

the world do not actually want further democratisation but a continuation of exploitative capitalism and political arbitration in all spheres of life.

The divisions in the Croatian public and government about this question and others, on which the international position of the country depends, has brought Croatia closer than ever to sanctions. All this means that those of us who are involved in the Croatian diplomatic effort have to attempt the difficult task of reconciling these obvious oppositions in the interests of the state and for the good of its citizens.

There are elements of truth in both approaches, but morally and in all soberness one's predilection must be against any Croatian autism. At the international level Croatia has to maximise its effects, and inside the country has to channel domestic differences through the democratic institutions of the political system. International surveillance, observation and interference are not always pleasant, and sometimes are degrading. Our attitude to them however cannot be a clumsy threshing around. The main reason the international community, through the OSCE Mission, is interfering more and more critically and in detail in the public and political life of Croatia is in the growing mutual distrust that is the result of the opposing viewpoints already mentioned in the public and the government, viewpoints that clash in an unproductive way.

There is not such a great problem in the formulations of procedures and other documents and instructions that the Croatian government accepts, rather in the distrust shown by the international community with respect to Croatia's most recent intentions. Croatia sometimes takes on international commitments too lightly, and then does not carry them out to the letter, reducing its international credibility. This situation is made use of by countries and services that via their network in Croatia would like to further their own particular interests, equating the historical guilt of Serbia and Croatia. We must not help assist them in this.

The solution, then, lies in restoring mutual trust between Croatia and the international community. The only way for the OSCE to stop laying down the law about our television programmes, history text books or judicial procedures is to have the required official explanation believed in the world. Fewer and fewer observers will be met in the field in Croatia, and more and more European experts who will assist Croatian society in making its regulations, standards and behaviour fit the standards and expectations of the developed world to which it both aspires and belongs.

It is not up to the Croats to change the destiny of the world, but, with their new state, the Croats have a chance to change their own, making it a harmonious part of a developed and integrated Europe. ■

The United States and Divided Societies

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Societies torn by internal conflict are a common feature of the contemporary international landscape. Whether in Chechnya, Algeria, the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Haiti, or Sri Lanka, peoples in many countries are fighting each other. While more visible perhaps at the end of the cold war, divided societies have been an international reality for years. Roy Licklider has identified 84 such wars between 1945 and 1990. These were of two general types: wars fought over socio-economic and/or political issues, e.g., Vietnam, Cuba and Haiti, and conflicts on the basis of identity, e.g., Northern Ireland, the former Yugoslavia, and Cyprus. This article will attempt to make some generalizations about American policy in these diverse cases. First, it will look to the past by reviewing U.S. policy during the cold war. Then, it will consider the Clinton administra-

tion by examining its policies and the dilemmas which have resulted.

A Brief Historical Review

The United States was involved in many internal conflicts in the years after 1945. It sent large numbers of troops to Korea and Vietnam, provided large amounts of assistance to embattled governments in Greece, Taiwan, and El Salvador, and promoted unrest in Cuba, Nicaragua, the Congo, and Chile. To cite merely the most extensive and geographically remote involvement, there were 550,000 American troops in South Vietnam in 1968, despite the fact that that country is literally halfway around the world from Washington, D.C. While the U.S. employed many tactics, the purpose of these initiatives was

almost always the same, i.e., to see its friends win the struggle against their opponents. There may have been rhetoric about negotiated solutions and compromise, but the primary goal of American policy was victory. Consider its policy in the 1980s toward two embattled societies in Central America: it supported the Salvadoran government against armed insurgents and supported armed insurgents against the Nicaraguan government.

The end of the cold war has had an ambiguous impact upon both the number of divided societies and American policy in such cases. One consequence of the demise of the Soviet Union was that combatants could no longer rely upon Soviet assistance, increasing their incentive to negotiate a compromise settlement. Such logic led to the resolution or potential resolution of many conflicts, including those in Central America and southern Africa. This could argue for greater or lesser American attention to the problem of divided societies. On the one hand, the demise of the USSR increases the relative position of the United States and the possibility of resolving such conflicts, because American leverage might be enhanced by the desire of former combatants for western economic assistance. On the other hand, the cessation of the Soviet/communist threat in places like Angola, Nicaragua, and elsewhere could argue for reduced American attention, as it was the Soviet threat which had dictated American involvement in the first place. Another consequence of the demise of police states in the USSR and elsewhere has been an increase in the number of divided societies. The emergence of new cases in places like Chechnya or the former Yugoslavia could also argue for greater or lesser U.S. attention. American involvement might stretch its military, economic, and diplomatic resources too far, but the sheer increase in the number of conflicts argues for American involvement, because some undoubtedly might threaten American interests.

