

Given the contradictions and shortcomings of these strategic concepts, perhaps the time has come to pay some attention to Soviet criticism of our nuclear deterrence doctrine. Gorbachev called mutual deterrence a source of tension. As [former] Soviet foreign minister Shevardnadze put it, "nuclear deterrence inevitably perpetuates the totality of confrontational relations among states."

Defense Secretary Cheney has wisely requested increased funding from Congress for certain research and development projects—in particular, strategic defense—that will purchase us flexibility in terms of doctrine and enemies. What we now develop and build will have to serve our military strategy in the twenty-first century. For the foreseeable future, one must hope, America's nuclear strategy will continue to be an alliance strategy embracing and protecting a non-nuclear unified Germany as well as a non-nuclear Japan—but a strategy that can put behind us the "confrontational" bipolar relationship with the Soviet Union to which Shevardnadze referred.

Yet before we wax lyrical about the dawn of a new era, free of the danger of instant nuclear holocaust, we have to remember that Stalin's legacy is not so easily overcome. The laws of physics, to be sure, do not ordain that there must be two nuclear superpowers, dividing the world into "two sides" threatening each other indefinitely with mutual annihilation. It is habits of mind and bureaucratic inertia, in both Washington and in Moscow, that cling to the apocalyptic "two sides" confrontation Stalin inflicted on the world at the end of World War II.

Such inertia casts a dark shadow far into the next century. The Pentagon bureaucracy continues to disparage strategic defense, contrary to the policy of the President and Secretary Cheney; it keeps designing our nuclear forces to deter a [military] onslaught [from the East]—and thus favors nuclear weapons installed in the middle of Germany and hair-triggered missile forces. Stalin has been buried twice in Moscow, but his ghost lives on in the Pentagon.

NOTE

1. *Containment: Documents on American Policy and Strategy, 1945–1950*, ed. Thomas Etzold and John Gaddis (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), pp. 302–6.

21 AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN THE THIRD WORLD: LESS WOULD BE BETTER

Stephen Van Evera

What policy should the United States pursue toward the Third World in the post-Cold War era? Three harbingers suggest that the Bush administration intends to continue America's past interventionist policies. First, a large chunk of the Bush administration's defense budget for fiscal year (FY) 1991 was allocated to forces optimized for Third World intervention, including fifteen aircraft carriers and eight light army and Marine divisions. The proposed budget for FY 1995 makes only modest cuts in these intervention forces.

Second, the Bush administration has continued four wars-by-proxy against leftist Third World regimes and movements, long after a Cold War rationale for fighting disappeared. In Cambodia the administration supports a coalition dominated by the Khmer Rouge, which seeks to oust the Vietnam-installed Hun Sen government. In Angola it has backed a violent rebellion by the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). In Afghanistan it sustains a rebellion by seven *mujaahideen* groups against the Najibullah regime. In El Salvador it supports the right-wing National Republican Alliance (ARENA) government against the Marxist Farabundo Martí Front for National Liberation (FMLN).

Third, during the latter half of 1990 the administration deployed a large military force to the Persian Gulf, and it used this force in early 1991 to rout Iraq from Kuwait, which Iraq had seized on August 2, 1990. By January 1991 this American force totaled some 515,000 troops, including some eight army and one and two-thirds Marine divisions, six aircraft carriers, roughly

This article is adapted from a chapter published in Joseph Krutzel, ed., *American Defense Annual, 1991–1992* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1991). A fully footnoted version appears in *Security Studies* 1.1 (Summer 1991). Earlier versions appeared in *Defense & Disarmament Alternatives* 3.3 (March 1990), and in *The Atlantic*, July 1990.

two thousand tanks, and fifteen hundred planes. Over one-fourth of all American military personnel, and two-fifths of America's ground units, were deployed.

I argue here that widespread American intervention in the Third World made little sense even at the height of the Cold War, and it makes even less sense with that war's demise. Accordingly, the United States should avoid further interventions in all but a few circumstances. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait presented these circumstances; hence the Gulf deployment deserved support, although the Persian Gulf War was perhaps unnecessary, since economic sanctions also might have forced Iraq from Kuwait. The case for the four proxy wars is much weaker, however. These wars should be quickly ended, and intervention forces should be sharply cut. Such cuts would save more than \$30 billion per year.

INTERVENTION FOR NATIONAL SECURITY?

Throughout the Cold War, proponents of U.S. intervention have made two principal claims: that Third World interventions protect American security by preserving the global balance of power, and that interventions promote democracy, thereby promoting human rights. Both arguments were false in the past, are false now, and would remain false even if the Soviet Union regained its strength and returned to an aggressive foreign policy.

The national security argument for intervention rests on three main assumptions:

1. The Soviet Union seeks an empire in the Third World.
2. It could gain such an empire, either by direct intervention or by sponsoring the expansion of proxies, unless the United States intervenes to stop it.
3. Such an empire would add significantly to Soviet military strength, ultimately tipping the world power balance in the USSR's favor, thus threatening American national security.

