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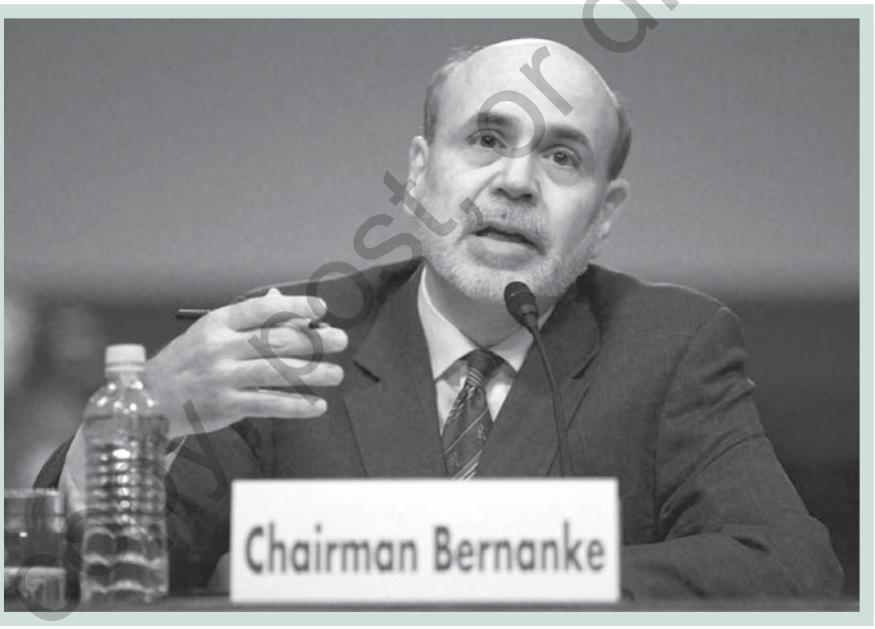
Contemporary American Foreign Policy

INFLUENCES, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

CHAPTER

1

Sources of American Foreign Policy



Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke testifies before Congress about America's great recession.

AP Photo/Evan Vucci

Our first chapter examines key influences on U.S. foreign-policy formulation and implementation. It begins by discussing how the foreign and domestic arenas have become intermingled in a globalized world and then identifies the several sources of foreign policy.

THE LINKAGE OF DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICIES

With America's economy sputtering, interest rates near zero, and the threat of a second recession looming, America's Federal Reserve announced a third round of "quantitative easing" (QE3) in September 2012. The Fed would purchase up to $40 billion a month of U.S. mortgage-backed bonds to

increase America's money supply and provide financial institutions with additional capital that could be loaned to businesses and individuals who would spend the funds, thereby stimulating the domestic economy and reducing unemployment. The action, advocated by Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke, had domestic objectives but, owing to **globalization**, would have a powerful impact abroad. Foreign critics, notably in Brazil, China, and Russia, contended that the Fed's action would weaken the U.S. dollar, raise the value of their currencies, and harm their ability to export, while triggering volatile investment flows from America to the developing world. Brazil's finance minister described QE3 as "selfish" and expressed fear about a currency war of competitive devaluations. Bernanke responded that the Fed's policy would hasten America's economic recovery, thereby aiding the global economy because Americans would be able to buy more foreign goods. As the Fed's decision illustrates, the domestic and foreign arenas are no longer isolated from each other.

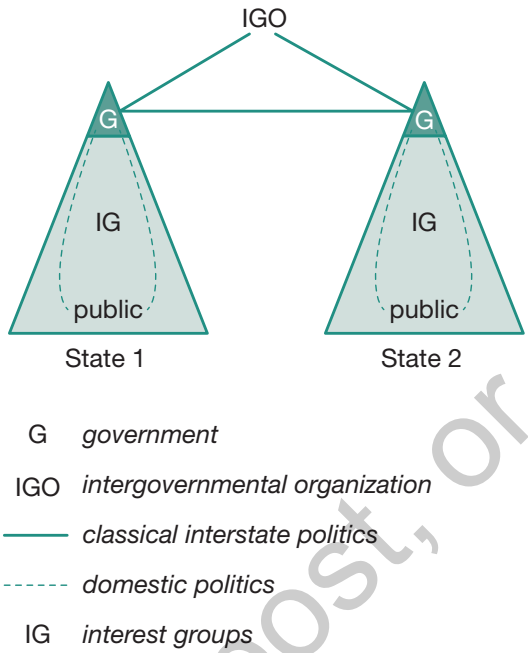
Recent decades have witnessed growing links between the domestic and foreign arenas. President Barack Obama came to office in 2008 promising a foreign policy based on domestic **values**. America's domestic policies were profoundly affected by wars in Korea and Vietnam and, more recently, by wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. International organizations and agreements such as the World Trade Organization and the North American Free Trade Agreement have a direct impact on America's domestic economy. Conversely, domestic policies on trade, taxation, economic investment, and even civil rights have a significant impact overseas. Frequently issues that arise in a domestic context have major consequences overseas. Thus, the appearance of a 14-minute U.S. film trailer posted in July 2012 on YouTube, featuring a blasphemous treatment of the Prophet Muhammad, produced rage throughout the Islamic world after it appeared on Egyptian television.

All countries are subject to external influences, and their external environment is in turn affected by domestic events. Foreign policy is the point at which influences arising in the global system cross into the domestic arena and domestic politics is transformed into external behavior. The traditional **state-centric** view was that America, like other states, is sovereign and, as such, controls its boundaries and territory, is subject to no higher external authority, and is the legal equal of other states. This perspective assumes that sovereign states have a clear and unitary national interest, and that their governments interact directly with one another and with international organizations. It also assumes that publics and domestic interest groups in different societies do not interact directly with those in other societies. Instead, they present their views to their own governments, which then represent them in relations with other governments. Figure 1.1 illustrates this perspective in which interstate politics remains distinct from domestic politics.

The traditional model is inadequate to describe the full range of factors shaping foreign policy. In the words of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, "increasing global interconnectedness now necessitates reaching beyond governments to citizens directly and broadening the U.S. foreign policy portfolio to include issues once confined to the domestic sphere, such as economic and environmental regulation, drugs and disease, organized crime, and world hunger. As those issues spill across borders, the domestic agencies addressing them must now do more of their work overseas, operating out of embassies and consulates."[1]

Figure 1.2 presents a picture of a **transnational** world in which external and domestic factors interact directly. The domestic pyramid of policy formation is penetrated at several levels, and links among governments and domestic groups are multiplied to reflect the complex exchanges that occur. Thus, there is interaction among interest groups at home and abroad and governments,

FIGURE 1.1 Model of State-Centric World



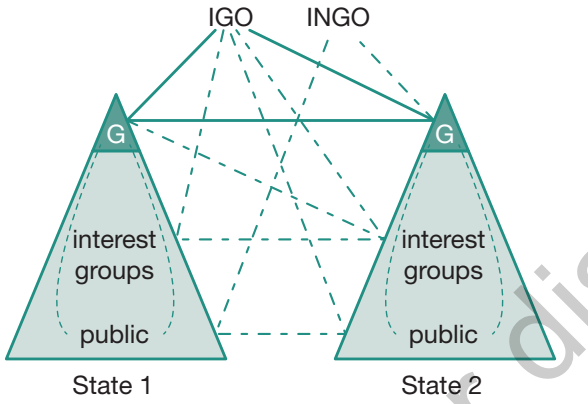
Source: Adapted from Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Transnational Relations and World Politics: An Introduction," *International Organization,* Summer 1971: 332–334.

among interest groups in different states, and among interest groups and both international and **nongovernmental organizations**.

The complexity of relations between societies and states at home and abroad was reflected by American recognition of Israel. Israel declared its statehood in 1948, a presidential election year in America. Both candidates had to take a position about whether to recognize Israel, but it was especially important that Harry Truman, the incumbent Democrat, adopt a favorable attitude toward the new state because he sought Jewish political and financial support in key states like New York. For Truman, Israelis constituted a significant constituency because of their links with America's Jewish community. Truman adopted a pro-Israeli policy, despite objections from the Departments of Defense and State, which feared that recognizing Israel would alienate oil-rich Arab states. Figure 1.3 represents schematically the links among groups in 1948 that interacted in relation to the question of recognizing Israel. Arrows represent the flow of communications among key actors. To understand Truman's decision, we would have to describe communications between him and other government officials, between the government and groups like the Jewish community and the Democratic Party, and between the U.S. government and those of other countries.

