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FOREIGN POLICY BY COMMITTEE:
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND SENATE COMMITTEE
ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

A dissertation submitted to the
Division of Research and Advanced Studies
of the University of Cincinnati
in partial fulfillment of the
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1995

by

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August 2, 1995

I, Jerry Edward Sullivan,
**hereby submit this as part of the
requirements for the degree of:**

Doctor of Philosophy

in Political Science

It is entitled Foreign Policy by Committee:

The House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Senate

Committee on Foreign Relations in the Post-Cold War

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ABSTRACT

While it had become an almost accepted practice for presidential candidates to criticize the incumbent's or opponent's proposed foreign policies, no candidate in the post-World War II era, at least until 1992, had successfully campaigned with an outright aversion to foreign policy. As in any presidential election year, both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue were up for grabs, and the answers as to whether this strategy would be successful were met with questions about its potential impact on Executive-Congressional relations on foreign affairs in the first truly post-Cold War presidency and post-Cold War Congresses.

This is a contextual study of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Whereas previous examinations of congressional foreign policy committees were either institutional in nature and/or historical in perspective, this analysis is placed in the specific context of the post-Cold War era and whether the committees are attempting to cope with post-Cold War challenges using a Cold War institutional structure or frame of reference.

The central questions concern the ability of Congress to effectively contribute to the American Foreign Policy

polemic in the post-Cold War era. Were these committees using an institutional structure designed and refined during the Cold War to attempt to cope with post-Cold War realities? Did these committees' institutional structures really matter? Was there something else that played a greater role in measuring congressional efficiency in foreign policy articulation and execution?

The author provides historical overviews of both congressional foreign policy committees and the National Security Council and their respective staffs, supplemented by interviews with those serving therein. The emphasis is how institutional changes coincided with changes in committee chairmen, in the case of the Legislative Branch, and changes in Presidents, in the case of the Executive Branch. Also explored is the durability of these changes and how they impacted on the institutional structure, conduct, policy outputs and interaction of both the NSC and congressional foreign policy committees.

The author concludes with recommendations for reform, especially those which address credibility perceptions existent between the Executive and Legislative Branches.

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If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

-James 1:5

No undertaking such as this could have been possible without Christ's love, faithfulness and sustenance as well as the love of some and dedication and support of others who all contributed to seeing this process through to its end. I'm convinced that it is inconceivable to write a dissertation or, for that matter, any book, in isolation; the end product is the result of the experiences we draw from each other as well as the conclusions we've reached through research.

Many people's insights and backing enabled me to complete the journey that a doctorate truly is. First and foremost, I will be eternally grateful to my parents, Joseph and Dorothy Sullivan. They never tried to force anything on me or my two brothers and two sisters. Instead, they allowed us to discover our own interests and then, in a very unintrusive manner, took their own steps to encourage those interests. Little did they (or I) realize that a six-year-old's fascination for presidents in 1964 would lead to a Ph.D. in political science.

The assistance of many people and institutions proved

invaluable. The Department of Corresponding Studies of both the Army War College and the Naval War College indirectly provided critical material yielding insiders' perspectives of Congress, the Presidency, and foreign policy making. They are staffed by courteous, professional and prompt people, ready to offer assistance at a moment's notice.

Denizens of government seem destined, perhaps doomed, to suffer all sorts of criticism, usually hostile and much of it undeserved. My experience in completing this research has been that many of those in public service, be they elected officials, political appointees, or career civil servants, are motivated by the best of intentions and a commitment to be good public servants. Far more often than not, personal ambition or personal agendas seem the furthest thing from their minds, despite what the popular perceptions may be. The members and staffs of the National Security Council, the Departments of State and Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs (now called International Relations), and Senate Committee on Foreign Relations who graciously gave their time and assistance on many a late evening in Washington deserve no small amount of praise, for without their cooperation (many times bought only after extensive and profound promises of confidentiality), there would be no dissertation. Once shielded by confidentiality, their observations indicated that many knew our foreign policy-making apparatuses had

several defects in need of repair, but nonetheless worked for people and institutions that did not necessarily want to confront those defects, much less the repairs.

For the members of Congress that did go "on the record," several deserve special mention, recognition and thanks. These include Lee Hamilton (D-In.), David Mann (D-Ohio), Eric Fingerhut (D-Ohio), Robert Portman (R-Ohio), Steve Chabot (R-Ohio), and John Boehner (R-Ohio). I also thank, among others, Nancy Kassebaum (R-Ks.) and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY) for pointing me in the right direction, and for the other members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, such as Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.) and Frank Murkowski (R-Alaska) who made their foreign policy staff aides available to me for research and discussions.

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Members of my committee, Dr. Norman Thomas, Dr. Marshall Goodman, and Dr. James Stever, are rightfully due their own praise, as they answered my questions and eased my fears with far more patience than I had any reason to expect. Their high standards, comments, observations and

suggestions constantly forced me to take a fresh look at my material, helping me turn something that I realize now was unpresentable into something passable, and something that I realize now was passible into something of which I am genuinely proud. They have my unending thanks.

My three children, Steven (age 5), Sarah (4) and Danny (1 1/2) provided perspective. When you've spent hours intensely involved in attempting to determine the implications of people's observations on the course and conduct of American Foreign Policy, the simpler things of life, like soccer practice, visits to the zoo, and playing on the swing provided a welcome respite and relief. I didn't know it at the time, but their pleadings for Dad to take a break were instrumental to keeping a clear head.

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Finally, Shirley's daughter (and my wife) Sharon has shown me, throughout this process, what it is to be like when you're a candidate for sainthood. Her patience, support and love have had an unquantifiable impact on finishing this dissertation, and if there is such a thing as an independent variable in completing a doctorate program, it certainly is having a wife like her. She got me started, she encouraged me, she helped me maintain focus, and she saw

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Sweat and Tears," I really am so glad she came into my life.

Jerry E. Sullivan
Cincinnati, Ohio
August 7, 1995

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The Constitution contributes no small degree of ambiguity to congressional involvement in international matters. It grants Congress the power to declare war, but makes the president the commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Specifically delineated powers of the House of Representatives are nonexistent. The Senate's express responsibilities are limited to the approval of treaties and the confirmation of diplomatic, cabinet and sub-cabinet positions. And yet, each house has evolved within its realm respective committees that speak to foreign affairs but not necessarily in unison.

Both the House and the Senate have committees specifically dedicated to foreign affairs, international relations, and U.S. foreign policy. These are the House Committee on Foreign Affairs¹ and the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. They are not, however, the only committees that make some contribution to the conduct of American foreign policy. The institutional structure of Congress, through standing and select committees, provides multiple venues for foreign policy debate through such

¹The name of this committee changed to the House Committee on International Relations in the 104th Congress.

committees as Agriculture, Appropriations, Armed Services, Banking, and Intelligence. The 1992 national election may be viewed, in part, as a referendum on public salience of foreign policy. By placing it in an almost subservient position to domestic concerns, President Clinton may have played upon or added to the skepticism present in some public circles concerning the importance of work performed by House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations, including the motivations of the congressmen who serve there.

Confronted with the inefficiencies of government under the Articles of Confederation, Alexander Hamilton remarked that there were "fundamental errors in the structure of the building." This same observation may be made today regarding the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee. With respect to these two committees, the "building" was designed for a foreign policy challenge now absent from the international scene. Specifically, the post-Cold War subcommittee structure of congressional foreign policy committees largely reflects Cold War orientations, clinging to geographical orientations in their subcommittees' focus. While issue-based or "functional" subcommittees have generally played a role in committee operations, the regional alignment adopted at the onset of the Cold War remains in effect. Congressional foreign policy committees are therefore finding it much more

difficult to make significant contributions to foreign policy debate as the baseline assumption to their operations no longer exists.

They have therefore undergone a change in or loss of focus. The 1992 congressional elections added to the dilemma. Tables 1 (page 8) and 2 (page 9) detail turnover in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House Foreign Affairs Committee since the induction of the "Class of '74" in the 94th Congress. Both foreign policy committees experienced substantial turnover following the 1992 election, but especially so in House Foreign Affairs, which saw almost half of its members replaced, due to retirement or defeat, in the 103rd Congress. Members with little or no congressional Cold War frame of reference now serve squarely among those who do. U.S. perceptions of how best to prosecute the Cold War led to the American policy of containment. Many, but not all, foreign policy considerations stemmed from the assumption of Soviet or Soviet-backed adversaries and how they would react to a given policy. Classic examples include continuing tensions over the division of Berlin, the Korean War, U.S. involvement in Indochina, the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban Missile Crisis, China, and Nicaragua. Communism's collapse released a range of domestic forces that had international ramifications, including the economic stability and viability of the Russian government and its people. The

Cold War may have ended, but that did not mean that U.S. policy makers could now turn a deaf ear to Moscow. Russia and its potential allies remained a subject of concern to Washington, but for reasons different than those existent when Moscow was a competing global "pole."

The passing of the Cold War changed this strategic premise, also resulting in an unforeseen consequence on the strategic premise of the foreign policy committees and subcommittees within the infrastructure of the House and Senate. It may be argued that the absence of a Cold War has dramatically altered freshmen representatives' and senators' perceptions and beliefs about foreign policy matters as a whole. With the driving force to earlier U.S. foreign policy a matter of history, it appears that senior representatives and senators on the committees have lost a large source of their expertise and influence with other members of Congress. To date, interviews with some freshmen not on the committees indicate that they now seek alternate sources of cues and information prior to voting on foreign policy legislation that reaches the floor of the House and Senate.²

Transition to a post-Cold War environment has been accompanied by more than one change in the nature of committee leadership. This has had greater impact on the

²Interviews with Rep. David Mann, D.-Ohio, and Rep. Robert Portman, R.-Ohio.

Table 1 - Senate Foreign Relations Committee Turnover Since 1975

<u>Cong.</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Auth. Members³</u>	<u>Actual Members</u>	<u>Dem.</u>	<u>Repub.</u>	<u>Vacancies⁴</u>	<u>New Members⁵</u>	<u>New Dem.</u>	<u>New Repub.</u>	<u>Percent Turnover⁶</u>
94	1975-77	17	17	10	7	0	3	2	1	17.6%
95	1977-79	16	16	10	6	0	3	3	0	17.6%
96	1979-81	15	15	9	6	0	5	2	3	31.3%
97	1981-83	17	17	8	9	0	7	3	4	46.7%
98	1983-85	17	17	8	9	0	1	0	1	5.9%
99	1985-87	17	17	8	9	0	4	2	2	23.5%
100	1987-89	20	19	11	8	1 (R)	5	4	1	29.4%
101	1989-91	19	19	10	9	0	3	1	2	15.8%
102	1991-93	18	18	10	8	0	2	0	2	10.5%
103	1993-95	19	19	11	8	0	5	3	2	27.8%

³Taken from authorization documents within each house of Congress.

⁴Vacancies are listed by party, (D) - Democrats, (R) Republicans. "1 (R)," for example, indicates one vacancy unfilled by the Republican Party.

⁵"New Members" include both freshmen and incumbents new to the committee for that particular session.

⁶Calculated by dividing the total number of new committee members by the number of actual committee members in the preceding Congress.

Table 2 - House Foreign Affairs Committee Turnover Since 1975

<u>Cong.</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Auth. Members¹</u>	<u>Actual Members</u>	<u>Dem.</u>	<u>Repub.</u>	<u>Vacancies²</u>	<u>New Members³</u>	<u>New Dem.</u>	<u>New Repub.</u>	<u>Percent Turnover⁴</u>
94	1975-77	37	34	22	12	3 (D)	5	4	1	12.5%
95	1977-79	37	37	25	12	0	10	8	2	29.4%
96	1979-81	34	34	22	12	0	10	7	3	27.0%
97	1981-83	37	36	21	15	1 (R)	12	6	6	35.3%
98	1983-85	37	37	24	13	0	14	9	5	38.9%
99	1985-87	42	42	25	17	0	9	3	6	24.3%
100	1987-89	45	42	25	17	3 (D)	10	6	4	23.8%
101	1989-91	43	43	26	17	0	9	6	3	21.4%
102	1991-93	43	43	26	17	0	6	4	2	14.0%
103	1993-95	45	45	27	18	0	20	14	6	46.5%

¹Taken from authorization documents within each house of Congress.

²Vacancies are listed by party, (D) - Democrats, (R) Republicans. "3 (D)," for example, indicates three vacancies unfilled by the Democratic Party.

³"New Members" include both freshmen and incumbents new to the committee for that particular session.

⁴Calculated by dividing the total number of new committee members by the number of actual committee members in the preceding Congress.

operations of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. New leadership provided by Rep. Lee Hamilton stood in marked contrast to his predecessor in the 102nd Congress, Dante Fascell. Not only was the style between the two different, but also the context in which their leadership had been provided. Compounding this passage has been at least a temporary change in the traditional relationships between the House and Senate foreign policy committees and the Executive Branch. Cabinet secretaries, the vice-president, and the president are, with increasing frequency, turning to the House of Representatives to get a congressional "sense" on foreign policy issues. The House Foreign Affairs Committee leadership views this only as a transient matter. As the doctrine of U.S. foreign policy absent the Cold War emerges and stabilizes, this same leadership expects the Senate to reassert and resume its traditional role.¹

The entire notion of "representation," particularly within the House Foreign Affairs Committee, is also under contention. Rep. Lee Hamilton, the Committee's chair, identified to me an additional dynamic at work in today's foreign policy committees: new members seek to represent those who directly elected them as well as those who share a similar ethnic or religious background nationwide. Not only do they serve as a conduit for their constituents, but they also proceed on the assumption that they are a "voice," for

¹Interview with House Foreign Affairs Committee member.

example, for the African-American, Hispanic, or Jewish communities.

The influx of new freshmen compounded the dilemma facing the leadership by invalidating, in part, another hypothesis about the role of committee and subcommittee chairpersons. In Congressmen's Voting Decisions, John Kingdon argued that freshmen not on committees sponsoring legislation reaching the chamber floor for a vote routinely look to the senior member of their party on the committee for a voting cue. This is no longer the case in legislation emanating from House Foreign Affairs or Senate Foreign Relations. New members of Congress are either becoming experts in their own right, time permitting, or they contact personal associates (not necessarily other legislators) with foreign policy expertise for information and background.²

In this work, I will examine the party changeover in Executive Branch control as well as a new committee chairmanship for House Foreign Affairs (e.g., a party-based approach to foreign relations), and specifically how those alterations have impacted upon congressional foreign policy committees. Party unity between the two branches is no guarantee of unity in foreign policy outlooks.³ Both the

²Interview with Rep. David Mann, D.-Ohio.

³Robert A. Dahl, Congress and Foreign Policy (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company; reprint, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1950), 234-35 (page references are to reprint edition).

House and the Senate have actively challenged the credentials of key foreign policy officials of the Clinton Administration, and these affronts have come from both Democrats and Republicans.

Barely nine months into the Clinton Administration, for example, Frank McCloskey, a Democrat from Indiana serving on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, characterized himself "as a loyal Democrat and supporter of President Clinton,"⁴ but openly called for the resignation of Secretary of State Warren Christopher. His charges against Christopher, and as an extension, against the President, are not what would usually be expected from someone who thinks of himself as "loyal." He stated:

...Christopher should resign. He has severely damaged the national interest through failed leadership in difficult situations that have required a firm hand. These crises, in the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Russia and Haiti, are likely to worsen because of the Administration's flawed policies...In a remarkable reversal prompted by public and Congressional pressure, the Administration has embraced the Bush policy toward Somalia: we will withdraw our forces and turn nation-building over to the U.N. Why did 18 Americans have to die?...In Haiti, we allowed peacekeepers to be turned back by a theatrical display by a few hundred thugs. Mr. Christopher has defined the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide as a strategic interest. But as his elastic views of America's interest show, the use of "strategic" can really only refer to President Clinton's short-term domestic political interests.⁵

⁴Frank McCloskey, "Christopher, Resign," The New York Times, Oct. 24, 1993, D-5.

⁵Ibid.

This conflict in foreign policy is not, however, a one-way street dominated by congressional perceptions of the Executive Branch. Contributing to the inherent tension are the perceptions of those within the institutions of the Executive Branch with which they must deal. A tandem avenue of this proposal includes attitudinal research with the primary Executive Branch agencies with whom both House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations routinely interact: the White House Office of Congressional Liaison, the Department of State and its Congressional Liaison Office. Suspicion and resentment continue to characterize the relationship between the two branches. According to an aide to a Foreign Relations Committee member:

Things get pretty tense with the State Department, especially when briefing information is leaked to the press. We'll ask for stuff about ambassador confirmations or embassy operations, and they'll really drag their feet sometimes. That irks us, and it doesn't make things any better between us. It makes us wonder what they're trying to hide.⁶

Hypotheses and Research Questions

This dissertation does not seek to answer the question of what U.S. foreign policy should be in a post-Cold War era. Congress is actively debating this issue. Instead, I use the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee as the primary units of analysis and

⁶Interview, Sep. 21, 1993.

compare their traditional (i.e., Cold War) versus present-day roles. The Cold War had a profound impact on the thinking of the foreign policy committees, such that their operations taken in total today may reflect modern institutions looking for a reason to exist. In other words, can these structures as they presently are serve as an effective check or balance on the Executive Branch and how it pursues foreign policy? I emphasize that this is only a temporary condition that will stabilize once foundations for American foreign policy in a post-Cold War era have been established and agreed upon between the Executive and Legislative Branches.

Hypothesis 1: If a successful presidential candidate sends a negative message about the importance of foreign policy, then he will help to create little desire in both new and established members of Congress to serve on one of the foreign policy committees.

Research question 1: In the wake of a presidential election where voters confirmed that they wanted "a president who would spend more time on domestic policy than he does on foreign policy," why would a freshman representative or senator even want to seek membership on a foreign policy committee at all? Why has committee turnover changed, especially in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, from being the result of new freshmen to a mix of veterans and freshmen?

Hypothesis 2: If there is a low degree of public interest in foreign policy, then freshmen members of Congress will seek to avoid a seat on either the House Foreign Affairs or Senate Foreign Relations Committees.

Research question 2: How do freshmen, as a group, perceive committees whose work is supposedly of little interest to the public, and what cues or resources do they now employ to vote on legislation emanating therefrom?

Hypothesis 3: If we are in a period of unified partisan control of government between the Executive and Legislative Branches, then there will be party unity in foreign policy.

Research question 3: Why has some of the sternest criticism of the president's foreign policy come from members of his own party in the 103rd Congress?

Hypothesis 4: If there is a fundamental change in the international political environment, then the nature of interaction and involvement between the foreign policy committees themselves and with the Executive Branch will also change.

Research question 4: How has the passing of the Cold War affected the operations of the two committees, particularly with respect to the Executive Branch?

Hypothesis 5: If there is a change in the House Foreign Affairs Committee's leadership, then there will be multiple challenges to committee operations, both because of style and context.

Research question 5: How has a change in committee leadership concurrent with the post-Cold War era impacted upon committee recruitment and socialization?

Hypothesis 6: If there is a fundamental change in the international political environment, then staff operations will also change to enhance member responsiveness to current foreign policy dilemmas.

Research question 6: How have foreign policy staff operations changed, and how does this represent a departure from previous studies of congressional staff behavior?

Hypothesis 7: If institutions reflect Cold War thinking and assumptions, then they will not be able to cope with foreign policy realities in a post-Cold War era.

Research question 7: Can the Cold War structure cope with present-day realities? Must this structure be *forced* to work absent the variable that led to its inception? Can it do so? If not, is there a better way?

Literature Review

This dissertation relies upon two distinct bodies of literature: research conducted on congressional committees in general and studies of congressional involvement in foreign policy in particular. Although many of these studies are considered classics in their fields, the context of 1993 has also rendered them outdated. Richard Fenno's

Congressmen in Committees serves as at least one starting point, particularly on member motivation to serve. Writing in 1973, he observed that:

Members of the...Foreign Affairs [Committee] express a set of individual goals different from any thus far discussed. They emphasize a strong personal interest in and a concern for the content of public policy in their committee's subject matter; in short, they want to help make good public policy.⁷

Fenno also added that these legislators:

voice a similar combination of personal interest, prior experience, and policy commitment in explaining their attraction albeit with a somewhat different emphasis. Interest in an important policy area is the dominant theme...Reelection through constituency service [is not] the major attraction...In no case did a Foreign Affairs member of either party give top priority to constituency-related goals.⁸

Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee sought influence within Congress as well as the Executive Branch. This dissertation will examine whether this situation still prevails. For example, there may very well be an acute awareness of constituency service among members of these two committees today, a phenomenon Fenno did *not* attribute to them, calling into question whether his thesis is still valid. Membership on a foreign policy committee may now realize some of the same benefits as domestic committees, as congressmen seek seats because of a specific

⁷Richard Fenno, Congressmen in Committees (Boston: Little, Brown, & Company, 1973), 9.

⁸Ibid., 11-12.

international issue of keen economic interest to their districts or states. A representative from an industrial district may desire to reap the benefits of international trade; a senator from an agricultural state might attempt to bring the value of foreign grain sales.

C. Lawrence Evans chose the Senate as his unit of analysis in Leadership in Committee. He developed a two step model of evaluating committee chairs, but did not include the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in his data collection. This model first addressed four sets of questions:

-What factors shape a chair's scheduling decisions? How do a chair's agenda tactics vary by issue area? And how do scheduling decisions vary across different committee chairs?

-Why do full committee chairs and ranking minority members delegate significant legislative responsibility to subcommittee leaders or other committee members in certain instances but not in others? How and why does the role played by subcommittee leaders vary across different panels?

-What factors shape how the chair and ranking minority members interact? How and why does the pattern of interactions between two full committee leaders vary across different pieces of legislation? How and why does it vary across different committees?

-Why do some chairs and ranking minority members moderate their legislative efforts in committee to facilitate passage on the floor, while others ignore the mood of the full chamber?⁹

He then evaluated chairs and ranking minority members based on their policy preferences, leadership experience,

⁹C. Lawrence Evans, Leadership in Committee (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), 5-6.

and proximate career plans.¹⁰ In this study, I will apply the Evans model to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, but cross-committee comparisons will be applied to conference committee situations with the House of Representatives.

Because of the committees' unique functions, socialization of new members to committee norms and procedures is also of interest, particularly as the committees are in transition to the post-Cold War era, especially in the House Foreign Affairs Committee. As House Foreign Affairs underwent a change of chairmen, did the patterns of interaction and association also change with the replacement of Dante Fascell (D-Fl.) by Lee Hamilton (D-In.)? What is the relationship of the leadership and organizational style of committee chairs to socialization patterns of new and existing members? Chester Rogers argued that within today's Congress there exists an "entrepreneurial culture."¹¹ His focus was on the first three months of a representative's existence within the institution, stating that this period is vital to member success or failure:

In most cases, new members go through what has been called an entry phase in which they are likely to suffer considerable shock as a result of

¹⁰Ibid., 8.

¹¹Chester B. Rogers, "New Member Socialization in the House of Representatives." Congress and the Presidency 19 (Spring 1992): 51.

the difference between their expectations and the reality of the organization they are entering. This early phase is crucial in shaping the entering member's perception of what the organization expects of him. The greater the difference between new member expectations and organizational reality, the more likely the new member is to resist the socialization process and thus reject parts of the organizational culture and possibly even leave the organization.¹²

There are, however, two shortcomings with Rogers' perspective, as they relate to this research. First, his unit of analysis was "the class of 1988 [which] had 33 members, fourteen Democrats and nineteen Republicans. It was the smallest class in recent history."¹³ The class of 1992, as stated earlier, consisted of over 110 new members; the House Foreign Affairs Committee received thirteen freshmen alone. Secondly, Rogers examined socialization of new members to the House as a whole, and not from the perspective of any given committee. Two avenues of inquiry will be pursued here: changes in socialization, if any, as a result of a new chairman and socialization from the perspective of new members of the committee, freshmen or not.

Congressional staff is a controversial topic, both within the literature and for the activities of the foreign policy committees. Roger H. Davidson and Walter J. Oleszek, in Congress and its Members, devote a single 34-page chapter

¹²Ibid., 48.

¹³Ibid., 52.

to the Congressional staff; it gives a broad overview of the staff without a deep investigation into its behavior in practice. A subset of this approach, more statistical in orientation, has been used by Randall Ripley and Grace Franklin in Congress, the Bureaucracy, and Public Policy. This tells us the demographics of the staff, to include race, gender, education, income, background, and previous and subsequent employment histories.

Davidson and Oleszek provide a broad overview of the staff. Differences between personal and committee staffs are highlighted; their costs are discussed, and the authors briefly touch upon the role they play in supplying the members with "new ideas" and how that translates into Congressional agenda setting. The authors address ethical considerations, such as involvement in reelection campaigns, and supply additional information concerning legislative support agencies (the Congressional Research Service, the General Accounting Office, the Office of Technology Assessment, and the Congressional Budget Office).

Their approach is the starting point for a more detailed analysis of staff influence. Michael Malbin's Unelected Representatives provides some statistical analysis of staff characteristics, but its hallmark is the use of case studies and elite interviews to formulate hypotheses and advance conclusions. His method builds upon Davidson and Oleszek, leaving us with a number of explanations

concerning staff growth (viewed from the perspective of the Congressman). According to Malbin, these include: more independence from the Executive Branch and outside interest groups; desire to leave a personal imprint on national issues; devotion of time and resources to gaining credit in the media for bringing new issues to the agenda; and the desire to gain control over an ever-expanding workload.¹⁴ Malbin also tells the reader his primary research question: *is the work of staff members affected by what they want to do after they leave Capitol Hill?*¹⁵

Malbin's conclusions, upon reflection, may not be that surprising. For example, he tells us that staffs look for issues upon which their member can act and subsequently claim credit and achieve reelection. This proactive "issue hunter" is actively recruited for duty on Capitol Hill. The staff member effective in so doing will be identified as a "gate keeper" or someone who has the propensity for "getting the congressman's ear." This should not be startling. The workload and agenda of Congress today is such that staff members *must* exhibit these tendencies to help guarantee some degree of congressional efficiency.

There is also a certain contradiction here as well. Malbin views the broad, original intent of staff as a means

¹⁴Michael Malbin, Unelected Representatives (New York:Basic Books, 1980), 6.

¹⁵Ibid., 19.

of allowing the member to make more productive use of his or her time; by using staff to research and promote those issues that are of interest, that objective is being accomplished.

Malbin shows that committee staffs, like Fenno depicted with the committees they serve, defy generalization. Richard Fenno postulated almost 20 years ago that no two committees are alike, and thus, reforming the committee system as a whole would do no justice to those committees that are perceived to run smoothly and efficiently.¹⁶ Committee staffs that are nonpartisan provide the greatest service to both the institution and to the electorate. Several cases were cited where duty and the pursuit of "nonpartisan" or "bipartisan" information benefitted everyone concerned. When such information is "partisan," or more specifically, when the staff member realizes that the member is already predisposed to viewing a given issue in a certain way, there is the potential for the information-gathering process to be tainted so that the only information presented is that supportive of the member's foregone conclusions.

The degree to which staffs are proactive or reactive may be in part due to the party controlling the respective houses of Congress compared to the party controlling the White House. Changes in the intensity and nature of

¹⁶Fenno, Congressmen in Committees, 289.

interaction between Congress and the Executive Branch is a focal point of this research, especially as control of the Executive Branch passed to a different party within the institutional memory of many of those interviewed. A senior staff member of the House Foreign Relations Committee observed that:

Our relationships with the Clinton Administration are much more harmonious than they have been in the past, simply because he's a Democrat. It's not as confrontational as it was during the Bush or Reagan Administrations. That doesn't mean we bow to every whim coming from the White House, because we have our own voice and our own perspective, too.¹⁷

This points to an observation made by Hoyt Purvis that congressional involvement in American foreign policy "is a legislative as well as an executive matter."¹⁸ He further states that executive-congressional relations may pose problems for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy:

...sometimes it becomes difficult to conduct foreign policy if there is not a single, authoritative voice; there is a potential gap between executive commitments to foreign governments and the approval by Congress necessary to carry out those commitments; and there is a tendency for Congress to write into law matters that elsewhere are left to the discretion of the executive. Co-determination in foreign policy has its advantages, but few would deny that it complicates the making of foreign policy.¹⁹

Purvis uses an issue-based approach to examining

¹⁷Interview, Sep. 15, 1993.

¹⁸Hoyt Purvis, Legislating Foreign Policy (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), 11.

¹⁹Ibid., 12.

executive-congressional relations in the foreign policy arena. Robert A. Dahl, however, posed three questions concerning the role of parties in foreign policy:

First, is party government desirable in the case of foreign policy? Second, even if one assumes its desirability, is it possible, given the great diversity of views on foreign policy *within* the existing parties? Third, what practical steps may one suggest to achieve it?²⁰

Dahl suggested that partisanship, bipartisanship and foreign policy should "best be looked upon as a series of concentric circles."²¹ Bipartisan support of a presidential administration was nearly unanimous within House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations in the reporting of legislation to the floors. Once outside that sphere, however, unanimity began to break down.²² He described a party government approach to foreign policy as "undesirable" because of the danger, as he argued earlier, of a "synthetic unanimity" based solely along party lines. Such cohesion "may lull leadership into false expectations" because it "does not reflect the actual distribution of attitudes among the population." It would also "repress inter-party debate and therefore adequate discussion of

²⁰Robert A. Dahl, Congress and Foreign Policy (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company; reprint, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1950), 187 (page references are to reprint edition). Emphasis in the original.

²¹Ibid., 231.

²²Ibid.

minority claims."²³

Regarding the second and third questions, Dahl contended that while there is, technically, nothing to prevent parties from organizing themselves "to provide much more responsibility toward the electorate on questions of foreign policy,"²⁴ the very nature of the arena is such that internally unified outlooks on domestic considerations are no guarantee that harmony is possible on a foreign agenda.²⁵ Congress, particularly the House, is in the midst of a long-standing project to establish legitimacy and viability in the foreign policy domain. This contention for dominance has its roots, according to Charles W. Whalen Jr., in the Vietnam War and the growing distrust of the Executive Branch. "This institutional self-analysis," he writes, "was made all the more urgent by the growing congressional mistrust of the executive. Bluntly stated, many legislators no longer could believe the president and his staff."²⁶

Hanna Pitkin identified a number of tensions in representation. A "mirror" model looks not at the degree to which a representative may speak for or serve his district, but rather concentrates on the entire representative body to

²³Ibid., 234-35.

²⁴Ibid., 197.

²⁵Ibid., 195-197.

²⁶Charles W. Whalen, Jr., The House and Foreign Policy (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 17.

determine the degree to which its makeup represents the country as a whole.²⁷ From a theoretical perspective, nothing prevents the legislature from incorporating symbolism to the extent that the legislative body "stands for" the population in its totality. This is Pitkin's "frame of mind" model.²⁸ She also stated that "The more a theorist stresses the national interest, the welfare of the nation as a whole, the more he will object to binding the representative closely to his constituent demands."²⁹ While this question is directed to representation theorists, it should also be asked of the representatives themselves. This concept of "national interest" is incorporated in the interviews of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee personnel, in part to validate the phenomenon that Lee Hamilton previously described. Of principal concern is whether these committee members view their service in terms of Edmund Burke's "trustee" role, John Stuart Mill's "agent" role, or a combination of the two.

The literature does not address organizational problems and questions that arise when the context of committee behavior changes. Specifically, those actions that should

²⁷Hanna Pitkin, Representation (New York: Atherton Press, 1969), 11.

²⁸Ibid., 20.

²⁹Ibid.

take place to make the organization more responsive to the international climate are not addressed. The nature of committee leadership styles should change, even if the leaders themselves do not change, simply because the framework for committee behavior has undergone a radical alteration. Likewise, committee structures, to include staffs, may be inadequate to confront a new international scene if the hierarchy maintains an institutional perspective reminiscent of bygone exigencies. Why this congressional "perestroika" has not occurred is at the heart of the hypotheses and research questions to be explored in this dissertation.

Methodology

I employed two research strategies to study the problem. The locus of the dissertation concentrated on elite interviewing. This entailed open-ended questioning of representatives, senators, personal staff, committee staff, and members of the Executive Branch who routinely interacted with the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees. Many members of Congress in both chambers have a standing policy of not granting interviews to those conducting academic research. This prohibition extends to their staffs. For the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, six of its 19 members and their staffs refused

participation. For the House Foreign Affairs Committee, ten of its 45 members and their staffs refused participation. I conducted interviews using one of three methods: face-to-face, telephonic, and written questionnaire. All members of both committees were contacted twice requesting assistance. These requests were for appointments in their congressional offices in the House and Senate office buildings. Where, because of scheduling conflicts, face-to-face interviews were not possible, members requested questionnaires for themselves or their staff assistants. If I received no response after four to six weeks, I sent a follow-up reminder to the staff assistant. Time constraints played heavily on the staff as well, and for those who did not have the time to complete questionnaires in writing, I conducted telephonic interviews. Using this approach, I interviewed 55 personal and professional committee staff assistants in both chambers of Congress.

These committees do not operate within a vacuum. The Executive Office of the President, the National Security Council, and the Departments of State and Defense have dedicated congressional liaison staffs who are also wrestling with the same strategic premise questions as the foreign policy committees. These specific liaison staffs will have at least one person dedicated to interfacing with the House of Representatives and one person dedicated to interfacing with the Senate. The lone exception is the

Executive Office of the President, which has one person performing foreign policy liaison for all of Congress. Getting face-to-face interviews with Executive Branch legislative liaison officials was much easier than with Congress. Using the same interview methodology for the Executive Branch as I used with Congress, I questioned 15 people responsible for legislative liaison in the EOP, NSC, and Departments of State and Defense.

Answers were coded to determine points of convergence as well as divergence, on such areas as personal background, motivation for committee or agency service, socialization to a new institution, selection of staff members, constituency benefit, perceptions of Executive Branch counterparts or vice versa, the degree to which other committee memberships enhance or inhibit membership on the foreign policy committees, definition of the national interest, and personal perceptions of the most critical issues facing the committee or agency.

A specific study of the respective staffs of House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations was a part of this project. I employed a two-pronged approach. Each committee has its own staff, with majority and minority party representation. Additionally, members usually have a personal staff member dedicated specifically to researching foreign policy issues. The exception is with those who are chairmen of committees and subcommittees. In these

instances, the committee or subcommittee staff serves also as personal staff for the member for foreign policy issues.

In addition to perspectives gleaned from the majority and minority staff directors, I interviewed personal and committee staff members for personal and committee philosophies regarding work dedicated to foreign policy. I anticipated that both staffs will be close to the variant Fenno described as nonpartisan, but that each would be both proactive in researching various issues that may be of interest to members as well as reactive to member sensitivity.

Document analysis supplemented interviews. This included committee hearings from the 102nd Congress (1991-93) and 103rd Congress (1993-95). I chose this as the frame of reference because it represented the transition from a Cold War to post-Cold War mentality. These two congresses also provided an excellent venue to compare leadership styles between the House Foreign Affairs Committee chair in the 102nd Congress (Dante Fascell) and his successor in the 103rd Congress (Lee Hamilton). Specific attention was paid to changes in leadership style as they relate not only to the person, but to the times in which the leadership took place. The Congressional Record, while a source for transcripts of debate on the substantive tenets of current foreign policy, gives no clue as to the reasoning behind the evolution of subcommittee structure within either the House

Foreign Affairs Committee or Senate Foreign Relations Committee. According to staff aides serving on both committees, neither Congress nor the committees keep such records. Both committees do, however, publish rules that establish the subcommittees and their operating premises, if any apply.

To facilitate access to potential respondents and to encourage them to speak freely, I offered confidentiality. Patterns emerged. Members of Congress generally, but not always, spoke "on the record"; committee and personal staff members generally did not. Members generally went "off the record," however, if their statements could be interpreted as unflattering to other representatives or senators or if those statements reflected on the political attentiveness of constituents in states or districts.

Interviews began with a series of standard open-ended questions that allowed respondents to proceed in a variety of directions, thereby encouraging probing. Interviews were scheduled for 15-30 minutes but routinely lasted an hour, and in some cases almost two hours. Appendix 1 details questions asked of members of Congress on one of the foreign policy committees, tailored for the members' unique committee and subcommittee memberships. This specific questionnaire, for example, was administered to Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, the representative from American Samoa. Appendix 2 lists questions for committee and personal staff.

The influx of new freshmen in the House allowed for an additional research question to be pursued directly related to the theme of the 1992 presidential election. Specific comparisons, from the questionnaire at Appendix 3, were made to non-members' (of the two committees) characterization of the term "national interest" vis-a-vis that of members, with particular emphasis given to any party peculiarities that arose with the concept. All members of the committees under consideration have employed the phrase at one time or another, but no attempt has been made to ascribe the meaning that the members may bring to that connotation.

Appendix 4 details questions asked of Executive Branch units to elicit their perceptions of a resurgent Congress. No longer is foreign policy the sole province of the Executive; the question being pursued here is how agencies under control of the Executive have responded to an assertive Congress, the degree to which tensions have deepened due to that contentiousness, and the impact that this combination may have on the overall conduct and development of U.S. foreign policy.

The Executive approach to foreign policy in the Clinton Administration has been characterized as a "troika" consisting of the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and the National Security Advisor and the institutions they represent. This study, while examining the role differences in institutional structure and attitude variance play in

U.S. foreign policy, intentionally excluded the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, select committees on intelligence, the Defense Department, and the National Security Council from its scope, except in those areas where the jurisdictions of House Foreign Affairs or Senate Foreign Relations may extend into their operations.

CHAPTER 2
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Framework for Chapters 2 and 3

Both this chapter and Chapter 3 (The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations) follow the same organization. The 94th Congress (1975-77) serves as the starting point for comparison and evaluation with the 103rd Congress, as the 1974 election produced congressional turnover rivalling that of 1992's election.

Three criteria form the basis for evaluation: the committees' operating premise (as well as those particular to any subcommittees), subcommittee structure (evaluated through subcommittee names and jurisdictions), and committee turnover in each succeeding Congress. The fallout from the 1992 general election had a double impact on the foreign policy committees: the first arose from new members, the second was a result of the policy climate.

The House Committee on Foreign Affairs witnessed almost 50% turnover when the 103rd Congress convened in January 1993. The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in that same Congress had over 25% of its senators as first-time members. Both had become accustomed to operating in the

climate of divided government. Only two Congresses, the 95th (1977-79) and 96th (1979-81) were unified in simultaneous party control of both houses of Congress and the Executive Branch. For the first time in 12 years, the Democrats again controlled both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue.

