

PART IV.  
GLOBAL TRENDS:  
UNITY OR FRAGMENTATION?

# Alliances and Alignments in a Globalizing World

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Common to all conceptions of globalization are the greatly increased range and intensity of international political, economic, and social interaction. Controversy persists as to how absolutely new this phenomenon is, but there is scarcely any dispute that an additional characteristic, the speed of interactions, has given rise to political behavior very different from that of even the recent past. This speed is particularly apparent in financial matters, in the transmission of news and in its political effect, and in the pace of military action.

As a consequence of all this, few major politico-economic events fail to have some effect on every country on the globe. Most countries, however, have only a limited capacity to influence these global events, especially outside their own immediate region. The key characteristic of the United States, as the world's so-called sole superpower, is precisely its ability to exert major political, economic, and military influence anywhere on the globe.<sup>1</sup>

In the past, countries involved in international politics, particularly those in conflict, have commonly sought alliances or alignments to reinforce their power and influence. It might be thought that such groupings are in principle incompatible with the idea of globalization, creating and hardening divisions when the wider process is one of integration. For various reasons, however, alliance or alignment seems likely to remain a pervasive feature of international politics, though one substantially modified by the new context. The unique status of the United States is a dominant feature of this changed context, and the changing role of alliances will be particularly noticeable in the U.S. case. The emergence of an embryonic "international community," or at least the semblance of one, will blur the margins of formal alignments, and U.S. military forces will find themselves increasingly acting less to promote vital national interests and to achieve an immediate military effect, and more to affect political behavior and mold the international system.

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## The New International Milieu

The sources of globalization are widely believed to be technological progress combined with the almost universal adoption of free and transparent market practices. According to optimistic analyses, through a combination of these phenomena with some form of democracy, the world is about to realize the utopian dream of the last three centuries: a generally perceived harmony of interests within which conflict, certainly conflict sufficiently acute to generate war, is rare. Such expectations underlay the pronouncements of a new world order at the end of the Cold War and are embraced in common interpretations of such popular works as Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man* and Thomas Friedman's *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*.<sup>2</sup> A world of mutually profitable interaction between all nations is hailed as the imminent pattern of international relations, happily replacing the war of all against all that many since Thomas Hobbes have regarded as the best description of international society.

Whether this new pattern is a plausible forecast, it is clearly not yet a reality. New habits of collaboration undoubtedly exist, but so do ample tensions capable of producing political and economic conflict. Moreover, while it is true that so-called soft power, in the form of political and economic influence, has a greater role in the politics of a world concentrated as never before on economic goals, military force is still unique in its capacity to produce quick results and to do so in ways that often can only be combated in kind.

The potential of the contemporary world for unfettered, mutually beneficial exchanges of all kinds stands in sharp contrast to the world of the Cold War, which took the formation of mutually exclusive blocs to new levels as an organizing principle for much of the globe. Perhaps it is realization that the need for such tight and rigid alignment has expired, at least for the time being, that has engendered the idea that alliances in general have lost their rationale. Thus, the persistence of the United States and certain of its allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and several other mutual defense arrangements has been depicted in some quarters as anachronistic and regressive. Certainly, it was a rude shock to the Russians that NATO did not follow the Warsaw Pact into history.

It is possible to imagine a number of international systems for the near future, each with a different role for strategic alignments. One possibility is continued progress toward a harmony of interests, with collapsing economic barriers, continuing political and economic rapprochements on the model of the European Union (EU) or the North American Free Trade Agreement, and increasing joint efforts by the great powers to police atypical conflicts under international license on the collective security principle. Theodore Roosevelt's "posse of nations" would be increasingly realized, and the United Nations would become the dominant alignment for security issues.<sup>3</sup>

Several current trends make it rather less ridiculous than it would once have been to speculate along these lines. Nuclear weapons have made major powers very cautious about conflict among themselves; technology and the market are indeed producing unprecedented welfare, in which new players are beginning to share—Indian emergence as an important software exporter is an example; and there is a definite

rise in democratic grassroots support for collective efforts to maintain international justice and order. In other words, countries are more explicit than some decades ago in accepting their stake in the international milieu on which their exploding prosperity heavily, though differentially, depends.