A similar link between the domestic and external arenas involving the Middle East was evident during the 2012 U.S. presidential election. President Obama and Republican candidate Mitt Romney in a televised debate on October 16, 2012, vigorously disputed the assault on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi,

FIGURE 1.2 Model of Transnational World



INGO *international nongovernmental organization*

classic interstate links

domestic links

transnational links

IGO *intergovernmental organization*

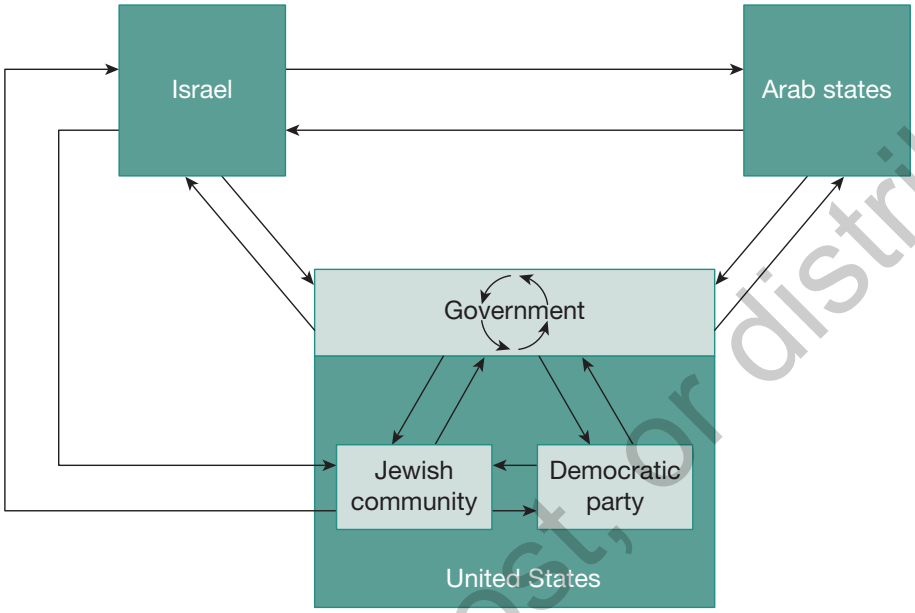
G *government*

Source: Adapted from Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Transnational Relations and World Politics: An Introduction," *International Organization,* Summer 1971: 332–334.

Libya, that climaxed with the death of America's ambassador. Earlier in the campaign, Governor Romney had visited Israel, where he depicted Obama as hostile to Israel and weak toward Iran. Injecting himself in the campaign, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu gave a speech at the United Nations in which he declared that Iran was approaching the point where it could produce a nuclear weapon and urged Washington to act before it was too late. As this case suggests, **affiliations** and **identities** that cut across national boundaries are important factors in foreign policy. Thus, analyzing only diplomatic relations among governments is insufficient to explain foreign policy, and studying foreign policy entails awareness that traditional boundaries between "foreign" and "domestic" policies have eroded.

Moreover, globalization has facilitated the movement of persons, things, and ideas across national boundaries, making them increasingly porous. Even a superpower like America is "penetrated" by flows of illegal migrants, illegal drugs, and subversive ideas. For its part, Washington employs a variety of tools to penetrate foreign societies—**propaganda** favoring democracy and human rights in countries like China and Russia, covert assistance to opposition groups in hostile states like Iran, foreign aid to friendly governments, and financial and political support for American corporations like Boeing.

FIGURE 1.3 Communication Model Israeli Recognition Process, 1948



Source: Raymond F. Hopkins and Richard W. Mansbach, *Structure and Process in International Politics* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1973), 135.

SOURCES OF FOREIGN-POLICY INFLUENCE

Let us now examine the major sources of influence on U.S. foreign policy. We shall discuss five categories of factors that influence American policymaking: **external factors**, **government factors**, **role factors**, **societal factors**, and **individual factors**.[2] The degree to which these affect foreign policy varies by country. For example, the United States is a large **democracy** with a high level of **economic development**. As such, it has a large government with numerous foreign-policy agencies and bureaucracies as well as innumerable societal pressure groups. And, increasingly, interest groups at home and abroad are linked transnationally. External factors, while important in shaping U.S. policies, are likely to have a greater impact on small countries like Denmark or Singapore because they are more dependent on trade and allies for economic and military security, while societal factors are likely to have less of an impact in countries like Russia and China that have **authoritarian governments** that limit the freedom of social groups, unlike the United States, which is an open society, governed by democratic **norms** and the rule of law. In addition, in large countries like America, the impact of particular individuals like the president, while substantial, is likely to be constrained by the many bureaucratic and social actors competing to have their views taken account of.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warns the United Nations about Iranian weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

AP Photo/Seth Wenig

External Factors

Globalization itself is perhaps the leading external constraint on foreign policy because **interdependence** dilutes American **sovereignty**, makes the United States increasingly vulnerable to the actions of other countries and, as the opening paragraphs of this chapter reflect, makes those countries more vulnerable to U.S. policies. Globalization also is a key source for the disappearing distinction between domestic and foreign policy. President Obama explicitly recognized growing global interdependence when, on entering office, he spoke of the need for multilateral cooperation and "common problems." Thus, globalization and the interdependence of the U.S. economy with economies worldwide were largely responsible for the rapid spread worldwide of America's subprime mortgage crisis in 2007 to 2008, and Obama declared that restoring U.S. influence abroad required reinvigorating the economy at home. In a word, America's recession became a global contagion.

The porosity of U.S. borders makes it vulnerable to flows of people, things, and ideas from abroad, for instance, cyberattacks, extremist political views, drugs, diseases, terrorists, and any interruption in patterns of trade. One such interruption was triggered by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan and the subsequent nuclear crisis that interrupted global supply chains in a variety of transnational industries including the production of and trade in automobiles and consumer electronics.

Other external factors of great significance are the distributions of resources and attitudes in the global system. America's own resources—economic, military, political, and social—are part of the country's domestic environment, but the *distribution* of such factors elsewhere is external and must be considered by decision makers in Washington. American decision makers must ask what U.S. capabilities are *relative* to those of potential friends and foes rather than what is the *absolute* level of American capabilities. Thus, American military and economic capabilities have declined since the end of the Cold War in relative though not in absolute terms.

Although some observers conclude that America is losing the military and economic dominance it enjoyed after the Cold War,[3] this does not mean that America is in the midst of absolute decline. China, for example, is "rising" but remains behind the United States on most dimensions. As political scientist Joseph Nye observes: "The word 'decline' mixes up two different dimensions: absolute decline, in the sense of decay, and relative decline in which the power resources of other states grow or are used more effectively." This leads Nye to conclude, "A smart-power narrative for the twenty-first century is not about maximizing power or preserving hegemony. It is about finding ways to combine resources in successful strategies in the new context of power diffusion and 'the rise of the rest.'"[4] Nye also reminds us of the interdependence of domestic and foreign policy in arguing that challenges to U.S. strength include remedying the American economy, ending the political stalemate between Republicans and Democrats, and reforming immigration policy to encourage the inflow of talented individuals from overseas.

Americans have also become increasingly preoccupied with domestic issues which they believe should take precedence over involvement abroad. Nevertheless, it is not that the United States has less military or economic **capability**—"**hard power**"—than it did in the 1990s but rather that other countries such as China and India have significantly increased their own military and economic capabilities. America remains the world's only superpower, but new centers of military and economic power have emerged in the global system.

The distribution of political views and **ideologies** is equally important. If emerging centers of military and economic power are American allies and friends, the relative decline in U.S. resources matters less than if those new centers are American enemies or potential enemies. The fact that Great Britain, France, and Israel have nuclear weapons does not concern Washington because they have been allies for many years. Indeed, as U.S. allies they enhance America's military reach and capability. By contrast, the growth in China's nuclear capability and the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by Iran and North Korea would pose serious problems for American national security because those countries are rivals and possibly enemies of the United States.

The importance of **attitudes** becomes apparent in other ways as well. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the Great Recession at home sapped American global influence, especially its reputation or "**soft power**"—a positive reputation that helps a country attract and persuade others—a fact reflected in the hostile attitudes of growing numbers of Muslims toward the United States. Indeed, one reason why President Obama in June 2009 spoke in Cairo of "a new beginning" was that American popularity among Muslims globally had fallen precipitously owing to wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, tensions with Iran, and U.S. support for Israel. According to the White House Press Secretary, Egypt had been selected because it "is a country that in many ways represents the heart of the Arab world, and I think will be a trip, an opportunity for the President to address and discuss our relationship with the Muslim world."[5]

Geographic location is also an external factor of importance though perhaps less so than in past decades. Historically, the United States enjoyed the protection of two great oceans, the Atlantic and the Pacific, that also served as highways for trade with Europe and Asia respectively. In addition, America's northern and southern neighbors, Canada and Mexico, are relatively weak militarily and are close political and economic partners of the United States. Contrast the security historically afforded America by geography with the insecurity of a country like Israel whose dangerous neighborhood includes adversaries such as Iran and Syria and nonstate terrorist groups such as Hezbollah in Lebanon to the north and Hamas in the Gaza Strip to the southwest. It is hardly surprising that Israel, surrounded by foes and with a relatively small population and territory (both societal factors) remains preoccupied with military security and has both literally and figuratively sought "to wall itself off."

Globalization has, however, reduced the overall impact of geography. Notwithstanding the protection of the oceans, America is vulnerable to Russian or Chinese intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) as well as terrorists and cyberattacks. It depended until recently on energy sources, especially oil, and raw materials located thousands of miles from its shores. Economic and financial interdependence, the growth of global markets, and the growing role of technology in the movement of funds globally make Americans vulnerable to economic decisions or difficulties in all corners of the world.