All three assumptions must be valid to uphold the security case for intervention. If any fails, the global balance of power is not threatened, leaving no security problem for intervention to solve. In fact, however, all three assumptions are defective. The first assumption crumbled with the waning of Soviet expansionism under Mikhail Gorbachev. Soviet tolerance of the 1989 democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe signaled the ebbing of Soviet expansionism worldwide, and perhaps its total abandonment. Eastern Europe matters far more to the USSR than any Third World region; Soviet leaders who concede their empire in Eastern Europe cannot be planning to colonize much less valuable Third World areas. Soviet cooperation against Iraq—an erstwhile Soviet ally—during the Persian Gulf crisis also illustrates the change in Soviet policy. In short, there is little Soviet imperial thrust left for American interventions to blunt.

The second assumption fails because the Soviet Union lacks the capacity to colonize the Third World. Today it can barely control its inner empire, as unrest in the Baltic republics, Transcaucasia, and Central Asia reveals. Overseas colonialism is unthinkable.

But even if the Soviets recovered their unity and their appetite for Third World empire, they could not seize it. Soviet military forces are designed primarily for land war in Europe and for intercontinental nuclear war with the United States, not for Third World intervention. This leaves the USSR with scant means to intervene directly. Nor can the USSR gain empire by promoting leftist revolution or expansion by Soviet "proxy" states, because the centrifugal force of nationalism tears the bonds between proxy and master. As a result, Third World leftists tend to be unruy proxies, seldom following Soviet dictates except when pushed into the Kremlin's arms by American bellicosity. This is underlined by the unfraternal relations among communist states and illustrated by the conflicts that have often flared between the Khmer Rouge and Vietnam, Vietnam and China, China and the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union and Albania. In fact, communists have fought each other as much or more than they fought others, indicating that Third World "Soviet proxies" are largely fictitious.

In addition, the USSR is evolving away from communism. This further discredits fears that the Soviets can organize a transnational communist empire, since the leaders of the empire are themselves discarding the ideology that would allegedly glue it together.

The third assumption fails because the Third World has little strategic importance, hence even large Soviet gains in the Third World would not shake the global balance of power. By the best measure of strategic importance—industrial power—the Third World ranks very low. All of Latin America has an aggregate gross national product (GNP) less than half that of Japan. All of Africa has an aggregate GNP below that of Italy or Britain. The aggregate GNP of the entire Third World is below that of Western Europe. Modern military power is distilled from industrial power. The Third World has little industrial power, hence it has little military potential, and correspondingly little strategic significance. As a result, Third World realignments have little impact on the global power balance.

Moreover, the nuclear revolution has further reduced the Third World's strategic importance to a level far below even what its industrial strength might indicate. Nuclear weapons constitute a defensive revolution in warfare. They make conquest among great powers almost impossible, since a victor now must destroy almost all of an opponent's nuclear arsenal—an enormous task requiring massive technical and material superiority. As a result, the nuclear revolution has devalued the strategic importance of all conquered territory, including Third World territory, because even huge conquests would not provide the conqueror with enough technical or material assets to give it decisive nuclear superiority over another great power. Hence industrial regions that mattered greatly before the nuclear age now matter

little, and Third World regions that formerly mattered little now matter even less.

Some interventionists assert that the Third World has strategic importance despite its lack of industrial power because the West allegedly depends on Third World raw materials, or because military bases in Third World areas allegedly have considerable strategic value. Both claims are much overdrawn. Oil is the only Third World material on which the West depends to any degree. The West imports many other materials from the Third World, but at modest additional cost all could be produced locally in the West, synthesized, replaced by substitutes, conserved and recycled, or acquired from alternative Third World sources if supplies from current producers were interrupted. Bases, too, can be replaced by longer-range forces, or moved to new locations, if a given country denies basing rights to the United States: Soviet bases in the Third World are vulnerable to Western blockade and destruction, since the West holds naval superiority. This leaves the Soviets unable to defend or resupply forces based overseas in wartime, hence Third World bases add little to Soviet military capability. Finally, the nuclear revolution renders such strategic arguments largely obsolete. Even if the United States depended heavily on Third World imports, and even if Third World bases mattered for conventional war, the American nuclear deterrent would still give the United States nearly absolute security from conquest.

The failure of all three assumptions creates a redundant, and therefore a very strong, case against intervention. Moreover, the latter two assumptions were false before the Gorbachev revolution, and would remain false even if that revolution were reversed. Hence the security case for intervention was very weak before Gorbachev appeared, and would remain very weak even if the changes he instituted were swept away.

In short, no national security justification exists for U.S. commitment to Third World intervention.

INTERVENTION FOR DEMOCRACY?

During the 1980s proponents of intervention supplemented security arguments with claims that American interventions promote democracy. This argument fails on both logical and historical grounds.

Deductive logic indicates that the United States lacks the means to implant democracy by intervention. Democracy requires suitable social and economic preconditions: a fairly equal distribution of land, wealth, and income; high levels of literacy and economic development; cultural norms conducive to democracy, including traditions of tolerance, free speech, and due process of law; and few deep ethnic divisions. Most of the Third World lacks democracy because these preconditions are missing. Moreover, it would require vast social engineering, involving long and costly postintervention occupations, to introduce them. American taxpayers clearly would not support extravagant projects of this sort.