On the other hand, these benign tendencies are neither universal nor firmly established. The modern world still includes many losers, both domestically and internationally, and their grievances combine with misperceptions and bad management to produce plenty of political dissension and conflict.<sup>4</sup> It is possible, therefore, to imagine a second, much less happy world typified by persistent conflict between the larger powers associated with a high level of internationally significant domestic unrest in weaker and even failing states. In a worst-case scenario, opponents of the United States arise again to threaten U.S. interests by military means—if not by posing a direct threat to the United States, then by excluding U.S. influence from areas of concern or greatly raising the cost of exercising it. More probable for the near future, however, is the absence of a plausible, potentially mortal threat to the United States; relative peace, if not harmony, between the other larger powers; and the persistence of areas of instability that increasingly tax the patience and resources of the would-be order keepers.<sup>5</sup>

## The Changing Role of Alliances

In any of these worlds, military alliances or alignments are likely to play an important part, but one probably very different from that of the past. In the more benign worlds, alignments might be the framework within which the policing of low-level conflict is managed and the burden shared. In the more conflict-prone worlds, the function would be the more traditional one of supplementing the power of the protagonists, but within a very different moral and political climate.

Whatever transpires, the role of the United States will be unique. It is the only power that can even presume to have the capacity to deal with any conceivable contingency singlehandedly.<sup>6</sup> This observation becomes much less meaningful, however, once the factors of interest and will are taken into account. Nuclear weapons and deterrence may give the United States a truly independent capability for direct self-defense, but all other contingencies demand a projection of U.S. power for what are, by definition, secondary interests. In these contexts, real U.S. power becomes a construct of preference and competing national purposes, and there are strict limits on what can be made available for the purposes of foreign policy. Nevertheless, the United States has demonstrated over and over again its unwillingness to interpret U.S. exceptionalism in isolationist terms. Moral concern and, increasingly, economic interests dictate a foreign policy of involvement.<sup>7</sup>

A posture of engagement, but from motives less compelling than that of national survival, indicates a policy of limited investment and consequently one in which help from others may be welcome and even essential. Alliances or less formal alignments can play a part in such a posture, partly to expand the area in which deference is shown to U.S. principles and preferences, and partly to mobilize force against those who remain impervious to U.S. notions of proper behavior.

There is a fairly developed literature on alliances and what they can and cannot provide in traditional world politics.<sup>8</sup> Formal alliances can establish, in advance, precise and detailed responses to defined contingencies, and this can have marked deterrent effects; less formal understandings and alignments, sometimes mere persistent tendencies in national policy, can give some guide to expectations. NATO was, and still is, a supreme example of the explicit formal alliance, while the much-debated Anglo-American special relationship is a not insignificant alignment within it. The latter relationship also reflects how subnational security institutions can establish links even more intimate than the surrounding formalities require, such as that between the National Security Agency in the United States and the Government Communications Headquarters in Britain. The persistence of good relations between the French navy and several allied navies even during the more virulent periods of Gaullist individualism offers another example.

Another set of important distinctions involves the persistence of alignments over time. Some alignments, whether formal or informal, appear only for a time or in respect to particular issues. Indeed, nations aligned on one count may remain not merely indifferent, but actually hostile on other matters. The role of the Soviet Union in World War II is an extreme example; that of Russia in the various Balkan crises, a recent, more subtle example. Even between such constant allies as the United States, the United Kingdom, and France, the strains of politics in the Persian Gulf have produced a number of asymmetries in which those mutually supportive on one issue work in contradiction to one another elsewhere.

Shifting, limited, and uncertain alignments lack the great value of more established relationships in providing bases for strategic planning and for realistic expectations as to who will deliver what in various contingencies. Standing, formal, and stable alliances can have more useful effects in the design of strategic policy, in deterrence of hostile tendencies, and in preparation for actual combined operations. Perhaps the deepest significance of NATO was in making it clear that the delays in deployment of U.S. power in 1917 and 1941 would not be repeated in another engagement affecting the European balance.