These chapters then explore the attitudes and perspectives of both members of long-standing as well as newer members towards their foreign policy committee assignments, balanced by their service on other committees and viewpoints of the Executive Branch specifically as they relate to foreign policy. At issue is the degree to which the end of the Cold War as well as a change in party control of the White House have altered members' expectations concerning foreign policy development and articulation.

Organizational Overview: 1975-1993

The primary problem confronting the House Foreign Affairs Committee since 1974, and particularly since the end of the Cold War, has been the establishment and maintenance of its identity. In addition to continuing shifts in jurisdiction, committee size, and subcommittee jurisdiction, the committee has also undergone a change in its very name. In 1975, as in 1995, the committee title was formally changed from the Committee on Foreign Affairs to the Committee on International Relations. This shift lasted but

two congresses, as by 1979 it had reverted back to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

The 1975 switch brought more than a cosmetic change to the committee. During the previous Congress, the Committee on Foreign Affairs had a primarily geographic focus to its subcommittee structure. These subcommittees included Africa; Asian and Pacific Affairs; Europe; Inter-American Affairs; Near East and South Asia; Foreign Economic Policy; International Organizations and Movements; National Security Policy and International Developments; State Department Organization and Foreign Operations; and the Review of Foreign Aid Programs. This last was considered a "special subcommittee."

The 94th Congress, commencing in 1975, saw the now-Committee on International Relations take an issues- or thematic-based approach to its subcommittees. Instead of a geographic dominant component, now the subcommittees were: International Economic Policy; International Operations; International Organizations; International Political and Military Affairs; International Resources, Food and Energy; International Security and Scientific Affairs; International Trade and Commerce; Oversight; Future Foreign Policy Research and Development; and Investigations. These last two received the designation of "special subcommittee," the latter chaired by Lee Hamilton, later the overall chairman of the Committee on Foreign

Affairs 1993-1995.

When the Committee on International Relations returned to its former title of Committee on Foreign Affairs in the 97th Congress (1979-81), the geographic element also reappeared, but in a slightly scaled-back variant. Recall that in the earlier days of a Committee on Foreign Affairs (e.g., the 93rd Congress), the ten subcommittees included five devoted strictly to regional or geographic matters. Upon the "return" of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in 1979, the membership had decreased from 40 to 34 members and there were two fewer subcommittees. These were: Africa; Asian and Pacific Affairs; Europe and the Middle East; Inter-American Affairs; Economic Policy and Trade; International Operations; International Organizations; and International Security and Scientific Affairs. Three of the subcommittees were exactly the same; the remaining subcommittees represented a merging or expansion of those existent at the close of the 93rd Congress.

What explains such a shift? The Committee on Foreign Affairs has never kept records of its initial organizational meetings.¹ The changes manifest in the 94th Congress stemmed largely from the turnover that Congress as a whole experienced in the 1974 elections, which were in turn the result of large public dissatisfaction with the Nixon

¹Confidential interview with staff assistant, April 1995.

Administration and Watergate. One plausible explanation is that Cold War considerations may have played into committee and subcommittee reorganization, but they were clearly secondary to domestic political considerations in the November elections. Whatever motivated voters to invest even greater control by the Democratic Party in the House of Representatives certainly had an impact on the Foreign Affairs Committee's structure, organization and membership.

The committee's priorities changed as well. Priorities may be discerned from either the subcommittee structure from Congress to Congress, or they may be gleaned from the committee's "operating premise." The operating premise is the committee's mission statement or statement of purpose, and sets the framework for a committee's agenda during the two sessions of a Congress. It specifies the authorized committee membership as well as the committee's jurisdiction and what general issues will be considered by the committee in the course of its normal operations. This is common to both chambers of Congress and to all committees.

Subcommittees may or may not have an operating premise.

The Committee on Foreign Affairs in the 93rd Congress specified 12 priorities:

- (1) Relations of the United States with foreign nations generally,
- (2) Establishment of boundary lines between the United States and foreign nations,
- (3) Protection of American Citizens abroad and expatriation,
- (4) Neutrality,
- (5) International conferences and congresses,
- (6) The American National Red Cross,
- (7) Intervention abroad and declaration of war,
- (8) Measures

relating to the diplomatic service, (9) Acquisition of land and buildings for embassies and legations in foreign countries, (10) Measures to foster commercial intercourse with foreign nations and to safeguard American business interests abroad, (11) United Nations Organization and international financial and monetary organizations, (12) Foreign Loans.²

Although the 94th Congress witnessed a significant influx of freshmen, the "Committee on International Relations," as it was then called, saw its sum membership drop by three, from 40 to 37 members. The proportional partisan composition changed substantially. Whereas the "Committee on Foreign Affairs" in the 93rd Congress had 22 Democrats and 18 Republicans, the new "Committee on International Relations" had 25 Democrats (a net gain of three) and 12 Republicans (a net loss of six). The committee's "mission statement" broadened as well. It read:

(1) Relations of the United States with foreign nations generally, (2) Acquisition of land and buildings for embassies and legations in foreign countries, (3) Establishment of boundary lines between the United States and foreign nations, (4) Foreign loans, (5) International conferences and congresses, (6) Intervention abroad and declarations of war, (7) Measures relating to the diplomatic service, (8) Measures to foster commercial intercourse with foreign nations and to safeguard American business interests abroad, (9) Neutrality, (10) Protection of American citizens abroad and expatriation, (11) The American National Red Cross, (12) United Nations Organizations, (13) Measures relating to international economic policy, (14) Export controls, (15) International commodity agreements (other than those involving sugar), (16) Trading with the enemy, (17) International education. In addition to its legislative jurisdiction under the

²Congressional Staff Directory, 1975, 326.

preceding provisions of this paragraph, the committee shall have the special oversight functions provided for in clause 3 (d) with respect to customs administration, intelligence activities relating to foreign policy, international financial and monetary organizations, and international fishing agreements.³

However, the committee changes were not as dramatic as they may appear at first glance. The new dynamic introduced by this committee, as evidenced by its purpose statement above, was trade. While the old Committee on Foreign Affairs did, in fact, have trade among its goals (i.e. "measures to foster commercial intercourse with foreign nations and to safeguard American business interests abroad"), the Committee on International Relations went farther and was much more specific as to what trade objectives it would pursue, coupled with the rubric of "International education." By the time the "Committee on International Relations" reverted to the "Committee on Foreign Affairs" in 1979, its purpose statement had remained unchanged with the lone exception of committee size. In the 97th Congress, the Committee on Foreign Affairs consisted of 34 members (an overall drop of 3), with 22 Democratic and 12 Republican members.

If the committee's purpose statement is the measure of continuity and predictability in committee operations, then the change imparted by the 94th Congress on the scope of the

³Congressional Staff Directory, 1975, 338.

Foreign Affairs/International Relations Committee can be classified as a constant. With, again, the exception of authorized committee membership, the purpose statement remained unchanged throughout the 1980s and into the 102nd Congress (1991-93). How the committee organized itself, through its subcommittee hierarchy, was not constant. It was not until 99th-100th Congresses that there was a perfect match between both subcommittee titles and jurisdictions. Until that time, at least one subcommittee in each succeeding Congress had changed its name and at least part of its area of responsibility. These remained in effect through the 102nd Congress.

If a change to the fundamental assumption of U.S. foreign policy was to have any impact on Congress and its foreign affairs structures, those changes would first appear in the 103rd Congress (1993-95). The start of the 102nd Congress (1991-93) coincided with the end of the Cold War, even though the Cold War and the U.S. policy of containment were in their final days. Once congressional committees establish their organization at the outset of a Congress, that structure and jurisdiction remain in effect through both sessions of Congress. When the congressional leadership decided on committee structure and jurisdiction in November-December 1990, classic Cold War realities (the Soviet Union, the Warsaw Pact, and containment) still faced congressional decision makers.

We would expect no change in the scope, jurisdiction, or subcommittee structure of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs if the Cold War had no impact at all on the congressional structure to contribute to foreign policy. The 1992 election saw a tremendous amount of change in overall congressional membership, but new members by themselves cannot explain a structural change. There must be some additional variable, such as the domestic climate or a change in the political environment, to produce the change.

Organization in the 103rd Congress

The 103rd Congress changed the structure of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, but on a broad perspective, the changes could be perceived as minor. Therefore, for the most part, the new post-Cold War reality was being confronted in the House with a committee and subcommittee structure rooted in the early- to mid-1980s.

The Foreign Affairs Committee's organizational statement remained intact from the 102nd Congress. However, the committee left subcommittee organization in place while changing subcommittee orientation.

Most importantly, subcommittees were now classified as "regional" or "functional," and a specific jurisdiction was articulated for each. Regional subcommittees had as their

jurisdiction:

The annual legislative programs of foreign assistance for each region shall be referred to the appropriate subcommittee for review and legislative recommendations, within a time frame to be set by the Committee. Those subcommittees shall be responsible for ongoing oversight of all foreign assistance activities affecting their region. Those subcommittees shall have the responsibility of annually reporting to the full committee, on a timely basis, the findings and conclusions of their oversight, including specific recommendations for legislation relating to foreign assistance. In addition they shall have jurisdiction over: Matters affecting the political relations between the United States and other countries and regions, including resolutions or other legislative measures directed to such relations; legislation with respect to disaster assistance outside the Foreign Assistance Act, boundary issues, and international claims; legislation with respect to region- or country-specific loans or other financial relations outside the Foreign Assistance Act; resolutions of disapproval under section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act, with respect to foreign military sales; oversight of regional lending institutions; identification and development of options for meeting future problems and issues relating to U.S. interests in the region; environmental, population, and energy affairs affecting the region; base rights and other facilities access agreements and regional security pacts; oversight of matters relating to parliamentary conferences and exchanges involving the region; concurrent oversight jurisdiction with respect to matters assigned to the functional subcommittees insofar as they may affect the region.⁴

This was a marked departure for the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Previously, only those subcommittees that the House now called "functional" had a specific mission statement to guide their efforts. The change was concurrent with Lee Hamilton's chairmanship of the Foreign

⁴1993 Congressional Staff Directory, 714-15.

Affairs Committee following the retirement of Dante Fascell.⁵

Functional subcommittees in the 103rd Congress retained their purpose statements, but instead of four there were now three. Prior to 1993, the "functional" subcommittees included: Arms Control, International Security and Science; Human Rights and International Organizations; International Economic Policy and Trade; and International Operations. Under new leadership, the functional subcommittees became: Economic Policy, Trade and Environment; International Operations; and International Security, International Organizations and Human Rights.

No change was made to the operating premise of the International Operations subcommittee. The functions of the Arms Control, International Security and Science subcommittee from the 102nd Congress were consolidated, along with the purposes of the old Human Rights and International Organizations subcommittee, into the Subcommittee on International Security, International Organizations and Human Rights.

The new Subcommittee on Economic Policy, Trade and Environment expanded the purview of its predecessor, the Subcommittee on International Economic Policy and Trade. The obviously new dynamic is environmental concerns. Upon closer look, the jurisdictional statements of the new

⁵Fascell was the committee chair 1985-93.

subcommittee and its predecessor are almost the same, with the following additions:

...licenses and licensing policy for the export of dual use equipment and technology;...international environmental policy and oversight of international fishing agreements.⁶

These changes did not affect the operations of the committee as a whole to any appreciable degree. If anything, the operations of the House Foreign Affairs Committee became more disjointed than in previous Congresses. There were at least two sources of this tension. One lay on the fact that, while there is universal agreement that no one is quite sure what foreign policy should be in the post-Cold War era, no one on the House Foreign Affairs Committee advanced at least an idea that could form the substance for future debate or organization. The other lay in the treatment extended to the committee by the Clinton Administration.

The perception of the committee and its staff was that the Bush Administration had frequent interaction with both the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees. Partisan realities dictated this. Confronted with divided government, the only way Bush could ensure that he had congressional support for his foreign policy objectives was to send such delegates as Secretary of State James Baker, Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney, and

⁶1993 Congressional Staff Directory, 716.

National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft to Congress regularly (as often as once per week) to testify on pressing issues that either needed or could need congressional support in the near- or long-term future.

When the foreign policy consequences of the 1992 presidential election were realized in January 1993 (marking the beginning of "unified" government), an expectation developed within the Foreign Affairs Committee that an even more symbiotic relationship would arise on foreign policy matters between Congress and the President. However, operational realities soon dashed the air of optimistic anticipations.

Instead of a unified congressional-presidential approach to international relations, the perception within the Foreign Affairs Committee was that the administration had taken the support of the committee for granted and assumed that all of the president's foreign policy initiatives would enjoy automatic support throughout the Legislative Branch, simply because of like party loyalty.⁷ The frequent consultation that characterized the Bush Administration's relations with *both* chambers of Congress were a thing of the past.

Even if there was heated disagreement between President Bush and the Democratic leadership of both houses of

⁷Interview with senior staff members of the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees.

Congress, testimony and consultation nonetheless routinely occurred. During the outset of the Clinton Administration, it appeared to the members of the Foreign Affairs Committee that the new president did not feel obligated to brief them in the manner that President Bush had. This ultimately became a source of resentment toward President Clinton on the part of Democrats on the Foreign Affairs Committee.⁸

Commented one Foreign Affairs Committee official:

We really got spoiled during the Bush Administration, and you have to remember that I'm a Democrat saying that. He'd have someone down here every week, because he was so concerned about foreign policy, even if we didn't always agree with him. You's see Cheney, Baker, Scowcroft or someone testifying before some committee because he really wanted, and I think needed, our backing. [The Clinton] Administration didn't do that. They automatically assumed that we'd fall in line behind them just because we're all Democrats down here, and so it looked like to us that he'd go off half-cocked somewhere and expect us to support him. He had a tough time learning that we want to be kept informed on what he wants to do, and if he really wants to do it, he has to keep us informed. If you ask me, I don't think he's fully learned that yet.⁹

Contributing to this disharmony was the manner in which prospective members of the committee were recruited. When new members arrive to Congress, they typically list "A" and "B" committees on which they are interested in serving. This preference statement is, in no way, contractual. Party leaders are not only sensitive to member preferences, but

⁸Interviews with members of the committee.

⁹Confidential interview, Sept. 1993.

they are also concerned about maintaining their party's presence and balance on the committees. New members may not get all of their desired committee seats. In fact, they may get something for which they hadn't bargained. When presented a committee assignment they did not want, such as a Foreign Affairs Committee assignment, new members had no choice but to try to turn this perceived "negative" into a professional and constituent "positive." House leaders did not necessarily perform "background checks" for concurrence with committee assignment desires, although they did take some consideration of new members' educational and professional experiences when making committee assignments. Against all this, the Speaker and House Minority Leader also had to stabilize their selections against regional balance for committee assignments.

Other Sources of Tension

After elections with such a great influx of freshmen, as was the 1992 election, the leadership of each party conducted three regional conferences to solicit member preferences for committee assignments. Within the House of Representatives, the Foreign Affairs Committee is classified a "B" committee assignment, meaning it is of secondary importance in the work of the chamber as a whole. Members selected "A" (or primary importance) and "B" committee

assignment desires at these conferences, with their assignments delivered to them at the conferences' end. The chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee did not participate in the formal selection process, but he later negated the assignment of particular members made by the party leadership during these conferences.¹⁰

House respondents not on the Foreign Affairs Committee generally did not seek membership because of its association with issues of foreign aid. Underlying this tendency, however, is that nonmember respondents also expressed a general, but not total, lack of interest in foreign affairs. Not all members who sought a seat on the committee, however, were granted one. For example, David Mann (D-Ohio) desired a seat on the Foreign Affairs Committee, but was denied and granted a seat on the House Armed Services Committee instead.¹¹

The membership of the House Foreign Affairs Committee in the 103rd Congress represents an unusual *geographic* balance, but it also represents a *proportional* balance relative to the size of state delegations in the House of Representatives as a whole. On a state-by-state basis, the greatest number of representatives come from the states of New York, New Jersey, Florida, and California. These are also large coastal states; the next largest delegations

¹⁰Interview with Lee Hamilton, Jan. 1994.

¹¹Interview.

were from inland states with access to the Great Lakes via the Saint Lawrence Seaway (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois). Table 3 (page 52) details state "delegations" within the Foreign Affairs Committee.

An additional influence at work within the Foreign Affairs Committee is that members, particularly the newer ones, view service there as a way to further pursue specialized interests for their constituents. Although the tone adopted by the 1992 general election trivialized, to an extent, foreign policy as a presidential issue, constituents are not wholly displeased with the foreign policy "ball of wax." For example, new members seek to advance constituency interests by service on the Foreign Affairs Committee concentrating on: Israel, if there is a large Jewish population within the district;¹² immigration legislation in those states with immigration concerns (particularly illegal immigration); or, matters regarding Haiti or U.S. foreign policy in Africa if the representative a large black constituency.¹³

Local industrial concerns also figured in decisions to seek a seat on the committee. Eric Fingerhut (D-Ohio) claimed representation of a large industrial base within his district and believed that he could further constituency

¹²Interview with staff assistant to David Levy (R-NY).

¹³Interview with staff assistant to Donald M. Payne (D-N.J.).

Table 3 - Foreign Affairs Committee State Delegations

<u>State</u>	<u>Members (Dem.)</u>	<u>Members (Rep.)</u>	<u>Total</u>
American Samoa	1	0	1
California	4	3	7
Connecticut	1	0	1
Florida	3	2	5
Georgia	1	0	1
Illinois	1	2	3
Indiana	2	1	3
Iowa	0	1	1
Kansas	0	1	1
Maine	0	1	1
Maryland	1	0	1
Minnesota	1	0	1
North Carolina	0	1	1
Nebraska	0	1	1
New Jersey	4	1	5
New York	3	2	5
Ohio	3	0	3
Pennsylvania	1	1	2
Washington	1	0	1
Wisconsin	0	1	1

interests through increasing exports from factories located in Northeastern Ohio.¹⁴ Fingerhut identified an interest within his district that was repeated in interviews with other committee members. One or two international issues consistently spark the passions of constituents, he said, even if there is a general lack of concern with foreign policy as a whole. These one or two issues will vary from district to district and from state to state. In Fingerhut's district, it was job creation relating to increased exports. He voted against the North American Free Trade Agreement, however, and was defeated in the November 1994 elections.

Similarities exist between personal and committee staff recruitment. In the case of personal staff, members typically bring those of long personal standing with them to serve as foreign policy advisors.¹⁵ The committee staff draws its ranks from former members of personal staffs, those who had previous service in the Executive Branch, close associates, and those who, through their own initiative, submit resumes for consideration by the Majority and Minority Chiefs of Staff. In this last case, resumes come in at a rate of about ten a month and are kept on file

¹⁴Interview.

¹⁵Confirmed through interviews with both members and personal staff assistants.

and periodically reviewed for 12 months thereafter.¹⁶ Professional vacancies usually require a high degree of specialization from prospective candidates, for example a thorough knowledge of Middle East politics and how U.S. agricultural exports can further foreign policy objectives in the region.¹⁷

Based on backgrounds and motivations, a potential tension exists between the members of the Foreign Affairs Committee, its committee and subcommittee staffs, and their personal staffs. Members may have a high degree of interest in foreign affairs, but little or no specialized education or training. The professional staff members and directors of the committees and subcommittees have extensive specialized education, but may have to suppress that expertise based on the personal desires of the members. The personal staff, even though each respondent claimed a high degree of interaction with the committee staff, must balance their activities between personal loyalty to the member and the goals of the committee as a whole.

Tension exists within the committee at a different level as well, specifically over the goals of foreign policy and the conceptual tools employed to specify the means. All members of the committee, like virtually every member of Congress, have at one time or another, used the phrase

¹⁶Interview with senior committee staff members.

¹⁷Interview with senior committee staff member.

"national interest(s)" on the floor of their chambers. With all respondents save one (the exception being the committee chair, Lee Hamilton), neither members nor staff could readily and inherently define the national interest nor the criteria used to reach such a definition.

This is critical to understanding the disorganization that is sometimes evident within the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Foreign policy is a means by which nations pursue their national interests. Resulting policies should therefore satisfy the articulation of these interests. Members and staff were each asked for a definition or conceptualization of the "national interest." As the members routinely invoke pursuit of the national interest to support or reject the pursuit of foreign policy, they should concurrently have ideas as to what criteria or concepts constitute national interests, otherwise there would be no sound foundation in invoking the principle. Do they, in other words, know what they mean when they say it? In virtually every case, respondents were silent for as long as one minute before answering this question and any clarifying probes. When they finally ventured an answer, there were no similarities either by constituency or by party. In essence, the House Foreign Affairs Committee represented at least 47 different ideas of the "national interest." Those conceptions experienced an exponential growth when the same question was posed to the personal and committee staff.

By illustration, some defined the "national interest"

as:

We don't really believe there is a "national interest, per se. We look at it instead as a "humanitarian interest." In other words, whether it's something good for humanity, and not just for the United States.¹⁸

The "national interest involves issues that directly impact on: the protection and safety of America and its possessions; the promotion of global security necessary for stability in the international marketplace upon which U.S. exports increasingly rely; and, the support of countries that believe in democratic government and free market economies.¹⁹

Answer the following questions: (1) Does it have an impact on the U.S. economy: (2) Does it have an impact on U.S. social conditions? and (3) Does it affect U.S. strategic interest and policy goals?²⁰

Security...military and economic security. The well being of our citizens.²¹

The goals of the country and its contribution defined by trade, economic health, some sense of what is or is not good. It's like a water bed - it ebbs or flows. I don't know. It a useful term to argue that we support what we ought to do.²²

It's like pornography. It's impossible to say what it is but I know it when I see it.²³

¹⁸Donald Payne, Jan. 1995.

¹⁹Written response from a staff aide to a Democratic member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Mar. 1995.

²⁰Written response from a staff aide to a Democratic member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Apr. 1995.

²¹David Levy, Nov. 1994.

²²David Mann, Dec. 1993.

²³Steve Chabot, Jan. 1995.

As was the case in pondering the course of U.S. foreign policy in a post-Cold War era, no effort has been made to orient the committee on an idea of "national interest" that could at least guide its work. The best time to do this would be at the outset of each Congress, but socialization to the committee and its norms and procedures occurs only during those times when the committee decides upon its general rules, a procedure which takes place but once every two years. Even then, it is a relatively straightforward procedure; new members are expected to immediately begin work on their committee and subcommittee assignments.²⁴

The rules of the Foreign Affairs Committee do not provide much basis for socialization. In addition to specifying the name, number, and jurisdiction of the subcommittees, rules for Foreign Affairs also state the frequency of meetings and other organizational rules and procedures. The committee is required to convene as such only once per month (specifically, "the first Tuesday...when the House is in session pursuant to Clause 2(b) of Rule XI of the House"²⁵) or when "called by the Chairman as he may deem necessary or at the request of a majority of the Members of the Committee..."²⁶ In the case of the former,

²⁴Interview with Lee Hamilton, Jan. 1994.

²⁵Rules of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Jan. 6, 1993, 1.

²⁶Ibid.

the "regularly scheduled meeting" may be considered as optional; if no business needs the action of the committee, the meeting will not be called.

With all but the most senior members of the committee, concepts of representation and service within the House of Representatives also contribute to intra-committee tension and conflict. Members were asked whether they viewed their service on the Foreign Affairs Committee in isolation from their membership on other committees, or whether they considered their overall service a "package deal" of interrelated committee assignments. Most members at least claimed the "bundle perspective;" senior members, however, distanced themselves from this outlook even if they had held it in their earlier years of service. Upon probing, the fruits provided by seniority, coupled with the impact they could have on the direction of the committee's efforts, led to this change in senior members' perspectives.

All members agreed that service on the House Foreign Affairs Committee was decidedly a negative for the majority of constituents within their districts. In this regard the committee has both a positive and negative appeal to its members. While they claim to derive a great deal of personal satisfaction from their service therein, they also realize that it is a dubious position in the minds of a majority of their constituents. The members therefore feel obligated to increase the number of trips they make back to

their districts throughout the course of a given year. In the words of one committee member:

The people back home tend to get suspicious when you're on the Foreign Affairs Committee. They like to think that the committee is somehow a 'giveaway' committee, sending our money to other countries. I have to go back home every weekend just to remind them that they are my first loyalty.²⁷

To balance this perception within the district, members tend to have seats on other committees that provide the opportunity for more tangible payoff to their electoral constituencies. In the 103rd Congress, members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee took other committee assignments in the House as shown in Table 4 (page 60).

Note that, in the 103rd Congress, no member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee sat on either the Appropriations or Ways and Means Committees. Respondents within the Executive Branch tended to downplay the significance of the House Foreign Affairs Committee in the foreign policy process, observing that, specifically within the House, the most significant foreign policy influence from their perspective was the roles of the Appropriations and Ways and Means Committees.²⁸ If the members' responses to motivations for service on the Foreign Affairs Committee are genuine, then from at least the perspective of the

²⁷Interview with Rep. Lee Hamilton.

²⁸Interviews with National Security Council official, Dec. 1993; Department of State officials, Sept. 1993 and Nov. 1994. Also, see Chapter 6, "The Executive Branch."

Table 4 - Members' Service on Other House Committees

<u>Committee</u>	<u>HFAC Members</u>
Agriculture	1
Armed Services	1
Banking, Finance, & Urban Affairs	7
Budget	3
District of Columbia	2
Education & Labor	10
Energy & Commerce	1
Government Operations	4
House Administration	1
Joint Economic Committee	1
Judiciary	5
Merchant Marine & Fisheries	5
Natural Resources	3
Post Office & Civil Service	8
Public Works & Transportation	5
Select Committee on Intelligence	2
Small Business	2
Space, Science, & Technology	4
Standards on Official Conduct	2
Veterans Affairs	3

Executive Branch, Foreign Affairs members are serving on the wrong committee.

The high number of Foreign Affairs Committee members on a committee such as Education and Labor is explained by the "constituencies" of each committee. Members universally agreed that an assignment to the Foreign Affairs Committee is one that must be constantly explained and justified to constituents, even if there are a narrow, but critical, range of foreign policy issues that play to the interests of congressional districts. It is *constituent perceptions* that serve as at least some motivation for members to seek service on other committees that appear to be more directly concerned with the well-being of the members' electors. Foreign Affairs Committee representatives reported that their district supporters viewed that committee assignment suspiciously, so much so that those members representing districts in the eastern half of the United States try to return to their regions each weekend to remind voters that their congressmen are still "in touch." Another method to offset this negative is through service on a committee with a perception of more directly addressing state and district concerns, such as Education and Labor. In the words of one member:

I like foreign policy. Most people in my district don't have a clue about it. They just believe that if I'm on this committee, I must somehow be giving money away to some foreign government. That's not really the case. About 80% of foreign aid is spent right here in the United States.

I've got to balance this assignment with something else, something more tangible to my people, something that really shows them that I'm thinking about them.²⁹

Not all members share that view:

Look, the best advice that was ever given me before I started this job, and let me tell you that everyone has advice, is to seek out committee assignments in those areas that really interest you, and don't worry about "sending signals" to your district. If you're going to make a real contribution here, you've got to do it in something you like and something that interests you, otherwise you'll be bored with it or hate it.³⁰

Two other factors inhibit the ability of the House, and specifically the Foreign Affairs Committee, to make greater contributions to the foreign policy process. The first of these is institutional, the second attitudinal.

At first glance, seeking the primary influence on U.S. foreign policy in the House should be found in the Foreign Affairs committee. However, it is not the sole committee that considers matters pertaining to international relations or affairs. Within the House, the Table 5 (page 63) displays committees and subcommittees outside Foreign Affairs also had some degree of international jurisdiction and concern.³¹

²⁹Confidential interview with House Foreign Affairs Committee member, Sept. 1993.

³⁰David Mann

³¹Measured by the words in committee and subcommittee titles that directly relate to the external relations of the United States. Examples include "international," "foreign," "national security," and "exports."

Table 5 - House Committees with International Concerns

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Subcommittee(s)</u>
Agriculture	Department Operations, Research, & Foreign Agriculture
Appropriations	Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs
Banking, Finance & Urban Affairs	International Development, Finance, Trade and Monetary Policy
Government Operations	Legislation and National Security
Interior and Insular Affairs	Insular and International Affairs
Judiciary	International Law, Immigration, and Refugees
Small Business	Exports, Tax Policy and Special Problems
Select Comm. on Intelligence	Legislation; Oversight and Evaluation; Program and Budget Authorization
Select Committee on Hunger ³²	International (considered a "task force")

³²Disbanded during the 103rd Congress.

These are in addition to the seven subcommittees within the Foreign Affairs Committee. Therefore, decision-makers in the Executive Branch as well as in the Senate may have to look to as many as ten committees and 18 subcommittees to get the House perspective on foreign policy matters. Arguably, the seven subcommittees of the House Armed Services Committee could be added to the list, considering the military input to the foreign policy process and resulting congressional concerns. This would raise the total to 11 committees and 25 subcommittees. This competition from within the House of Representatives alone waters down the Foreign Affairs Committee's operations and policy influence, particularly with respect to the Executive Branch. The President and his foreign policy aides have at least three options at their disposal concerning the House: they may pursue the advancement of foreign policy objectives solely with the Foreign Affairs Committee; facing resistance with that approach, they may attempt to link the objective with the jurisdiction of other committees; or, in order to build broad consensus within the House of Representatives, and therefore build broad consensus with the public, they may employ both strategies. When administrations have questions or concerns over, for example, international trade, the president could turn to the House Foreign Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on Economic Policy, Trade and Environment; or the House

Banking, Finance & Urban Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on International Development, Finance, Trade and Monetary Policy. This competition makes it easy for the Foreign Affairs Committee to establish itself as a voice on international affairs, but also makes it difficult, if not impossible, for the committee to establish itself as the House of Representatives' primary voice. Other committees with international interests detract from the House Foreign Affairs Committee's ability to establish and enforce its own identity.

Attitudes along another dimension inhibit the efficiency of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. These concern the most important matters on its legislative plate. Here it must be remembered that some of the responses were colored by immediate international issues confronting the United States at the time the interviews occurred. To its credit, respondents within the House Foreign Affairs Committee were more likely to respond by saying "the entire content and direction of U.S. foreign policy in a post-Cold War era" than their counterparts in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.³³ In fact, not a single respondent within the Senate responded in such a manner.

Little agreement on the "horizon" emerged after that. There was no consistency among members, either individually

³³Within the House, only five respondents answered in this way.

or by party, on the most important issues for the committee's consideration. Responses included hunger, overpopulation, emerging democracies, nuclear proliferation, immigration, peace in the Middle East, and Haiti. The significance of these responses lies in the influence that the institutional structure of the committee should have upon its members, versus what it actually has. A hallmark to committee organization, it will be recalled, has been the geographic (or regional) and issue (or functional) components to its makeup. With this as a given to the institutional structure of the Foreign Affairs Committee, there should at least be some expectation that regions along which the subcommittees are organized would develop important issue articulation by the members. This, however, was not the case. Regional issues were barely mentioned by any of the respondents, with the exception of the Middle East (the mention of Haiti coincided with its prominence in the media).

All but nine committee members serve on at least one regional subcommittee; 14 are absent from the functional subcommittees. Almost half of the Foreign Affairs Committee members, 21, serve on both a regional and functional subcommittee. In the case of multiple subcommittee memberships, five members serve exclusively on functional subcommittees, while six serve exclusively on regional subcommittees. In cases where members serve on a single

subcommittee, five devote themselves to functional subcommittees while eight concentrate their efforts in regional subcommittees.³⁴

The mix of regional and functional subcommittees, as well as the members' mixed patterns of involvement in them, are significant in what they don't reveal. When surveying members about the most critical issues facing the Foreign Relations Committee, there was virtually no regional dynamic in their answers. The responses instead followed functional lines, leading one to at least question the presence of regional subcommittees when members tend to think functionally.

As was the case with its inability to define the "national interest," the committee made no attempt to formulate an organizational philosophy that would establish some agreement among its members regarding the identification and processing of critical issues. While the chairman admitted that it was something he realized needed to be done,³⁵ he also conceded that there had been little time in the congressional schedule to do so. This stems in part from the nature of foreign policy and international relations: long term planning and orientation may provide participants a paradigm with which to confront their work, but some flexibility must be built into the structure that

³⁴1994 Congressional Staff Directory, 715-16.

³⁵Interview.

allows for response to short term crises.

This explains why virtually all personal and committee staff members considered themselves much more proactive than reactive. Respondents considered the reactive side of their trade as something to be avoided, as they switched into that mode when their members were caught surprised or unaware about a new international development. The staff norm was that it must impart stability and consistency into committee operations through anticipating crises and international concerns long before they move to the front of the congressional or presidential agendas.

Tension with the Executive Branch

Thus, proactivity should characterize the staff and members when working with the Executive Branch. However, the House Foreign Affairs Committee staff reported little routine interaction with the White House or State Department. Most personal staff aides also reported little routine interaction. Staff contacts with them rose during times of crisis, such as Somalia, Bosnia, or Haiti, but standardized activity designed to increase effectiveness in anticipating and managing foreign predicaments does not appear to have been a major concern for the committee staff. Some commented:

There was a lot of work we did with the White House during Haiti. We rolled them pretty good on

that one.³⁶

I have good relations with the White House. They respond to my calls, even if we disagree on an issue. I have a tepid relation with the State Department. It is my experience that they respond based on the issue's sensitivity.³⁷

We interface with the White House well, although we often have to follow up with correspondence sent to the President or Chief of Staff to get timely responses. We have contact with the White House about 15 times a month. As Democrats, we generally work with the Democratic Administration to find a common agenda we can support. With prior Republican Administrations, partisan politics intervened to create differences that couldn't be resolved. We interact well with the State Department and have extensive contact with them. We have not discerned major differences at State after a change of party control in the White House.³⁸

During the Bush Administration, we were running a lot of interference for the President. Now we're ignored, at least by the White House. [Clinton]'s got the majority in both houses.³⁹

It's about once per week. If [Clinton] wants to get something on foreign policy through the House, we'll be the first stop, so he has to talk to us regularly.⁴⁰

Nor do sitting members of the committee, except its leadership, systematically correspond with the Executive

³⁶Confidential interview with personal staff assistant, Jan. 1995.

³⁷Confidential interview with personal staff assistant, Jan. 1995.

³⁸Confidential interview with personal staff assistant, April 1995.

³⁹Confidential interview with committee staff aide, Dec. 1993.

⁴⁰Confidential interview with committee staff aide, Sept. 1993.

Branch. The Chief Executive viewed the committee leadership as being a reliable source of information concerning the "sense of Congress" on foreign policy issues.⁴¹

Nevertheless, it is this general lack of communication on the part of the members and staff that may explain the suspicion and distrust existent between the Executive Branch and the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Members and staff of House Foreign Affairs were uncomfortable when discussing the foreign policy objectives of the administration (because even they were not exactly sure what they were). As evidence they pointed to the caliber of foreign policy presidential appointees and the degree to which they interacted with the Legislative Branch.

Contrariwise, within the Executive Branch, respondents cited the inability of either the House Foreign Affairs or Senate Foreign Relations Committees to speak with anything approaching committee or party unity as "evidence" to support claims that Congress is institutionally unable to contribute to foreign policy discourse. Both the congressional and executive perceptions may be accurate.

If the sum total of a committee's contribution to any policy arena is measured by its ability to work in some degree of unison to craft legislation passable on the floor, then there are legitimate grounds for describing the role of

⁴¹Interviews with committee members and legislative liaison staff in the Executive Branch.

the House Foreign Affairs Committee as marginal. It last passed a Foreign Appropriations Act in 1987⁴², and it was last in 1985 that such an act reached the desk of the president for signature.

⁴²The comparable Senate version died in Committee.

CHAPTER 3
THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Organizational Overview: 1975-1993

Like its counterpart in the House of Representatives, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations also modified its operating premises during the 103rd Congress. But unlike the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has confronted two dynamics since the mid-1970s not present in the House of Representatives. One of these is constant, the other was an influence stemming from election results.

The constant stems from a constitutional role in the foreign policy process, rooted in the Constitution. Here the Senate has a specific input to the Chief Executives' formulation of U.S. roles in international relations. The Constitution's Article II grants the president the authority to negotiate treaties and nominate ambassadors; the Senate must consent to these treaties and nominations, and because they are referred to committees before debate and vote by the Senate as a whole, this work devolves initially on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

The other influence faced by the Senate was a change of

party control 1981-87. The House experienced no such transfer until the 1994 elections with the resulting party changes taking effect in January 1995. This gives the Senate an additional advantage over its foreign policy brethren in the House: not only has the Senate Foreign Relations Committee experienced and managed change wrought by constituent choices, but many of its staff and members who lived through that upheaval are still working within the committee hierarchy today. Thus the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has at least some institutional memory of majority party change and how to manage it. No such memory exists in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, as the last time it experienced Republican majority control was in the early 1950s.

Since the 94th Congress, turnover in the Foreign Relations has averaged just under 4 members per Congress. The greatest turnover during this period occurred at the beginning of the 97th Congress in 1981, where seven new members took their seats. This coincided with a change in party control of the Chamber from the Democrats to the Republicans. It was also in this Congress that the size of the committee increased from 15 to 17 members.

In two Congresses (the 96th and the 100th), the committee seated five new members. The former represented the mid-term election for then-President Carter; the latter was the result of party control reverting to the Democrats

from the hands of the Republicans.

How did the operating premise of the committee change during this period? In 1973, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, then chaired by Sen. J.W. Fulbright (D-Ark.), had as its operating premise:

...to consist of 17 Senators, to which committee shall be referred all proposed legislation, messages, memorials, and other matters relating to the following subject: (1) Relations of the U.S. with foreign nations generally, (2) Treaties, (3) Establishment of boundary lines between the U.S. and foreign nations, (4) Protection of American citizens abroad and expatriation, (5) Neutrality, (6) International conferences and congresses, (7) The American National Red Cross, (8) Intervention abroad and declarations of war, (9) Measures relating to the diplomatic service, (10) Acquisition of land and buildings for embassies and legations in foreign countries, (11) Measures to foster commercial intercourse with foreign nations and to safeguard American business interests abroad, (12) United Nations Organization and international financial and monetary organizations, (13) Foreign Loans.¹

Note that with the lone exception of jurisdiction regarding treaties, this operating premise matched that of the House Foreign Affairs Committee in the same Congress word for word. This Foreign Relations Committee also had its 10 regional and functional subcommittees, although they weren't referred to as such, broken down into the following jurisdictions: African Affairs; European Affairs; Far Eastern Affairs; Near Eastern Affairs; South Asian Affairs; Western Hemisphere Affairs; Arms Control, International Law and Organization; Multinational

¹Congressional Staff Directory. 1973, 162.

