratifying treaties, and exercising its oversight responsibilities, Congress can influence U.S. foreign policy in important ways.

A variety of interest groups also contributes to foreign policy. Business groups, ethnic lobbies, and think tanks, in particular, can provide important insights. They also can shape national conversations about particularly pressing foreign policy issues; in so doing, they occasionally put pressure on Congress to challenge presidential powers in foreign policy.

Presidents, officials in the State and Defense Departments, Congress, a wide variety of interest groups, and the courts all participate in ongoing foreign policy debates, which center on issues ranging from the spread of nuclear weapons to the protection of U.S. industries against foreign competition to the legal status of enemy combatants in the ongoing war against terrorism.

KEY TERMS
Bush Doctrine, p. 617
Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), p. 625
Cold War, p. 614
containment, p. 614
Defense Department, p. 624
Department of Homeland Security (DHS), p. 627
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National Security Council (NSC), p. 619
North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), p. 628
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), p. 614
protectionism, p. 639
State Department, p. 619
tariff, p. 628
treaty, p. 631

SUGGESTED READINGS
Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow. 1999. Essence of Decision, 2nd ed. New York: AB Longman. An updated edition of the classic study of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Three models (rational actor, organizational processes, bureaucratic politics) are developed to explain foreign policy decision-making and the behavior that results from the process.


Stephen Hook and John Spanier. 2007. American Foreign Policy Since World War II, 17th ed. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press. A classic book that traces all of the major phases of American foreign policy since World War II through the events of September 11. The volume pays special attention to the political process and context in which decisions were made.

William Howell and Jon Pevehouse. 2007. While Dangers Gather: Congressional Checks on Presidential War Powers. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. The authors examine the proposition that the president has become all-powerful in the formation of policies concerning the use of military force. They show that Congress has a
definite, if circumscribed, influence over decisions involving troop deployments abroad.
David A. Welch. 2005. Painful Choices: A Theory of Foreign Policy Change. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. This book outlines both organizational and psychological theories about when foreign policy decision-makers attempt to make major changes in policy. Several historical case studies are then used to examine each theory.

Amy Zegart. 1999. Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999. Reviewing the creation and evolution of several executive branch agencies, Zegart argues that pressures from Congress, the White House, and even the voting public have undermined the effective operation of certain security institutions. Meanwhile, bureaucratic politics work to limit the sharing of expertise and coordination of actions across various agencies.

SUGGESTED WEBSITES

Department of Defense: www.defenselink.mil
Assumes primary responsibility for the U.S. military.

State Department: www.state.gov
Assumes primary responsibility for U.S. diplomatic relations with foreign countries.

Council on Foreign Relations: www.cfr.org
Provides substantial research and commentary on foreign policy issues.

Brookings Institution: www.brookings.edu/foreign-policy.aspx
The foreign affairs wing of the Brookings Institution, another prominent policy think tank.

The United Nations: www.un.org
The most prominent international organization to facilitate diplomatic relations between nations.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee: www.foreign.senate.gov
Primarily responsible for overseeing the foreign policy apparatus within the executive branch.