The historical record shows that past U.S. interventions have generally failed to bolster democracy. These interventions have more often left dictatorship than democracy in their wake. Moreover, Washington has often subverted elected governments that opposed its policies, and many U.S.-supported "democratic" governments and movements were not at all democratic. Overall, this record suggests that the United States lacks the will and the ability to foster democracy.

The legacy of American interventions and occupations is not wholly undemocratic: Germany, Japan, Italy, Austria, and Grenada are significant exceptions. But these were easy cases: all had some previous experience with democracy, and all but Grenada were economically developed. Elsewhere the American record is bleak.

The United States governed Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic in a generally undemocratic fashion during the intermittent occupations in the period 1898-1934 and then allowed brutal dictators to seize power after it left. South Korea has seen far more dictatorship than democracy since American forces arrived in 1945. Following the era of U.S. colonial rule (1899-1946), the Philippines experienced a corrupt and violent perversion of democracy and a long period of repression under Ferdinand Marcos's U.S.-supported dictatorship. Even in the post-Marcos era, violence has marred Philippine elections, and the threat of a military coup has hung over the elected government. Iran and Guatemala have been ruled by cruel dictatorships ever since the CIA-sponsored coups of 1953 and 1954. Chile is only now emerging from years of harsh military dictatorship under Augusto Pinochet, who was installed by a U.S.-supported coup in 1973.

Some would argue that the United States brought democracy to Panama in 1989 and Nicaragua in 1990, but the United States deserves less credit than appearance suggests. The legacy of the 1989 U.S. invasion of Panama is still uncertain. The Bush administration's invasion deposed dictator Manuel Noriega and installed an elected government in his place. However, the administration also installed a sinister Noriega henchman, Col. Eduardo Herrera Hassan, as the commander of the new Public Force (PF), the successor to Noriega's corrupt Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF). Herrera staffed the PF almost exclusively with former PDF members, raising the risk that corrupt military cliques will continue to dominate the country's politics. Moreover, by invading, the United States merely sought to undo a mess of its own making. The United States created and trained the PDF; then, in 1968, the PDF destroyed Panamanian democracy, installing a junta that later gave rise to the Noriega dictatorship. Overall, U.S. policy toward Panama has not fostered democracy.

The 1990 Nicaraguan elections have apparently put Nicaragua on the road to democracy for the first time in its history. The U.S.-sponsored *contra* war and U.S. economic sanctions contributed by pressuring the Sandinistas to hold earlier and freer elections than they otherwise would have. However, the social conditions required for democracy were created by the Sandinista

revolution, over American opposition. In 1979, when the Sandinistas took power, 50 percent of the adult population of Nicaragua was illiterate; land ownership was maldistributed (5 percent of the rural population owned 85 percent of the farmland, while 37 percent of the rural population was landless); and the country was terrorized by the Somoza dictatorship's brutal National Guard. The Sandinistas reduced adult illiteracy to 13 percent, redistributed the land, and disbanded the National Guard.

Had the United States gotten its way, these changes never would have happened. As the Somoza regime crumbled in 1979, the Carter administration tried to forestall a Sandinista victory by replacing Somoza while preserving his National Guard in power. A National Guard-dominated regime surely would have left intact the old oligarchic social and political order—an order in which widespread coercion, voter ignorance, and vote fraud made elections meaningless.

The United States also gets mixed reviews for its role in arranging the 1990 Nicaraguan elections. The Reagan administration preferred a military victory to any compromise solution, including one providing for elections. It therefore disrupted the 1984 Nicaraguan elections by persuading the opposition not to run. It also resisted the peace plan proposed by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias in 1987, which launched the process that led to the 1990 elections. This resistance ended only when the Bush administration took office. In short, the impetus for the Nicaraguan election process came from Central America against U.S. opposition, while the conditions for democracy were established by a social revolution that the United States sought to prevent. Hence U.S. claims of authorship for Nicaraguan democracy ring hollow.

The undemocratic effects of American policies result partly from their pronounced bias in favor of elites. The Carter administration's support for the Nicaraguan oligarchy was not unique; in many other Third World countries American policy has bolstered the power of local antidemocratic upper-class elements, who then blocked the social leveling that democratization requires. In South Korea, U.S. policies favored the rightist elite from the early days of the postwar occupation. In the Philippines the United States aligned itself with the upper-class *ilustrado* elite after seizing the islands in 1898–1899, and again when it recovered the Philippines from Japan in 1944–1945. In Guatemala the CIA-sponsored Castillo Armas government (1954–1957) repealed universal suffrage and dispossessed peasant beneficiaries of earlier land reforms, leaving Guatemala among the most stratified societies in the world. Throughout Latin America the Alliance for Progress, founded partly to promote social equality, was coopted by oligarchic governments that ran it for the benefit of wealthy elites. As a result, the alliance in fact increased social stratification.

America's ambivalence toward Third World democracy is more starkly manifest in its recurrent subversion of elected Third World governments that pursued policies distasteful to the United States. There have been eleven prominent instances since 1945 in which Third World democracies have

elected nationalist or leftist regimes whose policies disturbed Washington. In nine of these cases—Iran (1953), Guatemala (1954), British Guiana (1953–1964), Indonesia (1957), Ecuador (1960–1963), Brazil (1964), the Dominican Republic (1965), Costa Rica (mid-1950s), and Chile (1970–1973)—the United States attempted to overthrow the elected government (or, in the Dominican case, to prevent its return to power), and in most cases succeeded. In the other two cases—Greece (1967) and Jamaica (1976–1980)—evidence of American subversion is less clear-cut, but is nevertheless substantial.