Corporations; Oceans and International Environment; and U.S. Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad.

Institutionally, there was little correspondence to the subcommittee structure of the House Foreign Affairs Committee at the time. This particular subcommittee structure in the Senate carried a caveat: *All subcommittees are consultative in nature and are not authorized to hold public hearings or consider legislation without the approval of the full Committee or its Chairman.*²

The operating premise stayed in effect through the 94th Congress to the 95th Congress in 1977, however the subcommittee structure changed with each succeeding Congress. In 1975, the Foreign Relations Committee had a new chairman, John Sparkman of Alabama, who did away with the aforementioned subcommittee limitation on hearings and legislation and altered subcommittee titles and jurisdictions. And as the then-new House Committee on International Relations changed its operating premise, also gone was the harmony between the operating premises of the congressional foreign policy committees. The statements of purpose for the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations had been an almost perfect match, with the exception of treaty provisions in the Senate.

Under Sparkman, who was thrust into committee

²Ibid., 163 (Emphasis in the original).

chairmanship following the election that bolstered the strength of the Democratic Party in Congress (because of the fallout with the Executive Branch stemming from the Watergate affair), the Foreign Relations Committee now had nine subcommittees (a reduction of one from the preceding Congress) with either a regional or functional purpose, broken down along the following lines: European Affairs; Far Eastern Affairs; Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs; Western Hemisphere Affairs; Arms Control, International Organizations and Security Agreements; Foreign Assistance and Economic Policy; Multinational Corporations; Oceans and International Environment; and Personnel (interestingly, this last subcommittee was the only one with an evenly split party membership: two Democrats and two Republicans).³

With a new Democratic administration in control of the Executive Branch, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1977 reorganized its operating premise and its institutional structure. Still under the chairmanship of John J. Sparkman, the premise now read:

...to consist of 16 Senators: 1. Relations of the United States with foreign nations generally. 2. Treaties and executive agreements, except reciprocal trade agreements. 3. Boundaries of the United States. 4. Protection of the United States citizens abroad and expatriation. 5. Intervention abroad and declarations of war. 6. Foreign economic, military, technical and humanitarian assistance. 7. United Nations and its affiliated

³Congressional Staff Directory, 1975, 164-66.

organizations. 8. International conferences and congresses. 9. Diplomatic service. 10. International law as it relates to foreign policy. 11. Oceans and international environmental and scientific affairs as they relate to foreign policy. 12. International activities of the American National Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross. 13. International aspects of nuclear energy, including nuclear transfer policy. 14. Foreign loans. 15. Measures to foster commercial intercourse with foreign nations and to safeguard American business interests abroad. 16. The World Bank group, the regional development banks, and other international organizations established primarily for development assistance purposes. 17. The International Monetary Fund and other international organizations established primarily for international monetary purposes (except that, at the request of the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, any proposed legislation relating to such subjects reported by the Committee on Foreign Relations shall be referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs). 18. Acquisition of land and buildings for embassies and legations in foreign countries. 19. National security and international aspects of trusteeships of the United States. (2) Such committee shall also study and review, on a comprehensive basis, matters relating to the national security policy, foreign policy, and international economic policy as it relates to foreign policy of the United States, and matters relating to food, hunger, and nutrition in foreign countries, and report thereon from time to time.⁴

With a more activist statement of purpose (interesting because the authorized committee membership was reduced from 17 to 16), the committee formally designated its nine subcommittees as geographic or functional subcommittees. There was some, but not complete, correlation of the statement of purpose with that of the House Foreign

⁴Congressional Staff Directory, 1977. 169.

Relations Committee. Geographic subcommittees included African Affairs; East Asian and Pacific Affairs; European Affairs; Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs; and Western Hemisphere Affairs. Functional subcommittees were: Arms Control, Oceans and International Environment; Foreign Assistance; Foreign Economic Policy; and International Operations.

A change in the committee chairmanship in 1979 to Frank Church (D-Id.) brought more changes to the committee. The organizational statement remained intact, with only minor modifications in the individual rank orderings of the subcommittees. Geographic subcommittees kept their number and jurisdictions, but now there were only two functional subcommittees: Arms Control, Oceans, International Operations and Environment; and International Economic Policy.⁵

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee was establishing a pattern different from that of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. A change of chairmen in the House had little impact on the organization or jurisdiction of the Foreign Affairs Committee, while a change of Senate chairmen always resulted in some change to either the operating premise, subcommittee organization, or both (in addition to at least some change in membership). While the Senate keeps no records of its initial organizational meetings, one

⁵Congressional Staff Directory, 1979. 190.

plausible explanation for these changes is the constitutional prominence of the committee and the desire of the chairmen to leave their own stamp on the foreign policy process.

The 97th Congress (1981-83) was no different, and an additional change dynamic came through a large level of new members, brought about because of party control changeover in the Senate. The new chairman, Charles H. Percy (R-Il.), did away with the specific geographic and functional delineations of the subcommittees but kept their jurisdictions as well as the committee's organizational statement from the previous Congress. Finally some consistency was emerging in committee operations. Percy kept the institutional perspective intact through the 98th Congress, giving the Senate Foreign Relations Committee four uninterrupted years of relatively no institutional change. A new chair in the 99th Congress, Richard Lugar (R-In.), however, ended the institutional tranquility.

Lugar's chairmanship was to last for only one Congress, but his changes represented a perspective that began under the chairmanship of Frank Church, namely that the Foreign Relations Committee should orient itself almost unidirectionally along geographic, and not functionally or issues-related, lines. Under Lugar, there were but six subcommittees; only one (International Economic Policy, Oceans and Environment) was what has been referred to as a

functional subcommittee. The five geographic subcommittees remained in place.

The transfer of party control back to the Democrats in the 100th Congress brought a new chairman to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Claiborne Pell (D-RI), whose service on the committee dated back to 1965. The committee's authorized assignment grew to 20, an increase of three from the 99th Congress, and the organizational statement of the committee remained in place. Change occurred, again, on the subcommittees, and this time the geographic subcommittees were not spared as they had been in previous Congresses. Geographic subcommittees, in some cases, added a functional component; new functional subcommittees were created where previously there had been none. The new subcommittee organization under Pell was: African Affairs; East Asian and Pacific Affairs; European Affairs; Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs; Western Hemisphere and Peace Corps Affairs; International Economic Policy, Trade, Oceans and Environment; and Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations.

Throughout the 1970s and well into the 1980s, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee demonstrated that it was quite capable of changing its institutional structure, but not necessarily its organizing premise, based on factors other than the presence of a Cold War. Certainly the predispositions and preferences of the committee chairmen

played a significant role. Had the Cold War (and subsequent post-Cold War realities) figured prominently in the institutional makeup of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, then some change in the subcommittee structure would have been evident either after 1991 or 1993.

Organization in the 103rd Congress

Pell maintained his chairmanship of the committee through January 1995, and with it maintained the operating premise and subcommittee hierarchy of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee as it was after he assumed control in 1987. Like its counterpart in the House of Representatives, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, despite calls from its members and elsewhere for new thinking on U.S. foreign policy, entered the new era, from an institutional perspective, precisely as it had been during the old era. The operating premise dated from 1977. With the Subcommittees on African Affairs; East Asian and Pacific Affairs; European Affairs; International Economic Policy, Trade, Oceans and Environment; Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs; Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations; and Western Hemisphere and Peace Corps Affairs, the subcommittee titles and jurisdictions remained unchanged from 1987.

At the beginning of each Congress, the Senate Foreign

Relations Committee publishes its rules for the next two years. Within these rules, there are few clues as to how both old and new members are socialized. The committee decides its subcommittee structure based on a majority vote of the committee as a whole, and no member may have more than three subcommittee assignments.⁶ Whereas the House committee is mandated to meet only once per month, the Committee on Foreign Relations requires a weekly meeting "for the transaction of Committee business"⁷ every Tuesday. Special sessions may be called by at least three members petitioning the chairman directly. The committee considers all meetings as open to the public unless the hearings involve national security matters, matters pertaining to the staff, matters which may "charge an individual with crime or misconduct," reveal the identity of an informer, "disclose information relating to the trade secrets or financial or commercial information pertaining specifically to a given person," or "divulge matters required to be kept confidential under other provisions of law or Government regulations."⁸ Proxies, like in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, were allowed under the Foreign Relations Committee's Rule 5, and special consideration is given to

⁶Rules of the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, February 1993, 2.

⁷Ibid., 3.

⁸Ibid., 4.

the Senate's constitutional role in the foreign policy process.

Specifically, separate rules govern committee procedures on treaties and nominations. No other committee in the Senate may claim jurisdiction to "review and report to the Senate on treaties submitted by the President for Senate advice and consent."⁹ The rules specify no time limit within which the treaty review process should be completed, only "as soon as possible." Treaties reported to the full Senate will almost always be accompanied by a written majority and minority report, but this is not absolutely required. The committee rules allow for a treaty to go to the full Senate for a vote without a written report "in extraordinary circumstances."¹⁰

Regarding nominations, the committee imposes on itself a six day waiting period between the submission of a nomination and the first committee action upon it. The rules do not require public hearings for nominees; chamber doors close upon a majority vote in favor of closed hearings. Before action by the full Senate, the committee rules stipulate nominees must complete a background investigation. They must also submit financial disclosure reports, clear any potential conflicts of interest, provide lists of personal campaign finance contributions as well as

⁹Ibid., 6.

¹⁰Ibid., 7.

those made by immediate family members during the previous four years, and for those designated to be chiefs of missions, "a report on the demonstrated competence...to perform the duties of the position to which he or she has been nominated."¹¹

Institutional rules governing the staff are more numerous in the Committee on Foreign Relations than in the Committee on Foreign Affairs, perhaps due to the constitutional function provided by Foreign Relations. These rules fall along two general lines: attendance at committee hearings, and operating procedures as a whole.

Committee members may have one personal staff assistant present with them at hearings; the personal staff assistants may also attend closed or classified sessions, provided they have the proper security clearances. The Senate Majority and Minority Leaders may also designate a staff assistant, properly cleared, to attend closed sessions of the Committee on Foreign Relations. The committee, by majority vote or by concurrence of the chairman and ranking minority member, may limit staff attendance at sessions.

The rules governing committee staff stipulate that while the staff works for the committee as a whole, it may still be organized along party lines and serve under the supervision of the majority and minority staff directors. Senators not on the Foreign Relations Committee may also

¹¹Ibid.

call upon the staff for assistance.

These same rules denote the primary responsibility of the committee staff "with respect to bills, resolutions, treaties, and nominations."¹² Unlike the staff of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Foreign Relations Committee staff is specifically charged, in the rules, to be activist. This activist characterization may be found in what the rules call staff "responsibilities." These are:

...to originate suggestions for Committee or subcommittee consideration...to make suggestions to individual members regarding matters of special interest to such members...to keep itself as well informed as possible in regard to developments affecting foreign relations and in regard to the administration of foreign programs or the United States. Significant trends or developments which might otherwise escape notice should be called to the attention of the Committee, or of individual Senators with particular interests¹³...pay due regard to the constitutional separation of powers between the Senate and the executive branch...to help the committee bring to bear an independent, objective judgment of proposals by the executive branch and when appropriate to originate sound proposals of its own...avoid impinging upon the day-to-day conduct of foreign affairs...assist the minority as fully as the majority to the end that all points of view may be fully considered by members of the Committee and of the Senate...bear in mind that under our constitutional system it is the responsibility of the elected Members of the Senate to determine legislative issues in the light of as full and fair a presentation of the facts as the staff may be able to obtain.¹⁴

The committee also imposes restrictions upon its staff.

¹²Ibid., 11.

¹³Referred to as a "duty" in the rules.

¹⁴Ibid., 11.

These restrictions explain, in part, why no member of the committee or personal staff would speak on the record. The constraints on staff behavior are both attitudinal and behavioral. They are:

...to regard its relationship to the Committee as a privileged one, in the nature of the relationship of a lawyer to a client...not be identified with any special interest group in the field of foreign relations or allow their names to be used by any such group...not accept public speaking engagements or write for publication in the field of foreign relations without specific advance permission from the Staff Director, or, in the case of the minority staff, from the Minority Staff Director (such statements should avoid the expression of personal views and should not contain predictions of future, or interpretations of past, Committee action...not discuss their private conversations with members of the Committee without specific advance permission from the Senator or Senators concerned...not discuss with anyone the proceedings of the Committee in closed session or reveal information conveyed or discussed in such a session unless that person would have been permitted to attend the session itself, or unless such communication is specifically authorized by the Staff Director or Minority Staff Director). Unauthorized disclosure of information from a closed session or of classified information shall be cause for immediate dismissal and may, in the case of some kinds of information, be grounds for criminal prosecution.¹⁵

Both personal and subcommittee staffs are drawn from a number of different sources. All but two respondents already had Washington-based experience within either the Legislative or Executive Branches. The remaining respondents came to these staffs with no prior national legislative background, beginning their service as part of

¹⁵Ibid., 11-12.

Congressional internship or fellowship. Senators on the Foreign Relations Committee may or may not have a personal staff member devoted to foreign policy. Most subcommittee chairs, but not all, do not have a personal staff member dedicated to foreign policy and international relations research. Instead, the subcommittee staff takes on a personal flavor by serving as the foreign policy research aides to the chair. This is not an ironclad rule. For example, Joseph Biden (D-Del.) served as the chairman for the Subcommittee on European Affairs in the 103rd Congress and has a personal aide devoted to foreign policy issues. Paul Simon (D-Ill.) chaired the Subcommittee on African Affairs, but does not have a personal foreign policy assistant. His subcommittee staff served that function. It is a matter of personal preference. If senators do not chair a subcommittee, the rule is that they will have a personal foreign policy staff assistant.

Members and Their Motivation for Committee Service

The ranks of the Committee on Foreign Relations are replenished biannually, except in unusual cases, such as the departure of Al Gore to assume duties as Vice-President and the subsequent appointment of Harlan Mathews to assume his duties. Members either continue from the previous Congress (provided there is no downsizing of the authorized committee

membership) or are recruited through the submission of preference statements to the Majority or Minority Leaders. These leaders' first consideration is to maintain their share of the party balance within the committee. If an insufficient number of senators express a desire to serve on the Foreign Relations Committee, party leadership within the chamber will appoint members whom they feel best qualified even though these prospective senators may not personally desire service on the committee.

Member motivations for service on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee have undergone stark changes from its Cold War days. Respondents revealed two general forces that propelled them to committee membership. The first showed deference to a traditional attraction of committee service: its constitutional role and those factors within the respondents' background (military service, legal education, history or political science degrees) that led them to believe that they could make some contribution, usually called "valuable" during interviews, to the course of U.S. foreign policy.

The second type of member may in part reflect a post-Cold War attitude and the deemphasis of foreign policy's overall importance to the electorate, particularly after the tone adopted during the 1992 presidential election. Committees in the Senate, like those in the House, are classified as either "A" or "B" committees based on their

overall importance in the chambers' respective operations. While the House Foreign Affairs Committee was considered a "B," or of secondary importance, committee assignment, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is traditionally an "A," or of primary importance, committee assignment. Despite this historic prominence assigned to the committee by the Senate leadership, there are a growing number of members who either did not want to serve or expressed no preference for service on the Foreign Relations Committee.

Typically, these members were "force fed" by (depending on party) either the Majority or Minority Leader onto the committee, thus immediately presenting them with the question of what to do with a committee membership they did not want. When asked why membership on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee did not fit in with their individual legislative agendas, respondents were unanimous: committee membership was not viewed favorably in their respective states, particularly because of constituent perceptions that the Foreign Relations Committee specialized in foreign aid programs serving as tax dollar "giveaways" going to "rathole" locations outside the United States with no resulting benefit to their respective states. Therefore these reluctant committee members (and it is notable that they are all the newest or most junior members of the committee) had to turn what they perceived as a personal negative into a positive for their constituents. Usually

the solution to their problem characteristically lay in using committee membership to bring the benefits of foreign trade back to their individual states.¹⁶

Members of the Foreign Relations Committee are also less likely to view their assignment as part of a broader representation package for state constituents. Members of long standing view their committee seat as a pursuit of where they feel they can make the greatest contribution to national policy and to the operations of the Senate as a whole. New members (especially those who did not seek service on the Foreign Relations Committee but were nonetheless assigned there), however, out of reelection concerns, attempt to use their position for constituency gain.

Within the Foreign Relations Committee proper during the 103rd Congress, members tended to balance their subcommittee assignments between regional and functional subcommittees more than their associates on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. A problem arises in measuring service of this kind due to the jurisdiction of one subcommittee: Should the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere and Peace Corps Affairs count as a regional assignment, a functional assignment, or both? The distinction is critical only when attempting to determine, initially, whether members of the committee orient themselves along either or

¹⁶Interviews with personal staff members.

both regional or functional lines.

Counting this subcommittee solely as regional yields the following picture: all of the committee's 19 members serve on at least one regional subcommittee and all but four serve on at least one regional and at least one functional subcommittee.

Counting Western Hemisphere and Peace Corps Affairs as solely a functional subcommittee is impractical; the fact that the Western Hemisphere falls under its jurisdiction rules this possibility out. Considering it both regional and functional denotes that all but one member, Judd Gregg (R-NH), serve on both regional and functional subcommittees.

Do institutional structures and patterns of subcommittee membership impact on the members' thinking, or on the thinking of the personal and committee staff, on consideration of the most important matters facing the committee? From the responses to interview questions, apparently not. With the exception of crisis issues prominent in the media at the time the interviews took place, no regional or geographic dynamic is apparent in the committee's long-range thinking. As in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the focus in the Senate is on issues, such as nuclear proliferation, hunger, immigration, emergency democracy transition, and the general question of foreign aid. No respondent in the Senate mentioned the entire course of U.S. foreign policy in a post-Cold War era.

Nor could any member of the Senate give a clear articulation of the "national interest," even though, as their House counterparts, all Foreign Relations Committee members have used the term either in media interviews, committee or subcommittee hearings, or on the floor of the chamber. No "grand strategy" was apparent in members' answers, and like the House, responses were more along the lines of what the Department of Defense classifies objectives in support of national interests rather than national interests *per se*.

Senators of the Foreign Relations Committee parcel their services out to as few as one and as many as four other committees. As with the House in the 103rd Congress, no member of the Foreign Relations Committee sat on the chamber's Appropriations Committee; only one member, Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY) sat on the Finance Committee (the Senate counterpart of the House Ways and Means Committee), which he also chaired. Table 6 (page 93) shows how members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee spread their service across other committees in the chamber.

Recall that, in the House, the Committee on Education and Labor had the highest number of Foreign Affairs Committee members. The Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, the chamber's counterpart to Education and Labor, also has the highest number of Foreign Relations members. This appears to be a balancing act between a personal

Table 6 - Members' Service on Other Senate Committees

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Foreign Relations Members</u>
Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry	3
Armed Services	1
Banking, Housing & Urban Affairs	3
Budget	5
Commerce, Science & Transportation	4
Energy and Natural Resources	2
Environment and Public Works	2
Finance	1
Indian Affairs	3
Intelligence	2
Judiciary	3
Labor & Human Resources	7
Rules and Administration	4
Small Business	3
Veterans Affairs	2

"positive" and a constituency "negative." While members derive a high degree of personal satisfaction from the Foreign Relations Committee, the fact that the committee does not necessarily sit well with constituencies force members onto committees that deliver benefits to their respective states.

Tension with the Executive Branch

Perhaps as the Founders intended, there remains a high degree of tension and distrust between the staff collectively and the Executive Branch as a whole. Within the Senate, though, respondents identified a specific source of tension and target of distrust: the State Department. With the exception of one respondent, all interviewees in the Senate expressed no confidence in the ability of Department of State personnel to provide specific answers to specific question. The lone holdout, a staff aide, was new to the position and therefore had not yet had the opportunity to interact with State.

One division in the State Department specializes in congressional affairs: the Office of Legislative Liaison. The chief of the division carries the title of Assistant Secretary, meaning that the individual must be confirmed by the Senate before assuming the position's formal duties. The Office of Legislative Liaison draws its ranks from three

sources: presidential appointees (the assistant secretary and deputy assistant secretaries), career foreign service officers, and career civil service employees. It is further specialized with a subdivision devoted to the House of Representatives and a subdivision devoted to the Senate. With only one office specializing in congressional matters, the reasonable inference is that this bureau would be the first place to which members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee would turn for information on either a global or regional issue, particularly one that is prominent in the media and in which the State Department is involved. This, however, is not the case. Instead, the first source of State Department information for the Foreign Relations Committee is the Desk Officer of the region or country involved. Senate respondents, based on the answers to open-ended questions, gave very low credibility to the State Department's Office of Legislative Liaison, even though the presidential appointees working within it all have, to some degree, congressional credentials, usually as staff assistants and sometimes as campaign aides.

Senate respondents viewed the Office of Legislative Liaison as little more than a public relations firm and not as a significant actor in the foreign policy process. On matters of substance, in fact, the personal and committee staff members of Senate Foreign Relations rarely turn to the Office of Legislative Liaison in the information gathering

process. Rather than being the Department of State's first contact with the Senate on all matters pertaining to congressional relations, the Office of Legislative Liaison is only one of many points of contact routinely. The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations chooses to engage the office, and then only grudgingly, on constitutional matters, such as legislation or ambassador confirmations. Senate staff aides commented:

Every time I call down there for information, it seems like it takes days for them to respond, and even then, it's never answers to questions that we asked.¹⁷

I tried to establish a good relation and go to them first. I mean, that's the way it's supposed to be, but it seemed that every time we had a question on what they were doing, we knew more than than they did, and that was just from reading the papers. I've given up on [the Office of] Legislative Liaison. If we've got a question, we call the Desk Officer.¹⁸

What do you expect from this Administration? Do you really believe that someone as uninterested in foreign policy as [President] Clinton would put people down there that knew what they were doing? I think they mean well, but it's bad enough that he flip-flops. I think he expects [the Office of Legislative Liaison] to cover for him while he keeps them in the dark. Then he makes everyone look bad.¹⁹

Ambassador confirmations were the worst. They were sending these guys up here and we didn't know

¹⁷Confidential interview with personal staff aide, Sept. 1993.

¹⁸Confidential interview with personal staff aide, Oct. 1994.

¹⁹Confidential interview with committee staff aide, Dec. 1993.

the first about them, which is in complete violation of our own rules. When they don't respond like we expect them to or want them to, it makes us wonder what they're trying to hide.²⁰

There was a big problem once over a trade issue involving Taiwan and China, and the State Department came out with a position that enraged just about all of our constituents, because it hit our state really hard. I called down to OLL [the Office of Legislative Liaison] and tried to find out what was going on, and the answer I got was completely different from what the department was saying. I said, "Hello! [Assistant Secretary of State] Wendy [Sherman]! Have you read the papers? Have you read your own boss's statement?" She said she'd get back to me, but she never did. She didn't know. They weren't telling her anything. I know it's not her fault, but what do you think we think about State when this is happening all the time?²¹

This may stem from shortcomings within the State Department as a whole and not because of any professional deficiency within the people who work in the Office of Legislative Liaison. As is occasionally the case with the White House Press Secretary, the Office of Legislative Liaison in the State Department is, in the estimation of the Senate, kept "out of the loop" on the internal operations of its various bureaus but must nonetheless be prepared to confront criticism and answer questions regarding those very units. Because the idealized place of the Legislative Liaison Office is not the reality, its integrity and competence are regularly challenged by the Senate Foreign

²⁰Confidential interview with personal staff aide, Sept. 1993.

²¹Confidential interview with personal staff aide, Nov. 1994.

Relations Committee, and particularly by the personal and committee staffs.

Communication between the personal and committee staff does not necessarily portray a picture of harmony. Both personal and committee staff assistants viewed themselves as proactive, and with no small degree of pride, but questioned the motives of other staff members' proactivity. This doubt is particularly manifest along party lines. For example, all but one personal staff members to Democratic senators took a dim view of Republican committee staff assistants. When personal staff aides spoke about other personal staff members, regardless of any party identification differences, the cross-party tension disappeared. In other words, all foreign policy personal staff aides thought very highly of each other.

Personal foreign policy staff assistants are quick to point out that, while they hold their own opinions and viewpoints on the current foreign policy process, they are willing to subordinate those views in deference to and service of the member of the Senate for whom they work. This does not mean that they keep their views to themselves. Behind closed doors, differences in views between senators and staff have led to heated arguments bordering on shouting matches.²² This is the staff's opportunity to get its views

²²Confidential interviews with personal staff assistants to Democratic and Republican senators.

into discussion. All personal staff assistants interviewed, however, insisted that they do not act independently or pursue their own agenda, even if a senator makes a decision in conflict with their views.

In a post-Cold War era, this attitude is critical. During the Cold War, foreign policy debate centered around the means to accomplish containment; there was general agreement on containment as an end. Today, both means and ends are the subject of debate. There was therefore a greater degree of foreign policy entrepreneurship within the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations either because of the new foreign policy reality and disagreement on foreign policy means and ends, or because of the perceived weaknesses of Claiborne Pell, the Democratic Foreign Relations Committee chairman during the 103rd Congress, or both. Competition between subcommittee chairmen to advance foreign policy agendas became the order of the day, and in order to be successful in that endeavor, senators expected their staff to be aggressive, proactive and articulate, but also loyal enough to execute decisions even if the staff personally disagreed with them.

This latter phenomenon was consistently singled out in interviews as the chief problem confronting the modern Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In fact, one of the sole sources of almost universal agreement between the Legislative and Executive Branches has been that,

particularly in the post-Cold War era, what is needed most is a strong leader of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The perception among members of Congress, their staffs, and foreign policy operatives within the Executive Branch is that under Senator Pell, the stature of the Foreign Relations Committee has been severely diminished. While there was universal agreement on Pell, no respondent would speak "on the record:"

It's really a sad thing about Senator Pell. He's a nice guy and he means well, but he's just not suited to be a chairman, not now. You need somebody with a lot of energy and who's real aggressive, and he's not either of those. The image of the whole committee suffers because of that, Republicans not as much as Democrats, but we all suffer.²³

This you're gonna have to keep confidential. He's a nice guy and all that, but he really doesn't have any business being the chairman over there. I mean the only reason he's got it is because he's been around for something like 30 years and seniority still plays a big role. You've got a lot of other people over there who are much better able to be an effective chairman, like Biden or Kerry, but what's happened is that the President's stopped going to the Senate for perspective on foreign policy. He's coming over to the House now, and that's ruffling a lot of feathers over in the Senate. As a result, it's making the Senate more antagonistic towards the President on foreign policy because they think they're being slighted. Once they get in a new chairman, a strong, effective one, the Senate will resume its traditional role in the foreign policy process.²⁴

Pell? He's a nice old man but that's about it.

²³Confidential interview with personal staff aide to Senate Foreign Relations Committee member, Nov. 1994.

²⁴Confidential interview with member of House Foreign Relations Committee, Dec. 1993.

The Foreign Relations Committee is running around Capitol Hill without any leadership at all, so you've got the whole committee working at cross purposes with each other, even in the same party, so the end result is that nothing gets done. By not doing anything, he ends up getting in the way.²⁵

It's really frustrating with that guy. You don't know how much work we put in trying to put legislation together. Once it gets into conference committee with the House, he gives away everything we worked so hard for. He gets rolled, and we wonder what we did all the work for.²⁶

The impact that the decline in the committee's standing due to Pell's reputation has had on Presidential-Congressional relations in foreign policy has been profound. Prior to the 103rd Congress, the president turned to both the Foreign Relations Committee chairman and ranking minority member to get some "sense of Congress" on foreign affairs. During the 103rd Congress, however, the president sought that "sense" from the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and not the chairman of Foreign Relations.²⁷ The view also advanced was that, with a new chairman in place, "the Senate Foreign Relations Committee would return to its traditional role in the foreign policy process."²⁸ That comment assumed, however, that the next

²⁵Confidential interview with staff aide in the Executive Office of the President, Dec. 1993.

²⁶Confidential interview with staff aide to Senate Foreign Relations Committee member, Sept. 1993.

²⁷Confidential interviews with members of the House, Senate, and Executive Branch.

²⁸Confidential interview.

chairman would also be a Democrat like Pell. No thought, let alone planning, was based on the assumption that the next chairman would be a Republican and that the Republican would be the ultra-conservative Jesse Helms of North Carolina, who, ideology notwithstanding, is also a very public chairman. The impact of this transition was so profound that, after the 1994 congressional elections, the lone item that one chief of legislative liaison in the Executive Branch could identify as the most critical foreign policy issue facing the United States was "who will be chairing the subcommittees of House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations."²⁹

Absent a strong committee chairman, individual members of Senate Foreign Relations from both parties attempted to stake out their own voice in the foreign policy arena either out of genuine concern for foreign policy as a whole or to position themselves for future leadership roles either within the Senate or the Executive Branch. The two primary examples of the "grand strategy" thinkers within the Senate are Joseph Biden (D.-Del.) and Richard Lugar (R.-In.). Their approaches to committee service are as opposite as their parties.

Biden sat on only one other committee besides Foreign Relations: the Senate Judiciary Committee, which he chaired. He saw no interrelationship between these two

²⁹Confidential interview.

committee positions and rather than using Foreign Relations as a means to deliver some constituency benefit to the state of Delaware, he sat on the committee because of a personal interest in foreign policy matters dating back to his college days. The same orientation applied, but based on an interest in law, obviously, to his seat on the Judiciary Committee.³⁰

Lugar also sat on only one other committee: Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, which he chairs in the 104th Congress. However, as foreign policy considerations were not at the forefront of constituent concerns, and representing an agricultural state, Lugar parlayed his Foreign Relations Committee seat to advance agricultural concerns through agricultural commodity exports.³¹ On foreign policy legislation reaching conference committee, he represented both the Foreign Relations Committee and the Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee. Unlike Biden, Lugar, as mentioned earlier, has actually chaired the Foreign Relations Committee. This experience is a major source of tension in the 104th Congress, as Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) is the new committee chairman.

Biden worked to develop his own foreign policy viewpoints into a broad strategic view of post-Cold War international relations and the U.S. role in them. He has

³⁰Confidential interview with staff assistant.

³¹Confidential interview with staff assistant.

used his chairmanship of the Subcommittee on Europe to keep regional crises like Bosnia in the media forefront. During 1992, in the waning days of the Bush Administration, Biden used the floor of the Senate to deliver a series of speeches on American foreign policy that were subsequently bound into a single volume titled, On the Threshold of the New World Order: The Wilsonian Vision and American Foreign Policy in the 1990's and Beyond.

Biden was unsatisfied with the Bush Administration's articulation of a "new world order," saying that they "have shown neither the aptitude nor the will to infuse this idea with meaning through a coherent agenda for action."³² His solution was to develop a strategy of "multilateral cooperation" in a number of endeavors that include science, education, peacekeeping, arms control, the environment, and technology transfer leading to economic growth. He outlined a "four-part American Agenda:

- directed, politically, at cementing the democratic foundation of a New World Order;
- directed, militarily, at protecting world peace through a new strategy of containment designed to stop the proliferation of dangerous weapons;
- directed, again militarily, at fortifying this containment strategy with an expanded commitment to secure the peace by collective military action where necessary; and finally,
- directed, in the economic-environmental realm,

³²Joseph Biden, "The American Agenda for the New World Order," On the Threshold of the New World Order: The Wilsonian Vision in the 1990's and Beyond, 17.

at launching a concerted, full-scale multilateral effort to promote - and reconcile - the broadening of global prosperity and the preservation of our global environment."³³

Supported by a range of objectives satisfying each part of the agenda, Biden's position is in keeping with what the Defense Department, in its most recent publication, calls the "national interest" with its satisfying objectives. Its significance is that Biden has at least advanced a vision from which a post-Cold War foreign policy debate can start. The chairman of the committee upon which Biden sat, Claiborne Pell, offered no such comparable vision.

Lugar addressed the 24th Annual Leadership Conference of the Center for the Study of the Presidency in Indianapolis on October 23, 1993 and specifically outlined ideas for an "American Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Period." In it, Lugar prescribed eight "Rules of the Foreign Policy Game." These were:

1. Tell the truth.
2. Understand, carefully observe and respect, and faithfully uphold the Constitution of the United States.
3. Bring into an administration the most able Americans who share the president's ideals, are loyal to the president, have public and private experiences which supplement those of the president, and who will be recognized by Congress and the American people as able "Big Leaguers."
4. Recognize that almost all Americans oppose any semblance of American imperialism and most oppose almost all intervention by this nation in foreign countries.
5. Even while the president remains a strong advocate for his personal worldview, as president

³³Ibid., 20.

he must maximize bipartisan support and frequently seek bipartisan consensus on foreign policy issues.

6. As a cardinal principle of American foreign policy, encourage American enthusiasm for assisting in the building of democratic institutions - free and fair elections, and civil and human rights.

7. Do not do secretly what could just as well be done publicly.

8. Do not enter into alliances, obligations, or even temporary commitments beyond the physical and economic capacity of the United States to fulfill.³⁴

Like Biden's presentation, Lugar's forms the starting point of a debate, even if it does bear striking similarities to Woodrow Wilson's beliefs. Unlike Biden, however, Lugar places the concept of American interests squarely within the post-Cold War environment. Discounting the notion that vital interests are "a function of geography and nuclear weapons,"³⁵ Lugar argues instead that interests should be classified in their broader context. The crisis in Bosnia is a "vital interest," he argues, because Europe as a whole is vital to the interests of the United States and that problems at the periphery will ultimately unravel the core,³⁶ perhaps for the third time this century.

The examples of both Lugar and Biden point to two competing challenges facing the Foreign Relations Committee:

³⁴Richard G. Lugar, "American Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Period," Presidential Studies Quarterly, Winter 1994, 17-22.

³⁵Ibid., 24.

³⁶Ibid., 25.

its role in a post-Cold War era and the absence of a strong chairman, majority and minority. While Biden and Lugar have offered theoretical starting points to specifying that role, there has been no succeeding follow-up on debating or implementing that foresight. The role of the chairman should be to establish and maintain an institutional climate to develop and advance such views. This is what the late Senator J. William Fulbright did so effectively. That committee subordinates have taken the initiative rather than the chairmen and ranking minority member strengthens and disseminates the perception that the Senate has lost, even temporarily, its ability to provide the president a "sense of Congress" on foreign policy matters.

The Role of Jesse Helms

The current chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms, has been a foreign policy wild card regardless of the president's political party affiliation. The media has criticized Helms as an impediment to the president's foreign policy during both Republican and Democratic administrations. The New York Times, for example, castigated Helms early in the Bush Administration, charging that the senator led a small but powerful group of colleagues in blocking key presidential appointments and hindering the president's efforts to

articulate foreign policy as it transformed from containment to an uncertain post-Cold War focus.³⁷

Three months later, Helms was a thorn in the side of both political parties, as he tried to derail the confirmation of Richard R. Burt as a U.S. strategic arms negotiator while simultaneously chastising Senate Democrats for their efforts to remove Donald P. Gregg as ambassador to South Korea.³⁸ While President Bush tried to make overtures to the newly-democratic governments of Poland and Hungary, through a \$125 million economic aid package, Helms wanted to block the president, earning him the title of "Senator No, As Usual" from the Atlanta Journal Constitution.³⁹ In that same month of July 1989, Helms tried unsuccessfully to stall efforts by the United States to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization, with the Senate voting to support President Bush.⁴⁰

Events in Panama soon dominated the foreign policy agenda. Then-Panamanian President Manuel Noriega survived an attempted coup in September 1989 and, according to Helms, subsequently executed the officer who had led the coup

³⁷"The First - Fearful - Hundred Days," The New York Times, Feb. 19, 1989, Sec. 4, p. 18.

³⁸Helen Dewar, "Testy Times at Foreign Relations," The Washington Post, May 18, 1989, p. a-23.

³⁹"Senator No, As Usual," Atlanta Journal Constitution, July 23, 1989, C-6.

⁴⁰James M. Dorsey, "Senate Refuses to Shun PLO," Washington Times, July 21, 1989, A-1.

against him. Helms' interest was the U.S. role in the coup and the general course of foreign policy in the region. Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney also experienced the brunt of Helms' wrath, with the North Carolina senator charging inaction and inattention throughout the Executive Branch. Cheney's involvement surfaced through Helms' contention that the Panamanian rebels had asked for U.S. assistance before and during the attempted coup, but that none was given.⁴¹ Cheney denied the charges. Within three months, American military forces invaded Panama to forcibly remove Noriega.

Helms' attitudes towards presidents and their foreign policy appears driven by the motivation to challenge chief executives whenever their views differ from his own. But because Helms has appeared reluctant to express a paradigm for foreign policy, knowing exactly the stimuli to which he will respond is problematic for any decision maker. Following the Panama invasion, Helms succeeded in removing Henry Kissinger from the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and tried to follow suit with former Senator John Tower.⁴² Helms also indiscriminately held up ambassador confirmations, such as George F. Jones'

⁴¹Thomas Shanker, "Cheney Dodges Growing Flak Over Uprising," Chicago Tribune, Oct. 6, 1989, Sec. 1, p. 24.

⁴²Jack Anderson, "Helms Got Kissinger Ousted from Board," The Washington Post, May 29, 1990, D-24. Tower later died in a plane crash.

appointment to Guyana.

As 1992 opened, the year of a presidential election, Helms fired virtually all of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's top Republican staff members. Apparently, within the committee staff, divisions were as rife between GOP factions as they were between Helms and President Bush. In this case, however, power struggles between the factions were leading to open arguments, crippling the ability of the staff to function as an organization.⁴³ None of the staff respondents even mentioned this episode during interviews.

With the general election approaching and at the height of the nominating convention season, Helms continued to express his displeasure towards U.S. foreign policy in Central America. In July 1992, he joined forces with Christopher Dodd (D-Ct.) in blocking confirmation of ambassadors to Nicaragua and El Salvador. What made the alliance so unusual was that the traditional relationship between Dodd and Helms was consistently marked by disagreement rather than anything approaching unison. This was apparently the first sign in the realm of foreign policy that, even despite party and ideological differences, Helms was willing to work with political opponents if he sensed some common ground between them. It would later characterize some of his interaction with the Clinton

⁴³Carleton R. Bryant, "Helms Cleans House in Senate Panel," The Washington Times, Jan. 8, 1992, A-3.