The Clinton Administration

These ambiguities are reflected in the Clinton administration's behaviour since 1993. It has worked to resolve some conflicts but not others. Thus, it has worked actively in Haiti, the former Yugoslavia, Northern Ireland, and the Middle East. Yet it has done little or nothing about conflicts in Sri Lanka, Algeria, Zaire, or Rwanda. Before examining what the administration has done, it is necessary to consider why it has chosen to involve itself where it has.

Even at the height of the cold war the United States was not involved in all divided societies. There

are a number of new obstacles in the current era to American intervention, however. One is American public opinion. While not isolationist, the public is now much more self-interested. In a recent poll, the top five goals specified for the U.S. were to stop the flow of illegal drugs into the U.S., protect the jobs of American workers, prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, control and reduce illegal immigration to the United States, and secure adequate supplies of energy. None of these relates directly to an American role in divided societies, although the immigration, nuclear weapons, and energy supplies goals might be relevant to specific cases. The proposed goals which received the least support in this poll were those which do relate more clearly to an American role in divided societies: protecting human rights, protecting countries against aggression, promoting democracy, and helping to improve the standard of living in less developed countries. Those goals received less support in this poll than they had in any similar poll of the preceding twenty years. There is a particularly strong opposition to putting American troops in danger. When Clinton proposed air strikes against Bosnian Serb positions in early 1993, 55% of the public opposed. Even after the Dayton Peace Agreement had been signed, the House of Representatives opposed sending American troops to that country, and the Senate gave grudging support only when it was clear that troops would be sent. In the Haitian case, too, more than half the public opposed sending troops.

The military has been very hesitant about sending troops overseas since the Vietnam War. Its doubts were reinforced by the experience in Somalia in the early months of the Clinton presidency. Military thinking is reflected in the 1995 National Security Report, which distinguishes three types of situations in which American troops might be used. According to this report, the U.S. should do whatever is necessary, including the unilateral use of force, when its vital interests are threatened. In situations where important but not vital interests are present, the use of force should be limited and conditioned on issues such as the likelihood of success, costs and risks commensurate with American interests, and the failure of other means to achieve U.S. objectives. Where only humanitarian interests are threatened, the use of American combat forces is ruled out, since American forces should only be used to provide unique services or meet urgent and otherwise unattainable needs. Since divided societies will probably involve U.S. interests of the latter two types only, the use of American forces will be limited.

Despite these obstacles, the Clinton administration has been quite active in seeking to resolve

conflicts in Haiti, Bosnia, Northern Ireland, and the Middle East. What factors have led it to become involved in these situations?

Factors Encouraging Involvement

One important factor has been the opinion of important domestic interest groups. While, as noted earlier, the general public is often sceptical of an American role in societies in conflict, there are sometimes significant domestic groups that advocate an activist American role. It is not unusual for democratic governments to heed interest group demands contrary to general opinion. In fact, public indifference may actually increase presidential discretion. The Haitian case provides an example. The general public was not moved by Haitian events and opposed the use of American forces to restore democracy in that country, but African-Americans – a crucial component of Clinton's constituency – overwhelmingly endorsed such policies. Similarly, Jewish-Americans have long advocated an active American role in the Arab-Israeli dispute.

The best recent example of the power of interest groups, however, is provided by the Northern Ireland case. Clinton had said little about that embattled territory prior to the 1992 presidential primary in New York. There, he promised to appoint a special envoy to Northern Ireland, to pressure the British government about human rights violations in the province, and to issue a visa for Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams – something the United States had refused to do for 20 years. Later, during the fall campaign, Clinton promised to take a more active role in Northern Ireland's peace process and to work with the British to reduce job discrimination against Catholics. Whether for this reason or others, Irish-Americans voted overwhelmingly for Clinton in 1992. In fact, without their support in New York, California, and New England, Clinton would not have won the presidency. Clinton understood the importance of the Irish-American vote and realized he would have to act upon the promises he had made. That necessity continued throughout his first term, since congressional Democrats needed the Irish-American vote in the 1994 elections and Clinton, himself, would need it in 1996.

The President's credibility is another factor prompting American action. In addition to pledges about Northern Ireland, Clinton had promised a more activist U.S. role in Haiti and Bosnia in the 1992 campaign. Once he became president, his own credibility required that those promises be honoured, because failure to do so would have reinforced the

popular impression that he had no principles and based his policy solely upon public opinion. Similarly, he had promised to send American troops to Bosnia in the aftermath of a peace settlement there. When such a settlement came, he had little choice but to do so, despite public opinion.