In short, American leaders have favored democracy only when it produced governments that supported American policies. Otherwise they have sought to subvert democracy.

American ambivalence toward Third World democracy is revealed by the thuggish character of many American Third World clients. America's client regimes in Central America are illustrative. The U.S.-backed governments of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras hold regular elections, which qualify them as "small and fragile democracies" in Ronald Reagan's view. But none pass the first test of democracy—that those elected control government policy. Instead, the army and police effectively rule all three countries; the civilian governments are hood ornaments on military vehicles of state. Civilian officials who defied the military would promptly be removed by assassination or coup. Knowing this, they obey the military. Moreover, the preconditions for fair elections—free speech, free press, and freedom to vote, organize, and run for office—are denied by government death squads that systematically murder critics of the government. The official terror has reached vast proportions in El Salvador, where the government has murdered 40,000 Salvadorans since 1979, and in Guatemala, where the government has murdered 140,000 since 1970. Fair elections are impossible amid such slaughter.

In sum, the United States lacks the means to institute democracy by intervention, and apparently lacks the will. There is little reason to expect more democratic results from future interventions. Accordingly, the advancement of democracy is an unpersuasive reason for intervention.

WHEN NOT TO INTERVENE: THE CASE AGAINST BUSH'S PROXY WARS

These criticisms of the case for intervention apply directly to the Bush administration's ongoing proxy wars. The Bush administration did not create these wars; they were inherited from the Carter and Reagan administrations. Nor is the United States solely responsible for past fighting; it became directly involved only after all four wars began. However, U.S. responsibility for past fighting is sizable, and the United States now plays a key role in sustaining the three wars where active fighting continues. (An uneasy truce has suspended the fighting in Angola, but a secure peace has not yet been achieved.) These wars have taken a huge human toll: 341,000 killed in Angola since

1975, including 320,000 civilians (thanks to the war, Angola has 50,000 amputees, the most per capita in the world); 64,000 killed in Cambodia since 1978; thousands killed in Afghanistan since the Soviets withdrew in 1989; and 75,000 killed in El Salvador since 1979. Such enormous violence requires a compelling justification, but the case for these wars is extremely thin.

Their main rationale vanished with the waning of Soviet expansionism. The Reagan administrations claimed that these wars were required to blunt the Soviet Union's "imperial thrust" in the Third World, in order to preserve the global balance of power. This rationale—dubious even during the Cold War, because there was little power in the Third World to add to either side of the balance, and little Soviet capacity to exert imperial control—wholly dissolved once the abatement of Soviet imperialism became clear, leaving these wars without strategic purpose.

Moreover, the administration's client groups are dominated by brutal elements who will rule by terror if they win on the battlefield. Democracy won't be helped, and human rights will be harmed, if the Bush policy succeeds.

In Cambodia the administration claims to oppose the return of the Khmer Rouge, while working to oust the Hun Sen government. But the Khmer Rouge are Hun Sen's only real competitors for power, and his most likely successors. In effect, then, the administration supports the Khmer Rouge's bid for power. These same Khmer Rouge killed over one million Cambodians when they held power during 1975–1978. In contrast, Hun Sen leads a pluralist, fairly popular regime that is accepted as legitimate in most of Cambodia.

UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi preaches democracy and capitalism to credulous conservative audiences in America, but he runs a brutal quasi-Stalinist autocracy in the territory he controls in Angola. He has murdered UNITA dissidents and once burned alive an entire family at a public bonfire as "witches." As a youth Savimbi was a communist organizer in Portugal, and UNITA defectors warn that he remains an unreformed Maoist. The training manual for UNITA leaders has a communist flavor, defining UNITA domestic policy as "democratic centralism," and UNITA's structure includes a Central Committee and a Politburo. UNITA also favors Savimbi's tribal kinsmen against others, leading one commentator to label his movement "nepo-Leninist." (Americans who mistook Savimbi for a supply-side conservative can probably blame Black, Manafort, Stone and Kelly, the high-powered public relations firm that Savimbi paid over \$2 million to give him a suitably Reaganite public image.)

The Afghan *mujahideen* are a fractious group dominated by Moslem extremists and drug traffickers. The strongest *mujahideen* group, Hizbe Islami, is led by Golbuddin Hekmatyar, an extreme fundamentalist described by some Afghan specialists as an "Afghan Khomeini." His fundamentalist cohorts have launched a reign of terror among Afghan exiles in Pakistan, murdering those who criticize their views. Hekmatyar has also scornfully castigated the United States and its "immoral" society, even while the United

States lavished him with aid. Another *mujahideen* leader, Nasim Akhunzada, was known until his death as the "heroin king" because he controlled the Afghan heroin routes to Iran. In 1989 rebel-controlled Afghan areas exported seven hundred tons of opium, the raw material for heroin, making Afghanistan the world's second-largest opium producer, after Burma. These "founding fathers" are not the type to build democracy if they win power.