Other external factors also affect policy decisions. As noted above, alignments and **alliances,** such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the U.S.-Japanese Treaty of Mutual Cooperation

MAP 1.1 Israel and Neighboring States

and Security, combined with the strong political, economic, and social ties among the members of such alliances, enhance overall U.S. capabilities and facilitate the projection of U.S. power around the world. On the other hand, alliances also limit the autonomy of the United States by obliging Washington legally and morally to act in certain ways to aid or protect its allies and friends.

A final set of external factors are the policies and actions of other countries toward the United States. Many of these are themselves reactions to U.S. policies and actions toward those countries. Indeed, reciprocity explains a good deal of foreign policy. As a rule, friendly acts trigger friendly responses, and hostile acts produce hostile responses. One problem, of course, is that another country's intentions are not always clear, and that its actions may be misunderstood by those in government. For example, as we saw at the beginning of this chapter, Brazil's finance minister interpreted the action of the Fed's renewed purchase of U.S. securities as unfriendly when the Fed's intention probably took little account of the consequences of its actions for Brazil.

CONTROVERSY

Realists and Liberals

Foreign-policy analysts and practitioners are frequently divided into "**realists**" and "**liberals**." These are ideal types, and most policymakers do not fit neatly into either category. Those who describe themselves as "realists" focus on external factors. They infer the national interest by examining the distribution of power globally, especially military power, and caution against intervention except where substantial American interests are at stake or where powerful rivals such as China or Russia are likely to profit. Alexander Hamilton was a "realist" who cautioned his young but vulnerable nation to remain out of the quarrels between England and revolutionary France. Realists largely ignore domestic factors, instead regarding states as "unitary" actors that reason like rational individuals. They also largely ignore normative questions, denounce ideologies, and regard as foolish idealistic efforts to extend democracy or human rights.

By contrast, those who describe themselves as "liberals" focus on norms rather than power and were termed "idealists" and "utopians" by realists. Liberals pay attention to domestic factors as sources of foreign policy and are more concerned than realists by threats to human security—climate change, global pandemics, and famine. Some, like Hamilton's political foe Thomas Jefferson, see normative objectives such as democratization and human rights as laudable foreign-policy objectives and are prepared to intervene overseas for humanitarian reasons. They also consider soft power as important as hard power.

Let us turn to the impact of governmental factors on foreign policymaking.

Government Factors

Such factors as the nature of government institutions; the distribution of influence among them; the means by which personnel are selected, recruited, and promoted; the bureaucratic and societal interests that are their constituents; and the degree to which government institutions are accessible to societal concerns are all relevant to American foreign policy. The size of government bureaucracies also matters. Thus, the larger and more complex are such bureaucracies, the more information they can absorb and the greater the attention they can pay to problems. On the other hand, as bureaucracies grow larger, more individuals must approve decisions, "red tape" increases, and, in general, it takes longer to make policy decisions.

Separation of Powers Among the constitutional factors that influence U.S. foreign policymaking is "**separation of powers**" among the branches of government—executive, legislative, and judicial. The authors of the Constitution intended that by distributing authority among the branches of government and constructing a system of **checks and balances**, it would prevent any branch from accumulating too much power. The separation ensures that there will be a fragmentation of decision-making authority in American policymaking.

Constitutionally, the president is "Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States" and has responsibility for overseeing the major foreign-policy bureaucracies—the Departments of State and Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the National Security Council (consisting of the vice president, the secretary of state, the secretary of Treasury, the secretary of defense, and the national security adviser)—that serve to coordinate foreign-policy planning for the president. Other agencies with both domestic and foreign-policy responsibilities include the Treasury; the Office of Management and Budget; the Office of National Drug Control Policy; the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; and the Departments of Homeland Security, Agriculture, Justice, and Commerce. Some of these agencies have grown more important in recent decades. For example, the Treasury and Commerce Departments and the U.S. Trade Representative have growing responsibilities in an era of economic globalization, and the intelligence agencies, along with Homeland Security, have a special role in combating terrorist threats.

These agencies frequently have overlapping responsibilities—for example, the State Department and the National Security Council—and may compete with one another for primacy in particular issue areas. Indeed, the position of national director of intelligence was established in 2004 with an eye toward coordinating intelligence activities following intelligence failures regarding 9/11 and Saddam Hussein's alleged program for developing WMD. Nevertheless, coordinating the activities of powerful intelligence agencies such as the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, and the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research remains a daunting task.

Presidents share their role in making foreign policy with Congress. Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution states: "He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice

and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls." Moreover, the Congress is vested with responsibility to "provide for the common Defense," "raise and support armies," and declare war.

On some occasions, presidents have asked for and received resolutions from Congress short of declarations of war, while on others, they have used NATO and United Nations (UN) resolutions as the basis for committing troops to combat. The presidency affords considerable latitude in foreign affairs and, despite the constitutional requirement that only Congress can declare war, the presidential prerogative to commit U.S. combat forces overseas has grown dramatically since President Franklin D. Roosevelt had to cope with an isolationist Congress before World War II. There were no official declarations of war for conflicts in Korea (1950–1953), Vietnam (1965–1973), the Persian Gulf (1990–1991), Afghanistan (2001–2014), or Iraq (2003–2011). To rein in presidential power to go to war, Congress passed the War Powers Resolution in 1973 by which Congress must approve troop commitments in conflicts lasting over 60 days. President Richard Nixon vetoed the act but was overridden by Congress, and every later president regarded the law as an intrusion on presidential authority. Nevertheless, in 2014 when President Obama decided to launch airstrikes in Iraq against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), he welcomed congressional approval but declared he could do so regardless owing to his power as Commander in Chief. When he decided to expand the strikes to Syria, he also invoked Congress's 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force against terrorists and its 2002 Authorization of Military Force against Iraq as providing authority to go forward. Thereafter, however, he decided to seek congressional authorization for his military campaign against ISIS while limiting it to three years, ruling out ground combat, and rescinding the 2002 authorization.

Congress retains the power of the purse—the authority to levy taxes and determine public expenditures without which foreign and security policies could not be implemented. A host of committees and subcommittees in the House of Representatives and the Senate deal with foreign-policy legislation, among which the most important are the Senate Foreign Relations, Homeland Security, and Armed Services committees, and the House of Representatives Select Committee on Intelligence, Foreign Affairs, Armed Services, Homeland Security, and Intelligence committees. These committees and their subcommittees are managed by powerful chairpersons, can hold hearings on foreign policy, and play a role in determining budget appropriations. But the power of the purse is a blunt instrument, and Congress rarely uses it if a president argues that national security is at risk.

If either house of Congress is dominated by a different political party than the president's, there will almost certainly be partisan disagreements. Thus, congressional Republicans blamed Presidents Roosevelt and Truman for the communization of Eastern Europe after World War II and for the defeat of China's anticommunists by Mao Zedong in 1949. And although congressional Democrats initially supported President George W. Bush's decision to invade Iraq, they later sought to limit the president's freedom of action once it appeared that the war would continue after the fall of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. More recently, the Republican-controlled Congress tried to force President Obama to declare additional sanctions against Iran even while negotiations were continuing with Tehran regarding its nuclear aspirations, and John Boehner, the Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives, invited Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu to address Congress about the dangers posed by Iran and Islamic terrorists, issues that Republicans believed Obama did not take sufficiently seriously. The

president, who did not get on well with Netanyahu, with whom he disagreed strongly on several issues, was not consulted and declared he would not see Netanyahu when he came to Washington. Thereafter, Netanyahu authorized expansion of West Bank settlements, which Obama opposed. Obama regarded Boehner as exceeding his role as House Speaker and intruding on the president's leading role in foreign affairs. He also regarded Netanyahu's acceptance of the invitation to speak and the actions of Israeli Ambassador Ron Dermer as gratuitous interference in America's domestic affairs. Susan Rice, President Obama's national security adviser, termed Netanyahu's acceptance of Speaker Boehner's invitation as "disastrous" for U.S.-Israeli relations. Following the March 2015 framework agreement with Iran, the Senate, led by Bob Corker (R-TN), chairperson of the Foreign Relations Committee, sought to force the president to obtain its approval for a final agreement. Obama agreed to let Congress reject the agreement, but its vote could be vetoed by the president.

Although congressional influence on foreign policy fluctuates, Congress rarely sways the executive branch on major issues. Congressional weakness in formulating foreign policy partly reflects lack of information and the exigencies of time, especially if situations require prompt action. Although some members of Congress, notably committee chairs who have served on key committees for lengthy periods, come to be foreign-policy experts, most members of Congress know little about foreign policy. America's intervention in Iraq provoked little congressional opposition until public frustration with the war led to Democratic control of the House and Senate in 2006. Congress has also asserted itself periodically during the Obama years, especially after Republicans took control of the House of Representatives in 2010. After taking control of the Senate in 2015, 47 Republican senators wrote a letter to Iranian leaders without consulting the White House, warning them that any agreement concluded with Tehran by Obama could be reversed by a future president, and the permanent end of sanctions against Iran would need congressional approval. The White House accused the senators of undermining U.S. foreign policy. Nevertheless, congressional criticisms of presidential decisions failed to alter significantly Obama's cautious approach to foreign policy.