The highly developed nature of NATO, with its standing headquarters, earmarked and assigned forces, and detailed, agreed plan to deal if necessary with a very well defined and serious threat, could easily give rise to mistaken expectations as to what alliances may deliver today and in the future. True, there is a greater willingness, even among realists with narrow interpretations of national interests, to contemplate action of the collective security type. But the contingencies likely to arise are rarely likely to be of equal, let alone vital, interest to many of the greater powers, so many of such crises will be elective for those powers. Conspicuous in recent analysis, therefore, is the concept of coalitions of the able and willing, with a great deal of emphasis on the latter.

As post-Cold War events unfold, it becomes clear that crisis management involves the provision of armed forces. It can be hoped that these forces will be in the types and numbers demanded by the circumstances—by a core of nations assembled ad hoc for the issue in question and supported in varying degrees by other nations—some offering economic or political support; some merely providing their votes in

international bodies; and some, one suspects, ostensibly cooperating, but in ways designed to limit the discretion of the more committed or even to thwart them entirely. As the types of crisis calling for peacemaking action are scarcely ever those that would trigger the actions mandated in formal security alliances, such groupings, even NATO, are more realistically envisaged today as well-disposed, but not necessarily available, bundles of nation-states. Indeed, one might argue that by such creations as the Partnership for Peace and Common Joint Task Forces, NATO has been moving formally in this direction of variable geometry, as has the obsolescent Western European Union with its associate memberships and observers.

In the universe of alliances, NATO is unique in the depth and range of its integration. Even in the changed circumstances of the post-Cold War world, it seems possible that the Atlantic allies are working out a framework for the kinds of collaboration called for by new challenges. The United States has gingerly come to view European defense integration with less paranoia about “caucusing,” partly, it has to be admitted because of the obviously limited talent or inclination that the Europeans show for such solidarity. This tentative U.S. relaxation has facilitated the British move toward Europeanization of defense begun at the Anglo-French St. Malo summit of December 1998. After a formulation at the Cologne summit of June 3–4, 1999, of European intentions—“to develop an effective EU led crisis management in which NATO members, as well as neutral and nonallied members of the EU, can participate fully”—that reawakened the worst U.S. fears,<sup>9</sup> the subsequent EU summit at Helsinki on December 10–11 struck the much more *Atlantic* note, the emphasis being on acting as Europe “where NATO as a whole is not engaged.” Helsinki also stressed, to U.S. approval, the need to refurbish and reorient European armed forces for truly effective intervention in areas of common NATO concern.<sup>10</sup>

Much remains to be done to establish a sustainable balance between the various parties to joint military action and to create the forces necessary to execute it. There is little sign that the needed expenditure will readily materialize. But one should not underestimate the progress made, particularly in achieving French acceptance of the notion that collective defense initiatives of European nations should be set in an Atlantic context. The choice of the former NATO Secretary General, Javier Solana, as the EU Foreign and Security Policy front man is another significant indicator of this progress.

## Future Prospects

The practical outcome of these efforts will depend very much on circumstances—that is, on what crises first test the new arrangements and how well they are handled. It is impossible to exaggerate the effects of particular events on opinion and, consequently, on political possibilities. The U.S. debacle in Somalia is a much-cited example. Bosnia was regarded as a very mixed achievement, but its difficulties were mobilized into a case for trying harder. Kosovo is, on the whole, not a happy memory, and no consolidated success has yet resulted. The next experience is therefore likely to be an influential test of whether the fragile framework for setting European defense integration in an Atlantic context will take root.

In the more general terms of emerging international political patterns, the NATO being constructed clearly is very different from the tightly knit, narrowly focused Article V collective defense missions, the arrangement to which the original members were accustomed. What is emerging is a much looser arrangement with a less defined membership and diluted obligations. When the new Secretary General, George Robertson, can declare that Cold War forces are “a waste of money,” those who believe in the need to preserve a core of pure collective self-defense against direct threats to national security must feel some concern—understandable, though the Secretary General’s opinion reflects the contingencies that he is likely to encounter in the near future.