The Salvadoran government is dominated by ARENA party founder Maj. Roberto D'Aubuisson and his military colleagues. President Alfredo Cristiani is largely a figurehead who distracts the American Congress with moderate rhetoric while D'Aubuisson and the military run their savage war. D'Aubuisson is widely regarded as the mastermind of El Salvador's official death squads and was personally implicated in the 1980 murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero and the 1981 murders of two American labor officials. He also authored a plot to assassinate the U.S. ambassador to El Salvador, Thomas Pickering, in October 1984.

In short, victory by the Administration's clients would lead to rule by violent elements who have committed gross human rights abuses and have shown no commitment to democracy.

Why does war continue? One would expect even an interventionist administration to cut off such odious groups once the wars they waged no longer served a strategic purpose. But the Bush administration presses on with its wars. Perhaps most striking, it has pressed on even after winning its main demands. Its targets have conceded America's principal aims, but the administration won't take yes for an answer.

As the price for a settlement in Cambodia, the United States has long demanded that Vietnam withdraw the occupation forces it left in Cambodia after it overthrew the Khmer Rouge regime in 1978–1979. Vietnam finally agreed and withdrew its forces in September 1989. But then the Bush administration upped its demands, first insisting that Hun Sen include the Khmer Rouge in his government as coalition partners and later demanding that his government step down under a complex and expensive scheme involving an interim United Nations (UN) administration—a solution that would raise the risk of a Khmer Rouge return to power, since Hun Sen's regime is the main barrier in their way. Meanwhile, the Hun Sen government has been prepared since late 1989 to accept internationally supervised elections conducted—as they were in Nicaragua, Namibia, and Poland—with the incumbent regime in office. These three cases, and several others, show that fair elections are feasible under such conditions. The administration has nevertheless rejected this solution, insisting instead on Hun Sen's prior departure. It also continued supplying the Khmer Rouge coalition armies, which forced Vietnam to counter by sending forces to Cambodia in the fall of 1989—thereby defeating America's main declared aim.

As the price for a settlement in Angola, the United States has long demanded that Cuba withdraw the troops it sent there in 1975 to bolster the new Angolan government. In late 1988 the Cubans agreed to withdraw by July

1, 1991, and began leaving. The Angolan government also offered to give amnesty to all UNITA members and to integrate UNITA personnel into the government. But then, in September 1989, the Bush administration for the first time demanded that the government also hold elections as the price for peace. This is a nice-sounding afterthought, but a pointless complication, because even foreign-sponsored elections will not bring real democracy to Angola; Angola is a poor country with a largely illiterate and deeply divided population, hence it lacks important preconditions for democracy. In late 1990 the Angolan government accepted multiparty democracy in principle, and in May 1991 it finally accepted a U.S.-Soviet plan that would resolve the war through elections, to be held in late 1992. Thus it appears that a peace premised on elections may be possible, and both sides also agreed to observe a cease-fire in the meantime. However, even if the peace succeeds, Angola surely won't become a democracy; thus the Bush administration's late demand for elections merely prolonged a war that could have ended sooner.

In exchange for an Afghan settlement, the United States asked the Soviet Union to withdraw the invasion force it sent to Afghanistan in 1979. The Soviets did so in February 1989, leaving behind an Afghan regime that offered moderate peace terms, including a broad coalition government and UN-supervised elections. Elections cannot bring real democracy in Afghanistan, for the same reasons as in Angola—intense poverty, widespread illiteracy, and deep tribal divisions. A peace based on power-sharing that reflects the relative military strength of the parties would probably prove more durable. Whatever the shortcomings of an electoral solution, however, the administration has impeded even that road to peace by demanding that the Najibullah regime step down before elections are held—a solution that Najibullah predictably rejects.

The United States said it sought to build a democratic political system in El Salvador. The FMLN has progressively softened its demands and now agrees in principle with Washington's declared objective, pledging to lay down its arms if conditions for free elections are established. The FMLN's main demand is the dismantling of the government death squads, to allow the opposition to organize and campaign without fear. But the Bush administration has not pressed the Cristiani government to accept such a settlement. Until the November 1989 FMLN offensive, the administration opposed any settlement that would give the left a significant share of political power. Later it began to express more support for negotiations, but still failed to apply strong pressure on the government. The two sides may eventually reach a settlement by themselves—they made substantial progress toward a peace agreement during early 1991—but American pressure could have brought peace earlier.

Why does the Bush administration wage these wars so stubbornly? One

theory holds that the administration has ceded control of Third World policy to the far right, in a bid to appease ultraconservatives for their exclusion from arenas of foreign policy decision making in which the stakes are higher for the United States, such as U.S.-Soviet relations. The far right favors a *jihad* against all Third World leftists, even if this means aiding barbarians or wrecking the targeted societies. To win this *jihad*, it will even use Marxist movements to destroy other Marxists if non-Marxist clients are not available—hence its peculiar willingness to back the Marxist Khmer Rouge and UNITA. In contrast, American peace groups have shown little interest in these wars, except for the Salvadoran conflict; hence the administration can make more friends than enemies by fighting on.