Although the judicial branch is less frequently involved in foreign policy than the executive or legislative branches, it, too, has from time to time an important input. The Supreme Court confirmed the supremacy of the government in foreign policy in *United States v. Curtiss-Wright Export Corp.* (1936) when it decided that Curtiss-Wright could not defy a U.S. arms embargo during the Chaco War between Bolivia and Paraguay. In *Missouri v. Holland* (1920), the Court ruled that international treaties took precedence over states' rights after Missouri declared that the federal government had no right to enforce a treaty regulating migratory birds.

The Supreme Court has also adjudicated disagreements between the president and Congress. Under the "political question doctrine," federal courts "will not adjudicate certain controversies because their resolution is more proper within the political branches," and "it has regularly been invoked in lower federal courts in cases concerning foreign policy."[6] In general, the Supreme Court has supported the president's prerogatives as Commander in Chief. One analysis reviewed 347 cases dealing with foreign policy that the Court decided between 1789 and 1996 and concluded that it had ruled in favor of the executive branch in over two-thirds of these. "The executive branch was more likely to emerge victorious when the case involved the President's constitutional powers, the supremacy of federal over state law, and when the case involved foreign actors."[7] Thus, the court ruled in 2015 that Congress could not require the State Department to indicate in passports that Jerusalem belonged to Israel because it undermined presidential foreign-policy authority.

Nevertheless, in *Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer* (1952), the Court ruled that President Harry Truman, who had nationalized Youngstown Sheet & Tube to prevent a strike from closing it during the Korean War, did not have the authority to seize private property. Nor has the Court been reluctant to overrule the executive branch in cases involving foreign policy if they touch on civil rights. For example, in *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld* (2004), the Court ruled that, while the government could detain those judged to be "enemy combatants" indefinitely, it could not deprive an American citizen of the right of **habeas corpus** and, therefore, had to allow Yaser Esam Hamdi (a U.S. citizen captured in Afghanistan in 2001) the right to challenge his detention and status as an enemy combatant in an American court.

In contrast to the United States, parliamentary democracies like that in Britain do not have separation of powers among the branches of government. In consequence, although prime ministers may be constrained by the need to consult other parties in coalition governments, as leaders of a majority party or a coalition, they are usually assured of a legislative majority for their foreign policies and defense budgets.

Policy Incrementalism Conflict among different branches of government constitutes only one of the impediments to foreign-policy consensus in America. The executive branch consists of a host of agencies and departments that define the national interest from their own perspective. The need to gain agreement among the branches of government or among the bureaucracies that constitute the foreign-policy community impedes making bold policies that diverge significantly from past policies or that change in a major way America's orientation to the world. Instead, foreign policymaking tends to be pragmatic and incremental, a style of decision making that Roger Hilsman, director of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research during the Kennedy administration, described as "an uneasy . . . compromise among competing goals. . . . A government does not decide to inaugurate the nuclear age, but only to try to build an atomic bomb before its enemy does. . . . Rather than through grand decision on grand alternatives, policy changes seem to come through a series of slight modifications of existing policy, with new policy emerging slowly and haltingly by small and usually tentative steps, a process of trial and error in which policy zigs and zags, reverses itself, and then moves forward."[8]

Most American foreign policy consists of routine procedures in maintaining relations with other countries and of bureaucratic competition in pursuit of institutional goals. With imperfect information and inability to foresee accurately the consequences of their decisions, leaders tend to proceed cautiously. Radical shifts in policy are also inhibited by the numerous cross pressures to which policymakers are subject, failure to reach consensus in the face of competing interests, and different perceptions. All this fosters minimal decisions even on important issues. Thus, the process by which American troop strength in Vietnam grew from 760 in 1959 to over 536,000 in 1968 was a gradual one, consisting of numerous discrete decisions in response to specific events that led to modest troop increases without any single decision to intervene massively. As we shall see, policymakers are bound by their own roles, the push and pull of parochial interest groups, and competition among bureaucracies, the topic to which we now turn.

Bureaucratic Competition **Incrementalism** presupposes the existence of a government that consists of "a conglomerate of semi-feudal, loosely allied organizations, each with a substantial life of its own."[9] Although presidents are in charge of the executive branch, they cannot always bend

foreign-policy bureaucracies to do their bidding. They need the bureaucracies to collect, process, and interpret information, as well as allocate resources and responsibilities for performing important tasks. It is often difficult to determine whether the information bureaucracies provide is slanted to support a particular policy, and it is sometimes impossible to determine whether they implement policy in the manner leaders wish. Large foreign-policy organizations like the Departments of State and Defense have their own "culture" based on collective memories, routines, and sources of information that is perpetuated by selective recruitment of similarly minded employees.

Bureaucracies devise **standard operating procedures** for dealing with routine issues. Such procedures are especially helpful in dealing with recurring issues because high-ranking policymakers in the executive and legislative branches have neither the time nor expertise to do so. On such issues, low-echelon bureaucrats can act within policy guidelines set by political leaders. But routine decisions can have serious consequences. President Dwight Eisenhower authorized a series of "spy flights" over the Soviet Union to gather intelligence, and decisions about individual missions were made routinely by the CIA. On the eve of a summit conference to be held in May 1960 with Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, such a flight was authorized. However, a U-2 spy plane, piloted by Francis Gary Powers, a civilian working for the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation under government contract, was shot down over the USSR. The news was released by Khrushchev, who demanded an American apology. The incident was deeply embarrassing to Eisenhower, who had been unaware that a flight was taking place. The administration denied that the violation of Soviet airspace was intentional, but its claims were shown to be false, and the summit was abruptly cancelled by the Soviet leader. Presidents can alter standard operating procedures, priorities, and institutional perspectives, but such alteration is usually a complex undertaking.

Nor do American leaders usually have the time, information, or expertise to supervise the implementation of policy. At best they may concentrate on those aspects of immediate importance to them, ignoring other issues. President Obama was intimately involved in the three-month review of the Afghanistan war leading to a decision to add 30,000 U.S. troops in the 2009 "surge." He spent so much time on the issue, including eleven hours on the day after Thanksgiving that he joked, "I've got more deeply in the weeds than a president should, and now you guys need to solve this."[10] Presidents who expect to give orders and have them carried out as they desire will be disappointed. President Truman said of Eisenhower, his successor: "He'll sit here and he'll say, 'Do this! Do that!' *And nothing will happen*. Poor Ike—it won't be a bit like the Army. He'll find it very frustrating."[11] Even President Franklin Roosevelt, noted for his ability to control his executive departments, was so frustrated by the effort he exclaimed:

> The Treasury is so large and far-flung and ingrained in its practices that I find it almost impossible to get the action and results. . . . But the Treasury is not to be compared with the State Department. You should go through the experience of trying to get any changes in the thinking, policy, and action of the career diplomats and then you'd know what a real problem was. But the Treasury and the State Department put together are nothing as compared with the Na-a-vy. . . . To change anything in the Na-a-a-vy is like punching a feather bed. You punch it with your right and you punch it with your left until you are finally exhausted, and then you find the damn bed just as it was before you started punching.[12]

The existence of large bureaucracies encourages competition. Much of foreign policy is the product of interaction among members of government and nongovernmental organizations and groups. The belief that "rational" decisions are based on "national interest" is remote from reality. Instead, much of foreign policy is the outcome of politicized bureaucratic processes involving competition and bargaining in which the outcome depends as much on the relative power of the participants as on the wisdom of their arguments. The budgetary process is often an important battleground for competing interests. Some argue that bureaucratic rivalry can be reduced through reorganization, but as one observer put it: "The 'best' organization is that which distributes power and responsibility in such a fashion as to facilitate the policies you favor."[13]

Bureaucratic competition is especially common in situations when time is available for debate, and decisions may lead to the distribution or redistribution of resources among bureaucracies. The Defense Department may argue for a larger share of the overall budget, declaring that military threats from overseas are increasing and are more important than concerns about the economy, the environment, or other issues. Rivalry is also common among the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines for a larger share of the defense budget, each arguing that its role is more important for national defense than that of the others. Sometimes a decision may be aimed at protecting bureaucratic interests by following "accepted practice." Thus, the military services may agree to maintain an existing distribution of funds in order not "to rock the boat." Bureaucratic competition encourages the formation of coalitions across organizational boundaries. Thus, the Defense Department may ally with members of Congress who favor high defense spending, especially from districts or states with high employment in defense industries, as well as with those industries. Defense-related industries in return may provide campaign contributions to those who favor defense spending. This coalition was termed by Eisenhower the "**military-industrial complex.**"

DID YOU KNOW?