Administration when Helms became chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In the specific case of Central America, Helms was also trying to block U.S. foreign aid to Nicaragua, particularly because that country's president, Violeta Chamorro, was pursuing a policy of national reconciliation following the ouster of Communist President Daniel Ortega. If there was any predictability in Helms's actions, it was that he viewed former-Communist countries with a high degree of suspicion, thereby unwilling to concede them any U.S. assistance much beyond formal recognition.

After the general election, in which President Bush lost to Arkansas governor Bill Clinton, the outgoing administration unhinged Helms' office by releasing \$54 million of a \$104 million aid package targeted to Nicaragua. Capitol Hill conservatives denounced the move; the Nicaraguan government headquartered in Managua praised it.

A new presidential administration brought a new and fresh set of challenges (or opportunities) for Helms to advance his foreign policy views. Less than a month into President Clinton's term, Helms penned an op-ed column for The Washington Times outlining foreign policy challenges that would potentially confront the new president. Helms' primary concerns, as they were during the waning days of the Bush Administration, were in Central America. Ironically, Helms discussed ways in which the Democratic Party could

"pursue a renaissance (by rethinking) U.S. policy toward Latin America."⁴⁴ With the Democratic Party fresh from retaining control of both houses of Congress and regaining control of the White House, the type of "renaissance" envisioned by Helms at the time was odd.

It was not long, November 1993 to be exact, before Helms confronted the new administration publicly. Acting almost as if his party controlled the Senate and the Foreign Relations Committee, Helms challenged the Clinton Administration's policies towards Russia and the strong allegiances exhibited therein towards President Boris Yeltsin. Helms thought the administration too sanguine towards the former Soviet enclave, especially the new Russian military doctrine, which was to be displayed full force in Chechnya one year later. Helms also maintained his focus on Central America by filibustering the nomination of Robert Pastor to be ambassador to Panama. Pastor later withdrew his nomination, claiming it had been "sabotaged" by Helms.⁴⁵

Debate was soon raging in Congress and across the country concerning the nature and scope of U.S. intervention in Haiti. Helms used hearings in the Foreign Relations Committee to batter administration officials, especially

⁴⁴Jesse Helms, "Foreign policy pitfalls close to home," The Washington Times, Feb. 16, 1993.

⁴⁵Elizabeth Kurylo, "Carter aide gives up on envoy post," Atlanta Constitution, Jan. 31, 1995, A-4.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher. Concerned about human rights abuses by overthrown Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Helms challenged the sedate portrayal of Aristide and his democratic election by Christopher, likening Aristide's election to that of German dictator Adolph Hitler.

The midterm elections approached. The Republican Party sensed that it would gain control of at least the Senate, and in October 1994 drew up plans for committee leadership when and if the power transfer occurred.⁴⁶ When the Republicans gained control of both houses of Congress, the administration braced for an assault on its self-admitted weak spot of foreign policy. The elections threw the administration into disarray. Two days after the midterm elections, one administration official was stumped when asked what the most critical foreign policy issues facing the country were. After much silence, the only item the official could muster was "who will be chairing committees and subcommittees in Congress."⁴⁷

The aftermath of the elections crystallized Helms' foreign policy philosophy. His idea of fair game was anything that appeared soft on communism (this in the **post-Cold War** era), treaties that eroded U.S. sovereignty, and

⁴⁶Eric Planin, "Senate Republicans have menu ready if the tables turn," The Washington Post, Oct. 25, 1994, A-14.

⁴⁷Confidential interview with member of Vice-President Gore's staff, Nov. 10, 1994.

aid programs he believed siphoned tax dollars down "foreign rat holes."⁴⁸ He therefore emboldened and broadened his foreign policy considerations to include human rights conditions in China, joined by South Dakota Senator Larry Pressler, who also pushed for Tibetan freedom and better treatment for Taiwan.⁴⁹

This transpired all before Helms formally assumed control of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Both fellow senators and the media challenged his chairmanship that same month when he first questioned President Clinton's ability to serve properly as Commander-in-Chief and then suggested that the president would need "a bodyguard" if he visited North Carolina military bases. Nebraska Senator Bob Kerrey, a former presidential hopeful, and South Dakota Senator Thomas Daschle, both Democrats, urged the incoming Senate Majority Leader, Bob Dole (R-Ks.) to oppose Helms quest for the chair of Foreign Relations.⁵⁰ George Melloan commented in The Wall Street Journal that Senate Republicans, having given a great deal of thought to foreign

⁴⁸Terry Atlas, "White House braces for Helms' foreign policy," Chicago Tribune, Nov. 20, 1994, Sec. 1, p. 15.

⁴⁹"Washington Wire: Clashes loom," The Wall Street Journal, Nov. 18, 1994, A-15.

⁵⁰"Dole is pressed to block Helms' chairmanship," Boston Globe, Nov. 25, 1994, p. 19.

policy, "should try to sound like leaders, not gadflies."⁵¹ Former President Bush entered the fray by labeling Helms and former independent presidential candidate Ross Perot as "isolationists."⁵²

Once formally holding the chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, Helms, perhaps mindful of the furor created during the interim between the 1994 midterm elections and the commencement of the 104th Congress, became more civil in his dealings with colleagues as well as the administration. He did not, however, cease in advancing his own views and perspectives. While beginning to establish a rapport with Secretary of State Christopher, Helms embraced Christopher's idea to merge the Department of State, the Agency for International Development, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and the United States Information Agency into a single "Department of International Relations,"⁵³ taking his support to the pages of The Washington Post on, of all days, Valentine's Day.⁵⁴ Later, Helms advanced his own thoughts for foreign policy reorganization and agency

⁵¹George Melloan, "Global View: For Republicans too now, the world intrudes," The Wall Street Journal, Nov. 28, 1994, A-19.

⁵²"Bush warns U.S. against the rise of isolationism," The Los Angeles Times, Nov. 22, 1994, p. 16.

⁵³Thomas W. Lippman, "Helms outlines foreign policy reorganization," The Washington Post, Mar. 16, 1995, A-19.

⁵⁴Jesse Helms, "Christopher is right," The Washington Post, Feb. 14, 1995, A-15.

absorption into a new "revitalized" State Department.⁵⁵

If any truce has emerged between Helms and the Executive Branch, it may only be characterized as uneasy. Helms has a long history of confounding both Republican and Democratic administrations alike, with attitudes grounded in the Cold War that seem unlikely to be changed in spite of that war's end.

⁵⁵"Helms calls for merger of foreign policy agencies," The Wall Street Journal, Mar. 16, 1995, B-2.

CHAPTER 4
STAFF OPERATIONS

This chapter explores the personal and committee staffs of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Comparisons are made between personal staffs in the House and Senate as well as between the two foreign policy committees. Finally, an examination of how these staffs interact with the Executive Branch concludes the chapter. Particular attention is paid to staff behavior following a change in a committee chairman as well as staff behavior under the Bush and Clinton Administrations.

Overview

Committee staffs have at least a two-tiered hierarchy consisting of, at the top, the foreign policy expertise responsible for research and analysis. These are the primary positions of influence on the committee staff. At the lower level, the administrative and clerical staffs are responsible for office management and operations. Although the committee staffs, at first glance, appear to have large numbers the actual positions of influence comprised

approximately 50% of their total numbers during the Cold War. In a post-Cold War Congress, professional staff assistants have grown to well over two-thirds of the ranks.

It is within the ranks of this 67% that inter-committee differences are resolved for legislation requiring conference committees. When foreign aid legislation reaches the conference committee stage, the staff resolves 90-95% of differences between chambers, thereby allowing the elected members to use their time more efficiently by concentrating on a narrow range of issues before final congressional resolution.¹ This mirrors two recent studies of congressional staff activity. In "Partners in the Policymaking Process: Subcommittee Chairs and Senior Aides," Dr. Christine DeGregorio reported to the 1988 convention of the American Political Science Association that "staff members anticipate and place issues on the congressional agenda." A senior aide was quoted as saying:

Generally what we try to do is anticipate. For instance, there's a group of us on the committee who have been trying to get [the chairman] interested in [the issue. It will be a critical issue] and has the potential of eclipsing everything else on the front page...we want [the chair] to reframe the issue for the public.²

Susan Webb Hammond of American University, in "The

¹Confidential interviews with House and Senate committee and personal staffs, Sept. 1993, Dec. 1993.

²Quoted in Susan Hammond, "The Congressional Staff Network," in James C. Gaston, ed., Grand Strategy and the Decisionmaking Process (Washington: National Defense University Press, 1992), 301.

Congressional Staff Network," analyzed Congress's national security staff (of which the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Foreign Relations are a part) and observed:

One staff director reported that in preparing for markups he "prepares the chairman's draft,...and helps frame the parameters of debate." Another reports that he "negotiates on behalf of principals. I negotiate until I feel the principals are necessary." Staff are simply articulating what many in this audience know from first-hand experience: senior staff help identify and frame the issues, draft, legislation, and build coalitions at every stage of the legislative process.³

While the Democratic Party held clear House majorities in the 95th-103rd Congresses, the staff, particularly in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, pursued operations with a bipartisan mentality, a view echoed by both majority and minority chiefs of staff.

Cross-Chamber Committee Staff Differences

Differences between the staffs of the House and Senate foreign policy committees begin with each committee's rules. As has been stated previously, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's rules specifically charge the committee staff to be active and aggressive in its information gathering and disseminating processes. The rules governing the House Foreign Affairs Committee staff differ widely from the

³Ibid., 302.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee rules.

The House Foreign Affairs Committee, for example, establishes qualifications for at least some of the staff while the Foreign Relations Committee does not.

Specifically,

The staff shall include persons with training and experience in foreign affairs who have a variety of backgrounds and skills so as to make available to the Committee services of individuals who have a first-hand acquaintance with major countries and areas and with major aspects of U.S. overseas programs and operations.⁴

House rules are also much more specific about the appointment and remuneration of the staff. Both the committee chairman and the chief of staff may authorize staff assignments; generally, the chairman appoints the staff with the approval of a majority of the members voting in the affirmative. Removing staff, according to the rules, also requires a majority vote of the members. The rules grant exceptions to subcommittee staff assignments, where the subcommittee chairman and the ranking minority member of each subcommittee may appoint an individual "who shall serve at the pleasure of the subcommittee chairman" or "who shall serve at the pleasure of said Ranking Minority Member."⁵

During the 103rd Congress, 61 people were on the committee staff, with six staff members serving on each of

⁴Rules of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Jan. 6, 1993, 6.

⁵Ibid.

the subcommittees (with the exception of the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, which had five), for a total of 96 professional and clerical House Foreign Affairs Committee staff members. Of these 96, 68 either held the title "professional staff member" (49) or occupied professional or leadership positions, e.g. chiefs of staff, staff directors, and legal counsels.

Foreign Policy Committee Staff Growth

The committee staff has grown rapidly while the authorized members of the committee fluctuated only slightly. Foreign Affairs Committee membership oscillated from 34 to 45 representatives between 1973 and 1993. In the 93rd Congress, the Foreign Affairs Committee staff was comprised of but 34 legislative aides. Included were 17 staff or clerical assistants; rather than having "professional staff members," the committee instead employed "consultants," a concept carried through the 102nd Congress ending in 1991. The committee staff proper, in 1973, employed eight "staff consultants" and one chief of staff (with no consideration given to majority or minority status). Subcommittees did not have staffs. There were, instead, ten subcommittee consultants, one of whom worked as a committee consultant and another who served as a senior staff assistant, giving the committee a total of 17

professionals (50% of its total).

The explosion in the size of the Foreign Affairs Committee staff came with the 95th Congress beginning in 1977. This coincided with a return to unified government, but in subsequent periods of divided government, there was no concurrent dramatic growth or shrinkage in the size of the committee staff. It was, however, coincidental with a change in chairmanship from Thomas E. Morgan to Clement J. Zablocki in the 95th Congress. A change in the 99th Congress, from Zablocki to Dante Fascell, resulted in a net growth of but six staff members; the succession of Lee Hamilton in the 103rd Congress added but one. There was a specific delineation of majority and minority staff representatives on both the committee as a whole and the respective subcommittees; the staff doubled to 72 members.

During the succeeding Congress (1979-81), the committee added 11 additional aides; approximately 50% of the staff consisted of professionals. This Congress also marked the beginning of full time assignment to subcommittee staffs. In previous Congresses, staff members were assigned to the full committee staff and detailed to subcommittees; many staff members had more than one subcommittee assignment. The subcommittees established a common organizational framework consisting of a staff director, minority consultant, two staff associates (with one exception - the Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs), and a staff

assistant.

By the 102nd Congress (1989-91), the committee staff swelled to 102 members. The 103rd Congress added one additional staff aide. Trends in staff growth or contraction appear to follow no particular pattern.

Table 7 portrays House Foreign Affairs Committee staff growth from 93rd (1973-75) through the 103rd (1993-95) Congresses.⁶ The post-Cold War Congress maintains approximately the same staff size with a slight reduction in the total number of professionals. Those Congresses in boldface indicate Congresses in which there was a change in chairmanship.

The number of subcommittees is not a reliable predictor of adding staff. In fact, as the subcommittees decreased, the total number of committee staff aides actually increased.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff has also experienced growth, but not to the degree of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Like the House, the positions of influence with the committee staff in the 93rd Congress was with its "consultants." The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, however, began using the title "professional staff member" but one Congress later, beginning in 1975. The 1973-75 Foreign Relations Committee staff employed 42

⁶All figures taken from the Congressional Staff Directory for the beginning of each Congress.

Table 7 - House Foreign Affairs Committee Staff Growth
1973-1975 (93rd-103rd Congresses)

<u>Congress</u>	<u>House Members</u>	<u>Sub-committees</u>	<u>"Professionals"⁷</u>	<u>Staff Directors⁸</u>	<u>Others⁹</u>	<u>Staff Total¹⁰</u>
93	40	10	18	1	16	35
94	37	10	20	1	19	40
95	37	9 ¹¹	31	11	40	82
96	34	8	25	10	48	83
97	37	8	24	10	46	80
98	37	8	29	10	43	82
99	42	8	43	11	34	88
100	45	8	47	12	33	92
101	43	8	53	12	34	99
102	43	8	58	12	32	102
103	45	7	56	16	31	103

⁷Includes counsels. Before the 103rd Congress, "professional staff members" were called "consultants."

⁸Refers to Committee and Subcommittee, Majority and Minority.

⁹Includes staff associates and assistants.

¹⁰All calculations are based on published listings in each Congress's Congressional Staff Directory. In the 95th Congress, the Subcommittee on International Organizations created a special 11 member "sub-subcommittee" staff for "Investigation of United States - Korean Relations."

¹¹Includes the "sub-subcommittee" on Investigation of United States-Korean Relations.

aides, 16 of whom were the professional ranks.

By the 103rd Congress, 64 aides worked on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff, 32 of whom could be considered "professional," e.g., staff directors, deputy staff directors, counsels, and professional staff members. Table 8 portrays Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff growth.¹² Some of the numbers must be treated with a degree of caution. A vital part of any staff are the men and women who perform the routine clerical, secretarial, and research assistant duties. The 97th-101st Congresses, as reported in Congressional Staff Directories, did not regularly report the people holding those positions, while Congresses both before and afterwards did. Concentrating on the size of the total staff may be a misleading indicator. A more accurate gauge of staff growth or contraction may therefore lie in the number of reported "professionals" on the Foreign Relations Committee Staff during any one given Congress.

As was the case with the House Foreign Affairs Committee, no variable such as a chairman, authorized committee membership, or subcommittee composition consistently influences either the growth of the staff as a whole or the number of reported professionals. The first post-Cold War Congress saw a reduction of professionals by four and a cut in the total staff of 15. Those Congresses

¹²All figures taken from the Congressional Staff Directory for each Congress.

Table 8 - Senate Foreign Relations Committee Staff Growth
1973-1975 (93rd-103rd Congresses)

<u>Congress</u>	<u>Senate Members</u>	<u>Sub- committees</u>	<u>"Profes- sionals"¹³</u>	<u>Staff Directors¹⁴</u>	<u>Others¹⁵</u>	<u>Staff Total¹⁶</u>
93	17	10	17	1	24	42
94	17	10	21	2	31	54
95	16	9	23	1	30	64
96	15	7	15	2	35	52
97	17	7	26	2	8	36
98	17	7	26	3	9	38
99	17	6	25	3	2	30
100	20	7	21	4	1	26
101	19	7	17	4	2	23
102	18	7	28	4	36	68
103	19	7	24	4	25	53

¹³Includes counsels.

¹⁴Refers to Committee and Subcommittee, Majority and Minority.

¹⁵Includes staff associates and assistants.

¹⁶With the exception of the Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations, which had its own staff, subcommittee staffs consisted of 2-4 of the full committee's staff members detailed to that particular subcommittee. Beginning with the 103rd Congress, the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere and Peace Corps Affairs was the only subcommittee with a specifically delineated subcommittee staff, as reported in the Congressional Staff Directory.

in boldface indicate a change in chairmanship.

The return of unified government in 1977 (the 95th Congress) saw the Foreign Relations Committee staff increase its numbers by 10. Professionals increased their ranks by two. Four years later, when Republicans assumed control of the 97th Congress concurrent with the inauguration of a Republican president, the committee staff added 11 professionals (after a reduction of eight in the previous Congress). When the Democrats regained control of the Senate in the 100th Congress, professionals dropped by four, with their numbers fluctuating between 17 and 28 in succeeding Congresses.

No particular force appears to influence the number of professionals, other than crises on the immediate horizon which senators feel will be long term and more demanding of their time.¹⁷ Larger staffs may be a source of prestige to some senators, but the larger staffs also allow for more information gathering and better information available to members of the Senate.¹⁸ Committee work patterns during these periods of staff size change increase or decrease not based on the size of the staff, but instead on the prominence of a range of foreign policy events transpiring

¹⁷See more detailed discussion of staff growth as a result of the Gulf War in Chapter 5.

¹⁸Recall that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff also has the task of providing information to all members of the Senate and not just the members of the Committee.

at a given time. During a congressional recess, for example, staffs reduce their work load to a predictable eight hour day; while in session and especially during a crisis, the staff will routinely work long into almost every evening. This pattern was prominently evident while interviews were arranged with the staff.

A change of chairmen while the Democratic Party controlled the chamber happened in the 94th and 96th Congresses. The first occurrence, when J.W. Fulbright passed control to John Sparkman, saw a net gain of four professionals and 12 staff members overall. When Sparkman transferred leadership to Frank Church in 1979, however, professionals shrank by eight and the committee staff condensed by 12. The next Congress saw a change in party control of the Senate, and in the Foreign Relations Committee, Church passed the reins to Charles Percy. Professionals increased by 11. When it was the Republicans' turn for intra-party transfer of committee leadership, from Percy to Richard Lugar in the 99th Congress, staff professionals were reduced by one. Change in chamber party control transpired again in the 100th Congress beginning in 1987, and under Claiborne Pell's new chairmanship, professionals were further reduced by four, but promptly increased by 11 under his chairmanship in the 101st Congress. The only axiom that may be said with any degree of certainty about professionals on the Foreign Affairs

Committee staff is that their ranks are in close approximation to the number of senators serving on the committee. In one Congress, in fact, the number of professionals was actually less than the authorized committee membership. The ratio of senators to professionals is slightly greater than 1:1; it is only since the 100th Congress that professional staff members outnumbered representatives on the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

One common motivation drives all committee and personal staff members in a post-Cold War Congress: a long-time interest in international relations and the U.S. foreign policy process. I asked all personal and committee staff members who agreed to interviews their motivation for serving a member (personal staff) or members (committee staff) of a foreign policy committee. A sample of their responses are:

I've always had an interest in foreign affairs. I studied it as an undergraduate and received a Master's degree from a British University. I also served in the Peace Corps, and when I heard there was an opening on the senator's staff, I applied.¹⁹

I specialized in International Law, and I also worked on the senator's campaign. When he found out he was assigned to the Foreign Relations Committee, he called me and offered the position

¹⁹Confidential interview with personal staff assistant to a Senate Foreign Relations Committee member, Dec. 1993.

to be a foreign policy assistant.²⁰

I was hired [by the representative] due to our earlier work on local legislation [with foreign policy connections] when he was (a) lieutenant governor and I was an Assistant Attorney General.²¹

[The representative] has always had a big interest in foreign and international issues, and I had worked for him on many of those issues when he was a businessman before coming to Congress. I've got a Bachelor's and a Master's in international relations or foreign policy, so it's only natural that I would work for somebody like [the representative].²²

My whole professional study has been geared to global concerns. This is where I belong and where I can make the greatest contribution.²³

I've done foreign policy stuff both here and in the Executive Branch. It's what I love and what I do best.²⁴

Hey, I've been studying this and living it for years, on the Executive Branch side and on the congressional side, both over in the House and here. When you have as many years as I do in this arena, it starts to come natural and you'd be a fool not to take advantage of that kind of experience.²⁵

²⁰Confidential interview with personal staff assistant to a Senate Foreign Relations Committee member, Nov. 1994.

²¹Confidential interview with personal staff assistant to a House Foreign Affairs Committee member, Apr. 1995.

²²Confidential interview with personal staff assistant to a House Foreign Affairs Committee member.

²³Confidential interview with House Foreign Affairs Committee professional staff member, Sept. 1993.

²⁴Confidential interview with House Foreign Affairs Committee professional staff member, Dec. 1993.

²⁵Confidential interview with Senate Foreign Relations Committee professional staff member, Dec. 1993.

This interest, however, is not a cohesive bond, as interviews revealed immediate differences along ideological and party philosophy lines. The same problem that has plagued the members of the committees also bedevils the staff: during the Cold War, there was general agreement on the ends of foreign policy; the congressional dialectic concentrated on means. In a post-Cold War Congress, staff respondents showed little agreement on ends or means, either within a political party or across party lines.

Motivations for Service and Recruitment

Typically, foreign policy committee and personal staff members sought service therein because of a personal interest in foreign policy in general or furthering the development of U.S. foreign policy in particular. In responding to questions about service motivation, staff members consistently remarked that they had a high degree of interest in foreign affairs throughout their professional careers. It is this motivation that subsequently led to their recruitment to the congressional staff.

Recruitment occurred under a variety of conditions. Members of Congress generally followed one of three paths to selecting a personal foreign policy staff assistant: the aide worked in a campaign and had expertise in the area, the designated staff director recruited or hired a foreign

policy staff assistant²⁶, or a vacancy occurred on the committee member's personal staff.

In some rare instances, a member may directly appoint an individual to the committee staff without following the usual hiring process. These types of hires typically stem from a long-standing relationship between the aide and the member of Congress as well as a proven ability to manage congressional staff affairs. One current member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff, for example, was dismissed from his presidential-appointee position in the State Department following news of reports that he had searched passport files during the 1992 presidential campaign. He found records of Democratic nominee Bill Clinton's trip to Moscow while a student at Oxford University in 1968. Shortly after his dismissal, he was appointed to the Foreign Relations Committee staff by Senator Jesse Helms (R-N.C.).

Both the committees and the individual members of the foreign policy committees constantly receive resumes from prospective staff candidates throughout the calendar year, up to as many as ten a week for the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees. These are kept on file for 12 months and periodically reviewed when and if vacancies occur.

²⁶This usually happened when the member did not anticipate service on a foreign policy committee.

In the case of vacancies, the committee staff directors or the member's chief of staff examine the committees' representatives', or senators' needs vice the qualifications of prospective candidates. For committee staffs, position requirements mandate an exact area of expertise that automatically reduces the pool of eligible contenders. Whereas under Cold War conditions the staff had a schema in which to frame their actions, the rule in a post-Cold War Congress appears to be "generalists need not apply." Staff directors report that those desiring a committee staff position should have a regional and functional focus to their professional studies. An example cited in interviews was expertise in Middle East affairs and the politics of agricultural or oil imports and exports.

A senator's or representative's chief of staff handles personal staff vacancies in a somewhat different manner. The baseline for personal staff is not the specificity or uniqueness of the committee staff, but rather whether the prospective staffer's skills match the members' subcommittee assignments within the foreign policy committees, and occasionally, whether those skills match assignments on other committees or subcommittees. In this latter instance, a member's tendency to view congressional committee assignments as a "package deal" for constituency benefit determines the tone of the job search. Members who saw no relationship or bearing between their committee assignments

(e.g., a member that sits on the Foreign Affairs/Foreign Relations Committee and the Judiciary Committee) tended to look solely at the potential staff aide's foreign policy qualifications.

The recruiting process helps determine what drives the prospective staff assistant professionally, but it also seeks to ascertain whether the staff candidates are driven, specifically by ambition. Committee chiefs of staff generally are sensitive to, and say that they can discern, people who view staff assignments as a springboard to other, perhaps more powerful, positions in either the Legislative or Executive Branches.²⁷ These kinds of candidates are *persona non grata*. Reasons given by both majority and minority staff directors are that the nature of committee work is such that ambition obstructs and hinders, rather than contributes to, the work and mission of each chamber's foreign policy committee staff. If a potential staffer has the requisite qualifications for a position, but appears in a personal interview to view the position as a springboard to something else, chiefs of staff report that they attempt to discourage the candidate by offering an artificially low starting salary.²⁸ It should not be construed that foreign policy committee staff service pays particularly well for any newcomer. As one chief of staff observed:

²⁷Confidential interviews, September and December 1993.

²⁸Confidential interview.

We look for people who deal with issues, people who are issue background qualified. There are people desperately trying to get into the system, even though it pays a ridiculously low salary. I do see some stepping stone potential, but the salary range only goes up to \$80,900 a year. That may sound like a lot, but for Washington, D.C., it's really not. Some people start out here at \$25,000.²⁹

A candidate's personal ambition rarely, if ever, figures into a hiring decision when being selected for the personal staff. The personal staff's emphasis is to produce for members as well as perform a range of tasks that avoids putting the members they serve in embarrassing situations. While no one denied that successful service on a representative's or senator's personal staff would enhance future career prospects, all quickly pointed out that they were specifically expected to be proactive in their research duties to prevent the representative or senator from appearing inattentive to or unaware of international developments. The hiring practices of Congress enforce this mindset: staff assistants enjoyed little real job security and could be summarily dismissed for virtually any reason by either the member or the member's chief of staff.

Personal Staff Comparisons

What differences, if any, exist in personal staff attitudes within and across chambers? Based on interviews,

²⁹Confidential interview.

attitudes of personal staff assistants towards their work and how they see their service vary little. Differences across party and chamber, however, do arise on the subject of foreign policy in general.

Personal staff assistants do not see themselves as employees. Rather, they view themselves as "teammates" or "associates." An aide to a Republican member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, for example, used the teammate analogy during interviews. He stated that he was on a first name basis with the senator he served. In his foreign policy advisory capacity, he has interviewed and questioned witnesses before formal committee hearings and routinely researched issues pertaining to the senator's subcommittee assignments within the Foreign Relations Committee specifically, and broader issues facing the committee in general. Prior to a hearing, he usually conducted a five minute run-through with the senator concentrating on expectations and background. "It's not heavily scripted," he said. "The senator doesn't enjoy scripted appearances."³⁰ He also identified two dynamics to his service philosophy. "You have to figure out the boss's style and assume the persona of the member," he said. Additionally, the personal staff has a "behind closed doors" behavior and a behavior adopted "before open doors." Behind closed doors, this aide said, "is where I play devil's

³⁰Confidential interview.

advocate. But it's never contentious."³¹

Assistants to Republican senators indicated that they are counted upon to use initiative, within the sometimes fuzzy bounds of acceptable behavior as defined by the Republican senator. In one aide's estimation,

If you work around here long enough, you begin to understand what's acceptable and what's not. The bottom line is that nothing you do can end up embarrassing the senator. You pretty much know what you can and can't do. He doesn't have to tell me.³²

Aides to Democratic senators reported taking a slightly different attitude towards their advisory role. Instead of the ongoing face-to-face conversations that occur in the offices of Republican senators, Democratic senators appear to have more formalized procedures in place for their staffs. All foreign policy staff assistants to Democratic senators interviewed stated that they routinely use formal, written memos to their senators to inform or advise them on international relations matters. Aides to Republican senators reported that their communications are all oral. Democratic senators also counted on their staff aides to be independent thinkers and not afraid to take a position contrary to the senators they serve. "I'm not a yes person," said one aide, "and (the senator) doesn't want me to be one. He counts on there being a dialogue with

³¹Confidential interview.

³²Confidential interview, Sept. 1993.

different viewpoints."³³

Democratic senators on the Foreign Relations Committee, according to their staffs, kept a short leash on their foreign policy personal staff. "Everything we do must be done with (the senator's) prior knowledge and approval," said one. "He knows what we're doing every step of the way."³⁴

Personal staff assistants to members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee identified the focus of their research as on specific foreign policy issues, stemming in part from the nature of the members' constituencies. Because they represent a much more geographically and socio-economically confined audience than their counterparts in the Senate, House members and their personal staffs tended to concentrate on foreign policy specifics rather than the broad, arching themes traditionally the responsibility of the Senate.

Staff assistants to Republican representatives on the Foreign Affairs Committee, like their counterparts in the Senate, interact routinely with the State Department but sporadically with the White House. While there are generally no differences across party lines regarding dissatisfaction with the White House approach to foreign policy, the intensity of that dissatisfaction is greater

³³Confidential interview.

³⁴Confidential interview, December 1993.

with aides to House Republicans than with aides to House Democrats. These aides also identified that the locus to their research is on district-specific foreign policy issues, such as Israel-based questions or immigration policy, with only some of their effort devoted to broader themes. This latter instance typically occurs when the foreign policy committees move towards conference committee actions.

Long-standing personal staffers to GOP representatives consistently yearned for the climate of the Bush Administration, where "the White House was timely and efficient in their responses"³⁵ to House inquiries. These staff aides identified a void of in-depth answers foreign policy questions and a time lapse of two to three weeks from inquiry to response.

Aides to Democratic representatives are also constituency- or specific issue-based in their foreign policy activity, but their behavior tended to reflect more of a factionalization characteristic to the House as a whole. This trend is particularly predominant among minority representatives, where the philosophy of representation embraces not only the district but also the members' ethnic group for the nation as a whole.³⁶

³⁵Confidential interview, Oct. 1994.

³⁶Confidential interview with House Foreign Affairs Committee member and members' personal staff assistants.

Attitudes are the reverse of Republican House staff aides: Democratic staff assistants feel that they receive an extremely positive response from the White House on their specific foreign policy concerns, but consider the State Department as distinctly unresponsive.

Information Gathering

Regardless of where staff aides work, either on the personal staff for a specific member of Congress or on one of the foreign policy committee staffs, all have, as a primarily responsibility, information gathering. Information gathering can be classified as either active or passive. Staff members participate in active information gathering when they are responsible, either solely or as a designated team, for researching information on behalf of members. This research may be either at the direction of the member or in anticipation of possible committee actions. In this regard, virtually all staff members viewed themselves as mostly proactive in their activities, but with a slight mixture of being reactive to members' concerns, especially on international issues that assume a sudden prominence. These issues are typically generated through front-page treatment in one of the country's major newspapers, such as the Washington Post or The New York Times. Additionally, constituency blocs occasionally

contact their representatives on "hot" issues that may not remain prominent for any significant period of time, but nonetheless mandate representatives to take some position. A frequently cited example was immigration.

Passive information gathering involves little, if any, energy on the part of the staff, as this type of information is delivered to them, either as part of a printed package or through meetings with groups of individuals. This is normally associated with interest group activities, and while the personal staff consistently reported that, overall, foreign policy interest among their constituents was consistently low, interest group involvement in the foreign policy process is a regular part of the staffs' regimen. Locally, an occasional foreign policy issue can motivate constituents to make concerted efforts to influence their representatives. Such issues are those that public has difficulty escaping, such as a chamber vote on the North American Free Trade Agreement or the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade treaty.

Cross-Chamber Communication

Cross-chamber communication between the staffs of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House Foreign Affairs Committee is sporadic. While staff directors may communicate once weekly, there are no regular meetings

between committee or personal staff members, save for occasional telephone conversations. In spite of this, staff leadership reports that the respective House and Senate committee staffs may work out 90-95% of differences between House and Senate versions of legislation before the members formally begin conference committee proceedings.³⁷

Cross-chamber staff communication steadily increases as the formal conference committee nears. The degree to which the personal staff gets involved rests on whether their senators actually have a seat at the table. The committee staffs, meanwhile, designate four to five professional staff members to follow the progress of bills through to passage and prior to commencement of the conference committee. Compounding their efforts has been the politics of foreign policy legislation in both chambers. Due to the legislative requirements of the foreign operations appropriations bills, conference committees must have delegates from the House Banking Committee and Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee. In the Senate's case, this does not pose any particular problems; Richard Lugar sits on both committees and does, in fact, represent both on conference committee hearings.

The House does not work to ensure this kind of continuity. While seven Foreign Affairs Committee members

³⁷Confidential interviews with staff directors and personal staff aides.

serve also on the House Banking Committee, none represent the interests of both committees when foreign appropriations legislation reaches conference committee. The Banking Committee sends a representative who is not a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee. This causes tremendous problems at the outset, for the Foreign Affairs Committee staff, who must now bring "on board" individuals who have had little, if any, contact or expertise with the legislation beforehand. Despite these hurdles, committee staff members and directors reported that they were able to work out at least 90% and usually 95% of differences between House and Senate differences in State Department Authorization Bills before the members of Congress actually began formal conference committee proceedings.³⁸

Personal staff assistants usually play a diminished role in the conference committee process unless their member has a prominent seat at the table. If the member does not have a seat on the conference committee, personal staff assistants reported that they didn't have a role at all. When the member received a conference committee assignment, the responsibility of the personal staff assistants was to ensure that they briefed their members on the committee agenda and that the members had the necessary and proper documents. Members funneled any legislative amendments they

³⁸Confidential interviews with foreign policy committee staff directors, Sept. 1993 and Dec. 1993.

sponsored through their personal staff assistant, who in turn would pass it to the committee staff, who would negotiate with the committee staff of the opposing chamber.³⁹

The leverage granted to staff prior to these proceedings rests on two variables that are always dynamic and never static: specific instructions given to the staff by members, particularly the majority and minority committee chairs, and an undefinable feeling that exists between the staff and the chairs based on the longevity of the relationship. In this regard, staff indeed operates as described by Malbin in Unelected Representatives, however each staff member interviewed realizes that overstepping the bounds of acceptable conduct in the members' names may quickly result in job loss. As one staff member told me,

This may sound ridiculous, but I can literally be fired if I wore the wrong colored tie to work. A senator's trust of an individual staffer is context specific. It's based on the traits of the individual senator. There's a difference between helping the senator and advancing his or your agenda. You always have to seek the senator's approval.⁴⁰

Information sharing is more routine between personal and committee staff members in the same chamber and in the same political party, e.g. the foreign policy/affairs personal staff member of a Democratic representative and the

³⁹Confidential interview with personal staff assistants, Oct. 1994.

⁴⁰Confidential interview.

majority staff leadership of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. This type of interaction is routine and ongoing, but it peaks concurrently with subcommittee or committee hearings. On some occasions, the personal staff member may represent the representative or senator at committee hearings, and has conducted hearings in congressmen's absences.

The staff is on shaky ground when acting in this capacity, and as implied earlier, the degree of their freedom of action is based solely on the amount of rope extended them by the member of Congress. While none of the staff interviewed thinks of themselves as overstepping their authority, they are quick to identify those they perceive who do. Not surprisingly, those who are perceived as "freelancers" by others do not think of themselves in a similar light.

Interaction with the Executive Branch

Foreign policy committee staffs have varying degrees of interaction with the Executive Branch. Contacts are not limited solely to the Department of State, even though that agency does constitute the lion's share of foreign policy committee scrutiny. House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations members and staff also routinely associate with the Department of Defense and Central Intelligence

Agency. Other cabinet departments, such as Treasury and Energy, may also infrequently come into direct contact with the foreign policy committees. Members and staff aides of both parties in both chambers also reported speaking directly with the White House on a somewhat regular basis, but congressional Republicans commented that it was significantly less frequently than congressional Democrats and certainly less frequently than when a Republican president occupied the White House. Even congressional Democrats and their aides commented that their primary interaction was with the State Department, and not the White House directly.

At the start of the 103rd Congress, interaction with the Executive Branch was constant, but this was an effort led by Congress, not the Clinton Administration. According to one senior staff member, the general impression within both the House and Senate was that the administration took the party control of each chamber for granted, or at least seriously underestimated the ramifications of that party control. Consequently, the Clinton team proceeded as if each chamber would fall in line with the administration's desires, in essence abandoning any consultative role.

It may be argued that, at least in foreign policy, Congress had become spoiled by the Reagan and Bush administrations. During those years of divided government, Republican presidents advanced their foreign policy agendas

through weekly contacts with Congress, informally through memoranda exchanges or formally through committee and subcommittee testimony. The impression within the foreign policy committees was that this was brought to an abrupt halt by the Clinton administration, the result being that questionable foreign policy ventures, when undertaken, often caught Congress completely by surprise. The perception of ineffectiveness by Congress was exacerbated through the media, capitalized by open criticism in The New York Times by a member of the president's own party sitting on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Frank McCloskey (D-In.). In this case, the staff certainly shared their members' concerns.

The National Security Council staff remarked that their interaction with the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee was not markedly different in Republican or Democratic administrations. Interestingly, the staffs of these congressional committees noted major changes in interaction, particularly in the frequency and depth of contacts. In Republican administrations, the president and cabinet sent "delegates" on an almost weekly basis. The reason given was that with majority control of Congress usually resting in the hands of Democrats, a greater degree of consultation and contact was needed by the president to generate support for foreign policy proposals. The NSC staff views its duties in a

parochially nonpartisan fashion. Staff members feel their first and only loyalty is to the president's foreign policy agenda, therefore, during interviews, they were extremely loyal to President Clinton in their perspectives and work attitudes. Even under the protection of confidentiality, however, a fascinating trend emerged: the farther a foreign policy agency included in this study was physically removed from the White House, the freer respondents felt to take major issue with the president's prosecution of foreign policy.