Domestic American politics is relevant in other ways. Clinton had had a number of foreign policy setbacks in his first year in office, including Somalia, the changed position on the linkage of human rights to most favoured trade status for China, and the failure to persuade European allies of the wisdom of his proposed "lift and strike" policy for Bosnia. Consequently, he needed a foreign policy success. This, and the electoral calendar, may help explain why the President decided in early 1994, against the wishes of the State Department, to grant a visa to Gerry Adams and why preparations were being made in September 1994 to send troops to Haiti. Similarly, the onset of the 1996 presidential campaign may help explain why Clinton made the December 1995 decision to send troops to Bosnia.

This depiction of the reasons for the active American role in Haiti, Bosnia and elsewhere should not be taken to mean that domestic politics, alone, explain U.S. policy. If that were true, Clinton would not have sent troops to Bosnia, even after the Dayton peace agreement. The President believed sufficient American interests were present in each of these cases to merit American involvement. All post-world War II Presidents have recognized U.S. interests in the Middle East and sought to reduce tensions between Israel and its neighbours, so Clinton's activism there breaks no precedents. His policies in Haiti, Bosnia, and Northern Ireland are a break with the past. George Bush, Clinton's predecessor, did not believe the United States had a significant stake in either Haiti or the Balkans. Clinton disagreed, believing American interests in Haiti included the promotion of democracy in the Caribbean and stemming the role of refugees to the United States. With respect to the former Yugoslavia, Clinton argued that American interests included the danger that war might expand, the role and credibility of NATO in the post-cold war era, assertion of the principle that aggression should not stand, and the humanitarian tragedy there.

There were also fortuitous developments that increased the likelihood that these conflicts might be solved. The Bosnian situation had changed dramatically by 1995: economic sanctions were having an impact upon Serbia territorial boundaries between the various communities in the country had become more coincident with demographic boundaries, NATO had demonstrated a willingness to strike at

Bosnian Serb positions, and all were war-weary. The September 1993 Oslo Agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization created an opportunity to resolve their conflict and both parties sought an active American role. In Northern Ireland, too, the situation was changed by the Downing Street Declaration of December 1993, in which Britain agreed to allow Sinn Fein to participate in negotiations if it agreed to a cease-fire.

Dilemmas

While these four cases demonstrate the Clinton administration's determination to work to resolve selected conflicts, the policies adopted in the four cases were very different. In Haiti, the U.S. provided strong rhetorical support for exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, pledged to send troops to restore him to power, and engaged in last-minute negotiations with the Haitian military to reach a settlement. The U.S. never pledged to send troops to either the Middle East or Northern Ireland but did engage in active diplomacy in both cases. The Clinton administration was especially active in the Bosnian case, where it worked with the Croatian and Muslim communities in Bosnia to form a federation, exerted diplomatic pressure to end the fighting, worked to have NATO endorse the use of air strikes against Bosnian Serbs, took an active role in the Dayton peace conference, and sent troops to enforce the peace. One thing that was common to American policy in all these cases was the desire to resolve the conflict. This marks a significant change from American policy in the cold war period.

Only the Haitian case has been resolved to date and that was largely a result of a threatened U.S. invasion, an unlikely policy in any of the other cases considered here. In those situations the United States has sought to work with local parties to resolve the conflict. As it has, several dilemmas have emerged. An examination of these dilemmas sheds light on the difficulties the Clinton administration has faced and raises issues it will likely confront in the future.

Economics vs. Politics Dilemma

One common element in these cases was the provision of American economic assistance. Typically, the U.S. gives funds after the conclusion of a peace settlement. In the Middle East, for instance, so much assistance has been provided to Israel and Egypt since their 1979 peace agreement that those two countries are now the leading recipients of American assistance, receiving nearly 40% of the total. Similarly, the U.S. pledged \$500 million for the economic de-

velopment of the West Bank and Gaza soon after the 1993 Israeli-PLO agreement. Others who have made peace have also received American economic assistance: Haiti received \$135 million in FY 1996 and \$120 million in FY 1997, and when the World Bank concluded in 1995 that \$96 billion would be needed for reconstruction in Bosnia, the United States promised almost 10% of that total. The Northern Ireland case is different only in the sense that assistance has been provided prior to resolution of the conflict. The U.S. has provided more than \$265 million since passage of the Anglo-Irish Support Act in 1986. Clinton has expanded American support, being the first President to approve American contributions to the International Fund for Ireland. In addition to public resources, the U.S. has sought to involve the private sector in efforts to rebuild divided societies. It concluded a free trade agreement with Israel in 1995 and later extended it to include the West Bank and Gaza. The United States also worked with regional governments and the private sector to establish a Middle East Development Bank and a Middle East-Mediterranean Travel and Tourism Association. Similarly, the U.S. sponsored conferences in 1995 and 1996 to encourage investment in Northern Ireland and has sent a number of trade missions there.