The Military Industrial Complex

Shortly before leaving office, President Dwight Eisenhower gave a television address in which he warned the American public about what he regarded a threat to democracy. "In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists, and will persist."[14]

Small Groups Unlike day-to-day issues that engage large foreign-policy bureaucracies, **international crises**—high-threat issues that arise unexpectedly and necessitate rapid decisions—require that decisions be made by small groups of top-level leaders. In the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, President John Kennedy bypassed the ordinary mechanisms of policy formation and set up a small group of about fifteen trusted advisers, which came to be known as the "Ex Comm" (the Executive Committee of the National Security Council). The need for secrecy, speed, imagination, and consensus limits the size of decision-making groups during crises.

Small-group decision making differs from that of large organizations in several ways. First, the parochial interests of the group members' bureaucratic organizations (in which the individuals occupy high positions) tend to be subordinated to the purposes of the ad hoc group, which is under pressure to behave cooperatively and expeditiously. The shortage of time in which to make decisions and the threatening nature of the situation generate stress. Although individuals tend to perform less effectively under intense stress, moderate stress may increase productivity and efficiency, heighten morale, and enhance problem-solving abilities in small groups. Moderate stress also reduces selfish behavior and increases group cohesion. Under time pressure, groups are more able to reach agreement quickly. Such cooperation may facilitate decisions but may also produce bad ones, especially if no one offers divergent views. Attorney General Robert Kennedy argued that if his brother President Kennedy and his advisers had been forced to make a decision during the missile crisis twenty-four hours before they did, they would have chosen to initiate an airstrike against Soviet bases in Cuba with potentially disastrous consequences.

In conditions of stress and limited time, the members of small groups tend to rely on their own memories of past events, drawing simplified comparisons and analogies between the present and the past. President Truman's determination that the invasion of South Korea in 1950 should not be "another Munich" and Robert Kennedy's concern lest his brother be viewed as "another Tojo" (Japan's Prime Minister who ordered the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941) suggest that simple analogies may prove potent in the decisions of small groups. Except in crises, foreign-policy decision making is more open to public view in democracies like America than in countries with authoritarian regimes that can determine foreign policy without consulting citizens.

Regime Type The type of government or regime is seen by many observers as a crucial factor in foreign policy. Thus, according to **democratic peace theory**, democracies do not go to war with one another because they are constrained by voters who are reluctant to do so. America is a democracy and, although democracy has many virtues, some critics argue that foreign-policy decision making is not among them. In an oft-recited passaged, French political thinker Alexis de Tocqueville, writing early in the 19th century, declared: "Foreign policy does not require the use of the good qualities peculiar to democracy but does demand the cultivation of almost all those which it lacks," and "a democracy finds it difficult to coordinate the details of a great undertaking and to fix on some plan and carry it through with determination in spite of obstacles. It has little capacity for combining its measures in secret and waiting patiently for the result."[15] This pessimistic analysis suggests that the role of public opinion, which we discuss below, is shaping decisions in democratic societies and is the source of democracies' foreign-policy errors.

Societal Factors

Several societal factors have an impact on foreign-policy decision makers.

Political Culture Societal factors reflect America's **political culture**, that is, the pattern of beliefs, identities, and values held by members of society. American history, myths, education, language, experience, and ideology all affect national identity and common goals. American politicians routinely try to appeal to

values such as democracy, individual liberty, equality of opportunity, the virtues of capitalism, and entrepreneurial initiative. Public opinion broadly reflects America's political culture, but the nature of its impact on foreign policy is highly contested.

Public Opinion Observers differ about what the "public" is and whose views matter. **Public opinion** exists even though it only episodically affects policy directly and is difficult to identify or even measure. The public's "mood" fluctuates as does its attention to foreign affairs. Thus, Alexander Hamilton declared that "the people" are "turbulent and changing" and "seldom judge or determine right."[16] Relatively few people are well informed about foreign policy or have more than superficial views about it, and much of the time the public is divided in its views and unable to articulate those views clearly.

Although public opinion is diffuse, there are social elites, or **opinion leaders,** who can guide the public in certain directions. Religious leaders assume positions that can influence their flocks, the mass media popularize some policies and criticize others, and educators have an impact in shaping the beliefs of their students. Business and labor leaders, like other socioeconomic elites, frequently help shape the views of those whom they represent. Politicians persistently seek to persuade partisan followers of the virtues of particular courses of action. Congressional hearings on foreign policy routinely feature opinion leaders with different views testifying about policies that they support or oppose.

How significant is public opinion? The fickle nature of public opinion in bringing an end to America's war in Korea in the 1950s, its intervention in Vietnam in the 1970s or, more recently, in Iraq and Afghanistan, lends credence the claims of de Tocqueville and Hamilton. The American public was aroused in 1992 by televised images of the effects of famine in Somalia and in 2001 by television coverage of al-Qaeda's attack on New York's Twin Towers. In 2014, grisly images of two Americans being decapitated by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in Syria rapidly transformed public opinion from aversion to intervention following wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to support for attacking ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

In crises, the public typically rallies around its leaders, especially if Washington makes an effort to mobilize public support for U.S. commitments overseas. As foreign threats loom, congressional efforts to oversee executive actions tend to lessen. Thus, the events of 9/11 united Americans. Congress quickly authorized President Bush to use force "against those nations, organizations, or persons, he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks," and public opinion willingly accepted the resulting American intervention in Afghanistan and the effort to capture Osama bin Laden. In September 2014, Congress quickly gave approval to President Obama's request for authorization to train and arm Syrian rebels in the face of ISIS with majorities of "hawks" in both parties supporting the request. Such events reinforced, at least temporarily, the role of the president as the principal architect of foreign policy. However, presidents often have to "oversell" what they are trying to accomplish with slogans such as "leader of the free world" or "making the world safe for democracy."

Overselling, however, makes it difficult for leaders to change course. Once an adversary has been demonized and depersonalized and once blood and treasure have been expended, it is difficult to back away from those commitments without facing an angry electorate. Thus, political scientist Gabriel Almond described the public's mood as prone to "dangerous overreactions,"[17] and diplomat George Kennan compared the public to a dinosaur in the sense that "you practically have to whack

his tail off to make him aware that his interests are being disturbed; but once he grasps this, he lays about him such blind determination that he not only destroys his adversary but largely wrecks his native habitat."[18]

Nevertheless, we should not overestimate the impact of public opinion. First, relatively few Americans pay much attention to foreign affairs except when sensational events occur like the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In 2012, only 12 percent of the U.S. electorate regarded foreign policy among their top three concerns, only 15 percent regarded defense as one of their three main concerns,[19] and in a national exit poll only 5 percent regarded foreign policy as the major issue in the 2012 elections.[20] Indeed, some analysts argue that, far from influencing leaders, in most cases leaders have the capability to shape public opinion. Hence, the Florentine political philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli cynically declared that "men are so simple and so ready to obey present necessities that one who deceives will always find those who allow themselves to be deceived."[21] This reflects an elitist model in which leaders can shape and manipulate public opinion and use the media to do so.

Others, however, like Thomas Jefferson, accept a **pluralist** model and view public opinion as shaping the view of foreign-policy elites who are aided by the media in doing so. Thus, political scientist William Caspary concluded that "American public opinion is characterized by a *strong* and *stable* 'permissive mood' toward international involvements."[22] Almond perhaps best captured the role of the American public in foreign policy when he wrote that "the function of the public in a democratic-making process is to set certain policy criteria in the form of widely-held values and expectations, leaving to those who have a positive and informed interest the actual formation of policy."[23]

In sum, what is perceived as public opinion may actually reflect the views of relatively small but highly vocal minorities, and, though few Americans have consistent views of foreign policy, those that do pay attention may feel intensely about particular issues. Public opinion can flow into the foreign-policy process through various channels—elections, mass media, political parties, Congress, and interest groups. Although most of the public is not organized and only a small proportion is attentive to foreign policy, vocal minorities are frequently associated with interest groups that use political and economic influence to shape policy and frequently contribute financially to the campaigns of politicians whose views they support. American political parties are especially important in this respect because they combine interests of many stripes into broad coalitions.

Interest Groups Major socioeconomic groups in America enjoy access to the government arena and can exercise indirect or even direct influence on decisions. Such groups represent ethnic and religious communities (e.g., Cuban, African-American, Jewish, Catholic, Islamic, Mexican-American, Indian, and Greek), labor and business, veterans, farmers, and women among others. Some groups have broad agendas, but many are single-issue groups that focus solely on what they regard as most important–for example, global warming, birth control and abortion for women overseas, human rights in Tibet or Cuba, and so forth. The influence of such groups varies depending on their ability to gain access to and lobby policymakers, their capacity to provide campaign contributions and deliver votes, and their overall public support. As a result, decisions with foreign-policy consequences are frequently made to satisfy domestic constituencies rather than deliberately to shape the external environment.

CONTROVERSY

The Israel Lobby

Political scientists John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt published an article in 2006, which later became a book, in which they contended that U.S. policy toward the Middle East was responsive to the "Israel lobby" in America, and that regional and strategic interests took a back seat to the domestic influence of this lobby. Critics contended that Mearsheimer and Walt exaggerated the lobby's influence and that moral, ideological, political, and military considerations dominated policymaking toward the region. What follows is an extract from their book.