So far as the new priority for peacekeeping is concerned, it is possible that the streamlining of institutions and, perhaps even more, the preparation of adequate and appropriate forces will do something to increase the number of the willing as well as of the able. But it would be unrealistic to anticipate an organization with the same coherence, mutual confidence, and clarity of purpose as the old Article V institution. This reduced solidarity will be the more marked the farther the *casus belli* of future peacekeeping demands are removed from the core European area in which the allies themselves live. It cannot be certain that the newfound will of Germany to use its armed forces would apply out of area, and in that context it must be admitted that the political situation in Germany and France recently has been favorable in that potential left-wing critics of military action have been restrained by the inhibitions of being in office. Whether Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer could lead his Green Party into supporting an intervention from the opposition must be at least debatable.

These are just some of the factors that cast doubt on the otherwise attractive idea of a possibly formal transatlantic bargain wherein the United States and the European Union divide up areas of responsibility and prearrange their proportionate contributions. Such a division may arise in practice, crisis by crisis, as it did de facto in Bosnia and Kosovo, but it would be a different matter to try to make allocations of responsibility beforehand. Notwithstanding a somewhat irreverent reminiscence of the work of Stalin and Churchill in carving out percentages of the Balkans for one another, any prearrangement would surely prove unsustainable; it would make all too apparent a commitment devoid of sufficient motive—that is, absent some actual crisis and endangerment of interests sufficient to concentrate the mind and override fears, vested interests, and existing regional sympathies.

Whatever Europeans may do by way of institutional reform and material preparation, decisions to act will remain national, and ever-creeping enlargement of NATO will extend the range of perspectives.<sup>11</sup> One encouraging thought is that the very existence of a joint intervention force, as proposed at Helsinki, or of relevant national forces could enhance the pressure to commit them to obviously appropriate actions. That is, the provision of ability may engender a degree of will.

The prospects for stiffening alignments in Europe can be regarded as good or bad, depending on one’s proclivity for optimism, but there is little ground to anticipate an analogous process in the other zones of U.S. global concern. Indeed, to try to emulate elsewhere what may be happening in Europe might be to repeat the very du-

bious “pactomaniac” effort of John Foster Dulles to follow up NATO with the Central Treaty Organization and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization.

For all their difficulties, the nations of Europe share cultural and political similarities, and the members of NATO have decades of successful and detailed military collaboration. Moreover, there are no mutual disputes remotely likely to lead to military conflict between the major actors. The dangers to peace involve essentially minor, if troublesome, issues on the periphery of the area. In the Middle East and in South and East Asia, there are sharp conflicts between substantial military powers, several of them with nuclear weapons and largely devoid of cultural sympathies or histories of cooperation. Such strategic alignments as do exist are the residues of the Cold War and do as much to divide as to unite the countries involved. New patterns of strategic collaboration on any widespread or stable basis seem improbable, while any attempt by the United States to deepen its existing alliances or strike up new ones would be more likely to set up countervailing balance-of-power reactions than to stabilize regional relations. Even assuming acceptable prospects, it is not yet clear with which regional actors the United States would do best to align.

Alliances and alignments will doubtless appear in these areas, but the prudent role of the United States may be to think less of constructing groupings for collective self-defense, which is still the model, if blurred, in Europe, and to think more in terms of trying to encourage a framework for collective security in diplomatic, if not military, terms. Such a framework could perhaps be rendered less utopian through a generalized perception of the priority of economic development and marketization in the march toward globalization.