One of the purposes of this assistance, e.g. in Bosnia, is physical reconstruction. More importantly, however, the assistance is designed to improve the quality of life for ordinary people, to give them a stake in peace, and to try to alleviate the poverty, which may have led to violence in the first place. As former Secretary of State Christopher once argued, there is a "critical link between peace and prosperity in the Middle East" and elsewhere. Or, as Commerce Secretary William Daley noted in October 1997, "peace and stability can take hold and prosper only in an environment of potential economic growth and revitalization."

No one would dispute these goals. However, one can ask whether economic revitalization or political stability comes first. The United States, implicitly, assumes the former. Many, however, especially in the private sector, would argue that political stability precedes economic growth. As the State Department has lamented with respect to Haiti, there has been only a slow return of private investment because "businesses have awaited the establishment of stable political conditions and enhanced security". In addition to this sequencing dilemma, one might question the American assumption that mutual tolerance and understanding will result from economic growth. Can economic growth mute the strong passions that follow a civil war? Will the contending groups work together to distribute assistance or com-

pete for the spoils, exacerbating political tension? Are there likely to be disputes over the distribution of reconstruction assistance or the basis on which such funds are provided? Issues such as these may help explain why Licklider discovered that negotiated solutions to civil wars are less likely to be stable than civil wars ended by victory of one side. Finally, economic growth, itself, especially the rapid economic growth which might follow the conclusion of a civil war, can often be politically destabilizing, since it widens the gap between rich and poor, creates new winners and losers, and creates gaps between political and economic power.

None of this is to argue that that United States should not provide assistance to those who have made peace. There are many needs which must be filled, the U.S. has resources to aid in their fulfilment, and the contention that political moderation and stability require economic growth is undoubtedly correct. There must be recognition, however, that conflict resolution is essentially a political process. Economic growth is undoubtedly a necessary condition for political stability, but it is not a sufficient condition.

Outcome vs. Process Dilemma

Another component of the American approach has been to establish a negotiating process to allow the parties, themselves, to negotiate their differences. Thus, the United States actively supported the onset of negotiations in the Bosnian and Northern Ireland cases and was an active participation in both. While surprised to learn of the Oslo Peace Agreement, the United States became an active supporter after 1993. The logic is that any political solution to such longstanding conflicts will require time to negotiate, that the parties will have to work out their own differences, and that any settlement they do agree to is more likely to endure.

Once negotiations have begun, there is pressure on all parties to continue the process. It sometimes appears that the Clinton administration is concerned more with keeping the negotiating process alive in the Middle East and Northern Ireland than with a final outcome. It makes ritualistic statements of support and tries not to criticize the parties or to criticize them equally. While negotiations did achieve a breakthrough in the Bosnian case, the continued stationing of American troops there demonstrates that much more needs to be done and of the desire to keep that process alive. There is good sense in all of this. Ongoing negotiations keep the parties talking rather than fighting as well as allowing momentum for peace to develop. Moreover, continued negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians or between

Irish Catholics and Protestants serves the political interests of President Clinton. He has claimed much of the credit for bringing such groups together and has supported their efforts strongly, so failure of a negotiation would have an adverse impact upon his foreign policy legacy.

Yet there are dangers with this emphasis on process. Since the parties to a civil conflict may lack the wisdom or political courage to negotiate a solution, the process might become interminable. Negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians have been going on for almost five years and much remains to be done before a settlement is reached. The negotiations in Belfast, similarly, have been largely fruitless despite years of negotiations. A process without a final settlement contains a number of risks, including the dashing of heightened expectations and the belief of the participants that there is no alternative to violence.

All this argues for a more assertive American role, especially when negotiations have stalled. If the parties are unable to reach a settlement, the United States may have to consider inserting its own preferred outcome. This is something it rarely does, again for good reason. Announcing America's preferred outcome entails risks: it will likely offend one or both parties to the negotiations and cannot be imposed by the United States in any event. Yet American assertiveness may be the key to breaking a deadlock in negotiations.

American officials would be wise to consider these dilemmas. While there is no easy solution for either, the United States may have to consider a more assertive and explicitly political approach if peace is to come to Bosnia, Northern Ireland, or the Middle East. Moreover, since experience in the cold war and post-cold war eras demonstrates that many countries will be challenged by internal political divisions and that the United State will attempt to resolve some of those conflicts, consideration of these issues now will aid its future efforts. ■