The Executive Branch respondents were united on one perception regarding Congress that crossed partisan control of the Executive and Legislative Branches. Because of constitutional structure, primary consideration and attention to foreign policy matters is automatically granted first to the Senate. The House of Representatives is looked at by the White House to generate *popular* support. Usually one of three strategies is employed by the White House. A foreign policy matter, and the Executive Branch's perception of it, will first be "sold" in the Senate before it is sent to the House (unless it is an appropriations matter, which by convention is reserved first to the House of Representatives). The second strategy is to "sell" the matter to both houses simultaneously. The third strategy, and this is a rare happenstance, is to "sell" the policy to the House first because of primary interest in the House,

and then move it to the Senate agenda. This last strategy occurred in the buildup to sending U.S. forces to Haiti, particularly with the involvement of the Congressional Black Caucus.

The National Interest and Critical Issues

Regardless of whether the staff aide worked on committee or as a personal assistant, or whether it was for Democratic or Republican members, every staff member interviewed had at least some difficulty articulating ideas of what constituted the national interest, even more so when they were called upon to identify their members' conceptions of the national interest. Periods of up to 60 seconds before a response was even started were not uncommon. Nor could the staff easily construct a formula they used to determine whether or not an issue was or was not in the U.S. national interest. In one instance, a personal staff assistant stated that he used

a humanitarian approach to the national interest. We also consider what's good for people and humanity, not just people as Americans.⁴¹

This aide was not able to state further, though, exactly what a "humanitarian approach" meant.

Opinions on critical issues facing U.S. foreign policy or the foreign policy committees were as diverse and wide

⁴¹Confidential interview, Jan. 1995.

ranging as representatives' and senators', with no common thread uniting them, by party or chamber. It was a few staff assistants in the House and not in the Senate that identified the course of U.S. foreign policy in a post-Cold War era as a major concern. Like the members they serve, little geographic thinking could be found in the range of responses.

The consequences for the staff are as devastating as they are for the members of Congress. Without any orientation to the ends or objectives of U.S. foreign policy, either for a committee staff as a whole or within the realm of an individual member's office, the staff places itself in a reactive mode to world developments regardless of the amount of proactivity each of them professes to claim.

When this happens (and in the post-Cold War Congress, it appears to be the rule and not the exception), staff assistants, like the members they serve, move from and react to an unending stream of events without any overarching premise to their operations or behavior. Further exacerbating the problem has been the "balkanization" of Congress, particularly in the House of Representatives. As representatives and their staffs work to advance a narrow set of issues on behalf of a particular constituency, real debate on post-Cold War foreign policy stops until the particular issue is resolved on a member's behalf.

But this discussion never resumes. Absent any discussion on post-Cold War foreign policy, either its ends or means, both the Executive and Legislative Branches will continue to react to international developments as they occur, rather than having some set plan in place providing the branches of government with an intellectual framework to confront such developments.

The staffs therefore mirror the members they serve. There is little, if any, chamber approach to foreign policy; it is, instead, competition between over 60 schools of foreign policy thought that assume prominence based solely on the prominence one member or one bloc of members may bring to an issue at any given time.

CHAPTER 5
THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

This chapter examines the personalities of the two committee chairmen, particularly in the context of a post-Cold War Congress. It also explores their respective leadership styles and seeks to answer the question of why, in the post-Cold War era, leadership was more assertive in a committee with no constitutional foreign policy role while it was surrendered in a committee that prides itself on its constitutional functions. How have the institutions of Congress and agencies within the Executive Branch responded to these styles, and how have the members of the committees responded? Both chairmen have had to contend with foreign policy entrepreneurs or foreign policy "freelancers" on their committees, therefore of note will be an exploration of how the chairmen manage, or do not manage, committee rogues.

Comparisons between the chairmen of the congressional foreign policy committees are studies in contrasts. In the House of Representatives, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Lee Hamilton, took an aggressive posture to his duties. In the Senate, however, the Foreign Relations Committee chairman, Claiborne Pell, took a

Reaganesque hands-off approach to committee chairmanship. The result had far-reaching implications.

Under Hamilton's leadership, the House Foreign Affairs Committee, which has no constitutional role in the foreign policy process, became the focal point for a congressional "sense" on international relations issues for decision makers in the Executive Branch. Meanwhile, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in general and Pell in particular were viewed with decreasing credibility in both houses of Congress and throughout the Executive Branch.

Hamilton's ascendance coincided with the dawn of a post-Cold War Congress; Pell's conscientious decision to abdicate traditional chairman duties to subcommittee chairmen had its roots long before the Cold War was laid to rest. Both committee chairmen were members of long standing in their respective chambers. Both chairmen were also members of long standing on the foreign policy committees. While Hamilton's experience was solely in the context of a House of Representatives controlled by the Democratic Party, Pell lived under both Democratic and Republican control of the Senate. While chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Hamilton was a "regular" on televised news programs on all four networks; Pell never made an appearance as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, allowing such subcommittee chairmen as Joseph Biden to express his perception of the "sense of the Senate"

on foreign policy matters.

So great was Hamilton's influence in foreign policy matters that he was considered as a potential vice-presidential candidate in 1992 to shore up Bill Clinton's perceived weaknesses in international relations. His removal from consideration coincided with an opinion he expressed on a Supreme Court ruling over a Pennsylvania abortion law.¹

Lee Hamilton

Indiana's Ninth Congressional District embraces the south and southeast portions of the state along the Ohio River. According to 1990 census data, 544,873 citizens call the district home, placing it slightly below the national average of 575,000 citizens per congressional district. It has a very small minority population, 2% Black, and its politics usually lean towards the Democratic Party.

Lee Hamilton has represented the district since 1965. He was born April 20, 1931 in Daytona Beach, Florida, and graduated from Depauw University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1952. He then studied at the Goethe Institute in Frankfurt, Germany 1952-53, followed by law school at the Indiana University. Hamilton was awarded the J.D. degree from that institution in 1956. He practiced law until he

¹See more detailed discussion beginning p. 157

won election to the House in 1964. Since then he regularly enjoyed large reelection margins of victory, running as high as 35%, over his Republican rivals. In the 1994 election, however, he won reelection by only a few percentage points.

Hamilton became a subcommittee chairman in 1973, when he led the Foreign Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on Near East and South Asia. During this 93rd Congress, he also sat on the Subcommittees on Asian and Pacific Affairs and Europe. Through succeeding subcommittee chairmanships, he subsequently led the Committee's Subcommittee on Investigations (1975-77) and then the Europe and the Middle East subcommittee from 1977 to the conclusion of the 103rd Congress. He kept this subcommittee chairmanship while serving as overall chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Concurrent with these subcommittee chairmanships, Hamilton was a member of a variety of other subcommittees on Foreign Affairs. These included International Economic Policy (1975-77), International Organizations (1977-79), International Security and Scientific Affairs (1979-85), Arms Control, International Security, and Science (1985-89), and Human Rights and International Organizations (1991-93). In the 101st Congress, Hamilton had no other subcommittee assignments or duties other than chairing Europe and the Middle East; committee rules stipulated that committee chairs and ranking minority members are *ex officio* members

of all subcommittees.² Therefore, while the Foreign Affairs Committee chairman (1993-95), Hamilton also held a seat on its seven subcommittees.

Hamilton called for reform in foreign policy in light of the end of the Cold War in April 1992. Specifically, he issued a challenge to the Bush Administration via an op-ed piece in The Washington Post calling for changes to document classification guidelines precisely because of the end of the Cold War. Reasons given by Hamilton included undermining of U.S. national security (due to the resources invested to maintain secrecy), decrease in accountability because of overclassification, protection of administration positions instead of protection of national security, impeding the free exchange of information, and cost.³

By June of that year, Hamilton was openly mentioned in the media as the successor to Dante Fascell as chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Fascell had been a member of Congress for 38 years. At least one columnist placed Hamilton in the same league regarding foreign policy matters as J.W. Fulbright and Mike Mansfield. This was most unusual in that those two were senators whereas Hamilton was a representative.⁴ One month later, Leslie H. Gelb pondered

²1993 Congressional Staff Directory, 713.

³Lee H. Hamilton, "The Costs of Too Much Secrecy," The Washington Post, Apr. 13, 1992, A-21.

⁴David E. Rosenbaum, "Turnovers: The Talk of the House," The New York Times, June 2, 1992, A-12.

whether a then-hypothetical chairmanship would issue in "A Hamilton Era".⁵ In Gelb's estimation, the House Foreign Affairs Committee, under Hamilton, would be in a much better position to contribute to the formulation of foreign policy as it would no longer be a "rubber stamp," engaged primarily in "helping out the White House."⁶ Gelb also mentioned Hamilton as a potential vice-presidential nominee.

That status changed four days later. The issue was abortion and the Supreme Court's upholding of a Pennsylvania law placing restrictions on it. Appearing on the NBC news program, "Meet the Press," Hamilton stated that he was "comfortable" with the ruling. He also commented

That case upheld *Roe v. Wade* and the right of the woman to make the ultimate decision, but it also upheld some restrictions on that decision so that if those restrictions did not constitute an undue burden on the woman, they were okay...I think it is perfectly appropriate to put some restraint on a woman seeking an abortion. That makes sense to me.⁷

The comment cost him any chance of a vice-presidential spot on the ticket, especially as it came just before the 1992 Democratic National Convention in New York City. Some reported that Hamilton had the Number Two spot locked up until the remark. According to Rowland Evans and Robert

⁵Leslie H. Gelb, "A Hamilton Era?", The New York Times, July 2, 1992, A-19.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Dan Balz, "Hamilton Gives Views On Abortion," The Washington Post, July 6, 1992, A-6.

Novak, an official of Clinton's campaign stated that "Lee will never know how close he came."⁸ Hamilton could not shake the abortion specter, as it would be used as an issue again in his reelection contest in his home district. Although his Republican opponent, Michael Bailey, gained national notoriety for the graphic nature of anti-abortion ads, Hamilton won by a comfortable margin.

Free of the burden of being on his party's national ticket, Hamilton was able to concentrate on foreign affairs. He continued to be a regular contributor to the commentary pages of The Christian Science Monitor, and following the November general election, when his status as the next chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee was not yet finally resolved, he contributed to foreign policy discourse by publicly outlining the course of Congress regarding U.S. troop deployments to Somalia.

He proclaimed that a congressional resolution on the deployment "(would) be the first order of business"⁹ so that the extraction of forces would be as precise and soon as the insertion. His primary concern was to fix a target date for the withdrawal so that "the mission not be allowed to drag on."¹⁰

⁸Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "Flunking the Litmus Test, The Washington Post, July 13, 1992, A-19.

⁹Walter Pincus, "Lawmaker: 'Define the Mission,' The Washington Post, A-7.

¹⁰Ibid.

Immediately after President Clinton's inauguration, Hamilton, now firmly in place as Foreign Affairs Committee chairman, published a column in The Christian Science Monitor calling for a new dialogue between the White House and Congress on foreign policy matters. Despite Clinton's claim during the campaign that Americans wanted "a president who spends more time on domestic policy than he does on foreign policy," Hamilton stated the contrary, that "it is clear that the next administration will need to devote considerable attention to foreign policy."¹¹ He was especially pointed on the nature of consultation.

One of things Congress can do, Hamilton wrote, is to "win public support for U.S. foreign policy. A foreign policy cannot be sustained for the long haul without the support of the American people, and congressional backing is perhaps the most important test of that public support."¹² He expressed frustration with previous attempts at consultation, calling them usually a matter of "too little, too late," and identifying it as a source of frequent congressional frustration as "it reduces their [congressmen's] opportunity to influence policymaking."¹³ Hamilton implied that consultation does not necessarily mean

¹¹Lee H. Hamilton, "President, Congress Need Dialogue," The Christian Science Monitor, Jan. 21, 1993, 19.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

approval, although that was unquestionably a goal. The purpose of consultation, he maintained, was "to obtain the advice of Congress before a final decision is made or an action is carried out."¹⁴ It "requires sustained contact with many members and committees in Congress" and "involves a large commitment of time and resources."¹⁵ Most importantly, he used these arguments to call for some measure of institutional reform within the Executive Branch, which he argued "needs special and probably separate units within the White House and the State Department dedicated to consultation."¹⁶

The public dialogue he initiated through the pages of The Christian Science Monitor continued with opinion pieces on how the U.S. could cooperate with the United Nations in resolving the Bosnian crisis and measures the U.S. could take to advance domestic democratic reforms within China.

He added The New York Times to his list in April 1993, commenting on the appropriateness of air strikes in Bosnia. There he stated his position as one who favored a negotiated settlement to the conflict overall, but in the interim would apply a tightening of sanctions and diplomatic isolation of the Serbs. He would support military options only if "other

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid.

measures fail - and if an allied consensus fails."¹⁷

By November 1993, there was an apparent reversal in his approach to Somalia. At the year's beginning, he had strongly favored specificity in the U.S. mission in the region, with fixed objectives and an appropriate removal date. Now he was fighting off a Republican attempt to bring them home at the end of the next January. Hamilton had stated in December 1992 that "I don't expect Congress to pick a date for the troops to be out, but I hope we can say we expect the mission to be accomplished by some date."¹⁸ Events in Somalia in October 1993 had placed both Congress and the administration in a state approaching crisis. U.S. soldiers had been killed with their corpses graphically portrayed on network television. According to one administration official,

No one in the White House knew what to do. The President called a meeting for that Sunday, and for the next six hours you had Clinton, Gore, (Secretary of State) Christopher, (Secretary of Defense) Aspin, and (National Security Adviser) Lake sitting in a circle with people going in and out all the time. They sat around the whole time looking at each other asking what they should do, if there was anyone that knew anything about the country, and finally someone remembered that Bob Oakley had served in Somalia during the Bush Administration. They called him in behind closed doors, and when he emerged, he was special envoy

¹⁷Lee H. Hamilton, "Air Strikes? Not Yet," The New York Times, Apr. 24, 1993, L-23.

¹⁸Walter Pincus, "Lawmaker: 'Define the Mission,'" The Washington Post, Dec. 4, 1992, A-7.

again.¹⁹

The congressional response to the massacre was to begin something approaching an immediate pullout. The debate fell, remarkably, along partisan lines rather than strategic considerations. Republicans favored a January 31, 1994 removal; Democrats opted for March 31. Support, or lack of it, was debated within the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and by the slimmest of margins, a 22-21 vote, the committee sided with the March date. Hamilton's stated position following the vote oriented along humanitarian lines. "If we pull the plug now, the outcome will be starvation."²⁰

The White House was, at least publicly, ignoring Hamilton's calls for greater consultation. At a breakfast sponsored by The Christian Science Monitor in February 1994, he expressed frustration that people in the administration were not speaking with a unified voice on foreign affairs, particularly in regard to Russian policy. While he acknowledged that Clinton had enjoyed "remarkable successes," specifically the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement, he was also concerned that the president and Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott gave conflicting views on a "personality driven" foreign policy

¹⁹Personal and confidential interviews, Dec. 1993.

²⁰Reuters, "Clinton Troop Plan Backed," The New York Times, Nov. 4, 1993, A-5.

with the likes of Russian president Boris Yeltsin.²¹

Hamilton then turned his attention to nuclear issues, specifically concerning North Korea and Pakistan. He called for the United States to maintain its resolve in standing up to North Korea's intention to withdraw from the provisions of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (and all of its ramifications), asserting that "military measures must not be ruled out."²² He then called for reconsideration of nonproliferation policy as applied to Pakistan, fearing that the 1985 Pressler Amendment, which outlawed "most U.S. aid to Pakistan unless the President certifies that Pakistan does not possess a nuclear explosive device."²³ Hamilton did not say that the U.S. should abandon its policy and goals, but rather that the policy be revised to "pursue attainable ones."²⁴

Even when the administration was under fire, Hamilton occasionally came to its rescue. He supported Secretary of State Warren Christopher through the pages of The Washington Post following Christopher's March 1994 trip to Beijing, China. While the Chinese were, in Hamilton's words,

²¹Marshall Ingwerson, "Hamilton Sorts Out Confusing Signals," The Christian Science Monitor, Feb. 4, 1994.

²²Lee Hamilton, "No More Hide And Seek in North Korea," The Christian Science Monitor, Feb. 10, 1994, 19.

²³Lee H. Hamilton, "Bomb Scares," The New York Times, Feb. 22, 1994, A-18.

²⁴Ibid.

"bullying" Christopher, the administration nonetheless made some progress in human rights goals by tying them to Most Favored Nation (MFN) trade status. Christopher was able to get concessions from the Chinese on a number of human rights considerations, according to Hamilton, calling the president's China policy "neither a charade nor an effort to bring down the Chinese government. It is, instead, the key that will open the door to a cooperative and stable relationship with the United States, including extension of MFN."²⁵

Hamilton introduced a new theme into his repertoire by summer. The issue was peacekeeping and the United States' relation to the United Nations in that matter. His model for success was the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO), a force in place in the Sinai Desert since 1982. While freely admitting that "public opinion (had) soured on United Nations peacekeeping operations,"²⁶ the MFO was successful because

First, (it) shows there is no substitute for a peace agreement...Second, because the MFO operates outside the U.N. system, it has been innovative in important ways that U.N. peacekeeping should emulate...Third, the MFO can hire its own staff, and has hired top-notch people, without concerns about U.N.-style nationality quotas...Fourth, MFO operations are conducted in full view of all parties...Finally, the MFO works because of U.S.

²⁵Lee H. Hamilton, "Give Christopher Credit," The Washington Post, Mar. 30, 1994, A-19.

²⁶Lee H. Hamilton, "Peacekeeping That Works," The Christian Science Monitor, June 30, 1994, 18.

leadership.²⁷

Despite support for MFO-styled operations at some point in the future, the issue of U.S. unilateral action was again at hand by September 1994. The country was Haiti.

Taking a position counter to fellow Hoosier Senator Richard Lugar, Hamilton stated publicly that "he believed both Congress and the public would support an invasion."²⁸ The invasion later became a matter of credibility, and not of public support. Addressing a breakfast sponsored by The Christian Science Monitor, Hamilton openly expressed frustration at the lack of consultation on the part of the administration, saying that "in general, members [of Congress] are not pleased with the level of consultation."²⁹ U.S. credibility was already low, he conceded.

Do we mean what we say? If we don't mean what we say, our credibility suffers...What would that tell the world about American foreign policy?...I think there is a reluctance of the president to articulate American foreign policy.³⁰

Following the loss of party control of the House of Representatives, and in the waning days of his chairmanship, Hamilton's focus was on North Korea. He threatened that

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Eric Schmitt, "Legislators in U.S. Differ Over Haiti," The New York Times, Sept. 1, 1994.

²⁹Marshall Ingwerson, "Hamilton: U.S. Must Invade To Maintain 'Credibility,'" The Christian Science Monitor, Sept. 15, 1994.

³⁰Ibid.

Congress would block a \$5 million oil shipment if North Korea did not release Chief Warrant Officer Bobby Hall, an American helicopter pilot shot down by the North Koreans. He also hinted that the Hall affair would negatively impact recent U.S. North Korea accords on nuclear matters.

Hamilton said,

If this airman is not returned, then it is bound to have a negative impact on our relationship with North Korea, and it's bound to have a negative impact on the attitude of the Congress toward this agreement.³¹

Earlier, Hamilton praised the administration's "nuclear deal" with North Korea. Hamilton called it a "major contribution to stability in Northeast Asia and the security of our key allies, South Korea and Japan,"³² saying that the agreement froze North Korea's weapons program, provided for dismantling of all processing facilities, and halted "nuclear equipment for the light-water reactor project it clearly wants until it allows 'special inspections' by the International Atomic Energy Agency to determine how much plutonium North Korea produced in the past."³³ Trying to install a long range focus to the foreign policy process, Hamilton reminded his audience that

³¹Stanley Meisler, "U.S. May Block North Korea Oil Deal if Pilot Is Not Released," Los Angeles Times, Dec. 28, 1994, A-4.

³²Lee H. Hamilton, "A good deal with North Korea," Chicago Tribune, Dec. 8, 1994, Sec.1, p. 31.

³³Ibid.

The path President Clinton has charted will be long and arduous, and carries no guarantees of success. The agreement with North Korea will take the better part of a decade to implement. There is good reason to believe that this agreement can protect and promote U.S. security interests and achieve our long-standing aims of a non-nuclear Korean peninsula and a stronger non-proliferation regime.³⁴

Hamilton's interaction with the Executive Branch was what might be expected for a chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and not the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He said

Personally, I have a lot of involvement with the White House, almost every day. There's one clear message: the president is struggling with a new era of foreign policy. It is fair criticism on how he articulates foreign policy, but I don't see anyone offering an alternative.³⁵

Despite the administration's hopes that theirs would be a presidency of domestic affairs, Hamilton observed that "foreign policy has a way of intruding on and overwhelming the agenda."³⁶ In his estimation, this affected the administration's ability to do any sort of foreign policy planning. His position is that

We ought to be doing more long range planning. You have to ask yourself where you want to come out. We ought to do more of it, and we need more discussion of what American foreign policy should be.³⁷

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Interview, Jan. 1994.

³⁶Interview, Jan. 1994.

³⁷Interview, Jan. 1994.

With the Republicans gaining control of the House of Representatives following the November 1994 elections, Hamilton became the ranking minority member on the House International Relations Committee, the successor to the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Claiborne Pell

Like Hamilton, Claiborne Pell led an eclectic existence on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee throughout his membership. Born November 22, 1918 in New York City, Pell received his undergraduate degree from Princeton University in 1940. He followed that with a master's degree from Columbia in 1946 after serving in the Coast Guard during World War II. He joined the State Department's Foreign Service in 1945, serving in Czechoslovakia and Italy until 1952. Pell was an executive assistant to the Rhode Island Democratic State Committee chairman in 1952 and 1954, and served as a consultant to the Democratic National Committee from 1953 to 1960, when he was first elected to the U.S. Senate. His adopted state of Rhode Island, according to the 1990 census, ranked 43rd in population with just over one million residents, making the state less than twice the size, in population, of Hamilton's congressional district.

Like Hamilton in the House of Representatives, Pell started work on his congressional foreign policy committee

in 1965. By 1973, he was chairing a subcommittee, Oceans and International Environment, which he kept until 1977. Then the subcommittee became Arms Control, Oceans and International Environment, which he chaired until 1979. In that year, the subcommittee changed names again, but not chairmen, as Pell then headed the Subcommittee on Arms Control, Oceans, International Operations and Environment, a seat he held until 1981 when the Republican Party assumed control of the chamber and Democrats like Pell their committee and subcommittee chairmanships.

During the first phase of Pell's Foreign Relations Committee leadership career, he also held seats on a variety of subcommittees: Arms Control, International Law and Organization (1973-75), European Affairs (1973-81), Near Eastern Affairs (1973-75), Arms Control, International Organizations and Security Agreements (1975-77), Western Hemisphere Affairs (1975-77), and International Operations (1977-79).

The next phase occurred while Pell was a minority member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 1981-87. Throughout this period he served as the committee's ranking minority member. Charles Percy (R-Illinois) and Richard Lugar (R-Indiana) successively chaired the committee, from 1981-85 and 1985-87 respectfully. Although the Foreign Relations Committee's rules resembled the House Foreign Affairs Committee's rules, in that both the chairman and

ranking minority member were members *ex officio* of all subcommittees, Pell did not list himself as a member of any specific subcommittee during Percy's chairmanship.

Percy, however, did. During his first Congress, 1981-83, he was listed specifically on the subcommittees on International Economic Policy, and on Arms Control, Oceans, International Operations and Environment (both 1981-83). During his second Congress as committee chair, 1983-85, he jumped to the subcommittees on African Affairs, European Affairs, and Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. At no time during his tenure as committee chairman did he also claim a subcommittee chairmanship.

Under Lugar's chairmanship, 1985-87, Pell specifically listed himself as a member of three subcommittees: African Affairs; International Economic Policy, Oceans, and Environment; and Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. Lugar meanwhile sat on European Affairs and joined Pell on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. Like Percy, Lugar also claimed no subcommittee chairmanships while serving as committee chairman.

When the Democrats regained control of the Senate following the November 1986 election, Pell assumed the chairmanship of the Foreign Relations Committee in January 1987. The Congress that began at that time, the 100th, was one of particular turmoil for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Not only did the committee change chairmen, but

the individual who had served as the chairman in the preceding Congress, Richard Lugar, lost his position to ranking minority member Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), who was senior to him. Among Republicans, Helms assumed leadership as ranking minority member and relegated Lugar to a subordinate position. In the previous Congress, Helms had chaired the Agriculture Committee, allowing Lugar to chair Foreign Relations. Helms had done this to protect the interests of North Carolina tobacco farmers. Senate Republican rules did not permit members to chair two major committees. The restriction did not apply to serving as ranking minority member.

While still under the subcommittee membership privilege granted to the committee chairman and ranking minority member, Pell nonetheless placed himself among the listed members of but one subcommittee, Western Hemisphere and Peace Corps Affairs. One Congress later, the 101st beginning in 1989, Pell formally sat on three subcommittees: East Asian and Pacific Affairs; International Economic Policy, Trade, Oceans and Environment; and Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. In the 102nd Congress (1991-93), Pell kept his formal seat on International Economic Policy, Trade, Oceans and Environment, but gave up his other two official seats in favor of a membership on the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations. By the first truly post-Cold War Congress, the 103rd, the only

official subcommittee assignment held by Pell was on Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations.

At no time during the period 1987-1993 did Pell hold a subcommittee chairmanship in addition to his duties as chairman. This follows a Foreign Relations Committee tradition that appears to have started in the 95th Congress (1977-79) under the chairmanship of John Sparkman (D-Alabama). Until the 95th Congress (Sparkman also chaired the Foreign Relations Committee in the 94th Congress), committee chairmen also chaired subcommittees. For example, in the 93rd Congress (1973-75), Foreign Relations Committee chair J.W. Fulbright (D-Arkansas) also chaired the Subcommittee on Near Eastern Affairs; in the 94th Congress, Sparkman oversaw two subcommittees: European Affairs and Personnel.

The award of Pell's chairmanship was based on seniority and longevity within both the Senate and on the Foreign Relations Committee. Apparently, the passion he may or may not have brought to the position was not taken into consideration, and the impressions of those both on the committee and within the Executive Branch reflect no small degree of frustration with him. Perceptions of those on the Foreign Relations Committee are not at all flattering to the chairman. In fact, no one interviewed in the House, Senate, or the Executive Branch expressed a positive attitude towards the manner in which Pell had led the committee since

1987.

That the frustration with him was still manifest as late as 1994 should be surprising in light of a conscientious decision made by Pell in 1991 to, in essence, abdicate his responsibilities as committee chairman and turn over most, if not all, leadership duties and responsibilities to the subcommittee chairmen.³⁸ However, without the central leadership of a strong committee chair, the Foreign Relations Committee became a body characterized by competition between the wills and desires of seven subcommittee chiefs, some more effective, and vocal, than others. Pell occasionally weighed in on some matters, usually through the editorial pages of the United States' leading newspapers. Three years after Pell's decision, members of the Senate as well as key officials in the Executive Branch openly complained about Pell's lack of leadership on the Foreign Relations Committee. But they did not respond to the situation by developing a strategy to either combat or work around what was classified in some interviews as a "non-chairmanship."³⁹

Pell's tenure as head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee began in 1987, but the difficulties he experienced as chairman began in the 101st Congress during the Gulf War. On September 16, 1990, Pell published an op-ed piece in the

³⁸See detailed discussion beginning page 179.

³⁹Confidential interviews, September and December, 1993.

Washington Post headlined "Let Congress Decide About War in the Gulf." This article came when Operation Desert Shield was in full swing and when Operation Desert Storm, the actual offensive, was still four months away. Pell argued that should the defensive nature of Desert Shield take an offensive turn, President Bush do something no president has ever done, namely, invoke the War Powers Act to "seek a specific authorization from Congress."⁴⁰ Pell's arguments to support this recommendation were based on estimates that proved wholly inaccurate. He stated, for example,

An effort to oust entrenched Iraqi forces from Kuwait would, according to some estimates, cost the lives of 20,000 American soldiers and escalate the daily cost to the taxpayer from \$30 million to \$1 billion.⁴¹

Both figures were wildly off the mark. However, he did use the article to assert a role for Congress in the foreign policy process, specifically as it related to the prosecution of the Gulf War. He charged the Bush Administration with being intolerant "of any meaningful congressional role in foreign affairs," further charging that "when pressed the president's men will admit they would like to roll back as many of the post-Vietnam constraints on presidential action as they can."⁴²

⁴⁰Claiborne Pell, "Let Congress Decide About War in the Gulf," Washington Post, Sept. 16, 1990, B-7.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

Views on the Gulf War would come back to haunt Pell. One month after this column, a personal staff aide to Pell, C.B. Scott Jones, wrote a letter dated October 3, 1990 to Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney charging that he, Secretary of State James Baker, and President Bush had inserted a code word into speeches on the Gulf War that could only be heard by playing the speeches backwards on a tape recorder.⁴³ The word, "Simone," when sounded out is "enemies" in reverse. Commanding an annual salary of \$50,000, Jones' specific assignment on Pell's staff was to "study developments in paranormal phenomena."⁴⁴

Pell's response was as cryptic as Jones' assertion that "reversed audio tapes can reveal through occasional words or phrases the hidden or coded thoughts behind normal, forward speech."⁴⁵ The Rhode Island senator stated that while Jones' theory "sounds wacky, there may be some merit to it."⁴⁶ Pell almost immediately thereafter reprimanded Jones.

Public criticism started to mount. Pell had requested the National Science Foundation to fund studies of psychic research and had regularly requested intelligence briefings

⁴³Associated Press, "Backwards, tapes reveal gulf code word to senator's aide," Chicago Tribune, Oct. 21, 1990, Sec. 1, p. 26.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid.

on Soviet efforts in "psychic warfare."⁴⁷ As journalist Philip Terzian wrote regarding the "Simone" incident,

Indeed, Mr. Pell's office is notorious in the Pentagon, in the Central Intelligence Agency, at the State Department and elsewhere for its habitual insistence on the waste of federal resources on 'paranormal phenomenon' research. At budget time, however, members of the executive branch giggle at their peril.⁴⁸

Perhaps in an attempt to regain some credibility, Pell joined forces with Georgia Senator Sam Nunn to order hearings concurrently before both the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Senate Armed Services Committee to contemplate further troop deployments in support of Operation Desert Shield. Their chief objective was "to define White House military goals"⁴⁹ in confronting Iraqi President Saddam Hussein over his invasion of Kuwait.

Whatever his assertiveness may have accomplished in November, Pell faced outright rebellion by fellow Democrats on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by the following February. Assertions by interview respondents in 1993 and 1994 that Pell was a chairman who could "be easily rolled"⁵⁰

⁴⁷Asides, "Commander-in-Chief Pell," Wall Street Journal, Oct. 19, 1990, A-14.

⁴⁸Philip Terzian, "Paranormals on the Potomac," Washington Times, Nov. 24, 1990, G-4.

⁴⁹Major Garrett and Frank J. Murray, "Nunn, Pell order talks to clarify Gulf goals," The Washington Times, Nov. 14, 1990, A-1.

⁵⁰Confidential interviews, Sept. 1993, Dec. 1993, Jan. 1994, Nov. 1994.

were equally appropriate for 1991. The issue in February 1991 was the size of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff.

Massachusetts Senator John Kerry, leading a group of Foreign Relations subcommittee chairmen, prodded Pell to add \$690,000 to the committee's 1991-92 budget for the sole purpose of increasing subcommittee staff. Because he was universally perceived as weak by other Foreign Relations Committee senators, the larger staffs would enable subcommittees "to sidestep the chairman's own staff on such issues as State Department funding and treaty approval."⁵¹ Pell had a practice of returning \$270,000 of the committee's operating funds annually to the treasury; this specific issue fell in the broader context of a Senate rule allowing committees to carry over unused funds from one year to the next. It took on partisan tones because of the demeanor of then-Ranking Minority Member Jesse Helms, who was viewed by subcommittee chairmen as an individual who easily intimidated Pell. The increased staff was as much a way to sidestep Pell as it was to counter Helms' combativeness. The committee's staff director, Geryld Christianson, defended the move due to increased workload arising from the Gulf War.⁵²

⁵¹George Archibald, "Senate panel budget request becomes hot partisan issue," The Washington Times, Feb. 21, 1991, A-3.

⁵²Ibid.

Meanwhile, Pell tried to save some public face. He published a guest column in the Los Angeles Times the next month that was a marked reversal from Washington Post piece the previous November. Now, Pell stated,

As America rejoices in the stunning success of President Bush's diplomatic and military leadership in the Persian Gulf War, we must not forget that there is still a peace to be secured and lessons from the conflict to be applied.⁵³

He characterized pre-Gulf War diplomacy as "flawed," likening the practices of the Reagan and Bush Administrations to British and French appeasement of Nazi Germany at the 1938 Munich conference.⁵⁴ Reminding readers that "we forgot the older political lesson that pampering dictators encourages aggression," Pell concluded by stating "We must never make that mistake again."⁵⁵

By April, it became almost impossible to discern the "real" Claiborne Pell. He was decidedly aggressive by joining fellow Foreign Relations Committee members Jesse Helms and Joseph Biden in a letter to Secretary of State James Baker urging the Bush Administration to submit the Conventional Forces in Europe treaty to the Senate for ratification. Bush had withheld the treaty from Senate scrutiny, "accusing the Soviets of non-compliance by

⁵³Claiborne Pell, "Make Saddam Hussein the Last Dictator We Pamper," Los Angeles Times, Mar. 17, 1991, M-7.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Ibid.

shielding its weaponry from treaty restrictions."⁵⁶ Bush had also hesitated in submitting the treaty to the Senate because the upper chamber wanted to amend the basic treaty. Specifically, the Senate desired to add a provision that would "effectively (dismiss) a new Soviet contention that heavy weapons shifted from the Army to the Navy are no longer covered by the arms-reducing CFE treaty."⁵⁷

The same day this article appeared, the Associated Press released a story that detailed how, in essence, Pell was removing himself from all future leadership involvement in the Foreign Relations Committee. Many in the Senate had already concluded that he had long since done that, albeit informally.⁵⁸

While questioning a Bush Administration official on the esprit-de-corps of U.S. verification teams executing duties under the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty, Pell asked, "Do they have some kind of distinctive uniforms?"⁵⁹ It was because of Pell, as this instance demonstrates, that the Executive Branch began to seek out Appropriations Committees for support of foreign policy initiatives rather

⁵⁶Rowan Scarborough, "Bush asked to speed arms treaty," The Washington Times, Apr. 23, 1991, A-4.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Confidential interviews, Sep. 1993, Dec. 1993, Jan. 1994.

⁵⁹Associated Press, "Pell: Above the fray, but his shirts aren't," The Washington Times, Sept. 23, 1991, A-4.

than the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.⁶⁰ The Associated Press reported that Pell was absolving himself of his chairman duties and letting subcommittee chairmen enter the fray. This decision cleared the way for Biden, Kerry, and Maryland's Paul Sarbanes to take the lead on Senate foreign policy issues. Pell's greatest contribution to committee operations, especially as conference committees on foreign aid bills approached, was his innate ability to "get out of the way."⁶¹ It was in this year, 1991, that a foreign aid appropriation of \$28 billion passed the full Senate for the first time in five years.

Pell may have been staying out of the Senate commotion, but he was remaining involved in foreign policy matters in other ways. He commented about the impact of presidential transition periods (the time between election and inauguration) on international relations, stating that "it creates uncertainty internationally because foreign governments are unsure about who speaks for the country and can take advantage of the muddled chain of command in Washington."⁶² Five months later, in the same newspaper, Pell was again commenting about the use and employment of

⁶⁰Ibid. Also, confidential interviews with National Security Council and State Department officials, Dec. 1993, Nov. 1994.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Claiborne Pell, "We Vote, Then We Wait - Much Too Long," Los Angeles Times, Dec. 5, 1992, B-7.

U.S. forces abroad. This time the region of conflict under consideration was Bosnia and the nature of U.S. involvement there.

Pell took a cautious approach. He posed three questions: why should the U.S. intervene in Bosnia, why is Bosnia different from the other places of conflict in the world, and what are American interests there?⁶³ His solution, perhaps because of criticism on Bosnian policy by Joseph Biden, was

First, we should ensure that we secure the proper United Nations authority. Second, the President should ensure that Congress authorizes U.S. participation in a Bosnia effort. Third, and perhaps the most difficult but most important step, the President needs to explain to the American people why we should be involved. Without these three steps, any effort is doomed to failure.⁶⁴

When the Clinton Administration, in October 1993, began active contemplation of U.S. involvement or participation in the Bosnian conflict, Pell weighed in with criticism not about his formula, but instead with the president's formula for the size of the deployment. Clinton planned to send 25,000 troops under a United Nations umbrella, a figure far too excessive in Pell's and other Foreign Relations Committee members' views. Had the plan gone into effect, the U.S. would have comprised half of the total force.

⁶³Claiborne Pell, "Free world's leader, yes: its army, no," Los Angeles Times, May 12, 1993, A-11.

⁶⁴Ibid.

"It's just too high a proportion of the 50,000 total," Pell said. "I think what's in Somalia is correct, where about a fourth or a fifth of the troops are American."⁶⁵ No mention was made by Pell or any other member of the Foreign Relations Committee concerning the effectiveness of the troops in relation to the mission in Somalia, certainly as much a decision-making factor as the exact number of troops to deploy. Again Pell's consideration was Senate or congressional authorization to commit U.S. forces and the exact nature of operations they would be expected to undertake. Along with other senators on the Foreign Relations Committee, he argued that "any deployment of American troops to Bosnia would require explicit approval by Congress."⁶⁶

The Bosnian crisis would raise its head in Congress again the following May, when Bosnian Serbs attacked Gorazde. On May 5, Pell and Lee Hamilton co-authored an op-ed piece in The New York Times titled "Don't Arm Bosnia." The Senate was expected to take up debate that very day on lifting the arms embargo against Bosnia that negatively impacted the Bosnian Muslims more than anyone else, ironic in that the embargo was designed to help them more than anyone else.

⁶⁵David Binder, "Senators criticize Bosnia aid plan," The New York Times, Oct. 6, 1993, A-8.

⁶⁶Ibid.