"The real reason why American policymakers are so deferential is the political power of the Israel lobby. The lobby is a loose coalition of individuals and organizations that actively works to move U.S. foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction. . . . It is not a single unified movement with a central leadership, and it is not a cabal or conspiracy that 'controls' U.S. foreign policy. It is simply a powerful interest group, made up of both Jews and gentiles, whose acknowledged purpose is to press Israel's case within the United States and influence American foreign policy in ways that its members believe will benefit the Jewish state. . . . These groups want U.S. leaders to treat Israel as if it were the fifty-first state. Democrats and Republicans alike fear the lobby's clout. They all know that any politician who challenges its policies stands little chance of becoming president."[24]

Political scientist Aaron Friedberg characterized the argument as "a stunning display of intellectual arrogance,"[25] and Dennis Ross, chief U.S. diplomat for the Middle East under Presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton concluded: "Republican and Democratic presidents have consistently believed in a special relationship with Israel because values matter in foreign policy."[26] Shlomo Ben-Ami, former Israeli foreign minister, contended that Mearsheimer and Walt "portray U.S. politicians as either being too incompetent to understand America's national interest, or so undutiful that they would sell it to any pressure group for the sake of political survival" and that "petitioning the government in favor of a given foreign policy is not the same as manufacturing it."[27] By contrast, others like the German writer Christoph Bertram praise the authors for "their desire and the courage to break taboos."[28]

Even supposedly apolitical research groups–"think tanks"–like the Brookings Institution and the Center for Strategic and International Studies receive funding from foreign governments that effectively make them lobbyists for those governments. The Center, for example, has many foreign donors, all of whom hope the Center will publicize their views.

George Kennan recalled that his first lesson on becoming a diplomat was that "one of the most consistent and incurable traits of American statesmanship—namely, its neurotic self-consciousness and introversion, the tendency to make statements and take actions with regard not to their effect on the international scene to which they are ostensibly addressed but rather to their effects on those echelons of American opinion, congressional opinion first and foremost, to which the respective statesmen are anxious to appeal."[29] Political scientist Robert Putnam makes a similar point when he writes of "**two-level games**." "At the national level, domestic groups pursue their interests by pressuring the government to adopt favorable policies and politicians seek power by constructing coalitions among those groups. At the international level, national governments seek to maximize their own ability to satisfy domestic pressures, while minimizing the adverse consequences of foreign developments."[30]

Indeed, sometimes Washington tries to modify or oppose the efforts of domestic interest groups to act in ways that policymakers believe will alienate other countries. Armenian-Americans in California have repeatedly sought to persuade Congress to declare the murderous actions of Ottoman Turkey in 1915 as "genocide," and every year on April 24 that community reiterates its demands publicly. For its part, the Turkish government vociferously denies that what took place constituted genocide and warns Washington that a congressional resolution that labeled the event genocidal would harm relations between two countries that have enjoyed a long history of friendship. Repeatedly, presidents have sought to prevent congressional action, but in 2007 and 2010, the House Foreign Affairs Committee passed nonbinding resolutions over the objections of Presidents George W. Bush and Obama. And in 2007 and again in 2010, Turkey recalled its ambassador to Washington "for consultations" in protest. During the 2008 presidential campaign, Obama promised to declare the events of 1915 a genocide, thereby illustrating the link between the foreign and domestic arenas, but altered his position after the election. Although the resolution failed to gain congressional approval on those occasions, a similar bill was referred to committee in March 2012.

KEY DOCUMENT

S.RES.399: Affirmation of the United States Record on the Armenian Genocide Resolution

112th CONGRESS
2d Session
S. RES. 399
IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES
March 19, 2012

Resolution

Calling upon the President to ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide, and for other purposes

Findings

Sec. 2. The Senate finds the following:

(1) The Armenian Genocide was conceived and carried out by the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923, resulting in the deportation of nearly 2,000,000 Armenians, of whom 1,500,000 men, women, and children were killed, 500,000 survivors were expelled from their homes, and the elimination of the over 2,500-year

(Continued)

(Continued)

presence of Armenians in their historic homeland.

(2) On May 24, 1915, the Allied Powers of England, France, and Russia jointly issued a statement explicitly charging for the first time ever another government of committing 'a crime against humanity'

(7) The Armenian Genocide and these domestic judicial failures are documented with overwhelming evidence in the national archives of Austria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Russia, the United States, the Vatican and many other countries, and this vast body of evidence attests to the same facts, the same events, and the same consequences

(15) As displayed in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Adolf Hitler, on ordering his military commanders to attack Poland without provocation in 1939, dismissed objections by saying 'who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?' and thus set the stage for the Holocaust

Source: Library of Congress, Bill Text, 112th Congress (2011–2012), S.RES.399. IS, http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c112:S.RES.399.

Individuals rarely have an impact on legislators or bureaucrats through letters or visits because, without the aid of interest groups or political parties, most lack sufficient organization or resources. There are, of course, exceptions to this. For example, the billionaire casino owner Sheldon Adelson contributed roughly $100 million to Mitt Romney's 2012 presidential campaign because he believes that Republicans are more likely than Democrats to support Israel's security. Others include Charles and David Koch, owners of the conglomerate Koch Industries, who "have funded opposition campaigns against so many Obama Administration policies—from health-care reform to the economic-stimulus program—that, in political circles, their ideological network is known as the Kochtopus."[31]

Members of Congress, however, are seldom swayed by the opinions of those who have no direct interest in the foreign-policy issue being discussed. Thus, the influence of interest groups frequently involves economic issues and is exercised by professional lobbyists (often former politicians or bureaucrats who have friends in Washington). Interest groups are likely to exercise greater influence on issues that affect them directly. Labor unions, for instance, are likely to enjoy access to political allies on issues that involve the outsourcing of American jobs to other countries. Sometimes informal coalitions develop between interest groups and congressional committees or executive agencies responsible for selected areas of policy.

If government and society constitute complex systems, individuals are the parts of those systems. The following sections examine the impact of individuals in formulating and implementing foreign policy. The first describes the impact of the roles of officeholders and policymakers, and the second deals with the characteristics of individuals that are unique to them. The roles of policymakers comprise the demands that their positions place on their actions. A role constitutes a piece of a larger organization and intervenes between that organization and an individual's personal preferences and perceptions.

Role

A role is a set of socially prescribed behaviors associated with individuals occupying similar official positions in a political system that encourages them to view foreign-policy issues in similar ways. An individual's role entails a set of responsibilities and tasks associated with the organization in which he or she is involved. As a rule, those with similar roles confront their tasks in similar ways, using the organization's standard operating procedures. Thus, American diplomats and military officers, however different in personal attributes, occupy similar roles in the government and will handle routine and repetitive tasks in similar ways that have in the past proved efficient and effective.

Roles can be modified by the interaction of individual officeholders' interpretation of what is expected of them, their actual behavior, and the expectations of those who are responsible for their recruitment or career advancement. When individuals assume new positions, their knowledge of role norms is based on the behavior of previous occupants of those positions as well as legal statutes, job descriptions, organizational charts, and peer groups. Thus, those who are promoted to the ranks of U.S. Army generals will likely behave like their predecessors and act in ways expected by the higher officers who promoted them.

A role, therefore, is partly shaped by what superiors expect. Individuals who wish to retain their positions or advance their careers try to behave in ways that they think are expected of them and to meet the obligations to the organization of which they are members rather than following personal convictions. In this sense, an individual's role involves a commitment to serve the interests of that individual's institutional home. From a role perspective, where individuals "stand depends on where they sit." Military officers are expected to support increased budgets for defense and improvements in the status of the military profession in society. Those who behave otherwise will find it difficult to advance in their profession. The highly competitive promotion systems in organizations like the Departments of State and Defense and the CIA tend to limit creativity and encourage conformity. Since key factors in promotions are the efficiency reports written by superiors, they can deter the forthright expression of views on foreign policy that differ from the views of supervisors. Only a courageous foreign-service officer would have publicly taken issue with the Bush administration's intervention in Iraq in 2003 or have expressed doubt about whether Saddam Hussein was seeking WMD at that time.

The obligations of role occupants to superiors shape their perceptions of foreign-policy issues. A member of Congress is likely to take positions that conform to the interests of constituents—those who elected him or her to office—rather than to the interests of the country as a whole. Thus, members of Congress see no conflict between seeking to close down military bases to reduce the budget while opposing closing bases in *their* districts. Institutional loyalty also narrows the frame of reference for interpreting information and, not surprisingly, stimulates rivalries among executive organizations.

Role prescriptions can be passed on to individuals in various ways but primarily through socialization and recruitment. Government bureaucracies recruit individuals with beliefs and backgrounds similar to those in the existing elite. Role prescriptions are thus perpetuated by self-selection. Those who are recruited and able to gain promotion have usually been able to internalize role prescriptions, that is, to adopt them as their own views. As such, prescriptions are generally resistant to change.