Although there is clearly much greater reason to anticipate alignment in the traditional, alliance-like mold in Europe than elsewhere, the typical pattern of the future seems likely to be much more indeterminate and fluid than those of the past two or three centuries, let alone the intense rigidities of the Cold War. In these circumstances, it will be an increasingly useful art to estimate what kinds of assistance will be forthcoming and from what directions. There are a number of objective circumstances that may help in such calculations:

- The geographical proximity of nations to the arena of crisis.<sup>12</sup>
- The political and military capacity of a nation to exert any influence. The possession of capability in a world in which the international community watches through the media to see who “does his or her duty” can, one observes, become almost a compulsion to act. This is, of course, why the United States, the paramount possessor of means, finds it so hard to avoid entanglement.
- The ideological and historical factors likely to color popular and elite reactions.
- The perceived political goals of a nation, some of which may already be encapsulated in agreements and articulated policy, and others only emerging in short order as the contingency evolves. These public and elite perceptions, perhaps the most important proximate determinant of behavior, are peculiarly volatile, less an objective element than historical precedent may suggest, and rendered even more subjective by the influence of modern media, public opinion, and the rapidly emerging nongovernmental organizations that exploit them.<sup>13</sup>

These influences are, of course, especially powerful in the democratic politics of the United States and its allies, a fact that raises, and will raise even more acutely as time passes, very difficult political and even constitutional questions. Among those questions is, how far can elites charged with security policy properly attempt the "education" of publics on the interpretation of national security interests for a world in which problems appear less as direct, patent threats than as adverse trends in the international milieu that only an expert can appreciate.

The availability of alliances will affect the public and elite debate in several ways. The practical help brought by allied armed forces and other assets will have not merely its own value but also will affect the burden-sharing debate that arises in all democracies. This debate has special dimensions in the United States, where the Congress persistently suspects administrations of "going native" in enthusiasm for the national interests of others. Other nations have their own public opinion, and this will affect the willingness of others to offer help, particularly in some of the political and economic dimensions that now loom larger than military action in the arsenals of means appropriate for issues of less than truly vital national interest. Some of these nonmilitary actions are not merely facilitated by wide participation but, as in the case of sanctions and boycotts, are dependent on near universality. Paradoxically, with the exception of sensitivity about serious casualties in most societies, the lesser means, such as sanctions, may bear more directly on publics than military operations by professional forces, with a consequent lesser tolerance for the sacrifices and inconvenience entailed.

A third way in which alignment affects the opinion that governs national diplomacy is that of international license for coercive, particularly forcible, action. Indeed, in an age when at least the ostensible supreme goal of foreign policy is the preservation of a benign international milieu, legitimacy of means becomes an integral part of the goal itself. This is especially so when, as in so many latter-day crises, action requires overriding the sovereignty of states. It might indeed be said that in such circumstances, there is an unavoidably aggressive aspect to peacemaking, paralleling the fact that the military means required are those of force projection. Some international license is therefore essential if the means employed are not to gradually negate the overall purpose of action.<sup>14</sup>

This problem was clear in the several recent Balkan crises and gave rise to attempts to reinterpret NATO, once a classic collective defense organization, as one with the legitimizing functions of a collective security arrangement. In strict law, only the United Nations has a generally recognized right to authorize the use of force other than in self-defense. But British and U.S. political leaders, in particular, cited the agreement of a considerable number of democracies as conferring at least a semblance of legitimacy on NATO use of force.<sup>15</sup>

This tactic illustrates both the advantages and the dangers of coalition. While conferring some sense of moral safety in numbers, it also carries a patent risk of tainting NATO, in this instance, as merely a vehicle to impose the interests of a few on the world at large. In the case of NATO, such perceptions play into the hands of those who accuse the United States of hegemonism and unilateralism, behavior that

could be depicted as peculiarly inappropriate for an emerging globalized world of mutual respect.

## Implications for the United States

There is a point at which the general trends in the role of alliances and alignments just discussed take on special nuances in the case of the United States as pre-eminent world power. The United States has since the end of the Cold War replaced its erstwhile role as leader of the free world with leadership in general. The leader that was vital as the core animator of NATO and other Cold War alliances is now almost always the essential instigator of effective peacemaking action.

The United States enjoys, or suffers under, this primacy for several reasons. Most obvious is its predominance in virtually every military capacity. Particularly important in an age that cherishes proportionality of effect and low cost is the U.S. advantage in intelligence, control, and targeting—this in combination with habits of international leadership. Reciprocal to this is the general, if sometimes grudging, deference of many habitual allies and associates of the United States, conditioned during the Cold War and still, now as then, conscious that it often takes a degree of U.S. self-assertion to cut through their own mutual disagreements and rivalries.