Pell and Hamilton argued against lifting the arms quarantine for a number of reasons. While it was an effective show of sympathy, they claimed, it would have been, in their estimation, largely ineffective. A unilateral action on the part of the United States would have immediately introduced conflict into the United Nations Security Council. In a sense, they continued, it would also "Americanize" the conflict, "signalling that the U.S. was entering on the side of the Bosnian Muslims. We would become responsible for Bosnia's fate."⁶⁷

Lifting the embargo would also encourage other states to violate other U.N.-sanctioned embargoes, particularly against such rogue states as Libya or Iraq. Finally, such a move would torpedo any hopes ascribed to peace talks.⁶⁸ They also advanced the idea that, as congressional foreign policy committee chairmen, they saw no vital national interest in the region. There were, rather, "pressing humanitarian and political interests in ending the fighting."⁶⁹

These collaborative opinion pieces were largely the result of Hamilton. Joint efforts he undertook with Pell roughly followed a pattern. Hamilton liked to "rough

⁶⁷Claiborne Pell and Lee Hamilton, "Don't Arm Bosnia," The New York Times, May 5, 1994, 27-A.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Ibid.

sketch" editorials either by writing them longhand, dictating to a microcassette recorder, or by assembling collections of notes from staff aides. Once finished, he would again write the column on legal pads, and when satisfied with the final product, query the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to determine if Pell would "sign on." Pell and his staff would provide what input or changes they thought necessary, and when both were satisfied with the final product, the column was sent to press. These columns were meant to provide an "idea," but not necessarily the sense, of how Congress reacted to international issues.⁷⁰

Some members of Congress were quick to point out that the two chairmen were expressing their own views, and not necessarily those of all members of the committee, another indicator that committee discipline may have become a long-gone thing of the past. Benjamin Gilman, then the Ranking Minority Member on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, responded to The New York Times the very day the Pell-Hamilton piece appeared. Calling their arguments "seductive,"⁷¹ Gilman observed that "diplomacy may be working, but not for the Bosnian Muslims, who have been denied their right under the U.N. Charter to arm and defend themselves while their communities are uprooted, towns

⁷⁰Confidential interview with House Committee on International Relations press official, April 1995.

⁷¹Benjamin A. Gilman, "Let Bosnian Muslims Arm Themselves," The New York Times, May 13, 1994, 30-A.

destroyed and civilians subjected to heavy gunfire."⁷² On "Americanization" of the conflict, he stated it would be

no more than it already has been since United States warplanes have engaged in airstrikes under North Atlantic Treaty Organization imprimatur; nor can Bosnia's situation be compared to those of Libya or Iraq. Neither of those countries is fighting for its national life.⁷³

In looking for an "honorable option," as Gilman put it, he suggested that the only way out was to allow the Muslims, as the title of the letter charged, to arm themselves.

By September, the focus in the Senate had changed, if the editorial pages were any accurate barometer. Again, a crisis was at hand, this time involving Cuban refugees. President Clinton was no stranger to this dilemma, as he was governor of Arkansas during the Mariel Boatlift during the Carter Administration in the summer of 1980. It was at Fort Chaffee, in Clinton's home state of Arkansas, that a major contingent of refugees went, causing as much a domestic predicament then as they would when he would serve as president.

Pell and Hamilton weighed in again, and again the subject was embargoes. This time they argued for lifting one, namely the U.S. embargo against Cuba. Writing in The Washington Post, their column was significant for a number of reasons. First, it was an acknowledgement by two

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid.

committee chairmen that the administration's foreign policy was driven solely by crisis and complicated by domestic considerations. "Yet Washington's hard-line stance continues - more a product of shortsighted domestic politics than of prudent foreign policy considerations,"⁷⁴ they said.

Second, their frustration was born not only of the current administration, but of administrations past as well. They also believed that

We want Cuba to join the community of democratic nations by instituting political and economic reform and respecting human rights. Unfortunately, current policy seems based on the longstanding hope that isolating Cuba will bring about change...Unfortunately, after three decades the embargo has failed to bring about democracy in Cuba.⁷⁵

Because they surmised that the way to "better erode totalitarianism (would be) by reaching out to the Cuban people,"⁷⁶ they offered a six point plan that they conceded was not "politically possible," along with lifting the embargo in general. This plan included: 1) Lifting the travel ban from the U.S. to Cuba; 2) lifting the ban on U.S.-to-Cuba family remittances; 3) removing restrictions limiting telecommunications and exchange of press between the U.S. and Cuba; 4) Expanding exchange programs between U.S. and Cuban citizens; 5) lifting the ban on the

⁷⁴Claiborne Pell and Lee Hamilton, "The Embargo Must Go," The Washington Post, Sept. 8, 1994, A-19.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Ibid.

commercial sales of food and medicine; and 6) removing extraterritorial provisions of the embargo that angered American allies and hindered multilateral approaches to Cuba.⁷⁷

Conclusions

Comparing Lee Hamilton and Claiborne Pell is a contrast between, respectively, a foreign policy extrovert and a foreign policy introvert, ironic in the constitutional functions that their committees provide. Both have used print media to advance foreign policy considerations, Hamilton much more so. Pell as a foreign affairs expert is virtually unknown; Hamilton, while chairman, staked out multiple corners of a media universe to advance his foreign policy credentials. As a result, the Executive Branch distanced itself from engaging the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in determining the congressional "sense" on foreign policy matters.⁷⁸

Under Pell, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee lost a tremendous amount of prestige it once held. Committee members thought of Pell as an impediment to their operations, with many senators viewing him as someone who "gets in the way."⁷⁹ The prestige of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, meanwhile, has increased. Hamilton

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Confidential interviews, Sept. 1993 and Dec. 1993.

⁷⁹Confidential interview, Sept. 1993.

observed

At one time there was no payoff for an assignment on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Now there is renewed interest, and it has become a very good "B" assignment.⁸⁰

Whereas the conventional wisdom was once that the House Foreign Affairs Committee was inconsequential while the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was distinguished, during the 103rd Congress, in part because of Pell, the converse was true. Hamilton has had his own share of difficulties while chairman. He led the committee at a time when its membership was extremely diverse, populated by many members who in the estimation of some represented ethnic and religious constituencies nationwide rather than the constituencies of their districts.⁸¹

The impact on the role of congressional foreign policy committees in a post-Cold War era has been dramatic. The chairman of the House committee, having a concrete idea of relevant foreign policy issues and the specifics of what constitutes the national interest, has led his committee to a new position of prominence. Without a strong leader, or according to some, without a leader at all, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has retreated to insignificance even with its constitutional functions.

Much of a committee's prestige, influence, and

⁸⁰Interview, Jan. 1994.

⁸¹Confidential interviews, Sept. 1993 and Dec. 1993.

effectiveness depends on the leadership that its chairman provides. Lee Hamilton saw opportunities in the post-Cold War environment and used them. Claiborne Pell allowed the prestige his committee once held slip into near-oblivion; rather than using his position to regain or retain his committee's stature, he deferred to his subcommittee chairmen to do his work for him.

CHAPTER 6

THE WHITE HOUSE AND CONGRESSIONAL FOREIGN POLICY COMMITTEES

Virtually every cabinet department makes at least some contribution to the formulation and articulation of foreign policy. Some agencies, such as the Departments of State and Defense, have an explicit role, while, for example, the Departments of Agriculture and Transportation may have a more implicit role. Executive Branch interaction with the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee has been crystallized through the establishment of the National Security Council.

Created through the National Security Act of 1947 (and as amended in 1949), the actual use of the NSC has been more a matter of presidential preference rather than strict adherence to any prescribed formula. This flexibility was built into the NSC system. Some presidents have, at least initially, shied away from the NSC; others have actively embraced it throughout their administrations.

As specified in the act, the council's functions were:

...to advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the Government to cooperate more effectively; to assess and appraise the objectives, commitments, and risks of the United States in relation to our actual and

potential military power for the purpose of making recommendations to the President; and to consider policies on matters of common interest to the departments and agencies of the Government concerned with the national security, and to make recommendations to the President.¹

This chapter examines the evolution of the National Security Council since the Truman Administration and compares the post-Cold War interaction of the Clinton NSC with congressional foreign policy committees with that of its predecessors. Two paths will be followed: methods by which previous Cold War administrations crafted their National Security Councils; and, how those councils then interacted with the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees in foreign policy matters.

Several questions are considered: is there a historical trend in which the NSC has influenced the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Senate Committee on Foreign Relations? Has the post-Cold War era caused a deviation in traditional relationships between the NSC and Congress? How does a post-Cold War administration regard congressional involvement in foreign policy - is it at all different from that which existed during the Cold War?

For the sake of clarity, I differentiate between the National Security Council and the National Security Council *staff*. Under the 1949 amendments to the National Security Act of 1947, the NSC was strictly constituted to consist of

¹National Security Act of 1947, *United States Code*, Title 50, Section 402.

the President, Vice-President, Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense. Other officials who have participated in designated advisory capacities include the Director of Central Intelligence and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The act envisioned that the NSC staff would be headed by an "Executive Secretary," but presidents have opted instead for appointing an "Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs," popularly referred to as the National Security Adviser. The National Security Adviser received additional support through the creation of a National Security Council staff, comprised of regional experts and administrative assistants to facilitate the advisory support given to the President. Under public law, and unlike cabinet secretaries, the NSC adviser is not subject to Senate confirmation.

The act also authorized the President to create temporary "seats" at the NSC table for a number of other cabinet secretaries. This, however, changed in the Clinton Administration, making formal comparisons with previous presidencies more difficult. On his first day in office, President Clinton signed Presidential Decision Directive Number 2, changing the formal membership of the NSC. Whereas it previously consisted of, strictly speaking, the four statutory members and a team of advisers, the "new membership," as the President described it, was the previous membership authorized by statute *plus* the Secretary of the

Treasury, the U.S. Representative to the United Nations, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (upgraded from an advisory capacity), the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy, and the Chief of Staff to the President. The Attorney General received a conditional invitation to sit at the table, based on matters pertaining to the jurisdiction of the office to include covert actions.² In essence, Clinton broadened the membership of the NSC to a "mini-cabinet" that codified the participation of key members of the Executive Office of the President, a distinct departure from previous administrations.

The Truman Administration

Harry Truman was the first president to function with a National Security Council. A creation of a Republican Congress, Truman thought little of the institution and used it even less until the Korean War. He attended its first meeting in September 1947, but was a sporadic presence until the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. Truman's philosophy towards the NSC explains his routine absence: as it was an advisory body, he felt that attending its meetings would negatively impact on the quality of advice. In his absence, Truman initially left chairmanship of NSC meetings to the

²William J. Clinton, "Organization of the National Security Council," The White House, Jan. 20, 1993, 1.

Secretary of State, George Marshall. It is here where the policy impact of the NSC was first felt. Paul Schott Stevens, a Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs in the Reagan Administration, wrote:

...Truman found the coordinating structure useful. He began to attend meetings of the NSC weekly and directed that all major national security policy matters be coordinated through the Council and its staff. Truman's attendance reflected his interest in a more direct exchange with the NSC's permanent members and other participants, which included heads of various departments as matters on the Council's agenda dictated. Ultimately, however, Truman viewed the Council only as a place for recommendations to be worked out, and he relied heavily upon an inner circle of advisers quite distinct from the NSC as such.³

Truman's role was unique. As he was the first president to live with a National Security Council, he would also set the standard for interaction with Congress. The act represented a "de facto delegation of authority from Congress."⁴ This was part of a much broader trend of enhancing presidential power in the national security arena through congressional allocation. Reasons for so doing were more a recognition of congressional inefficiencies rather than Executive Branch effectiveness:

For one thing, national security affairs are invariably complex and multifaceted, and most congressmen have neither the expertise nor the interest to follow them in depth. For another

³Paul Schott Stevens, "The National Security Council: Past and Prologue," Strategic Review, Winter 1989, 57.

⁴Dennis M. Drew and Donald M. Snow, Making Strategy: An Introduction to National Security Processes and Problems (Maxwell AFB: Air University Press, 1988), 68.

thing, the sheer volume of national security affairs is beyond the capabilities of congressional scrutiny, especially since Congress must consider public affairs across the range of public policy areas. Finally, many security problems are time-sensitive. The structure and nature of Congress are best suited to situations that allow thorough deliberation and debate, both of which are time-consuming. National security situations often move faster than the pace of congressional debate, so that a president must act after only informal consultation with the leader of the houses of Congress and the chairpersons of relevant committees.⁵

Congress, in crafting the National Security Act of 1947, proceeded as a reaction towards events that had transpired under Franklin Delano Roosevelt:

...there was strong support in Congress as well as in the Army for unification of the American military establishment under a single Secretary of Defense. Unification was strongly opposed, however, by the Navy, and the struggles between the services over the unification issue were the key faction in the evolution of the National Security Act of 1947. The idea of a National Security Council including the Secretary of State and a civilian responsible for defense resource and mobilization issues was first broached in the Eberstadt Report, a study of postwar defense organization commissioned in 1945 by Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal. As the unification debate developed, a National Security Council was accepted not so much as something desirable in its own right but rather as necessary to securing Navy acquiescence in a unified Department of Defense. However, the NSC was viewed by its proponents in both services (and by some in Congress) as a useful mechanism for harnessing the President to the advice of the uniformed military, thus precluding a repetition of the undisciplined strategic leadership of FDR. As indicated earlier, such expectations revealed a fundamental misunderstanding of the role of the presidency in the American political system, and would prove

⁵Ibid., 68-69.

wholly wide of the mark.⁶

Congress wrote no oversight mechanism into authorizing legislation for the National Security Council, but this would not prevent Congress from subsequently investigating the NSC. Technically, its roles and actions were beyond congressional grasp as its advisers and usage stemmed in large part from presidential desires and perceptions rather than specifics provided within the 1947 National Security Act. NSC policy papers produced during the Truman Administration, genuine policy expressions, "represented the best effort of the United States government to clarify its objectives, inventory its resources, and establish its criteria for assessing process."⁷

The Truman Administration's interaction with Congress on foreign policy matters, coming as they did at the onset of the Cold War, were not crystallized specifically with foreign policy committees, but rather with Congress as a whole and key individuals in Congress. Senator Robert Taft (R-Ohio), for example, was so tough an opponent of President Truman that his opposition on virtually every policy matter made the conflict almost seem personal. William Averell Harriman, Truman's national security special assistant, commented that Taft "believes in things I consider dangerous

⁶Carnes Lord, The Presidency and the Management of National Security (New York: The Free Press, 1988), 69.

⁷John Prados, Keepers of the Keys (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1991), 33.

to national security;" Truman's own Secretary of Defense, Louis Johnson, had personally congratulated Taft for a speech in which the Ohio senator lambasted Truman for not consulting Congress prior to U.S. involvement in South Korea.⁸

Korea bedeviled Truman's relations with Congress. Rather than seeking congressional approval, Truman proceeded on the basis that a United Nations mandate supplicated any need for congressional consultation.⁹ Harriman ran interference for the Truman Administration not only with Congress, but as a personal envoy around the world as well. As the NSC was still an infant organization, genuine clashes with Congress came once the institution had seasoned and matured during the Eisenhower Administration.

The Eisenhower Administration

Dwight David Eisenhower receives credit for first organizing the NSC along hierarchical lines and transforming it into a "mini-cabinet."¹⁰ Eisenhower envisioned the NSC as

...a corporate body composed of individuals advising the President in their own right, rather than as representatives of their respective

⁸Ibid., 43.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Stevens, 57.

departments and agencies. Their function should be to seek...the most statesmanlike solution to the problems of national security, rather than to reach solutions which represent merely a compromise of departmental positions.¹¹

He also began adding to the council's unofficial membership, including his budget director and Secretary of the Treasury as a nod towards the linkage between military strength and economic vitality. Another infrequent attendant was the chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. It was also Eisenhower that had the first official "National Security Adviser," directly charging him with staff management and policy development.

The council structure during these years reflected a new institution experimenting to identify its operating principles, norms and procedures. The NSC, at least at first, was organized around two "boards": an NSC Planning Board "for policy development and a separate Operations Coordinating Board for filling the gap between the formulation of general objectives and the detailed actions needed to achieve them."¹²

Despite the attention he provided to the organization of the NSC, Eisenhower was not always satisfied with its results.

For the President's taste, Secretary of State John

¹¹James S. Lay, Jr. and Robert H. Johnson, An Organizational History of the National Security Council, U.S. Senate (1960), 39.

¹²Stevens, 57.

Foster Dulles talked to much, and in excessive historical detail, while his brother Allen, head of the CIA, waxed too philosophical. Following that meeting (NOTE: concerning a 1958 Iraqi crisis), Eisenhower simply adjourned a small group of aides to the Oval Office to decide on a course of action. In retrospect, it would appear that Eisenhower, in fact, favored informal settings of this sort to make the key decisions on security policy, and he later came to believe that the NSC's work could have been done better by a single trusted official supported by a small staff.¹³

Eisenhower's philosophy towards the NSC was far more encompassing than organizational interests. General Andrew Goodpaster, a defense liaison officer and staff secretary to Eisenhower, commented:

Eisenhower himself attended all the NSC meetings, or essentially all. He had the papers in advance, and he would enter into the discussion. He did not necessarily take the leading role in the discussion but would intervene whenever there was something he wanted to bring out. The president felt that that was vitally important—that he should not just be briefed, but should participate in the substantive deliberation prior to making his decisions. He wanted to go through this process, and crystalize the issues, the way he did in his "summation," in order to lay down a clear line of policy for everybody at the same time that would guide his administration in the same terms.¹⁴

He was also much more personally engaged with Congress on foreign policy matters than his predecessor. Goodpaster also observed:

[Eisenhower] wanted to work with the Congress and did. It was very clear that he would never have

¹³Stevens, 57-58.

¹⁴Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr. and Jacquelyn K. Davis, ed., National Security Decisions: The Participants Speak (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1990), 3-4.

something develop, as was charged to President Truman, that committed the United States without consultation with the Congress on action such as might involve a foreign commitment of force. The first thing he would want to do was to get congressional leaders to the White House. Here, oftentimes, you would see an interesting reversal. Where previously it had been their complaint that they had not been consulted, they would now be telling him, "Well, Mr. President, we look to you to make these decisions." On occasion, one had a very strong sense that they were quite anxious to get out the door. He would tell them that, no, this was a responsibility we had to share-that it is a duty of the president, but that you must be part of this as well. I do not recall any occasion on which there was a charge of a failure of consultation on his part. He was, in fact, very determined to keep it always the other way.¹⁵

Goodpaster's further comments indicate that consultation and concurrence were not synonymous:

In a couple of areas [Eisenhower] was dissatisfied with the action of the Congress, and this was not necessarily the opposition party. On trade issues he had a very tough time, and that was especially so in his first administration-the first couple of years-when Congress was led by his own party. He felt that they had been in opposition so long that that was the only role they knew in respect to the president on issues of trade and the like. They had a very strong sense of the prerogatives of the Congress in controlling policy on trade, while the president, of course, felt this was a very important area of foreign policy as well.

Another area in which it was difficult for him to get what he felt was needed was in the foreign assistance programs, particularly economic and technological assistance. That is one of the things he worked on at the hardest. He felt that some of that opposition was really quite small-minded and simply unwilling to look to the largest issues that were involved. These, to him, were instruments by which the United States could build relationships that would be healthy and constructive with these emerging countries. Another area that he was keenly interested in was

¹⁵Ibid., 53.

the U.S. Information Service-public diplomacy. Again, he felt that Congress was too niggardly in that and that as a result we were failing to put the positive part of our story across. Those were some of the main elements in his relations with the Congress.¹⁶

Eisenhower's personal diplomacy approach to foreign policy matters extended to such senators as J.W. Fulbright, Arthur Vandenberg, Hubert Humphrey and Walter George. During crises, such as the 1958 intervention in Lebanon, Eisenhower sent David Newsom and Bill Macomber to both the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee to conduct daily briefings.

Not all was harmonious and efficient between Eisenhower and Congress, however. An unexpected challenge confronting the Eisenhower Administration came not from the congressional foreign policy committees, but instead the Senate Government Operations Committee. In a speech at the National War College on April 16, 1959, Washington Senator Henry Jackson took direct aim at the entire mechanism of the National Security Council as envisioned and practiced by Eisenhower. Jackson's contention was that the NSC "had not and could not produce a coherent and purposeful national program" and "that Congress knew only bits and pieces of the story and demanded an investigation."¹⁷ Jackson sponsored Senate Resolution 115, demanding an investigation, and

¹⁶Ibid., 54.

¹⁷Ibid., 92.

managed it through the Government Operations Committee.

It was an attempt to influence foreign policy by a congressional committee not directly concerned with foreign policy. In July 1959, the Government Operations Committee formed a Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery chaired by Jackson. Although the subcommittee was formed by the Senate, Eisenhower largely set the rules and scope of the proceedings, preferring "limited cooperation" else there be no cooperation at all. The major concession Eisenhower received was for the subcommittee

to be "a study, not an investigation" and [it] would not attempt to infringe in the "Constitutional privilege of the President to obtain advice."¹⁸

Public interest in the subcommittee was high at first, but waned as its proceedings carried on. In 1960, the subcommittee announced a one-year recess, then issued a series of reports early in 1961. It saw a revival as a Subcommittee on National Security Staffing and Operations, and existed under a variety of names through the Nixon Administration.

The Kennedy Administration

The Cold War was in no way serving as an independent variable determining how presidents used their National

¹⁸Ibid., 93.

Security Councils. The first president to live under the arrangement initially regarded it purely in an advisory capacity until dominated by the Korean War; the second president was actively engaged in the entire NSC process, both organization and steering, calling on average of 44 NSC meetings during each year in office.

The third president with a National Security Council, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, demonstrated that political affiliation was also a negligible variable. Kennedy made the NSC a campaign issue, charging his opponent, Vice-President Richard Nixon, of having no viable strategy to contend with the Soviet Union. Kennedy's initial style borrowed from both Truman and Eisenhower. He kept Eisenhower's preference for personal involvement in the policy process, but did so with a smaller staff absent many of the bureaucratic channels Eisenhower put in place.

Kennedy's contribution was also physical and went beyond the institutional. Soon after assuming office, he converted the bowling alley in the basement of the White House's West Wing into the White House Situation Room. Now the presidency had a direct means to receive information on an around-the-clock basis rather than having it filtered or delayed as it made its way through cabinet agencies. The situation room had the staff and classified communications equipment necessary to send and receive message traffic to and from the Defense Department, State Department, and

embassies overseas. Formally, Kennedy's NSC met a grand total of 45 times,¹⁹ just one time more in almost three years than Eisenhower's council met each year. Kennedy enjoyed experimentation with other national security mechanisms, usually temporary in nature and designed to handle one major event or crisis.

Kennedy's congressional relations were decidedly mixed. Departing from the previous administration, Kennedy's NSC advisor, McGeorge Bundy was a more public figure. Bundy took on the role as an infrequent public spokesman for national security matters. Senator Jackson, the nemesis of Eisenhower, applauded the more flexible approach used by Kennedy but immediately thereafter absentmindedly charged that "the NSC process is still at work when one or two or more Cabinet officers make presentations to the President and decisions are reached."²⁰ Edmund Muskie, who was not serving on the Foreign Relations Committee but who did sit on Jackson's special subcommittee, commented that the NSC was "a convenient label for a meeting of people who would probably meet anyway."²¹

Kennedy's relations with Congress, and particularly the Senate, were alleviated in part through his selection of

¹⁹Stevens, 58.

²⁰Stephen J. Cimbala, ed., National Security Strategy: Choices and Limits (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1984), 327.

²¹Ibid.

Vice-President, Lyndon Johnson. John Prados asserted:

Johnson was, after all, a consummate politician and proven leader, a man who had played the Senate like a calliope, the fox who could persuade, cajole, and bully his way to any goal.²²

And yet, "Kennedy's national security people knew LBJ as the front man with Congress and assumed him to be ignorant about foreign policy."²³

Presidents seem destined to have at least one foreign policy or national security crisis during their administrations, therefore sensitizing Congress to its foreign affairs roles. Truman had Korea and the decision to forego consultation with Congress. For Eisenhower, it was Francis Gary Powers and the U-2; for Kennedy, it was the Bay of Pigs. Despite these, the three presidents enjoyed relatively harmonious relations with congressional foreign policy committees, interrupted infrequently by turbulence outside the ring, such as Senator Jackson's special subcommittee.

The Johnson Administration

Johnson did not embrace the NSC concept for at least two reasons. First, immediately after assuming office following the assassination of President Kennedy, Johnson's

²²Prados, 134.

²³Ibid.

primary concern was the presidential election less than one year away.²⁴ Second, although the proceedings of the NSC were largely classified affairs, their contents nonetheless would be revealed on the front pages of newspapers the following morning, in all likelihood from members of the NSC staff who were in attendance. This frightened Johnson, so much so that he called a scant three NSC meetings during the first 100 days of his administration. During his presidency, he would chair but 75 NSC meetings, dealing mostly with Vietnam and Southeast Asia.

Instead, Johnson opted for regular meetings consisting of most of the *de jure* members of the National Security Council: the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, and the National Security Adviser, expanded later to include the Director of Central Intelligence and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These were Johnson's "Tuesday Lunches," usually with a secretary or stenographer present but whose contents were not reported to departments or agencies. To be sure, not all the Tuesday Lunches took place, in fact, on Tuesday, but the secrecy Johnson treasured came at a high price: the statutory members of the NSC and its advisers were in routine attendance, but the organization, evaluation, analysis and recommendations made possible through the structure and process developed by Eisenhower and Kennedy was not achieved.

²⁴Prados, 148.

This inability or lack of desire to work directly with the NSC staff created at least one other significant problem. Without direct involvement by the president, the staff conducted its work unaware of the president's desires. Walt Rostow, who replaced McGeorge Bundy as Johnson's national security adviser, encouraged the president to meet directly with the staff. Rostow advised the president early in 1966 that the meeting would be "an opportunity for you directly to confirm your desire that they use their positions as a means of stimulating and helping formulate new ideas."²⁵ Johnson intended to surprise the staff by arriving for conference in the Situation Room, but the gathering was so large that the meeting instead was held in the Cabinet Room instead on May 27, 1966, two and one-half years after Johnson assumed the presidency.

Johnson did not know who was working for him. He viewed the meeting as a way to familiarize himself with his own staff, asking the attendants to introduce themselves with a brief description of their work. The only such introduction that piqued Johnson's interest was made by Jim Thomson, the staffer responsible for China, Burma and Cambodia. It was the first and last meeting Johnson would have with the Situation Room staff.

Just as Johnson seemed drawn to isolation in his relations with his NSC staff, so would the course of events

²⁵Ibid., 167.

draw Johnson to isolation in his relations with congressional foreign policy committees. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, chaired by J. William Fulbright, mounted a direct challenge to Johnson's foreign policy, specifically U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia.

Fulbright felt betrayed by Johnson as events in Vietnam developed following the Gulf of Tonkin incident. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman led Johnson's resolution through the Senate to an 88-2 victory, which, when coupled with the House of Representatives' unanimous endorsement, ultimately led to expansion of U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Appearing as if he was looking for an excuse to step up U.S. action in Vietnam, Johnson took a questionable attack on the *Maddox* in the Gulf of Tonkin and presented its implications to Congress in the form of the Forrestal-Sullivan draft congressional resolution. Confusion fogged the White House as reports of the attack flowed in; a year later, Johnson commented "For all I know, our Navy was shooting at whales out there."²⁶

The aftermath of the resolution saw Congress, and especially its foreign policy committees, resurgent. The traditional pattern had been that of deference to the Executive Branch during times of crisis. The variable that drove this new response was Executive Branch duplicity concerning Vietnam. Johnson's desire to quickly pass the

²⁶Prados, 210.

resolution, regardless of the veracity of reports used to produce it, later led to a huge credibility gap between the Executive and Legislative Branches that had affects on areas other than foreign policy. Congress, in a sense, felt "had."²⁷

Fulbright's anger and frustration came to the fore in a speech he delivered on May 5, 1966, in which he stated:

The attitude above all others which I feel sure is no longer valid is the arrogance of power, the tendency of great nations to equate power with virtue and major responsibilities with a universal mission. The dilemmas involved are preeminently American dilemmas, not because America has weaknesses that others do not have but because America is powerful as no nation has ever been before and the discrepancy between its power and the power of others appears to be increasing... What I do question is the ability of the United States, or France or any other Western nation, to go into a small, alien, undeveloped Asian nation and create stability where there is chaos, the will to fight where there is defeatism, democracy where there is no tradition of it and honest government where corruption is almost a way of life. Our handicap is well expressed in the pungent Chinese proverb: "In shallow waters dragons become the sport of shrimps."²⁸

The Nixon-Ford Administrations

From the perspective of managing national security affairs, the transition from Johnson to Richard Nixon came

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Thomas G. Paterson, ed., Major Problems in American Foreign Policy, Volume II: Since 1914 (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Co., 1984) 600.

under circumstances similar to those that transpired in the transition from Truman to Eisenhower: a Democratic president passed the reins to a Republican at a time when the U.S. was heavily committed to an undeclared war. Nixon, with his perspective as Eisenhower's Vice-President, restored the NSC system and its policy development functions under the direction of Henry Kissinger, but carried his aggressiveness one step further by broadening the role of the NSC staff to policy implementation. Nixon also favored staff work that presented him with a variety of options, as opposed to papers based on consensus. The size of the NSC staff exploded, and according to Paul Schott Stevens, a fundamental change occurred:

The Situation Room, with its "backchannel" capability, prove to be an important tool in Kissinger's hands for accomplishing Nixon's basic purpose: running foreign policy from the White House, and not the State Department.²⁹

The State Department, as an institution, was now in decline, while its cabinet secretary still retained a seat on the National Security Council. Not surprisingly, Stevens commented, morale in the State Department as well as throughout the Executive Branch declined as a result of this arrangement, but the centralized approach favored by Nixon changed somewhat when Kissinger became Secretary of State. This maneuver saw a return of at least some of the "classic" relationships that had existed in previous administrations,

²⁹Stevens, 59.

where the president was served by a strong and personally trusted Secretary of State.

President Gerald Ford, perhaps bowing to a precedent from the Eisenhower Administration, opted for a low-profile national security adviser, Brent Scowcroft, rather than the high-profile Kissinger. Scowcroft cut the size of the NSC staff by 20% and reduced the NSC's policy committees from six to two. Scowcroft noted differences between the Nixon and Ford Administrations:

The whole NSC system of foreign and national security policy was fairly well insulated from the political impact of the Watergate crisis. Vice President Ford was briefed on a regular, usually a once-weekly, basis either by Henry Kissinger or myself, and we would generally, each week, run over with him the major foreign policy issues that were current and what had happened to them over the week. As a result, he was really quite familiar and quite comfortable with the ongoing operations when he took over as president. It was not a traumatic shift for him to move in. I think the best way to describe the structure of the NSC system in the Ford Administration is to say that it was a fairly direct continuation of that of the Nixon Administration. Indeed there were few organizational changes, and at the outset of the Ford Administration, of course, Henry Kissinger was still wearing two hats, secretary of state and national security adviser. The structural changes really followed the intelligence investigations of 1975. In 1976, there were some modest organizational changes but not significant ones. Basically, the interagency structure of the NSC system was broken down into a number of subcabinet committees. By and large they had the same membership, but they had different titles, depending on the subject to be taken up. Each of these committees was supported by experts from various groups, like the Special Review Group, which dealt with crisis management; the Forty Committee, which dealt with intelligence and covert actions; the Intelligence Committee, which dealt with intelligence procedural matters.

That basically was the structure. [National Security decision making] varied slightly from that of the former administration to accommodate the personality of the new president. In the latter days of the Nixon Administration the activity of the NSC changed somewhat from the earlier years, when it was very active in terms of the number of NSC meetings. Once the basic policy decisions had been made for different geographical and functional areas, the incidence of meetings declined. President Nixon didn't like meetings in the first place. He would much prefer to take the documentation up to his study in the residence, review it, then ask any questions he might have. He made his decisions based on written input more than discussions from a meeting. In his administration, the number of meetings actually declined quite sharply. President Ford was quite the opposite. He was a fairly voracious reader, but he liked to come to his decisions as a result of the give and take of debate among his principal advisers, so we returned to a much more active NSC meeting schedule. It was the way he liked to make his decisions, and I guess inevitably, as a result, the quality of the papers declined somewhat. There was not a regularly scheduled NSC meeting on the agenda. Meetings were scheduled according to the occurrence of issues which needed resolution at that level; it is not possible to say how often it met.³⁰

Ford's primary concerns following Nixon's resignation were domestic and not foreign. As such, his direct regular involvement in NSC matters was much less than that of his predecessor. Ford's decision, however, to keep Kissinger at State had its political price.

In language that foreshadowed the 1992 presidential campaign, Jimmy Carter made foreign policy in general (and Henry Kissinger in particular) a campaign issue by charging that "As far as foreign policy goes, Mr. Kissinger has been

³⁰Pfaltzgraff & Davis, 6-7.

the President of this country."³¹ The "Lone Ranger" speech, as it came to be known, was so successful that it, not surprisingly, had many fathers, or at least people claimed roles in its development, including Anthony Lake, an NSC veteran from the Nixon Administration who would later serve under Carter on the NSC staff and as Bill Clinton's national security adviser.

Nixon's relations with Congress concerning foreign policy centered initially around ending the Vietnam War, but also expanded to include opening relations with China and legislative endeavors such as the Jackson-Vanik Amendment and the War Powers Act. Both represent congressional assertiveness that had its roots in the disillusionment arising from Vietnam. Congress also attempted to legislate foreign policy through the Cooper-Church Amendment following Nixon's "incursion" into Cambodia in the spring of 1970:

The authoritative Congressional Quarterly Service described the proposal as "a precedent-setting attempt by the Senate to use authorizations and appropriations to influence U.S. foreign affairs." The amendment failed. In fact, the only action taken by Congress to cut off Cambodian war funds occurred after (then known) U.S. military activity had ceased...The ultimate wording of the funding prohibition was essentially that of Cooper-Church, but the timing was significant to the initiator-respondent proposition...The fate of the Cooper-Church amendment, the ultimate importance of which is largely symbolic, illustrates the difficulty of getting even a majority of 535 independent-minded lawmakers to agree on a specific proposal - a prospect made all the more difficult when the proposal is at variance with the president (or, as

³¹Ibid., 379.

was often true during the Carter years, when the president fails to exercise the leadership that Congress has come to expect). More generally, the extent to which money can be used to affect the nation's foreign policy is limited. Simply put, it is difficult to legislate foreign policy, or to equate lawmaking with foreign policy making.³²

John Spanier noted that congressional combativeness in foreign policy, a distinct departure from previous Executive-Legislative relationships, was a response to the "imperial presidency" and resulting conclusions drawn from such charges. He commented:

The conclusions drawn from these charges were: the need to constrain the presidency; and the need for Congress to be more assertive in fulfilling its foreign policy responsibilities, thereby ensuring presidential restraint and accountability.³³

The goal was simple, even if the legislation and its interpretation were and are not: preclude U.S. involvement in "another Vietnam." Congress also sought to impose limits executive agreements, which Spanier observed "Presidents had increasingly used to make foreign policy commitments in order to get around the difficulty of mobilizing two-thirds support in the Senate for treaties";³⁴ restrictions on military assistance and arms transfers; and limitations on

³²Charles W. Kegley, Jr. & Eugene R. Wittkopf, American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 453-54.

³³John Spanier and Joseph Noguee, ed., Congress, the Presidency and American Foreign Policy (New York: Pergamon Press, 1981), ix.

³⁴Ibid., x.

covert operations through the two-step process of first receiving presidential approval and then reporting such operations to congressional oversight committees. Until 1980, the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committees were among the eight committees to which such operations were reported; after 1980, the responsibility fell solely to House and Senate intelligence committees.

The Jackson-Vanik Amendment was the collective brainchild of Senator Henry Jackson and Representative Charles Vanik. The goal of the Nixon Administration at the time was to use trade enticements to restrict the Soviet Union from flexing its global power muscles. In exchange for most-favored-nation (MFN) status, Nixon called for settling the Soviet Union's lend-lease debt and an expansion of Soviet-American trade. In October 1972 and January 1973, Jackson and Vanik introduced their similar resolutions, respectively, in each chamber of Congress. Debate lasted well over two years.

The amendment addressed five issues:

U.S. human rights policies, the relationship between domestic electoral politics and foreign policy in the United States, the improvement of the general political relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States, the development of Soviet-American trade, and executive-legislative relations.³⁵

Foreshadowing the debate that would come over the North

³⁵Ibid., 3.

American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), business interests supported the economic expansion inherent in the amendment while organized labor opposed it. Furthermore, the genuine point of concern addressed in the amendment linked foreign policy and trade with Soviet emigration policies. Domestic politics helped drive this, particularly as elected officials were actively courting the Jewish vote when Nixon signed the Soviet-American trade agreement on October 18, 1972; the Soviet Union's emigration policies were intentionally restrictive on its Jewish citizens.

Jackson wanted to send a message, to the Soviets if not the administration, that they both had to contend with Congress. "It is important the Russians understand they are dealing with not only the administration but also with Congress," he said.³⁶ The Soviets were as much a part of lobbying Congress as were Kissinger and Jackson. Personal solicitation from the administration to Congress was the rule of the day, but it was the Senate Finance Committee, and not the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, that held hearings on the trade agreement and the Jackson-Vanik Amendment. This stemmed from constitutional and institutional limitations on Congress: the tariff provisions of the trade agreement raised revenue; revenue bills first arise in the House of Representatives and are traditionally referred to the Ways and Means Committee; its

³⁶Ibid., 5.

counterpart in the Senate was and is the Finance Committee. The amendment passed, as part of a Trade Reform Act, by a 323-36 majority in the House and a 72-4 majority in the Senate in December 1974; the Soviets subsequently announced that they would not enter into the trade agreement's provisions. Perhaps as a form of payback, Soviet Jewish emigration fell far short of Jackson's expectations.

The War Powers Act started a debate that has yet to be finished. Congress appears to have desired to restrict the president's ability to commit troops to foreign theaters, but run from acting as aggressively as the act calls. Passed over President Nixon's veto in 1973, the War Powers Act (or Resolution) has never had its legitimacy formally recognized by presidents. Reports they have delivered to Congress have been consistent with the spirit of the act, but never *pursuant* to the act.

The War Powers Act provides that the president cannot commit to wartime overseas troop deployments if those operations exceed 60 days unless he receives specific congressional authorization; if American troop safety is at issue, the period can be extended to 90 days. If American forces are engaged in hostilities without congressional authorization, Congress, through a concurrent resolution passed in both houses, can direct the president to remove such forces from direct armed combat.