If a position occupied by an individual is new, that individual may enjoy greater latitude in defining his or her role. George Washington set significant precedents as America's first president. His

interpretation of the constitutional requirement (Article II, Section 3) that the president "shall from time to time give to Congress Information of the State of the Union" led him to deliver the first State of the Nation address to Congress on January 8, 1790. After he delivered a second State of the Nation address the following year, he established a precedent that later presidents followed in reporting to Congress either in a speech or, beginning with Thomas Jefferson, in a formal written letter. In 1913, President Woodrow Wilson reverted to speaking annually before a joint session of Congress. Until recently, presidents sometimes spoke directly to Congress and sometimes followed Jefferson's custom. Washington's original precedent has dominated recent decades, however, owing to the unique opportunity offered presidents in advocating policies in an annual televised speech with officials from all three branches of government in attendance.

As time passes, role norms become set, precedents grow, and expectations become more widely shared and deeply anchored. It is thus difficult for an occupant, even a president, to impose his or her personality on or remold well-established roles. For that reason, high officials find themselves with few alternatives even if a particular policy violates their personal principles. Whether individuals can modify role norms depends upon the strength of role prescriptions, the force of their personality, and the uniqueness of the problems they confront. Robert McNamara's career as secretary of defense for Presidents Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson illustrates how such factors can enlarge a role. Between 1961 and 1968, McNamara gradually expanded his role vis-à-vis Congress and the military services, reviewing programs of the Defense Department and introducing novel cost-effectiveness techniques that assisted him to evaluate them comparatively. "McNamara innovated both in the types of decisions that he did make and in the manner in which he made and carried them out. Both types of innovation stemmed from a conception McNamara had of his office—a conception unlike that of any of his predecessors."[32] McNamara's career illustrated how role and personal characteristics combine in fostering the views and actions of policymakers.

An individual like McNamara can rationalize a decision by referring to the demands of his role. Presidents do so as well, and overall Americans tend to accept a president's policy in foreign affairs more readily than in domestic affairs. In a 2002 speech delivered at West Point, President George W. Bush explained that after 9/11 his role demanded that he take extraordinary steps to meet his obligation to provide security for Americans. "Homeland defense and missile defense are part of a stronger security, and they're essential priorities for America. Yet the war on terror will not be won on the defensive. We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge. In the world we have entered, the only path to safety is the path of action. And this nation will act."[33]

Unlike presidents, however, other role occupants have more limited scope for individual initiatives, and the role expectations of their organizations reflect more parochial interests. In sum: "Role, in and of itself, cannot explain the positions adopted by individuals; after all, the very notion of role implies a certain latitude over how to play the role," but "role occupiers do become predisposed to think in certain bureaucratic ways, and for a variety of psychological reasons they tend to adopt mind-sets compatible with those of their closest colleagues."[34] Thus, role explains only part of how individuals affect foreign policy. We have seen that in new or top-level political posts, individuals like McNamara may be able to take initiatives or follow their personal beliefs rather than the positions dictated by their roles. Let us now examine some of the individual traits that can have an impact on foreign policy.

Individual Factors

The 19th-century Scottish essayist and historian Thomas Carlyle attributed nearly all change and drama in history to the wills of great men. That Netanyahu and Obama disliked each other complicated efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East, while the close rapport between Obama and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi facilitated overcoming policy differences between their countries. But history is the product of both people *and* their times. We can distinguish those characteristics of individual leaders and their behavior—personality, experience, intellect, values, and political style—that make them unique.

KEY DOCUMENT

Thomas Carlyle, "On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History"

"We have undertaken to discourse here for a little on Great Men, their manner of appearance in our world's business, how they have shaped themselves in the world's history, what ideas men formed of them, what work they did;—on Heroes, namely, and on their reception and performance; what I call Hero-worship and the Heroic in human affairs. . . . Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here. They were the leaders of men, these great ones; the modelers, patterns, and in a wide sense creators, of whatsoever the general mass of men contrived to do or to attain; all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realization and embodiment, of Thoughts that dwelt in the Great Men sent into the world: the soul of the whole world's history, it may justly be considered, were the history of these."

Source: Thomas Carlyle, Lecture I, The Hero as Divinity (May 5, 1840), "On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History," The Project Gutenberg EBook, July 26, 2008, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1091/1091-h/1091-h.htm.

Since decision making is partly the product of environmental and psychological predispositions, the relevance of individual traits is significant. During the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, American leaders had to make informed assumptions about the belief system of Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. How would he interpret and respond to American moves? Would he view them as a personal challenge, or would he seek to avoid a nuclear cataclysm? Data on psychological predispositions, however, are difficult to obtain and are subject to different interpretations. During the crisis, Llewellyn Thompson, Ambassador-at-Large and former Ambassador to the Soviet Union, was brought into the

decision process to "act" the part of Khrushchev. During the discussion among American leaders who were members of the Ex Comm, some of the participants argued that Washington should remain firm but avoid forcing Khrushchev into a corner and making him respond defensively. Others argued that the United States should adopt an unambiguously hard line because Khrushchev would back down in the face of superior American military power. In part, the disagreement arose from different interpretations of Khrushchev's personality.

Personality Among the most interesting individuals are those with personality characteristics that lead to aberrant behavior. Sometimes such behavior reflects an individual's unconscious attempt to cope with inner conflict or need—in political scientist Harold Lasswell's classic formulation, the displacement of private motives onto public objects.[35] Lasswell was concerned with what he called "social psychiatry," which he believed clarified the process of policymaking.[36]

Certain emotional issues tend to evoke aberrant behavior. For example, ego-defensive behavior occurs in agitation for or against communism, pacifism, birth control, and obscenity. Studies of prejudice suggest that certain individuals have greater needs than do others to defend their identities. Their behavior, often hostile, may compensate for unconscious needs and personality defects. Garry Wills analyzed how Richard Nixon acted during a press conference in 1962 after he had been defeated in California's election for governor. "Nixon entered, laboring unsuccessfully at the game smile of politicians who have submitted to the judgment of voters and now must accept it. But as he advanced to the podium, his eyes picked out this or that face in the press corps; and behind the faces—behind pens slanting in a hostile scrawl, mikes held up for every slip—he could see again the words they used against him, headlines, leads, last paragraphs all stored in his retentive memory bank, that library of grievances."[37]

When individual factors have an impact, studying leaders' life histories can help us to understand their adult behavior. Their relations with their parents, their education, and their **socialization** as children and adolescents may have created enduring frustrations or anxieties. An analysis of President Woodrow Wilson's behavior concluded that his unwillingness to compromise with political opponents and, therefore, his failure to get the Senate to agree to America's entry in the League of Nations were consequences of childhood competition with his strict Presbyterian father. The authors suggest that Wilson repressed his rebellion against his father but unconsciously refused to submit to him. As a result, Wilson "could brook no interference. *His* will must prevail if he wished it to. He bristled at the slightest challenge to his authority. Such a characteristic might well have represented a rebellion against the domination of his father, whose authority he had never dared openly to challenge. Throughout his life his relationship with others seemed shaped by an inner command never again to bend his will to another man's."[38]

Wilson, who set out to "make the world safe for democracy," was described by political scientist John Stoessinger as "the classical crusader," that is, an individual who "tends to sacrifice unwelcome facts on the altar of a fixed idea." Stoessinger contrasted crusaders, who are frequently moralists, with "pragmatists" like Harry Truman. "The pragmatist always tests his ideas against the facts of his experience. If the design does not hold up against the facts, the design will have to change."[39] Bruce Bartlett, an adviser to President Ronald Reagan, argues that President George W. Bush became a crusader during his presidency. Bush was "clear-eyed about Al Qaeda and the Islamic fundamentalist enemy" whom he

understood "because he's just like them." Bush "truly believes he's on a mission from God. Absolute faith like that overwhelms a need for analysis."[40]

Individuals motivated by repressed hostility may also assume a posture of moral superiority toward those with whom they are in conflict, and this may lead to poor decisions. Those in the foreign-policy establishment with such attitudes may encourage ethnocentric behavior, that is, behavior reflecting suspicions of other societies and nations and showing little respect for them. **Ethnocentrism** produces hostility. For example, many Pakistanis believe that American leaders are haughty and disrespectful because Washington persists in sending unmanned drones over their country to kill Islamic militants, thereby violating Pakistani sovereignty. Such personality factors contribute to an individual's beliefs.

Beliefs The beliefs of leaders and the strength with which those beliefs are held may have an impact on the way in which they deal with new information, including information that seems to contradict those beliefs. People usually have coherent attitudes toward and beliefs about the world that reflect their values and preferences. The stronger their attitudes and beliefs, the greater the contradictory evidence and information needed to alter them. When confronted with evidence that contradicts strong beliefs, policymakers must alter their beliefs, deny the evidence, or rationalize it so that it no longer seems contradictory.