There is also, even at the level of peacemaking, a latter-day form of escalation dominance. In the Cold War, of course, this derived from the U.S. predominance in strategic nuclear capability. Today, it is rooted, perhaps not always consciously, in the sheer unpredictability of complex historical and ethnic conflicts, which makes it impossible to be confident about how armed encounters will develop. In recent experience, they have usually turned out to be bloodier, more prolonged, and much more difficult to terminate than originally expected. In such a situation, only the United States, with comprehensive and deep military resources, can be confidently relied on to handle almost anything that transpires. U.S. participation in operations thus gives allies a reassurance that they can get from nowhere else. In the spirit of Hilaire Belloc's *Cautionary Tales for Children*, they "always keep a-hold of nurse, for fear of meeting something worse." This indispensability is not, of course, without its resentments, and the United States needs to be alert to measures such as the introduction of missile defenses that, unless carefully presented, add yet another layer of dependency.

The other side of this is the nervousness that the United States commonly feels over being dragged into situations deeper and deeper by allies over whom it has inadequate control. This possibility may take on an added dimension in the future as the idea of asymmetrical retaliation by opponents raises the prospect of unintended consequences affecting the American homeland, not merely its Armed Forces overseas. All of this underlies typical U.S. insistence on being in overall control of joint operations and, above all, in full, unfettered command of its own forces.

This dilemma poses serious obstacles to any U.S. thought of lightening its burdens by delegation of authority to other nations or to such novelties as the emerging European Defense Identity under such concepts as the Common Joint Task Forces.<sup>16</sup>

In most areas of the world, there is in any case no such embryonic organization to offer to take over.

Thus, unless it begins to demonstrate unprecedented self-restraint, the United States is likely to continue to find itself directly involved whenever military action has to be taken in defense of even the “softer” national interests created by U.S. concepts of international order and humanitarian concerns. In such situations, it will commonly find itself operating with allies whose participation is required not so much for the practical aid provided, but for reasons of legitimacy and minimization of the denunciation for “hegemony” so frequently encountered. Such multilateral operations will frequently entail restrictions not merely on broad policy, but even on specific military operations. There is also the danger of being hustled into operations that seem imprudent in strictly military terms.<sup>17</sup>

There is, of course, nothing new about differences of opinion between allies over diplomacy, military strategy, and tactics, but these take on a new character in an age blessed with pervasive media and typified not by a war for survival, which tends to produce differences in perspective, but by largely optional engagements. This new character is accented by the tendency of such engagements to produce much quicker results, good or bad, than the prolonged struggles of previous major wars or the turbid evolution of the Cold War. This makes it possible to draw lessons, some accurate, others mistaken, which become the material for domestic and inter-ally recrimination.

## Implications for the Armed Forces

The new world, which the term *globalization* characterizes, thus presents Armed Forces with a new context, an important part of which is related to the question of alliances and alignments. Because of their preeminence, U.S. forces face two levels of challenge probably more sharply distinguished than ever before. Foremost, but largely latent, is the continued capacity to deter mortal threats to the United States itself and to be prepared through reconstitution of forces to meet any emergent challenges disposing a power at all comparable to its own. The headline-catching operations in which the Armed Forces find themselves engaged from day to day are, however, likely to be concerned with the protection of very secondary interests. This calls for operations well below overall U.S. potential, but nonetheless highly taxing, given the probable budgetary constraints on forces and political inhibitions upon operations. When, where, and against whom hostilities may arise is rendered virtually unpredictable by the range and perception-based nature of those U.S. secondary interests. To confine the potential commitment, selectivity will doubtless be advocated, but this will often prove difficult when allegedly universal political and moral values are asserted as justification for operations.