WHEN TO INTERVENE: THE CASE FOR THE GULF DEPLOYMENT

The case for the 1990–1991 Persian Gulf deployment is far stronger than the case for these proxy wars. Like them, the Gulf deployment did not protect American sovereignty or advance democracy, nor did it protect American prosperity. The Gulf deployment did advance secondary American interests, however, and was justified for this reason.

Had Iraq gone unchecked, its seizure of Kuwait might have foreshadowed its seizure of the rest of the Arab Persian Gulf. Iraq could have easily overrun the other Arab Gulf states (Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman), especially if it had retained Kuwait's large resources and converted them to military use. Iraqi expansion would have been eased by the common Arab culture that Iraq shares with the Gulf states; this common identity would have dampened popular resistance to Iraqi occupation, allowing Iraq to digest Arab conquests at modest cost and then move on to take more. Moreover, an Iraqi campaign of this sort was not implausible. Iraq has launched two wars of choice since 1980, and the ideology of the Iraqi Ba'ath party stresses the importance of achieving Arab unity, thus justifying a campaign of expansion against Iraq's Arab neighbors.

Had it seized the other Arab Gulf states, Iraq would have gained control of 20 percent of world oil production—a vast increase from the 4.4 percent that Iraq controls alone. Iraq's GNP would have more than quadrupled. In short, an enlarged Iraq would have emerged far stronger than before.

This expanded Iraq would have remained a minor world power, too weak to directly threaten American security. It still would have produced only 1 percent of gross world product (GWP), leaving it dwarfed in economic strength by the major industrial states. (In contrast, the United States produces 27 percent of GWP; the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] states together produce 50 percent of GWP.) With this small economic base, even an enlarged Iraq could not have built a military machine that could match

the militaries of the industrial West. Iraq could have developed a modest nuclear deterrent and could have emanated power in the Mideast region under the umbrella provided by this deterrent. However, Iraq would have remained vulnerable to Western military power, because even a nuclear-armed state cannot build a robust defense against determined opponents with economies twenty-seven times larger, or fifty times larger, than its own. As a result, the Western countries could have managed any direct Iraqi threat to themselves.

An enlarged Iraq would have also gained some capacity to coerce others from its influence over world oil supplies. However, this capacity would have been partially offset by its military inferiority; had it used the oil weapon to threaten others' vital interests, they might have played their military card. Moreover, Iraq could not use the oil weapon without wounding itself, since it needs oil revenues just as oil consumers need oil.

Nor could an enlarged Iraq have extracted much wealth from the West by forcing a large permanent oil price increase. Such an increase would have triggered new non-OPEC oil production, alternative energy development, and wider energy conservation. These events would devalue oil held in the ground by current oil producers, including Iraq. Such considerations have led Saudi Arabia to pursue a moderate oil pricing policy; the same considerations would have compelled Iraq to adopt similar policies. Moreover, with just 20 percent of world oil production even an enlarged Iraq would have lacked the market power required to force more than a marginal rise in long-term oil prices. Had it cut its oil production completely, it might have caused a large oil price rise, but other producers would have harvested all the profits. Had it pumped enough oil to make money from the price rise, its own pumping would have kept that rise to a minimum. In short, the price of oil was not at stake in the Persian Gulf.

Thus Iraq's seizure of the Gulf would have posed little direct threat to American sovereignty or prosperity. Overall, an expanded Iraq would have become a dominant regional power but would have remained a minor world power, with little influence beyond the Middle East. It could not have jeopardized vital Western interests or taken the offensive against the West. Nor would its expansion have injured democracy, since the Gulf states are not democratic.

However, the United States does have secondary interests that would be jeopardized by unchecked Iraqi expansion and that were protected by the Gulf deployment. These include the protection of human rights, the preservation of peace among other states, the deterrence of terrorism, the prevention of nuclear proliferation, and the fulfillment of its moral commitment to Israel. If these interests are considered alone, each by itself can seldom justify the use of force, but here their cumulative importance is substantial, and Iraqi expansion would have threatened them quite directly. Hence the Gulf crisis was an instance where the limited use of force was appropriate.

Iraqi occupation forces cruelly violated the human rights of the residents of Kuwait. The United States has acquiesced to far more serious human rights violations by other governments, and American opposition to Iraq's lesser violations reflects a double standard. Nevertheless, the fact that the Gulf deployment ended these violations weighs in its favor. Iraq's aggression was unusually blatant—UN members have very rarely tried to conquer and annex one another—and American action to reverse it helps deter similar acts by others in the future; this bolsters peace. Iraq has sponsored international terrorism and has escaped punishment for this sponsorship; the Gulf crisis provided an opportunity to correct this oversight. Kuwait's financial resources would have allowed Iraq to intensify its quest for nuclear weapons, hence America slowed the Iraqi nuclear program and inhibited the regional spread of nuclear weapons by restoring Kuwait's freedom.

Most important, the U.S. deployment thwarted a serious threat to Israel's security and deflected a threat to the United States that derived from America's commitment to Israel. If the Arabs living to the east of Suez were united under a single government, Israeli security would be seriously jeopardized. These Asian Arabs are now ruled by eleven separate governments. This leaves them unable to act in concert, limiting their collective ability to threaten Israel. However, Israel might be unable to defend against a single Arab regime that controlled both the oil wealth of the Persian Gulf and the military power of the eastern frontline states. Such a state would command a net GNP many times that of Israel and might convert this economic superiority into military superiority.