Nixon's veto message stated, in part, the Congress

"purport(ed) to take away, by a mere legislative act, authorities which the President has properly exercised under the Constitution for almost 200 years." The act was unconstitutional, he stated, because "the only way in which the constitutional powers of a branch of government can be altered is by amending the Constitution - and any attempt to make such alterations by legislation is clearly without force." The act would "seriously undermine the nation's ability to act decisively and convincingly in times of international crisis." It would "undercut the ability of the United States to act an effective influence for peace" and that it would "give every future Congress the ability to handcuff every future President."³⁷

Brent Scowcroft, who along with McGeorge Bundy is one of only two men to serve as national security adviser to two different administrations, described the impact of the War Powers Act while he served under Gerald Ford:

The War Powers Act was in train for several years, although it had gone through different kinds of approaches. One of the unfortunate aspects of the War Powers concept was that among the congressional leadership there were a lot of liberal Republicans, including Sen. Jacob Javits and Sen. John Sherman Cooper. This made it very, very difficult to try to deal with. I think in the larger sense that what we were seeing was one of the greater swings of the pendulum in the nation's history of executive-congressional relationships on foreign policy. Under the impetus both of Vietnam, and the weakness of the

³⁷Cited in Charles W. Kegley, Jr. & Eugene R. Wittkopf, American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 444.

president as a result of the brewing Watergate problem, the War Powers Act became a reality. We tried to deal with our congressional friends on it before the president, of course, vetoed it. However, events were in full swing and its passage was preordained. It was one of the opening steps in a fairly constant series of attacks on presidential prerogatives on foreign policy, followed by increasing restrictions in Vietnam - a couple hundred had preceded it - in foreign aid, in foreign military sales, and so on. the subsequent Greek-Turkish-Cyprus case and Angola exemplified instances where the presidency lost some of its strength and the Congress moved in to take it over. I think that since World War II - or since the outset of World War II - that Congress had seen a series of dynamic, activist presidents who took over more and more authority. The War Powers Act was a congressional reassertion of its role.³⁸

As for the consequences of the War Powers Act,

Scowcroft noted:

I think one of the unfortunate things in looking at this in historical terms is that this period coincided in the Congress with a collapse of congressional discipline, if you will, and a fundamental change in the makeup of the Congress. As a result, the possibility of a reasonable and cooperative relationship with the Congress decreased at the very time that it became more important. This also coincided with the rise in the power of congressional staffs and the decline in the power of the committee chairmen. Together, these factors have contributed to making things particularly difficult in the area of foreign policy formulation and legislation.³⁹

The Carter Administration

Jimmy Carter's approach to his NSC staff was an attempt

³⁸Pfaltzgraff & Davis, 58.

³⁹Ibid.

to balance or restore equity in what he viewed as an arena previously characterized by extremes. Rather than relying heavily on the NSC staff or on the State Department, he instead tried to draw on what he viewed as the strengths of both. For example, Carter saw advantages to the State Department's bureaucratic structure as well as its inertia. To him, it was an almost perfect complement to the NSC staff's rapidity. He selected two men of long-standing personal relationship with him to head these two agencies: Zbigniew Brzezinski, an assertive personality, to lead the equally assertive (as Carter saw it) NSC, and Cyrus Vance to lead State.⁴⁰ With experience in previous administrations, Vance, to Carter, was the ideal person to head the State Department. Whereas previous presidents had made sport of ridiculing State Department bureaucracies, Carter actually preferred its stagnant thinking as a "beneficial restraint on overly rapid action in inadequately assessed plans."⁴¹

One of Carter's aims was to initiate and preserve a spirit of innovation in both State and the NSC staff. The

⁴⁰Following the abortive hostage rescue mission in Iran, Vance resigned as Secretary of State. Vance had been the lone opponent to the mission in the administration. After Vance's resignation, Carter consulted with Brzezinski and decided that both Maine Senator Edmund Muskie and Warren Christopher would be excellent choices for Vance's replacement. The job was first offered to Muskie. He consulted with his family and close political associates, and accepted the position the next day.

⁴¹James Earl Carter, Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), 53.

NSC therefore maintained a Special Coordination Committee for crisis management and interagency affairs while the State Department concentrated on policy articulation through a Policy Review Committee. Whatever Carter desired, his approach eventually led to personal competition and sometimes confrontation between his national security adviser and Secretary of State.

Two challenges dominated Carter's interactions with Congress and its foreign policy committees: the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT) II and the Panama Canal Treaty. Carter came to office with a strong commitment to human rights abroad while also advancing an aggressive domestic agenda that he would later admit was too much, too soon for Congress to process efficiently. In his inaugural address, Carter stated:

Our nation can be strong abroad only if it is strong at home, and we know that the best way to enhance freedom in other lands is to demonstrate here that our democratic system is worthy of emulation...We are a strong nation and we will maintain strength so sufficient that it need not be proven in combat - a quiet strength based not merely on the size of an arsenal, but on the nobility of ideas. We will be ever vigilant and never vulnerable, and we will fight our wars against poverty, ignorance and injustice, for those are the enemies against which our forces can be honorably marshalled. We are a proudly idealistic nation, but let no one confuse our idealism with weakness.⁴²

The SALT II and Panama Canal Treaty negotiations were

⁴²Jimmy Carter: Inaugural Address, The Annals of America, v. 21 (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1987), 14.

similar in that they both reflected Carter's foreign policy commitments outlined in his campaign and inaugural address; they both were the result of similar tactics used to generate public and congressional support. SALT II in the Carter Administration built on a proposal started in the Ford Administration. The Panama Canal Treaty was a divisive issue for both Congress and the United States in general.

Brzezinski's Special Coordination Committee was heavily involved in SALT II. In one of the first NSC meetings of the Carter Administration, the president took his well-known dissatisfaction with the Ford proposal and stated his desire for a new SALT that included strategic arms cuts far greater than his predecessor suggested. Having stated his position, Carter turned the actual planning over to Brzezinski.

The administration stumbled badly as the proposal circulated back-and-forth between Washington and Moscow and before it reached the Senate. Carter, for example, stated publicly that he favored the initial Ford arrangement and almost immediately thereafter released his own reductions. The Kremlin greeted this new treaty as detrimental to its own security, causing many of Carter's lieutenants to perform "shuttle diplomacy" in Moscow, Geneva and London. Carter faced more problems at home. His Arms Control and Disarmament Agency director, Paul Warnke, resigned, causing Carter to replace him with not one but two people: George M. Seignious II, to head the ACDA, and Ralph Earle II, whose

responsibilities were strictly limited to SALT.

By the time Carter finished his negotiations with the Soviets and prepared for Senate ratification, SALT II had been on the agenda for over two years. The verification provisions of SALT II were a major sticking point for Carter, so much so that his choices for Warnke's replacements were guided in part by considerations for the Senate's receptiveness to them.

Before the actual treaty had been signed on June 18, 1979, Carter began preparing his national security team for Senate ratification. Both Brzezinski and Vance were active participants in the process, keeping with Carter's views of drawing from the strengths of both State and the NSC in crafting national security policy. Carter employed a number of approaches to generate congressional support. Warnke and Vance testified regularly before Congress; State, Defense, and the CIA held executive sessions. Carter also offered regular seats to legislators on SALT delegations so that by May 1979 46 members of the House and 26 Senators had participated in SALT delegations.⁴³

Senate opposition to SALT came from two camps usually in opposition to each other: those who felt the treaty went too far and those, like Henry Jackson, who felt the treaty didn't go far enough. Over a year before the treaty was signed, Jackson aide Richard Perle stated that opposition

⁴³Prados, 398-99.

already stood at 32 senators (two short of stopping the treaty) and could go as high as 51. Two events stopped the ratification process, both contributing to perceptions (especially in the Senate) that the Soviets could not be trusted when they made promises on either foreign policy or arms control: the presence of a new Soviet brigade in Cuba and its supporting aircraft; and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Carter withdrew SALT II.

The Panama Canal Treaty had its roots at least as far back as the Johnson Administration, and Cyrus Vance had served as one of Johnson's key players when anti-American riots erupted in Panama over the canal. The issue was sovereignty; the Panamanian belief was that the canal represented an attempt for American control over the country. Inside the administration, the canal was placed in the broader context of Latin American relations and the ability of countries to provide human rights to their citizens. Negotiations had started as far back as 1974, but the points from which the U.S. would not budge were defense rights and neutrality of the canal zone.

Personal lobbying from the administration carried the treaty. In retrospect, had Carter energized his cabinet and staff for SALT II as he did for the canal treaty, he may have won on both fronts. The Panama Canal Treaty was not one, but two, pacts. The first addressed neutrality, the second defense and operations. Passions ran high for both

those in favor of and those against the treaty. Senator Paul Simon (D-Ill.) and Jesse Helms (R-NC), both members of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, advanced pro and con arguments, respectively, in The American Legion Magazine (January 1978). Simon maintained that all sides benefited, while Helms advanced the argument that because the canal was built and maintained with U.S. funds, and because of the potentially flawed assumption of a friendly Panama, the U.S. should retain full control over the zone.

Carter established ad hoc delegations whose mission it was to generate support for the treaties. The regular "lobbyists" included Vance, Brzezinski, Ellsworth Bunker, Sol Linowitz, Warren Christopher, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, and on at least one occasion, the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Both treaties passed by the slimmest of margins (68-32), but the battle was not yet over. Implementing legislation now had to clear both houses, not just the Senate. The first salvo, interestingly enough, was fired not from Washington but from Panama.

Carter notes in his memoirs:

Privately, Torrijos praised us highly, but later he revealed to the public that he had given orders for the National Guard to attack and blow up the Canal if the Senate had rejected our agreement.⁴⁴

Coupled with the sting of defeat felt by the treaties' opponents, the remark served as an impetus to wage war on

⁴⁴Carter, Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President, 176.

the treaty by blocking its implementing legislation. The treaties called for such legislation by October 1, 1979, with full control reverting to Panama by 1999.

Instead of concentrating on 100 senators, Carter had to marshal his resources across both chambers of congress, 535 representatives and senators in all. Awaiting him was a House of Representatives seeking "to reverse its traditionally subordinate role in the foreign policy realm."⁴⁵ The House sentiment was summed up in the words of John D. Dingell (D-Mich.):

We in the House are tired of you people in the State Department going to your tea-sipping friends in the Senate. Now you good folks come up here and say you need legislation [to implement the Panama Canal treaties] after you ignored the House. If you expect me to vote for this travesty, you're sorely in error.⁴⁶

Carter made it a point to have personal meetings with both the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee during the transition following the November 1976 general election. To generate support for the implementing legislation, he sent the same delegates to Congress as a whole as he did for the Senate ratification, adding the U.S. ambassador to Panama, Ambler Moss. Carter also conducted evening briefings personally for up to 100 House members at a time, hoping to generate satisfactory

⁴⁵Cecil Crabb & Pat M. Holt, Invitation to Struggle: Congress, the President and Foreign Policy (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1984), 92.

⁴⁶Ibid.

bills to meet the obligations of the treaties. In his diaries, Carter commented:

In the evening I spent an hour and a half briefing about 100 House members on the Panama implementation legislation. I'll be doing this two or three more times in order to cover all the members who are willing to discuss it and to learn. So far they've had a very negative attitude, many of them swayed by completely misleading statements.

DIARY, MAY 8, 1979⁴⁷

The House passed an implementing bill disappointing to Carter by a slim 200-198 margin. Carter hoped the Senate's bill would be more to his liking so that differences could be resolved in his favor during conference committee. The president continued his personal briefings, enlisting the support of the Speaker of the House to delay additional votes on implementing legislation until Carter had the requisite votes.

Similar to previous meetings, but I think even better. The House members are sober; their main concern was not about the right or wrong of what they should do, but about the political consequences of voting in any way favorable toward Panama. Most of those who spoke out against it were shamed by the responsibility of others.

DIARY, JUNE 11, 1979⁴⁸

A new implementing bill passed the House by a 224-202 margin, but still had elements unsatisfactory to the president. Ultimately, Congress sent Carter implementing legislation to his liking and signed it into law on

⁴⁷Carter, 181-82.

⁴⁸Carter, 183.

September 27, 1979, three days prior to the treaties' effective date.

The treaties and their supporting bills came at a great political cost to both Carter and the legislators who supported them:

If I could have foreseen early in 1977 the terrible battle we would face in Congress, it would have been a great temptation for me to avoid the issue - at least during my first term. The struggle left deep and serious political wounds that have never healed; and, I am convinced, a large number of members of Congress were later defeated for reelection because they voted for the Panama treaties.

Twenty senators who voted in favor of ratifying the first treaty in 1978 were up for reelection later that year. Of those, six did not run, seven were defeated, and only seven returned for another term. The Panama Canal Treaty vote remained a vital political issue until the elections two years later, when another one-third of the senators were up for election. Eleven more of the senators who supported the treaties were defeated in 1980 - plus one President.⁴⁹

The Reagan Administration

Just as the challenger made political hay of the incumbent's foreign policy in 1976, so had it happened again in 1980. Jimmy Carter was on the receiving end of what he had dealt Gerald Ford, but it was at the hands of a fellow Ford challenger from the bicentennial year, Ronald Reagan. Reagan's approach to NSC management differed dramatically from that of the president he dethroned.

⁴⁹Ibid., 184.

Gone was the effort to seek balance between the NSC and the State Department. Instead Reagan sought cabinet government where the National Security Adviser formally managed the NSC staff and did not compete with cabinet secretaries. Compared with previous administrations, the national security adviser's influence was far reduced in the Reagan White House versus previous administrations. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, Secretary of State George Schultz (after General Alexander Haig's departure) and Central Intelligence Agency Director William Casey became the primary national security policy influences. Indeed, Reagan apparently did not pay much attention to the position of national security adviser, as six individuals held the position throughout his eight years in office. Schultz eventually gave the nod to national security adviser nominees.

On a continuum from total engagement with to total disengagement from national security council management, Reagan demonstrated that he was not completely attached to nor detached from NSC mechanisms. He often did both simultaneously. For example, his relaxed and delegatory style fostered intense competition among his lieutenants for influence and policy "turf," thereby helping contribute to the lack of mission clarity as U.S. Marines were deployed to, and subsequently attacked in, Lebanon. At the same time his White House was trying to manage public relations

following a terrorist attack on those Marines, he was intimately involved in the planning and execution of the U.S. rescue mission in Grenada.

This was a departure from previous presidents. Former Chief Executives had set a general tone for management of the NSC. They had also generally settled on whom they would trust to assist them in that management. This consistency allowed relations based on trust to last throughout administrations with little personnel turbulence. Having six national security advisers in the course of eight years broke this tradition. New national security advisers had to convince other *de jure* members of the NSC that they were "not a 'captive' of the State Department."⁵⁰ The lack of continuity also led to a scandal, the Iran-Contra affair, that shook the national security institutional mechanisms to their very roots and energized congressional roles in foreign policy and security processes.

Reagan's philosophy towards his national security inner circle was to select people who shared his policy goals and whom he felt were competent to perform their tasks and to give them free rein to complete those tasks. The rein given, however, was so free that policy entrepreneurship (unaccompanied by supervision, oversight and, some would argue, interest from the president) became the order of the day. Prados commented:

⁵⁰Prados, 481.

Rather than playing arbiter for the knights at his round table, Reagan sat back and agreed with all of them. The key became being the last to see him before the moment of decision. Many of the President's keepers developed their own techniques for that...The problem was a matter of discipline at the top. Every bureaucrat could create national policy, provided he could be astute enough to move the issue to a presidential level. The dynamics of NSC machinery created a new class of these policy entrepreneurs...In a system where the President has no fixed agenda and a limited interest in national security, this might be a reasonable way to generate options, but without discipline at the top the result was chaos. The easiest way around the approval of a competitor's proposal seemed to be to get approval for additional initiatives that modified or canceled the original plan. Thus it became typical of the administration that it would carry out the SALT II agreements despite Reagan's denunciation of them in the 1980 campaign, or that it would swear to uphold the ABM Treaty while unilaterally defining it out of existence.⁵¹

Personal liaison between the White House and Congress continued under Reagan, with special briefings given to congressional foreign policy committees prior to actual or anticipated crises, such as before the invasion of Grenada. Many of the Reagan Administration's challenges in congressional relations came from conflicts inherent in divided government. Reagan faced a House of Representatives controlled by the Democratic Party throughout his two terms; the Senate was under Republican control 1981-87. Congressional disagreements with Reagan's foreign policy were fought in both budget committee and foreign policy committee arenas.

⁵¹Prados, 481-82.

Schultz, Reagan's second Secretary of State, made frequent visits to Capitol Hill for both public and private testimony before foreign policy committees. In his memoirs, he notes:

On August 17 (1982), with the president's endorsement, I met in a closed session with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to consult on every key question we were addressing in the upcoming (Middle East) initiative. "The senators," I reported to the president, "did virtually all of the talking." Their major themes were: the West Bank-Palestinian question should be addressed quickly, regardless of the state of play in Lebanon; Jordanian involvement was essential to effective negotiation; the Camp David process provided a means on continuity that had Israeli acceptance; Israeli settlement activity in the occupied territories had been the major cause of Arab cynicism, and a settlement freeze there would do the most to reinvigorate the peace process. All these points were consistent with my own thinking. On August 18, I went through the same process at a breakfast meeting with the House Foreign Affairs Committee, where similar points were made to me.⁵²

Consultations with members of Congress took the form of closed sessions with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and parallel sessions with members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. At a critical session with senators on July 27, Holdridge discussed both the arms sales negotiations and our plans for congressional notification of the availability of F-5E fighter planes for Taiwan. He assured senators, including skeptics Barry Goldwater and Jesse Helms, that any agreement we made with China would link our peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue to our policy on arms sales. Our approach was accepted.⁵³

⁵²George P. Schultz, Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993), 90-91.

⁵³Ibid., 385.

Schultz notes that party identification was no barometer to support of the president's foreign policy ventures. One example followed congressional reaction to the administration's decision to mine Nicaraguan harbors:

Members of Congress expressed outrage at the act and at not having been informed of this secret operation. The Senate on April 10 voted resoundingly 84-12 for a nonbinding resolution opposing the use of federal funds to mine Nicaraguan harbors. The House Foreign Affairs Committee followed suit the next day in a vote of 32 to 3, with 2 abstentions. Republicans deserted the president in droves.⁵⁴

Reagan's arms-for-hostages dealings were not the product of a unified administration. In fact, at least the Secretary of State was kept "out of the loop" on both decision making and implementation. Schultz's actions telegraphed his dissatisfaction with an NSC staff apparently out of control:

Dante Fascell, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, called hearings that Monday and wanted Mike Armacost to testify. It would not be appropriate, I felt, in a politically charged battle, to ask a professional foreign service officer to answer for political decisions. I asked John Whitehead to take over. He had only three hours to prepare. He did a tough job in a magnificent way. Shock waves reverberated around town as Whitehead openly defended me, denounced arms for hostages, said Iran supported terrorism, and pointed out the impossibility of coping with operations run clandestinely by the NSC staff.⁵⁵

Through the Goldwaters-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, Congress imposed a measure of discipline on the

⁵⁴Ibid., 404-05.

⁵⁵Ibid., 837.

Executive Branch by requiring it to submit to the legislature an annual classified and unclassified National Security Strategy of the United States. This strategy was intended to outline diplomatic, military and strategic goals and objectives and also serve as a budgetary basis for security expenditures. Under Section 603, Congress directed the President to submit the strategy simultaneously with the budget each January.

The National Security Strategy, when published, serves as the starting point for at least two major planning and execution documents relative to congressional involvement in foreign policy. The first is the budget. Once the administration has settled on a strategy, the budget must be constructed so that goals and objectives articulated therein may be met or pursued to the president's satisfaction.

The second is the production of the National Military Strategy of the United States. This document is a combined effort of the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff that details how the Department of Defense will meet the objectives of the National Security Strategy. It is a relatively new contribution to foreign and military policy debates, as it was also mandated in the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Department Reorganization Act of 1986, Section 603.

Typically, publication of the National Military Strategy follows at least six months after the release of

the National Security Strategy, in part because the Defense Department neither cannot nor will not begin work on the National Military Strategy until the administration publishes the National Security Strategy.⁵⁶ The National Military Strategy's significance is that it is the sole official source for defining the national interest.

The Bush Administration

George Bush, the first sitting Vice-President to be elected President in his own right since Martin Van Buren, strengthened a process started in the Nixon Administration: interagency or interdepartmental planning groups that Bush officially referred to as Policy Coordinating Committees.⁵⁷ The major difference between Bush and Reagan was that Bush was personally involved in the deliberations and decisions of the working groups so much that it worked to the exclusion of maintaining simultaneous focus on domestic policy. Robert Portman, now a congressional representative from Ohio's Second District, also served as a member of Bush's staff as deputy assistant to the President and Director, Office of Legislative Affairs. He commented:

⁵⁶Source: Interview with Department of Defense Public Affairs Office, Jan. 1995.

⁵⁷Reagan's version was called "Policy Review Groups," officially designated so in 1987 following Iran-Contra. These groups met almost 200 times in the final two years of the Reagan Administration.

We spent days and weeks working out some new policy for health care or crime and we'd be ready to go in and present it to him, and a foreign policy crisis would come up, and he'd go lock himself in the west wing of the White House with Scowcroft, and Powell, and Cheney, and Baker, and we wouldn't see him for days. It was really frustrating at times.⁵⁸

According to another Bush Administration official, the interagency working groups had become something of an art form:

These groups would start normally at the deputy assistant secretary or assistant secretary level, and you'd have people from State, Defense and the NSC, all the regional experts, sit down and assess the world, basically. They all knew what they could and could not do or recommend, so they'd sit around the table and list every possible contingency that could come up from any "hot spot." Then they'd begin to assemble their contingency books. They'd identify solutions to the problems that they had authority to solve, and any unresolved problems would be sent to the next higher level. The deputy secretaries would then confer and add to the book, with plans for contingencies that they had authority to solve. What wasn't resolved at that level went to the next higher interagency group, and Dick Cheney (Secretary of Defense), Jim Baker (Secretary of State) and Brent Scowcroft (National Security Adviser) would have their own meeting, and in a nutshell do what the lower levels had been doing, only at their level. They knew what they had authority to resolve, and finally, you'd have a very small number of possible flare ups that required a presidential decision, and Cheney, Baker and Scowcroft would then go into the Oval Office, discuss the problems, make recommendations, and Bush would sign off on whatever he wanted to do. The final product was a book that had immediate preplanned reactions to just about every possible contingency. That's why Bush was such a good foreign policy president. His staff had worked out in advance just about everything. Then the process would begin again

⁵⁸Personal interview, October 1993.

the next month.⁵⁹

Bush drew his national security advisers from close associates who all had previous White House experience. Richard Cheney, the Secretary of Defense, was a congressman from Wyoming who, at the age of 34, was also Gerald Ford's White House Chief of Staff. Brent Scowcroft became only the second man, along with McGeorge Bundy, to serve as national security adviser in two different administrations. Bundy had served under Kennedy and Johnson; Scowcroft had been national security adviser during the Ford Administration, following Kissinger's brief interlude as simultaneous Secretary of State and NSC adviser. Secretary of State James Baker was Reagan's Chief of Staff and subsequently Secretary of the Treasury. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell was one of Reagan's six national security advisers.

Bush faced the congressional dilemma of divided government. While the Republicans retained control of Senate for six of Reagan's eight years, Bush faced Democratic control of both chambers of Congress throughout his entire administration. Therefore he could not bank on the strategy of advancing his agenda through one chamber of Congress, hoping that his preferences would win out in conference committee. Both Carter and Reagan used this

⁵⁹Confidential interview with former Bush Administration official, Dec. 1993.

approach. Bush developed a congressional strategy that would impact on Executive-Legislative relations after he left office and to the detriment of his successor. His national security team began regularly appearing on Capitol Hill in open and closed session, regardless of whether crises or critical issues were on the presidential horizon. When crises actually occurred, such as the U.S. invasion of Panama or the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the personal diplomacy between the Bush Administration and Congress had already laid the groundwork for generating congressional support. This did not mean that the support would be unanimous, nor that the support would be enthusiastic, but Bush's own credibility on foreign policy or national security issues was both well established and constantly reinforced, even if that credibility was not well received as a political asset.

While administrations attempt to produce a National Security Strategy annually, the pattern for much of this decade has fallen short of that goal. The last four were published in August 1991, January 1993 (both Bush Administration documents), July 1994 (the first Clinton Administration strategy), and February 1995. A National Military Strategy in support of the National Security Strategy was released in January 1992 and based on the 1991 National Security Strategy. The next National Military Strategy would not emerge from the Pentagon until February

1995, a byproduct of the 1994 National Security Strategy. The new Military Strategy's publication coincided with the release of a new Security Strategy, making it immediately outdated. This is the first National Military Strategy representing the influence of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John Shalikashvili.

The 1991 National Security Strategy was truly a transitional document. While there was acknowledgement that the Cold War as it was understood had ended, the still-existent Soviet Union was an entity to be treated cautiously and with no degree of certainty. In fact, President Bush, while expressing optimism, also tinged his comments with both some pessimism and warnings. He said,

The old system of Communist orthodoxy is discredited, yet its diehard adherents have not given up the struggle against change...If reform is to succeed, Soviet leaders must move decisively to effect institutional change. When invited and where appropriate, we will offer our cooperation. But it is clearly not in our interest to offer assistance in a way that allows the Soviet government to avoid the hard choices that in the longer run are the only hope for the people of that country...Today the threat of a U.S.-Soviet military conflict is lower than at any time since the end of World War II...But Soviet military power is hardly becoming irrelevant.⁶⁰

Institutionally, the 1991 National Security Strategy neither suggested nor proposed sweeping reforms to confront a post-Cold War era. Much positive rhetoric about the United Nations was evinced by Bush, but substantive foreign

⁶⁰George Bush, National Security Strategy of the United States (Washington: The White House, 1991), 5.

policy issues were to be resolved, according to him, through increasing international understanding and through greater international dialogue. Bush stated,

Through broadcasts, academic and cultural exchanges, press briefings, publications, speakers and conferences, we engage those abroad in a dialogue about who and what we are - to inform foreign audiences about our policies, democratic institutions, pluralistic society and rich academic and cultural diversity. We will increase our efforts to clarify what America has to contribute to the solution of global problems - and to drive home democracy's place in this process.⁶¹

The first institution mandated to confront change in the National Security Strategy was the Defense Department, which was "ordered" through the document to downsize by 25 percent and orient itself on "minimum essential military forces," which was also to be referred as "the base force." Under the base force concept, the Defense Department would now be comprised of four "packages": strategic forces, Atlantic forces, Pacific forces, and contingency forces. Each of the forces had areas of responsibility, either geographic or issues-oriented. For example, strategic forces oriented on "the enduring demands of nuclear deterrence and defence." Atlantic forces targeted "heavy threats characteristic of Europe and Southwest Asia" while Pacific forces were thought of primarily as "an essentially maritime theater, placing a premium on naval capabilities, backed by the essential air

⁶¹Ibid., 14.

and ground forces for enduring deterrence and immediate crisis response." Finally, contingency forces were to be based in the United States and were largely active duty troops" able to respond to spontaneous and unpredictable crises."⁶²

The timing of the January 1993 National Security Strategy was odd. The Bush Administration released it in its last days, representing perhaps the final contribution of that administration to foreign policy debate. At the same time, however, it would also be the guiding strategic document for the incoming Clinton Administration for the next 18 months.

Reading the new strategy, one may be left with the conclusion that Bush, and perhaps his successors, knew they were in a new era, but weren't exactly sure what kind of era it was. "We are indeed moving into a new era. It is an era that holds great opportunities - but also great dangers," he said.⁶³ Here is evidence that there was at least some acknowledgement of uncertainty and the necessity to make at least some institutional changes within the Executive Branch to work within the framework of the new era. In many respects, the 1993 strategy repeats verbatim many of the remarks made by Bush in his acceptance speech in Houston at

⁶²Ibid., 31.

⁶³George Bush, National Security Strategy of the United States (Washington: The White House, 1993), i.

the Republican Convention during the summer of 1992. But also clear in the 1993 strategy was that, from an issues perspective, the Cold War and its implications were no longer the locus of foreign policy planning. In their place were the issues of peace and democracy promotion, economic integration, and security concerns (including the industrial base, arms control, nonproliferation, terrorism, and illicit drugs).

While the Cold War had ended technically, some of its ramifications were still impacting upon the organizational thinking of an administration attempting to articulate the first strains of post-Cold War thinking. From an institutional perspective, the Bush Administration also proposed, in the same document, the first changes in institutional approaches to the new reality. These included suggesting structural changes to the United Nations to perform peacekeeping, the creation of a new "Fund for Peace as a vehicle to facilitate the United States' share of payments to the U.N., a greater role in "U.N. peacekeeping and humanitarian relief planning and support," and making "the U.N. Security Council a key forum for nonproliferation activities."⁶⁴

Major changes in the budget process and economic policy were also recommended in this document. Again, these were significant because it is this manuscript that guides much

⁶⁴Ibid., 7.

of an administration's economic planning. Specifically, Bush suggested a lowering of the deficit, policy that supports growth and ensures low inflation, greater personal and national savings, increased investment, reduction of taxation, regulation, and litigation; raising educational attainment and achievement throughout the educational system; improved national infrastructures and energy efficiency; and fundamental changes to the welfare state, referred to in very broad terms as "new approaches to dealing with societal ills which sap our economic strength."⁶⁵

The Clinton Administration

William Jefferson Clinton campaigned as someone who was unabashedly disinterested in foreign policy and national security. He was the first president in the post-War era who had downplayed serious consideration or engagement in foreign affairs, proclaiming himself to be a president who would "spend more time on domestic policy than he does on foreign policy." His first days in office indicated just how committed to that philosophy he truly was. His inaugural address paid little substantive mention to foreign affairs or the role of the United States in the world:

To renew America, we must meet challenges abroad

⁶⁵Ibid., 10.

as well as at home. There is no longer division between what is foreign and what is domestic - the world economy, the world environment, the world AIDS crisis, the world arms race - they affect us all. Today, as an old order passes, the new world is more free but less stable. Communism's collapse has called forth old animosities and new dangers. Clearly America must continue to lead the world we did so much to make. While America rebuilds at home, we will not shrink from the challenges, nor fail to seize the opportunities, of this new world. Together with our friends and allies, we will work to shape change, lest it engulf us.⁶⁶

While his second official act was to sign a directive outlining the organization and membership of the National Security Council and its staff, he skipped his administration's first foreign policy planning meeting and did not attend any meetings of the NSC for the first six weeks in office.⁶⁷ His first National Security Strategy, which under public law must be submitted concurrent with the president's budget, finally arrived on Congress's doorstep in July 1994, 18 months after taking office. The Clinton Administration lived under the Bush Administration's last National Security Strategy, published in January 1993. Additionally, no accompanying National Military Strategy, for which the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act calls, had been forthcoming from the Pentagon until February

⁶⁶William J. Clinton, Inaugural Address, Jan. 20, 1993, White House Electronic Archives.

⁶⁷William R. Farrell, Col. Frederic M. Anderson, & Michael T. Corgan, "The Clinton NSC: It's Not Time For a Change," National Security Decision Making, Module III (Newport: Naval War College, 1994), 2.

1995. The Administration and the nation were guided, therefore, by a National Military Strategy published in January 1992 based on a Bush Administration National Security Strategy dated August 1991.

The first effort by the Clinton Administration to articulate its perspective of a post-Cold War approach did not appear until July 1994. No longer was it simply a "National Security Strategy of the United States." Now it became A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement.

President Clinton identified his overarching goals, proclaiming his as "a new national security strategy for this new era."⁶⁸ These goals were:

To credibly sustain our security with military forces that are ready to fight.

To bolster America's economic revitalization.

To promote democracy abroad.⁶⁹

In attempting to establish his own foreign policy identity, President Clinton declared herein that "the Cold War is over." Previous security strategies had marked their publication as coming in times of transition. Rather than meeting this new era with shrinkage from the international scene, the president overtly shunned both isolationism and

⁶⁸William J. Clinton, A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement (Washington: The White House, 1994), i.

⁶⁹Ibid.

protectionism. Furthermore, like President Bush, he reminded readers that security threats are not solely military in character. Included on this list were terrorism, narcotics trafficking, environmental degradation, rapid population growth, refugee flows, and transnational environmental issues.⁷⁰

The president called congressional involvement in this new strategy "critical." He provided no firm definition of "engagement," but instead stated what it should be:

...selective, focussing on the challenges that are most relevant to our own interests and focussing our resources where we can make the most difference. We must also use the right tools - being willing to act unilaterally when our direct national interests are most at stake; in alliance and partnership when our interests are shared by others; and multilaterally when our interests are more general and the problems are best addressed by the international community.⁷¹

Clinton provided both a definition and rationale for enlargement:

Our national security strategy is based on enlarging the community of market democracies while deterring and containing a range of threats to our nation, our allies and interests. The more that democracy and political and economic liberalization take hold in the world, particularly in countries of geostrategic importance to us, the safer our nation is likely to be and the more our people are likely to prosper.⁷²

While adopting a broad geographic and thematic approach

⁷⁰Ibid., 1.

⁷¹Ibid., 5.

⁷²Ibid., 2.

to articulating a new national security strategy, there was no call by the Clinton Administration for fundamental institutional reforms to cope with what he himself called a "new era." In essence, institutions arising during the Cold War, whether in the Executive or Legislative Branches, were given tacit approval to retain their Cold War structure. The National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement was a statement of what needed to be done, and not one of how to organize to do it.

For his national security and foreign policy team, Clinton followed a pattern set by previous administrations. He drew upon those who had either congressional or White House experience, in part to shore up shortcomings in his own background, which had been confined to the level of state politics. For Secretary of Defense, Clinton chose Les Aspin, a Wisconsin representative with a long history as Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. Secretary of State went to Warren Christopher, a lawyer and veteran of the Carter Administration whose most recent national exposure had been as the primary author of a report detailing the Los Angeles Police Department's handling of the Rodney King episode. For National Security Adviser, Clinton tapped Anthony Lake, who had served on the NSC staff in both Republican and Democratic administrations. Lake had also written a number of books and monographs on the Third World and U.S. policy towards it, concentrating on Africa.

None had a true grounding in international economics, the one foreign policy issue that Clinton repeatedly harkened to during the campaign.

An air of optimism prevailed throughout Congress at the outset of the Clinton Administration. Gone were the days of divided government; now unified government was the order of the day. Whatever expectations Congress had about working with a Democratic president were soon dashed by reality.

The regular consultations so characteristic of the Bush Administration were replaced by no consultations at all. Those consultations that the Clinton Administration finally conducted were the cause of more strife than congressional support. Clinton faced the same problems with his own party in Congress endured by Reagan following the decision to mine Nicaraguan harbors. After the deaths of 18 U.S. servicemen in Somalia, for example, Clinton sent Les Aspin to brief Congress on the situation and anticipated U.S. plans:

You've got to understand something about Congress, and this applies whether you're talking about Democrats or Republicans. When they get Pentagon briefings, they like to see all the decorations: the colonels and the generals with all of their medals and the satellite photos with the "secret" or "top secret" classifications and the pointers and all that. Secretary Aspin showed up after the Somalia incident in his usually unpressed suit, almost like it was "coming home" week. Well, they didn't care whether he was one of them for 26 years or not. He was the Secretary of Defense and they expected him to act like that. Well, he gives his briefing off of some notes he had on the back of an envelope and when he's done, he shoves one hand in his pocket and says, "Well, that's about it guys. What do you think?" Pat Schroeder was in an uproar. She said, "Les, you're the

Secretary of Defense. You tell us!"⁷³

I was in the room. I heard that briefing, and after it was all over, one congressman from the South stood up and said, "Les, in all the 26 years I've been in the House of Representatives, that's the worst god-damned briefing I ever heard and I'm your fucking friend."⁷⁴

Even Pat Schroeder was upset. Pat Schroeder! Let me tell you something. If you can't impress Pat Schroeder, something's wrong with you.⁷⁵

Clinton's own directive regarding national security organization should have prevented this. In addition to stipulating the new NSC membership, Clinton also charged the national security adviser for "determining the agenda (of NSC meetings) and ensuring that the necessary papers are prepared" "at my direction and in consultation with the Secretaries of State and Defense and, when appropriate, the Secretary of the Treasury and the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy." The president also created three institutions within the NSC that borrowed from his predecessors: the NSC Principals Committee (NSC/PC), the NSC Deputies Committee (NCS/DC), and Interagency Working Groups (NSC/IWGs).

The NSC/PC is the "senior interagency forum." It is charged to "review, coordinate, and monitor the development

⁷³Confidential interview with Deputy Assistant Secretary, Dec. 1993.

⁷⁴Confidential interview with member of Congress.

⁷⁵Confidential interview with Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff member, Dec. 1993.

and implementation of national security policy." Clinton designed the forum as a meeting place for Cabinet-level officials "to meet to discuss and resolve issues not requiring the President's participation," chaired by the national security adviser. The designated members of the NSC/PC are the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, the U.S. Representative to the U.N., the Director of Central Intelligence, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy. In short, the NCS/PC is a forum for the NSC except the president and vice-president.

The NSC/DC is "the senior sub-Cabinet interagency forum for consideration of policy issues affecting national security." It "shall review and monitor the work of the NSC interagency process (including Interagency Working Groups...)." To accomplish this

The Deputies Committee also shall focus significant attention on policy implementation. Periodic reviews of the Administration's major foreign policy initiatives shall be scheduled to ensure that they are being implemented in a timely and effective manner. Also, these reviews should periodically consider whether existing policy directives should be revamped or rescinded.

Members are the deputies and Under Secretaries to the members of the NSC/PC. As the national security adviser chairs the NSC/PC, so the deputy national security adviser chairs the NSC/DC. Crisis management occurs with the NSC/DC, through a group designated the Deputies Committee/CM (Crisis Management).

NSC/IWGs may either be permanent or ad hoc. They are established at the direction of the Deputies Committee, and are a forum for Assistant Secretaries in the departments regularly represented on the National Security Council:

The IWGs shall convene on a regular basis - to be determined by the Deputies Committee - to review and coordinate the implementation of Presidential decisions in their policy areas. Strict guidelines shall be established governing the operation of the Interagency Working Groups, including participants, decision-making path and time frame. The number of these working groups shall be kept to the minimum needed to promote an effective NSC system.