So far as U.S. naval forces are concerned, the tasks will typically involve the projection of force onto land from only lightly contested oceans, although there are numerous problem areas in which nondestructive exertions of power—for example, blockade, counterblockade—will be appropriate responses. As many have observed, there will be a premium on speedy operations producing rapid political results, ideally at low cost, particularly in casualties. The means recommended to serve such

ends often involve action at a distance, in which the United States now excels, but this solution will often be thwarted by the modern concern about casualties, one's own as well as those of noncombatants and even hostile armed forces.<sup>18</sup> For this and many other long-recognized reasons, forces deployed close to the area of contention are unlikely to be rendered unnecessary by longer range technologies. It has also long been recognized that forces deployed in the area of contention are typically essential for the suppression of civil and irregular warfare.

In practice, the United States will doubtless find itself blessed with a core of truly helpful, frequent allies, and a fringe group of occasional associates able to offer varying assistance or hindrance. The allies and associates likely to contribute should obviously be encouraged to make their forces as numerous, effective, and interoperable as possible, but budgetary limitations and the sheer number and variety of those who may turn out to be U.S. allies in peacemaking contingencies severely limit what can be achieved. Consequently, U.S. forces themselves will have to maximize their capacity to operate with disparate allies, sometimes perhaps to the point of accepting less than optimal effectiveness of their own. It may be necessary to develop multivoltage sockets, technical and organizational, in U.S. formations into which foreign forces can be plugged. This is an area in which service-to-service contacts may sometimes offer solutions difficult to work out at the formal state-to-state level.

The tendency of peacemaking operations to extend into state-building tasks almost colonial in nature also gives a new meaning to the concept of "stay-behind forces." In this area, particularly where the need is for police rather than military operations, there may be more hopeful avenues for allies of lesser military capability. Indeed, where the task is precisely one of establishing legitimacy of contentious states and the diplomatic outcome of conflict, there may be a positive value in removing the greater powers, particularly that superpower suspected of "hegemonism," from the equation.

## Conclusion

A summing up of the implications of globalization for the Armed Forces, particularly as concerns alliances and alignments, must begin with a few of the tendencies that the term embraces. Salient among these are the accelerated, global interplay of events, the intense scrutiny thereof by public opinion through modern media, and the emerging consensus of democratic opinion on standards of acceptable international behavior. One does not have to accept the latter at face value or endorse all its components to see that it has produced a powerful new conditioning context for national security policy.

The United States confronts this new world with only one direct and serious threat to its national survival: that posed by nuclear weapons in the hands of a very few major nuclear powers. Policies and forces for deterrence are already in place to deal with this threat, and active forms of defense could be deployed if needed and practicable. The United States, however, has interests in an extraordinary range of issues, and those interests are hardly limited to issues affecting national survival. The issue that brings into most serious question any presumed differentiation of levels of

threat is that of weapons of mass destruction in rogue hands. A lesser issue concerns forms of asymmetrical response to U.S. policy abroad involving attacks in the American homeland. This possibility, probably much exaggerated at present in both technical and political terms, adds a strategic dimension to U.S. involvement in conflicts abroad, which have been characterized here as secondary.

Unless such fears lead the United States to reduce its global agenda, which seems unlikely, the United States will continue its policy of active intervention in foreign conflicts. For a rich and casualty-averse nation, political and economic means will more often than not be the first recourse. But recent experience shows that there are many contingencies for which military force is justified. The military role will be limited, orchestrated with other coercive and persuasive means, and always employed under close public scrutiny.

Usually, for reasons cited earlier, circumstances will suggest or even compel action in association with other states. Even when the United States feels able to act on its own, its commitment to due process as a desirable aspect of the international milieu will ensure that it finds itself in a “virtual coalition” with those other states on whose good will and collaboration its wider interests depend.

Alliances and alignments have thus become an inherent feature of any U.S. military action short of self-defense in extremis. Occasionally, the United States will feel so strongly about an issue or become so impatient at the restraints of coalition that it will ride roughshod over critical foreign opinion. This may well be prudent, but it will always carry a price. Acting in association with others always entails a balance between help and hindrance. The value of company in matters subject to global scrutiny means that a major task for U.S. commanders and planners will be finding avenues of military effectiveness within a web of such constraints. 🌐

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Charles Krauthammer, “The Unipolar Moment,” *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 1 (1991), 31.