If Iraq controlled the Gulf it would be well positioned to establish such an Asian Arab hegemony. Syria, Jordan, Yemen, and Lebanon would then be vastly outmatched by Iraqi power and might succumb to it. Like Bismarck's Prussia, Iraq would enforce national union.

If so, the GNP of this hegemonic Iraq would be 7.7 times that of Israel. In contrast, the frontline states that fought Israel in 1967 and 1973 held a GNP superiority over Israel of only 1.9 to 1, and the worst plausible "eastern front" that now might challenge Israel—a coalition of Syria, Iraq, and Jordan—holds a GNP superiority of only 2.3 to 1 over Israel. Thus an Iraqi hegemony in Arab Asia would threaten Israel with a far greater preponderance of resources than it has faced before. If it exploited this preponderance, hegemonic Iraq could probably gain conventional superiority over Israel, and might even find ways to threaten Israel's nuclear deterrent.

Moreover, such a hegemony would concentrate these resources in very hostile hands. The Iraqi Ba'ath party remains committed to the destruction of Israel, hence it seems quite plausible that Iraq would have turned against Israel once it gained dominance among the Asian Arabs.

The containment of Iraq also serves American interests, if the United States intends to sustain its security guarantee to Israel, as I believe it should. The United States could certainly contain even an Iraq that controlled Arab Asia.

However, America's security guarantee to Israel would then require greater American effort and involve greater risks. A hegemonic Iraq might have launched a renewed oil embargo to coerce the United States to halt security assistance to Israel. The United States could have weathered such an embargo, especially if it prepared properly beforehand, but an embargo would pose a major nuisance. A hegemonic Iraq also might have compelled the United States to rescue Israel in a future Arab-Israeli war, if it defeated Israel on the battlefield. This might have required the direct use of American forces, perhaps involving the United States in a regional nuclear conflict. The United States undoubtedly would have succeeded, but perhaps at a high price. These dangers were avoided by containing Iraq before it gained hegemony over its Arab neighbors.

By containing Iraq, the United States also sustained the possibility of an Arab-Israeli peace. Israel will not trade land for peace if it faces a serious military threat from the east, since territorial concessions involve some loss of military capability for Israel. Hence the containment of Iraq is a precondition for an Arab-Israeli peace. The possibility of an Arab-Israeli peace now seems remote, given the aggressive aims embraced by both sides. Nevertheless, both parties may someday pursue peace more seriously, so it seems worthwhile to preserve the conditions that peace requires. The Gulf deployment helped sustain these conditions by bolstering Israel's security.

The size of the Gulf deployment and the administration's decision for war in January 1991 can still be questioned, however. The administration chose to deploy a large force, in order to put strong military pressure on Saddam Hussein to concede, and to prepare an offensive military solution if he did not. In January the administration decided that it had waited enough and launched the war. However, a strategy of prolonged economic siege also might have forced Iraq to concede. Such a strategy would have required a far smaller force and cost fewer lives. It stood a good chance of success because Iraq is vulnerable to economic embargo and blockade: it heavily depends on revenues from oil exports, which supplied 42 percent of Iraq's GNP in 1989 and are easily interdicted. By one estimate a sustained siege would have reduced Iraq's GNP by 48 percent. Economic sanctions have often failed in the past, but previous economic sanctions have never been so punishing. Iraq would have resisted, but it seems doubtful that this resistance would have lasted for many years had the United States kept the pressure on. Such a siege strategy would have required a force adequate to defend Saudi Arabia from Iraqi attack and to blockade Iraqi ship traffic—perhaps 75,000–100,000 U.S. troops—but probably no more than this.

Administration officials rejected a long-siege strategy on grounds that the United States might have been unable to maintain unity in the international coalition required to enforce it. However, only a small coalition—including just Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United States—was required to prevent Iraqi oil exports. The politics of maintaining this small coalition seem man-

ageable. Thus the goals of the Gulf deployment were worthy, but the size of the deployment seems excessive, and its offensive use seems unnecessary.

WHAT INTERVENTION FORCES DOES AMERICA REQUIRE?

The United States has no interests in the Third World that could justify a long and costly intervention. As noted above, the main arguments for past interventions—those positing that interventions protect national security or promote democracy—are not persuasive. Certainly no American Third World interest could justify another engagement as expensive as the Indochina war.

However, the 1990–1991 Persian Gulf conflict illustrates that the United States does have interests in the Third World that could justify the limited use of force. It also provides a useful yardstick for setting America's intervention force requirements, because a more demanding Third World contingency is hard to imagine: Iraq lies halfway around the world, it had the world's fifth-largest army, and it held the advantage of standing on the defensive, having already seized Kuwait. One analyst suggests that the 230,000 U.S. troops in the Gulf by early November 1990 were already adequate to retake Kuwait; and, as noted above, others argue that a siege strategy requiring only 75,000–100,000 troops might have sufficed to free Kuwait. The Gulf deployment thus provides a "worst plausible case" and sets a generous standard for meeting the requirements of that case, since a smaller force might have been sufficient to achieve American goals; hence it indicates a maximum requirement for intervention forces.