An analysis of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles by political scientist Ole Holsti concluded that he consistently explained changes in Soviet behavior during the Cold War, including conciliatory actions, in terms of hostility, weakness, or treachery, which eliminated the need for him to alter his beliefs in the face of new evidence. "Dulles selected two aspects of Marxist theory—materialism and atheism—for special emphasis," and "after pointing out that the free world had such high moral standards as to preclude the use of immoral methods, Dulles concluded that 'atheists can hardly be expected to conform to an ideal so high.'" Thus, "he attributed the characteristics of the Soviet leaders—insincerity, immorality, brutality, and deceitfulness—primarily to their atheism."[41] Dulles's experience in negotiating with Soviet leaders had contributed to his suspicions of their motives. As in the case of Dulles, people's experiences can shape their beliefs and foreign-policy preferences.

Experience The experiences of policymakers help them interpret the challenges they face. Different experiences are likely to endow officeholders with unique qualifications that may or may not be suitable for solving the problems at hand. George C. Marshall, who served as secretary of defense from 1950 to 1951, had been a five-star general of the army and chief of staff. More than any other secretary of defense, Marshall understood the difficulties confronting the military services. In addition, having also served as secretary of state, he was in a position to judge between the military services and the political objectives they were supposed to serve.

In contrast to Marshall, Charles E. Wilson had been president of General Motors before becoming secretary of defense in 1953. His previous experience equipped him to cut military expenditures and design military plans that would enable the Eisenhower administration to maintain a balanced budget. Wilson had little military training, and toward the end of the Eisenhower years, professional officers complained that American military forces had been permitted to grow obsolete. More recently Ashton Carter replaced Chuck Hagel as secretary of defense, largely because Carter's wide

experience in the formulation of defense policy made him more willing to consider using force, a trait sought by hardliners in Congress.

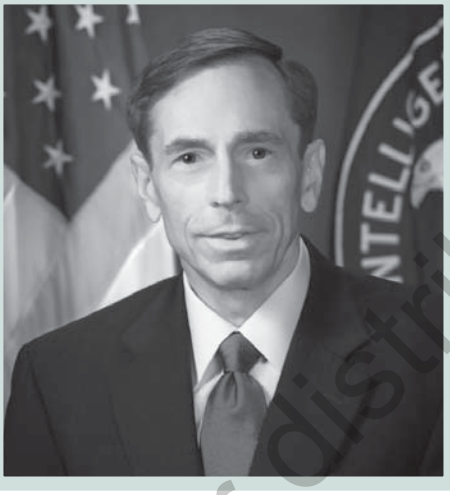
Age is also an important aspect of experience. The events of the era in which individuals were socialized are likely to be reflected in the ways in which they consider problems. Such individuals have different points of reference and concerns from others of a different generation. Thus, policymakers who were socialized before and during World War II are more likely to be concerned about "appeasing" a foe than those raised earlier during World War I or later during Vietnam. The generations that came of age during the slaughter of World War I, the American defeat in Vietnam, or the frustrating wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are likely to be less concerned about appeasing others if such a policy would avoid war. The experiences of policymakers may also affect their leadership style, that is, how they approach making decisions.

Leadership Style Leadership style refers to the ways in which policymakers reach decisions. President Eisenhower, who had served much of his adult life as a high-ranking army staff officer, expected as president to coordinate the work of others and consult widely with advisers and subordinates. Not only did Eisenhower solicit the advice of others and delegate authority to them, he tried not to impose his views on them in order to achieve consensus. Although this approach minimized conflict among decision makers, it also tended to blur the lines of responsibility and produce decisions at the "lowest common denominator."

President Bill Clinton was a "policy wonk" who took great pleasure in engaging subordinates and advisers in discussion and debate. That style was also characteristic to some extent of President Obama. Obama was less able than Eisenhower or George W. Bush to operate hierarchically and less willing than Eisenhower or Bush to let others narrow the alternatives presented to him. Obama "had very little foreign policy experience" and "lacked any executive-management experience." He was "deliberative to a fault and an inveterate seeker of the middle ground" and was not "inclined to develop strong bonds with most of his cabinet members or to empower them or agency heads, which is essential in a sprawling U.S. government that is the world's largest and most complex organization."[42] His reliance on a small circle of advisers made it more difficult to cope with the multiple and simultaneous challenges to America during his second term—confrontation with Russia over Ukraine, the Ebola epidemic, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, civil war in Syria, and Chinese truculence. "Personal relationships," declared a former U.S. diplomat, "are not his style" unlike Presidents Clinton and George W. Bush who "yukked it up with everybody."[43] Indeed, former CIA director and defense secretary Leon Panetta criticized President Obama for his leadership style. "Too often, in my view, the president relies on the logic of a law professor rather than the passion of a leader."[44]

In contrast to Obama, President Franklin Roosevelt, previously assistant secretary of the Navy and governor of New York, encouraged subordinates to compete with one another, making it necessary for him to serve as ultimate arbiter in the disputes that inevitably erupted. He let situations develop and crystalize, and "the competing forces had to vindicate themselves in the actual pull and tug of conflict; public opinion had to face the question, consider it, pronounce upon it—only then, at the long frazzled end, would the President's intuitions consolidate and precipitate a result." Roosevelt "organized—or disorganized—his system of command to insure that important decisions were passed on to the top."[45]

United States Department of Defense



Darren Livingston (Central Intelligence Agency)

Leon Panetta and David Petraeus, very different CIA directors

Different leadership styles are apparent when comparing General David Petraeus and his ebullient predecessor Leon Panetta as director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Petraeus, a former four-star army general who was prominently involved in America's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, had a quieter and less public demeanor than Panetta, a former congressman with considerable political experience. According to a friend of Petraeus, "He thinks he has to be very discreet and let others in the government do the talking."[46] Fearful of leaks, Petraeus, unlike Panetta, gave few interviews and kept a low profile.

Finally, foreign-policy decision making can also be affected by the physical and mental health of policymakers.

Health Leaders are frequently old and less able to act with the vigor and dynamism they had when they were younger. The strain of high public office in Washington is great. Both Eisenhower and Woodrow Wilson, for example, suffered serious illnesses while in office, which lessened their control over decisions. President Roosevelt was already ill when he met Soviet leader Joseph Stalin at Yalta in February 1945. He died two months later, and some observers claim Roosevelt was unfit to negotiate effectively with the Soviet dictator.

As the stress of making life-and-death decisions increases, mental illness may become a problem. James Forrestal, the first American secretary of defense, took his own life in 1949 by throwing himself from the sixteenth floor of the Bethesda Naval Hospital, where he was undergoing psychiatric treatment. "The most lasting tribute to James Forrestal," wrote his biographer, "would be a massive effort to reduce the incidence of physical and mental breakdown in political life."[47] Indeed, although America requires military officers in charge of nuclear weapons to undergo extensive psychological tests, it provides no such safeguards for the president who would order their use in the event of war.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined several of the key sources of influence on the formulation and implementation of American foreign policy. We have seen how foreign and domestic policies have become increasingly entangled in recent decades. In a large democratic country like the United States, it is difficult to identify a unitary national interest that is the outcome of individual rationality. Instead, many government and societal groups as well as individuals define the national interest from their own perspective.

External factors like globalization and accompanying international and transnational interdependence have limited sovereign independence, and the relative distribution of power constrains what is possible while the distribution of attitudes shapes what is probable in foreign policy. A host of government characteristics such as separation of powers and the competitive views of government bureaucracies shape the way foreign policy is made and the outcomes of policymaking. Societal factors such as the lobbying of interest groups and public opinion also influence policy outcomes. The roles that individuals have in government and society influence their perceptions and actions, as do individual characteristics such as their personality, beliefs, and health. In sum, American foreign policy is the outcome of a complex, continuous, and messy process in which alternatives are put forward by many individuals and interests and frequently are the outcome of domestic conflict and compromise rather than rational consensus.

The relative potency of these sources of influence varies over time and by issue. The next chapter examines how these influences have affected the contours of American foreign policy historically and the changing patterns in policy over time.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do the "transnational" and "state-centric" models of foreign policy differ? Which is closer to the reality of a globalized world?
2. In a globalized world, the foreign and domestic political arenas are increasingly linked. Discuss and give illustrations.
3. What are major sources of influence on American foreign policy? How do they differ?
4. How do you think the relative impact of the different influences on foreign policy might differ in the United States and China?
5. Do you think U.S. influence in foreign affairs is declining? Why or why not? How would an American decline change global politics?
6. How do you think the relative impact of the several sources of foreign policy might differ in dangerous crises like the 1962 Cuban missile crisis and in noncrisis situations?

KEY TERMS

affiliations (p. 9)
alliance (p. 13)
attitudes (p. 12)
authoritarian government (p. 10)
capability (p. 12)
checks and balances (p. 15)
democracy (p. 10)
democratic peace theory (p. 21)
economic development (p. 10)
ethnocentrism (p. 31)
external factors (p. 10)
globalization (p. 7)
government factors (p. 10)
habeas corpus (p. 18)
hard power (p. 12)
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ideologies (p. 12)
incrementalism (p. 18)
individual factors (p. 10)
interdependence (p. 11)
international crises (p. 20)
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standard operating procedures (p. 19)
state-centric (p. 7)
transnational (p. 7)
two-level games (p. 24)
values (p. 7)