<sup>2</sup> The classic, if much misunderstood, forecast of peace based on economic advantage was in Norman Angell, *The Great Illusion* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1911).

<sup>3</sup> A very early discussion of the chances of a conflict-free world based on prosperity is in Richard Rosecrance, *The Rise of the Trading State* (New York: Basic Books, 1986); an almost classic *reductio ad absurdum* opposing view was in John J. Mearsheimer, “Back to the Future: Instability and Europe after the Cold War,” *International Security* 15, no. 1, (Summer 1990), 5–56.

<sup>4</sup> A responsible voice raising the loser question is Jay Mazur, “Labor’s New Internationalism,” *Foreign Affairs* 79, no. 1 (January/February 2000). See also Kathleen Newland, “Workers of the World, Now What?” *Foreign Policy* 114 (Spring 1999), 52–65.

<sup>5</sup> A very thoughtful discussion of possible future worlds and the U.S. place in them is in Charles Kupchan, “After Pax Americana,” *International Security* 23, no. 2 (Fall 1998), 40–79.

<sup>6</sup> Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, “Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy,” *International Security* 21, no. 3 (Winter 1996), 40–69. See also Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1990).

<sup>7</sup> Still a most illuminating study of principles traditionally underlying U.S. foreign policy is in Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson, *The Imperial Temptation: The New World Order and American Purpose* (New York: Basic Books, 1992). Consider, too, President Clinton’s doctrine that “if

anyone comes after innocent civilians and tries to kill them *en masse* because of their race, their ethnic background or their religion and it's within our power to stop it, we will stop it" was followed by so many briefed qualifications as to provide an excellent, if theoretical, illustration of the dilemma of a universal principle coupled with a limited interest. See *The Wall Street Journal*, August 6, 1999, A12.

<sup>8</sup> A recent discussion is in Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliance* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987).

<sup>9</sup> U.S. fears about Cologne were expressed by Under Secretary of State Strobe Talbott as implying that "Europe's default position would be to act outside the alliance whenever possible." Reuters, October 7, 1999.

<sup>10</sup> A convenient text of these declarations can be found in *TransAtlantic Internationale Politik*, January 2000, 5–8, 139–141.

<sup>11</sup> A comprehensive survey of the implications of galloping enlargement is in Hans Binnendijk and Richard L. Kugler, "Open NATO's Door Carefully," *Washington Quarterly* (Spring 1999).

<sup>12</sup> A full discussion of the criteria for intervention can be found in Luc Stanier, "Common Interest, Values and Criteria for Action," in *Towards a Common Defence Policy*, eds. Laurence Martin and John Roper (Paris: Institute for Security Research, Western European Union, 1995).

<sup>13</sup> One valuable study of nongovernmental organizations is by Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998).

<sup>14</sup> For a recent discussion of the role of norms in United States foreign policy, see Robert W. McElroy, *Morality and American Foreign Policy: The Role of Ethics in International Affairs* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992).

<sup>15</sup> A somewhat labored setting out of justification and its relation to action was in Prime Minister Tony Blair's speech in Chicago, April 22, 1999, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, <[www.fco.gov.uk/news/speechtext.asp](http://www.fco.gov.uk/news/speechtext.asp)>.

<sup>16</sup> A thoughtful and hands-on discussion of all this is in Willem van Eekelen, *Debating European Security, 1948–1998* (The Hague: Center for European Policy Studies, 1998). The author, former Dutch Defense Minister, was also Secretary General of the Western European Union.

<sup>17</sup> A somewhat unusual expression of hope that the need for partners will restrict U.S. interventions, in an unexpected publication, is in Robert Jervis, "U.S. Grand Strategy: Mission Impossible," *Naval War College Review* (Summer 1998), LI, 3, 22.

<sup>18</sup> For a foreign perspective on the inhibitions imposed on modern combat forces, see R. Fry, "Operations in a Changed Strategic Environment," *Journal of The Royal United Services Institution* 140, no. 3, 34.