America's major interventionary forces are its lighter conventional forces—that is, those forces that are strategically mobile but are rather lightly armed. These include the army's light infantry, airborne, and airmobile divisions (comprising 6 of the army's 18 active divisions in FY 1990); the Marines' 3 amphibious divisions; supporting air force tactical airpower and air force and navy transport forces; and the navy's 15 aircraft carriers. Together these forces cost \$102.3 billion in fiscal year 1990, or 34 percent of the \$300 billion FY 1990 defense budget.

The Gulf deployment engaged somewhat less than half of America's light forces—only three and two-thirds light army and Marine ground divisions, and only 6 aircraft carriers. The "Gulf deployment" standard therefore suggests that at least half of America's light forces could be safely eliminated. Such a cut would leave the United States with a substantial capacity for Third World contingencies.

Specifically, the United States could cut four active army light infantry divisions and one active Marine division and still retain four active light divisions—an army airborne division, an army airmobile division, and two Marine divisions—for Third World contingencies. This four-division force matched the Gulf deployment with an extra one-third Marine division to spare. It substantially exceeds the American force deployed in the 1989

invasion of Panama (which utilized only one and one-half ground divisions) and is comparable to roughly half the peak American deployment in Vietnam—surely enough for any plausible future Third World contingency.

If the navy carrier force were cut from fifteen to eight carriers, the United States could still sustain a force of two to three carriers in combat for many months at a time and could surge a force of six or seven carriers into combat for a few months. Perhaps six carriers would be required to cover American sea lanes early in a Soviet-American confrontation—two carriers each for the Atlantic and Pacific sea lanes, and two more for the Persian Gulf or Northern Norway—hence an eight-carrier force should be adequate for this task. Experience suggests that a Third World contingency requiring more than six carriers is very unlikely. The six carrier Gulf deployment was America's largest carrier deployment anywhere since World War II. An eight carrier force could sustain a multi-month deployment of this size, although carrier crews would face the hardship of prolonged tours of duty.

Had these cuts been imposed on the FY 1990 defense budget, it would have dropped by 17 percent (\$51.5 billion), to a total of \$248.5 billion. Such sharp cuts should not be imposed in a single year, but could be phased in over several years. Instead, however, the Bush administration cut American light forces by only one army division during FY 1991 and has proposed additional cuts that will probably total one additional light army division, two light army reserve divisions, and one aircraft carrier by FY 1995. These cuts would produce a savings of \$17.6 billion from FY 1990 spending levels if parallel cuts are made in supporting forces—a significant cut, but some \$33.9 billion less than would be allowed by reductions to a Gulf deployment standard. American light forces would still total seven active light ground divisions (four army and three Marine) and fourteen aircraft carriers, some three light ground divisions and six aircraft carriers more than a Gulf deployment standard suggests. Thus the Bush budget for light forces substantially exceeds the likely demands of the Third World contingencies that these forces are designed to address.

Fewer dollars, but many lives, could be saved by ending the Bush administration's proxy wars in Cambodia, Afghanistan, and El Salvador. The administration's aid to its proxies totals only some \$600 to \$700 million per year, but this small expenditure is causing vast human suffering. If the Bush administration values human rights, it should stop these cruel wars as quickly as possible. Toward this goal, it should serve notice that its subsidies are ending and should press its clients to accept peace terms that each has been offered. If it did so, the fighting could soon be ended.

22 NOW THAT THE COLD WAR IS OVER, DO WE NEED THE CIA?

Loch K. Johnson

Espionage isn't what it used to be. Consider that for over forty-five years, the national security efforts of the United States have been designed to thwart the global expansion of the Soviet Union and its communist allies—the so-called containment doctrine.

The United States has deployed ships and soldiers around the world and aimed twelve thousand strategic nuclear warheads on targets from Moscow to Minsk. We have peered into the Soviet heartland with sophisticated reconnaissance satellites and ringed the perimeter of the USSR with electronic listening devices. Our spies have pilfered top secret documents from safes within the Kremlin itself.

Presidents have unleashed the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to fight communism in the back alleys of the world. Its weapons have included secret propaganda, political manipulation, economic disruption, and paramilitary (warlike) operations ranging from assassination plots against foreign leaders to large-scale "secret" wars.

On their side, the Soviets have done their best to spy on the United States and disrupt our attempts to influence global affairs. The KGB, the chief Soviet intelligence agency, proved to be a ruthless adversary in this hidden and undeclared World War III.

Now, suddenly, the CIA and the KGB have run into a hitch: the end of the Cold War. The opening of Soviet society (*glasnost*), coupled with the warming of relations between the superpowers, threaten to make intelligence agencies anachronistic.

The president of the Soviet Union, Mikhail S. Gorbachev, has promised to allow a large increase in the number of U.S. on-site military inspections in his country, and President George Bush has agreed to reciprocate. Once cut

Note: This chapter was written especially for this book. An earlier version appeared in the newsletter of the Foreign Policy Section of the International Studies Association in 1990.