With an institutional framework in place backed by presidential imprimatur, how well did the system work? Interviews conducted in 1993 and 1994 with both presidential appointees and career civil service employees of the Departments of State and Defense, the National Security Council, and the Central Intelligence Agency found it extremely difficult to arrange for centralized planning, to say nothing of centralized execution, concerning foreign relations.

Presidential appointees displayed the greatest dismay at this, particularly because they felt abandoned by the White House. A consistent perception, supported by their own firsthand experiences, was that their selection as well as that of their cabinet or agency director was based on a desire of the president to choose officials capable running the department without any direct involvement of or consultation with the Chief Executive.

To be honest with you, I feel used. I know why he picked me for this position. I'd been working on the Hill for years, and I knew all the key people when it came time to get his proposals through, because I had worked for them for so many years. Well, once I get down here, they begin planning and developing policy up in the White House without even talking to us about how to sell it to Congress, and then they expect us to sort it out for them with Congress. I really do want to see President Clinton succeed, but sometimes, since I've been here, I've felt abandoned.⁷⁶

This "hands off" policy regarding international and defense matters extended to the degree of access granted to the departmental secretaries. Secretary of State Warren Christopher found it extremely difficult to arrange for personal time to brief the president on international affairs; during the early days of the administration, according to key appointees, the president did not even want to talk with him. It was only after the deaths of 18 U.S. soldiers in Somalia in October 1993 that Christopher finally obtained a regularly scheduled appointment with President Clinton, even though it was and is for only one hour every week.⁷⁷

With a Cold War/Soviet focus or perspective, such disarray was the exception and not the rule. While one appointee compared the post-Cold War era with the post-World

⁷⁶Confidential interview with legislative liaison official, Sept. 1993.

⁷⁷Interview with State Department officials, Dec. 1993, Nov. 1994. Also, Elaine Sciolino, "3 Players Seek a Director For Foreign Policy Story," The New York Times, Nov. 8, 1993, 1.

War II era, stating that both required "a need for new thinking,"⁷⁸ the direction of that thinking was unarticulated. The official went on to say,

The administration is trying to work foreign policy with Cold War institutions in a post-Cold War world. We're in an era where there's zero money available combined with the difficulties of developing a U.S. foreign policy. We need a different way of thinking and operating.⁷⁹

When the subject is interaction with the Legislative Branch, there are major disagreements on the goals of foreign policy and how the administration should go about achieving them. In "chicken and egg" fashion, the central question yet to be resolved is whether the budget should drive these goals and objectives or whether goals and objectives should drive the budget.

The State Department takes what may be called a thematic approach to foreign policy. "It's hard to have an overriding theme in a post-Cold War world," one presidential appointee stated.⁸⁰ While personal loyalty to President Clinton remains high, there is also universal agreement that foreign policy remains the Achilles' Heel of the administration. The same official also commented that foreign policy "is the pit bull of what (the Republicans) want to do against President Clinton."

⁷⁸Interview.

⁷⁹Interview.

⁸⁰Interview.

As an institution, the State Department desires continuity, and not change, in foreign policy.⁸¹ The obvious tension arising, but not specifically addressed, was how to maintain continuity when the conceptual basis of foreign policy has been removed or eradicated. A starting point under active consideration now and evidenced in State Department operations is a shift from a regional or geographic emphasis to what one interviewee called "issues based budgeting."

Responses of Executive Branch officials to survey questions reveal that while this is certainly a new approach, it is not surprising. As was the case with the congressional foreign policy committees, there was scant mention of any geographic component when respondents were asked about the most important issues facing the agency. The lone exceptions addressed Haiti (which was an ongoing operation at the time some of the interviews were conducted), peace in the Middle East, or North Korea's nuclear weapons procurement (although this last issue fell generally in the larger context of nuclear proliferation).

Congress, in its information-gathering processes, must confront two bureaucratic obstacles in dealing with the State Department. For geographic information, both the committee and personal staffs consult the respective desk officers, usually at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level.

⁸¹Interview with Assistant Secretary.

There is within Congress a built-in skepticism of the State Department's Legislative Affairs offices, because Congress tends to view their denizens as being little more than public relations hacks for the department or the administration.

Not surprisingly, people whose job it is to perform or orchestrate legislative liaison do not view this in precisely the same manner. They agree that they run interference for the administration, but that is to guarantee uniformity in the message they are communicating to Capitol Hill. Additionally, the Office of Legislative Affairs draws its ranks from three different sources: presidential appointees, career civil servants, and foreign service officers. Inclusion of this last group may be surprising, but the State Department's position is that foreign service officers are a vital part of the congressional liaison and information function because "people on the Hill won't understand foreign affairs without them."⁸²

In dealing with Congress, State Department officials point out that a major problem they face, which also exists in its relations with the Defense Department and National Security Council, is a combination of institutional and personality tensions. While organizational orientation exists on paper, in the guise of the president's directive

⁸²Interview.

of January 20, 1993, respondents perceived that the document was not backed by action, leading them to act on their own priorities or beliefs rather than an overarching theme articulated by the president.

In selecting his legislative liaison team, President Clinton picked some people based on their previous experience as members of congressional staffs. The strategy was that, by including some persons with Hill experience, legislative liaison would be made easier, especially in difficult legislative fights. "Washington is a place where people get recycled," said one member of the legislative liaison staff.⁸³ Additionally,

I know he campaigned as an outsider, and that's fine for the election, but once you begin to start governing, you've got to have people who know this town and know the halls of Congress if you expect to get anything done. Look at who he chose for his top three posts: Christopher, Aspin and Lake. These are all people who've been here before and who have real experience in national security and foreign policy. Do you remember the theme of the campaign? The biggest reason he picked those three people was because he believed he could turn national security over to them without having to get involved in it.⁸⁴

This is certainly not a one-way street, however, as many members of the congressional foreign policy staffs had experience within the Executive Branch before working in Congress. Clinton's strategy proved correct in handling

⁸³Interview.

⁸⁴Confidential interview with presidential appointee, Dec. 1993.

particularly contentious issues such as the vote on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). "We were jockeying for votes in the corridors to the chambers just before the NAFTA vote," commented one member of the legislative liaison staff.⁸⁵

Although State Department officials act, in theory, on behalf of the president, perceptions about his engagement and concern in foreign policy matters are at variance with other Executive Branch agencies. The National Security Council staff, for example, views the president's involvement in foreign concerns as intense as that during the Bush Administration. Within the Department of State, that perception is not nearly as strong. Some appointees expressed a general sense of abandonment in their day-to-day duties, and the feeling was intensified as they all personally knew the Chief Executive.

Comments about presidential involvement in foreign affairs, even by the same respondent, embraced a "good news - bad news" dynamic. In one interview, for example, a presidential appointee commented that the president "has a level of intensity that's remarkable when he gets engaged." Shortly thereafter, however, this same respondent stated,

You can tell what he's interested in. I think, when he picked his foreign policy team, he did it so they could run it by themselves without his getting involved while he did the domestic side. He has to be the one to say the buck stops here.

⁸⁵Interview.

He hasn't been engaged enough.⁸⁶

From the perspective of the Clinton National Security Council, both the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee are seen as somewhat "irrelevant."⁸⁷ The NSC in this regard shares some of the same perspectives as the Department of State, in that the real conduct of foreign policy, and the contributions of Congress thereto, are not made in the foreign policy committees but rather through appropriations committees. According to one NSC official,

A lot of people would wonder if they (House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations) have any relevance at all. They have an inability to pass any legislation. Senate leadership in the form of George Mitchell prevents it from even coming to the floor, knowing that it's going to take a lot of time and in the end not produce anything.⁸⁸

As with the Department of State and members of both the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees, the National Security Council identified a critical component to the effectiveness of the foreign policy committees as the competence of the committee chairmen. In this respect, there was a profound disregard, as there was with all those interviewed throughout the Executive Branch, for the chair of the Senate Foreign

⁸⁶Interview.

⁸⁷Interview.

⁸⁸Interview.

Relations Committee (Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island), whom one NSC official described as providing "nonleadership."⁸⁹

Dissatisfaction with the foreign policy committees does not stop with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee chair. Within the NSC there was also the perception that while it is routinely involved in policy-making and executing, Congress, in all of its institutional manifestations, must be forced into a *decision* making mode. One career NSC employee observed,

You'll probably get very few definitions (of the national interest) from the Hill. They'd be pinned on an issue. They don't like to put things in black and white. They like to sit on the fence. I think they have to be forced into making decisions.⁹⁰

The NSC's perspective is that the president has been much more extensively involved in foreign policy than is reported in the media or through the public statements of members of the foreign policy committees, such as Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) or a Frank McKloskey (D-In.). Long serving members of the NSC staff reported that foreign policy issues will drive any presidential administration, but to their surprise public concern with foreign policy issues continued to exist at all, especially in view of the tone adopted in

⁸⁹Interview.

⁹⁰Interview.

the 1992 presidential campaign.⁹¹

In the post-Cold War era, foreign policy has not vanished as a presidential concern, but what is changing is the kind of involvement by the president. "Foreign policy will drive anyone," said one NSC civil servant, who observed

From what I've seen Clinton's been as engaged as Bush. Bush had a lot more on the forefront, like the U.S.S.R., the Gorbachev coup, Yeltsin's emergence. The world had changed, and that's why we had the "New World Order." From my perspective, Clinton doesn't ignore foreign policy. There's been a lot that's been going on, it's just at a different level. He's as involved in Bosnia, Somalia, and Haiti as Bush was.⁹²

Compare this perception of presidential "engagement" with that shared by those within the Department of State. When queried about a definition of the national interest, there was no agreement within the National Security Council, even though their own publication initiates a Defense Department definition of it. Responses ranged from "it doesn't exist" to "that depends on the situation." This stems in part from some degree of institutional loyalty, greater than other Executive Branch agencies, within the NSC to the president. "It's not 'the NSC this' or 'the NSC that', it's 'the President,'" said one staff member of the NSC. Others at least attempted to articulate some idea. One official observed,

Free trade to the extent you can support it.

⁹¹Interview.

⁹²Interview.

Democratic peace. A free and peaceful world. Security of country. Our way of life. First and foremost the Constitution. Use the things vital to our survival in our relationship with other countries.⁹³

If this a new era with new realities, then there should have been at least some attempt to organize Executive Branch foreign policy agencies along institutional lines, providing them a framework with which to confront their new international environment and new organizing principles as well. Within the NSC, as with the State Department, this has not happened, judging from interviews.

The NSC's judgment of critical foreign policy issues has a much stronger geographic focus than the perspectives of the congressional foreign policy committees, the State Department, and the Defense Department. Whereas other interviewees greeted a challenge to define the national interest with up to one minute of silence, but could immediately vocalize critical foreign policy issues, in the case of the NSC it was the exact opposite. Typically, respondents were silent for at least 20 seconds, and often longer, before volunteering any opinion. Issues listed included: the former Soviet Union and particularly its nuclear and conventional arsenal; the transition of the former Soviet republics to new market economies; state supported terrorism (with specific reference to Libya, Iraq, and North Korea) and relations with China (especially

⁹³Interview.

regarding its economic development and human rights abuses, which were predicted to be a major U.S. concern for at least the next 10 to 20 years).

The DOD has little direct involvement with the congressional foreign policy committees. Like the Central Intelligence Agency, DOD can give any member of Congress classified intelligence briefings on virtually any issue or region under its domain upon the request of the member.⁹⁴ The DOD is discussed here because of its contribution to foreign policy concerns that stem from the publication of the national security strategy. This is the *National Military Strategy of the United States*, the preparation of which starts immediately after release of the national security strategy and is completed on average of about six months afterward. This document contains an official explication of the national interest of the United States, a concept that most Congressional and other Executive Branch respondents were unable or unwilling to define. The Department of State does not routinely publish a comparable document in support of the president's National Security Strategy, even though President Clinton's version actively calls for changes in State Department operations, such as

⁹⁴Confidential interviews with the Central Intelligence Agency's and Department of Defense's legislative affairs staff, Dec. 1993 and Nov. 1994.

the need for "preventive diplomacy."⁹⁵

Like the National Security Strategy, the National Military Strategy is an evolving concept. The 1992 version, generated as a result of the August 1991 National Security Strategy, presents in its opening pages a statement of the U.S. national interests in the 1990s and the objectives necessary to satisfy these interests. The creation of then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell, these interests and objectives were:⁹⁶

Interest
The survival of the United States as a free and independent nation, with its fundamental values intact and its institutions and people secure.

Objective
Deter any aggression that could threaten the security of the United States and its allies and - should deterrence fail - repel or defeat military attack and end conflict on terms favorable to the United States, its interests, and its allies.

Effectively counter threats to the security of the United States and its citizens and interests short of armed conflict, including the threat of terrorism.

Improve stability by pursuing equitable and verifiable arms control agreements, modernizing our strategic deterrent, developing systems capable of defending against limited ballistic-missile strikes, and enhancing appropriate conventional

⁹⁵Department of State Office of Public Communications, Jan. 11, 1995.

⁹⁶Colin Powell, The National Military Strategy of the United States (Washington: The Pentagon, 1992), 5.

capabilities.

Foster restraint in global military spending and discourage military adventurism.

Prevent the transfer of militarily critical technologies and resources to hostile countries or groups, especially the spread of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons and associated high-technology means of delivery.

Reduce the flow of illegal drugs into the United States by encouraging reduction in foreign production, combatting international traffickers and reducing demand at home.

A healthy and growing U.S. economy to ensure opportunity for individual prosperity and resources for national endeavors at home and abroad.

Ensure access to foreign markets, energy, mineral resources, the oceans, and space.

Strengthen and enlarge the commonwealth of free nations that share a commitment to democracy and individual rights.

Healthy, cooperative and politically vigorous relations with allies and friendly nations.

Strengthen international institutions like the United Nations to make them more effective in promoting peace, world order and political, economic, and social progress.

A stable and secure world, where political and economic freedom, human rights, and democratic institutions flourish.

Maintain stable regional military balances to deter those powers that might seek regional dominance.

Aid in combatting threats to democratic institutions from aggression, coercion,

insurgencies, subversion,
terrorism, and illicit drug
trafficking.

It is notable that the military strategy is not entirely military in nature. It includes references to a range of diplomatic and domestic activities necessary to bring it to fruition. Also, it is significant that in interviews conducted throughout the Executive and Legislative Branches, all but one of 55 respondents identified the national interest, only after giving much thought to the question, in terms that the Defense Department classifies as objectives in support of clearly-defined interests. None of the respondents was aware that the Department of Defense had indeed made such a formulation.

When the statement was read to members of the foreign policy committees or their respective personal or committee staff members, respondents typically expressed agreement or disagreement and at this point interview sessions became a debate on the accuracy of the definition. The salient point is that, particularly within congressional foreign policy committees, no effort has been made to at least orient their members in a common direction concerning the nature of the "national interest," even though they have all used the phrase in committee hearings or during debate on the chamber floors and the term is used frequently as a justification for pursuing or not pursuing a particular foreign policy

course of action.

Further obfuscating foreign policy within the Executive Branch is the publication of the National Military Strategy itself. Although the Goldwater-Nichols Reorganization Act of 1986 "charges the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, with the responsibility of assisting the President and the Secretary of Defense in providing strategic direction for the Armed Forces,"⁹⁷ the written document providing this direction was in effect from January 1992 until the ultimate emergence of its successor in February 1995, during the 104th Congress. During that time, the Executive Branch experienced a new president with two new security strategies, three secretaries of defense, and two chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The administration's first official definition of the "national interest" therefore came two years into its tenure. As the Administration simultaneously released a new National Security Strategy in February 1995, the newly-published National Military Strategy became immediately outdated.

Conclusions Concerning the Executive Branch

In a sense, there is little difference between Executive Branch contributors to foreign policy and their

⁹⁷Powell, Colin L. 1992. The National Military Strategy of the United States, i.

counterparts in the congressional foreign policy committees. Both are highly suspicious of each other; both widely discount the competence and sincerity of the other; each questions the other's competence and motivations.

Within the Executive Branch, there exists the same lack of coordination of effort found in Congress. No one in either branch has yet made the effort to orchestrate their institutional foreign policy inputs so that they work in harmony rather than at cross-purposes. The inability of Congress to do so is understandable: there is no constitutional edict mandating such symmetry and its members have much to gain and little to lose by being foreign policy mavericks. The inability to do so on the part of the Executive Branch is much less comprehensible. The president and his administration have much to gain from enhanced interbranch coordination and they suffer from its absence.

Coordinating the Executive Branch on foreign policy requires a fundamental reorientation of presidential attitudes and institutional efforts. Returning to the foreign policy and crisis response working groups characteristic of the Bush Administration would be a good first start, but such a move mandates that the president articulate concrete goals and objectives to orient the working groups. Publishing a national security strategy is not enough. Just as President Clinton attempted to frame all debate prior to the general election in terms of impact

on the economy, the working groups would need the constant, on-going involvement and guidance of the Chief Executive to reinforce how foreign policy development and articulation relate to the published counsel within the covers of the national security strategy.

Virtually all of those interviewed within the Executive Branch commented that no one is quite sure of what the content and thrust of U.S. foreign policy should be in the post-Cold War era. No one, however, is attempting to at least advance an idea that can serve as a starting point for the debate. In this sense, then, the Executive Branch is experiencing the same problems as the Legislative Branch.

Further clouding the issue is a partisan dynamic to the contest. There was a striking difference in the timbre of interviews conducted before and after the November 1994 elections. Prior to November 8, 1994 respondents could easily list any number of issues they felt were the most important for U.S. foreign policy. These included "the usual suspects": China, North Korea and nuclear proliferation, peace in the Middle East, internal developments (both civil and military) within the former Soviet Union, foreign aid, etc. After the mid-term congressional elections, political appointees within the Executive Branch (in marked contrast to career civil servants) could list only one: who would chair the congressional foreign policy committees and their

subcommittees.⁹⁸

This concern is evidence supporting the argument made earlier that continuity, and not change, is the constant sought in American foreign policy. In spite of Executive Branch attitudes that these same committees are not serious contributors to the content of American foreign policy, it is also evidence that they do play *some* role, even if it is unclear. Otherwise the uncertainty inherent in a party shift in partisan control of Congress would not weigh as heavily on the minds of those within the Executive Branch.

No consistent pattern emerged in Executive-Congressional relations during the Cold War. Each president brought a different perspective and attitude towards NSC mechanisms. Truman maintained a "hands off" policy, at least until the start of the Korean War, so as not to taint the quality of advice he received. This does not mean he ignored it. Eisenhower was extremely active and engaged in NSC processes, calling NSC meetings almost every week of his administration and establishing a clear hierarchy for the institution. Kennedy was also engaged, but felt that his own efficiency would be enhanced through streamlining the NSC while creating the Situation Room that would eventually enable the NSC to eclipse the State Department as the chief

⁹⁸The interviews were conducted with both the Department of State and Vice-President Gore's staff. The respondents were different subjects than those interviewed prior to the midterm elections.

foreign policy organ. Johnson's inherent distrust of NSC information security did not denote that he was completely dissatisfied with the membership of the NSC; he simply avoided the staff and instead concentrated his consultation with the NSC statutory members. The Nixon-Ford Administrations were somewhat opposites in that the former was a foreign policy "attentive" throughout his tenure while the latter was more concerned with domestic matters. Neither ignored NSC mechanisms, however, and Ford maintained an active role in NSC deliberations while calling formal meetings on an *ad hoc* basis as the situation called. Carter had a foreign policy orientation far different than Ford. He also had a far different orientation towards the NSC, attempting to impart some equality between the NSC and the State Department, hoping that innovation would result. He maintained regular liaison with congressional foreign policy committees and with Congress in general, often calling members of Congress to the White House for personal briefings. Carter's experiences with Congress matched Eisenhower's in that committees outside of House Foreign Affairs or Senate Foreign Relations attempted to influence foreign policy. Reagan's preference was for a strong Secretary of State rather than a dominant NSC adviser. Eventually, his Secretary of State, George Schultz, cleared prospective NSC advisers for service on the White House staff. Schultz was a frequent visitor to Congress, often

appearing or testifying at closed sessions of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House Foreign Affairs Committee. Bush, Reagan's successor, faced a different challenge. Governing during a time of divided government forced him to send regular delegations to Congress to testify weekly on some aspect of national security. The congressional foreign policy committees became, in a sense, spoiled, expecting future administrations to consult with them in the manner that Bush had, regardless of the degree to which they agreed with his policies.

Compared with previous presidents, their engagement with the National Security Council, and the degree to which they built and maintained relations with Congress, President Clinton represents a major disappointment. Attempting to obfuscate the difference between domestic and foreign policy, as he did in his inaugural address, was more than what Edwin Corwin called an "Invitation to Struggle." It was an invitation for failure.

The selection for his national security team reflected a strategy borrowed from previous administrations: pick people with experience and a "name" "inside the beltway" to shore up the perceived deficiencies in his foreign policy background. He departed from the strategy of previous presidents, however, in that he remained disengaged from the national security process after making those selections. The last Democratic president for example, Jimmy Carter, was

a regular participant in national security decision making even after selecting Brzezinski and Vance (and later Muskie), planning strategies for dealing with Congress on a number of foreign policy "fronts." Clinton was decentralized to a fault, believing that the previous Washington credentials of his aides would be more than enough to advance his agenda. The paralysis in the Oval Office following the deaths of 18 U.S. servicemen in Somalia, followed by the congressional disgust at the quality of information provided by then-Secretary of Defense Les Aspin, demonstrates that merely selecting qualified people is not enough to enhance national security decision making. Rather, it is only a starting point; the president must still be constantly involved in the process and its oversight, as Ronald Reagan painfully learned.

Evidence of detachment exists in other areas as well. During the outset of the Clinton Administration, the Executive Office of the President (EOP) saw little need for regular consultation with Congress on foreign policy matters, the philosophy being that in an era of unified government, a Democratic-controlled Congress would follow the president. Having just come from four years of weekly liaison from President Bush, the sudden stop was cause for both congressional concern and outrage, typified in a member of the president's own political party calling for the resignation of the Secretary of State. The problem of

congressional relations substantially improved only after the 1994 congressional elections, when the administration stepped up its presence before both the now-called House Committee on International Relations and Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Following some bombastic rhetoric on the part of Jesse Helms towards the administration, Warren Christopher became a regular fixture with the new Foreign Relations Committee chairman, so much so that harmony was beginning to characterize the relationship between the two. So frequently was Christopher in the Capitol that he was called "a hostage on Capitol Hill."⁹⁹ Congressional liaison occurs now not because of presidential attentiveness and involvement, as in previous administrations, but instead because of divided government. Bush led foreign policy fights by design; Clinton's hand was forced by the political situation, rather than as part of any strategy.

Rather than having two people assigned to handle foreign policy liaison with Congress, one dedicated to the House and the other to the Senate, President Clinton opted instead to have one do both, Al Maldon. Maldon refused interviews for this project on the grounds of "conflict of interest" with no other justification. Clinton later detailed him to head the White House Military Office, leaving the position of congressional foreign policy liaison

⁹⁹Elaine Sciolino, "A wallflower no more, Christopher is Courted," The New York Times, Jan. 30, 1995, A-8.

vacant for weeks until filled by Doug Sosnik. Maldon was later implicated in a scandal involving the misappropriation of White House helicopters to fly aides on a golf trip.

Clinton did not attend an NSC meeting until six weeks into his administration and skipped the first foreign policy planning meeting, which concerned Bosnia. While Johnson initially held only three formal NSC meetings in his first 100 days in office, he still engaged the statutory NSC membership weekly in the Tuesday Lunches, especially as U.S. presence escalated in Vietnam. Clinton's Secretary of State was not bestowed a regular audience with the president until the crisis in Somalia, and then it was for but one hour a week.

The president's own national security strategy, mandated by public law, was not forthcoming until 18 months into his administration, leaving the NSC and Congress to pursue their national security inputs off of a Bush Administration document. President Clinton released his second strategy in February 1995, still not in accordance with the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act, but beyond that is even more indication that regardless of the president's public pronouncements, disengagement from national security policy making is still the watchword despite the policy's title proclamation of its "engagement." This indication lies in the documents' language.

Previous national security strategies had been personal

statements from the president to whomever was the audience: Congress, the public, or other nation's. Because it was a personal statement, there was free use of the word "I" on the part of the president. That changed with the Clinton Administration. Following a three page introduction that is a personal statement, the remainder refers to the chief executive not as "I," but as "the President." As such, it is not a statement from the President, but a statement from the President's staff.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND REFORMS

Congress's Foreign Policy Problem

Despite the fact that there is an almost incestuous relationship between the ranks of the Executive and Legislative Branches on the staffing of the various foreign policy committees and agencies, there still remains a high degree of distrust and professional contempt across branches. There are those within the State Department who formerly served as congressional staff; some congressional staff members served formerly in the Executive Branch. Some of these transitions were made by the current administration thinking that greater harmony would arise between the two branches in matters of foreign policy. While an excellent theory, it has not been born out in practice.

The central problem confronting the articulation and execution of foreign policy, and the role of Congress in it, has been that universal agreement exists on the call for a new foreign policy in a new era (a thought echoed throughout all interviews), but no one has had the intuition or will to advance an idea of just what that foreign policy and the congressional role should be. Rather than having two

committees generally agreeing on the ends of foreign policy with discussion focussing on the means (as was the case during the Cold War), the foreign policy committees combined have become a forum where 66 individuals are pursuing their own ideas of foreign policy with little central direction provided by the committee leadership. That there is a necessity to impart some sort of organizational direction to the foreign policy committees has been freely acknowledged by one of the committee chairmen; that the time or opportunity has been available to do so is another question.

Certainly one tool at the committees' disposal rarely or never used is the mandated weekly meeting. Generally, the rules for both the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee require them to meet in full at least weekly unless there is no pressing business for the agenda. Should this ever occur, the respective chairmen, rather than cancelling the meeting, could instead use them as a forum to develop and impart some sense of direction for future committee actions.

The tone of such meetings is not hard to imagine. Instead of reacting to an almost continuous stream of crises, committees could develop long- and short-range goals and objectives that guide their activities so that they could be proactive as well as reactive in the foreign policy arena. For even greater flexibility, there could also be a separate majority and minority statement of principles so

that political parties within Congress would have some sort of ideological or party philosophy from which to approach foreign affairs.

Attempting to discern exactly what goes into committee organization is nearly impossible. At the beginning of each Congress, the committees decide upon their rules and subcommittees, but the committees keep no records on the hearings or minutes of meetings so that the public may see what went into those decisions. In essence, it is a process done without a written record from which people must evaluate committee actions and behavior. How decisions are reached in this fashion would be of particular benefit for scholars and the public as well.

In the 104th Congress, for example, the "newly" titled House Committee on International Relations reduced the number of its subcommittees in accordance with promises made with the Republican Party's "Contract With America." Now in Republican hands, the committee's majority members wanted to cut more subcommittees and staff within, but political considerations and intra-committee conflict forced them to retain such subcommittees as Africa.¹ Despite members' and staffs' personal recollections about such meetings, their actual contents will forever remain a mystery to those outside of the committees.

¹Personal interview with Steve Chabot (R-Ohio), Feb. 1995.

While the rules and subcommittee composition may be viewed as minor irritations, committee operations could be made more productive if the committees used their weekly meetings and other opportunities to not only articulate how they will conduct business, but also the principles that guide them in the conduct of that business. This would at least provide some organization in their approach to foreign affairs, thereby enhancing the efficiency of both chambers' foreign policy committees.

These meetings could also serve the purpose of formulating at least some agreement on the issues worthy of present and future committee consideration. The meetings would also constitute a preemptive strike on the greatest problem confronting the operations of both committees, the inability of members to share their perspectives as a basis for reaching some agreement on proper committee business.

Simply stated, members of congressional foreign policy committees and their staffs all recognize the need for a new foreign policy in a post-Cold War era, they realize that some issues are more important than others in the arena of committee business, but they have stopped there and done little or nothing to advance those ideas and opinions in a format for the greater consideration and debate in larger forums such as the full committee or the full chamber. The weekly "general business" meeting mandated by committee rules would be an excellent opportunity for such

consideration, but as of yet, nothing has been done to formalize the process. Former House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Lee Hamilton acknowledged that this was something that "needs to be done," but the time or opportunity had not yet presented itself to push the matter to fruition.²

This works to alleviate communications problems within each respective chamber, but it does not yet address the problem of cross-chamber communication for the foreign policy committees. Opinions differ widely on the degree and amount of such communication. Key leaders of each committee and the staff directors report that they communicate at least weekly, and sometimes more often, with their counterparts in the House or Senate. Subcommittee chairmen and staff reported no such communication.

Regular cross-chamber communication facilitates the conference committee process, even though the popular perception is that the only legislation of any importance is the annual foreign aid bill. Conference committees may arise that have important foreign policy implications, demanding that the cross-chamber process is on-going and dynamic, rather than infrequent and sporadic. During the Gulf War, for example, decisions to send U.S. forces, had they required specific legislative approval from Congress, would have also required much more contact than that between

²Interview, Jan. 1994.

solely the chairmen on a weekly basis. Should U.S. involvement in a region, popular or unpopular, be required in the future, conferees who see each other formally only once a year cannot be relied upon to reach a sound congressional consensus, because they have had no formal, ongoing contact. As an initial step towards reviving that unity, the committee should, even if it requires separate party articulation, identify the major issues that confront it and define concepts of the national interest. Members could then concentrate upon the issues in terms of explicit partisan understandings of the national interest. This conceptualization, definition and articulation could also become the subject of regular review within the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Next, the committee should address its role in the foreign policy process. It already has a stated role in the form of its organizing premise. What exists on paper, though, does not necessarily correspond to what transpires in reality. Like its counterpart in the Senate, the House Foreign Affairs Committee represents 45 separate foreign policy voices frequently working at cross purposes internally. Until the committee leadership works to bring these divergent opinions together to make meaningful offerings to the U.S. role in international relations, the Executive Branch will continue to view other committee assignments, such as Appropriations, as genuine foreign

policy leverage.

Executive Branch Reforms

This call for increased dialogue can certainly be applied to the Executive Branch as well. Little agreement exists between key Executive Branch agencies on the goals, objectives, and direction of U.S. foreign policy in the post-Cold War era. Like the Congress, the Executive Branch has not been forthcoming in at least advancing an idea of what that foreign policy should be. Instead, the overarching paradigm provided by containment has been replaced by crisis-to-crisis reaction, often with little regard for any public positions taken by the White House. One way to restore this dialogue is by personal presidential involvement in the foreign policy working groups that were a hallmark of the Bush Administration. Restoring the vitality of these working groups with their ability to forecast potential crises and crisis reaction, however, would be pointless unless their efforts were backed by a sincere commitment from the president.

This also requires President Clinton to publicly embrace foreign policy with the same fervor with which he rejected it in the 1992 presidential campaign. By doing so, he would accomplish two objectives. First, he would be taking positive steps towards restoring U.S. prestige that

has been lost in the international arena since his inauguration. Second, he would be taking positive steps towards defusing an issue that is already haunting him as the 1996 election approaches.

Other options are available to the president that would not require such institutional reorientation. The amount of time currently granted to Secretary of State Warren Christopher for personal discussion with the president currently stands at one hour per week.³ While the duties, responsibilities and demands of the Oval Office are numerous and unending, affording the president's principal foreign policy adviser more time than one hour a week should provide the president, at least in theory, greater time to consider a broader range of international relations matters.

Each of the principal national security institutions (State, National Security Council, and Defense) could broaden their respective offices of congressional liaison into offices of congressional consultation. Alternatively, a separate office of congressional consultation could also be established. This would serve to alleviate many of the perceptual problems that now exist between the Executive and Legislative Branches on foreign policy matters.

Offices of Congressional Liaison throughout the Executive Branch currently exist to assist the president in

³Confidential interview with State Department official, Nov. 1994.

passing key legislative proposals in both chambers of Congress. These offices are usually further broken down into specialists devoted to working with the House of Representatives and specialists devoted to working with the Senate. The lone exception is the White House itself, where a single individual in the Office of Congressional Affairs handles both chambers of Congress with respect to foreign policy.

Within the halls of Congress, these offices of congressional liaison or affairs are viewed as little more than glorified public relations departments, particularly the State Department's. The National Security Council does not share this perceptual handicap, and in fact both elected representatives and their personal and committee staffs think very highly of the congressional liaison performed by the National Security Council.

Part of this problem can be traced to how the State Department handles its Office of Congressional Liaison. It is frequently kept "out of the loop" in the decision making process and it often lacks information regarding the rationale for and the outcome of some very key decisions. Begrudgingly, though not always, Congress turns first to the Office of Congressional Liaison for explanations of State Department actions.

When that office indicates openly or subliminally that it is not fully aware of the ramifications of some decisions

reached by the State Department hierarchy, both the office and the State Department suffer two consequences. First, the office erodes any future credibility, turning it from a source of information or perspectives to a source of derision. Second, Congress turns more frequently to the respective desk officers for countries or regions, taking those desk officers away from other duties, not the least of which is monitoring and reporting information on their areas. This diversion further decreases the efficiency of State Department operations, a problem easily resolved by incorporating the Office of Congressional Liaison into the cabinet office's decision making processes. This would also force the State Department, especially the Secretary of State, to more fully consider congressional perspectives and possible objections as the agency proceeds on its daily business.

Adding an Office of Congressional Consultation would be an added benefit. Such an office could either be a part of or independent of an Office of Congressional Liaison. Here the focus would be on the purely constitutional issues facing Executive Branch institutions, especially those that specifically call for consultation or consent of Congress before the president proceeds on a given course of action.

If the presidents or cabinet secretaries incorporated this option, they would have to give careful consideration to the exact placement of such an office in the decision

making hierarchy. Would its chief be given assistant secretary status, thereby requiring Senate confirmation? Would the Senate be receptive to this particular kind of nominee?

An additional consideration given to a hypothetical Assistant Secretary for Congressional Consultation must also be the candidate's qualifications. This would not be an office given as a reward for service in an election campaign. The successful aspirant would require expert credentials in at least three areas: the jurisdiction of the agency (State, Defense, NSC, CIA, etc.), the Constitution, and a thorough knowledge of congressional personalities and strategies for approaching them. In this latter capacity, this theoretical Assistant Secretary may have to be as much of a politician as the person doing the appointing and the people who would be the primary clientele (e.g., representatives and senators).

Congressional Reforms

Many congressional reforms to enhance participation in the foreign policy process would require nothing less than a fundamental overhaul of the institution. Other reforms could be resolved at the committee level with only minor coordination required from the chamber leadership.

Abolish the seniority system and award chairmanships

based on merit. There is no relationship between seniority and leadership ability, particularly within the Senate. When the chamber leadership decides to award a chairmanship based solely on the length of service, either in the chamber or on the committee, there is an accompanying supposition that years invested in that particular house will result in effective committee operations. The Senate is particularly guilty of this philosophy, and as a result, the respect normally accorded the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by the Executive Branch has all but vanished. This stems directly from the ineffectiveness of Claiborne Pell.

That Pell was no longer up to his duties and responsibilities as Foreign Relations Committee chairman was plainly evident by 1991. When he decided in that same year to, for all intents and purposes, abdicate from his leadership responsibilities, Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-Maine) should have moved swiftly to replace Pell with someone who could aggressively pursue the job of chairman, either from within the ranks of the Foreign Relations Committee or someone from outside the committee membership who still had viable foreign policy credentials. Mitchell's own inactivity in this respect buttresses assertions made in interviews by those in the Senate, namely that Mitchell's disinterest in the Foreign Relations Committee matched Pell's.

Such a reform may require chamber leadership to put

more than one candidate's name from each party in nomination for a committee chairmanship. The collegial nature of the Senate would therefore be placed in a possibly fractious position, as members, especially in the majority party, would have to choose between the senior member (the traditional route) or the best qualified senator. Senate Republicans made that decision in 1987 and again in 1995. They chose seniority and tradition. That kind of choice may have fallout in other committees and how they conduct their business, thereby in part thwarting whatever momentum the majority party has in the respective chamber and detracting from the party's legislative agenda.

The problem is much less severe in the House of Representatives, but that does not imply that it does not exist. Following the 1994 elections, chairmanship of the new/old Committee on International Relations fell to Benjamin Gilman, whom many Republican congressional newcomers in the 103rd Congress felt would not receive the position (in the event of a Republican victory) due to his perceived relatively complacent nature and the fact that he had sided with House Democrats on many key issues.⁴ To date, however, Gilman has led the Committee on International Relations in accordance with the Republican Party's "Contract with America," ensuring that the committee took

⁴Confidential interviews with House Republicans, Oct. 1993, April 1994.

its "fair share" in subcommittee and staff cuts while acting to craft legislation relevant to the Contract, particularly on matters of national security.

Abolish the foreign policy committees. Throughout the Executive Branch, neither the House Foreign Affairs Committee nor the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was viewed, on the whole, as having great degree of significance. This should not be taken to mean that their individual members were viewed in same light. Quite the contrary. Former Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Lee Hamilton, by his own account, had a regular and on-going dialogue with the White House on foreign policy matters. Others contributing to this debate and providing a wide range of views included the Senate's Joseph Biden and John Kerry.

But because the committees as a whole were suffering image problems in the Executive Branch, the president's agencies turned more and more to the House and Senate's Committees on Appropriations for matters pertaining to foreign policy. Specifically, the Executive Branch directed its concerns to the Senate Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on Foreign Operations and the House Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Concerns.

This stems from the Executive Branch philosophy towards foreign policy and the role the budget plays in its

formulation. Decision makers face two options: articulate foreign policy goals and attempt to procure appropriations to support those goals, or examine the appropriations available for an upcoming fiscal year and then structure goals and objectives within the limits imposed by budgetary constraints. As a whole, the Executive Branch opts for the latter approach, attempting to influence the appropriations process by securing increased funds to broaden those goals and objectives.

Had the Senate not opted for a weak Foreign Relations Committee chairman, this phenomenon may not have happened. It is also unknown whether the damage wrought by a weak chairman is permanent or temporary. If temporary, then the new Senate leadership may act as quickly as feasible to repair eight years of declining prestige in the Executive Branch's eyes and the Foreign Relations Committee can, indeed, assume its historic place in foreign policy.

If permanent, however, then both the House and Senate should move quickly to acknowledge the damage done and take steps to ensure that they have a vehicle by which to influence foreign policy. This would mean shifting the responsibilities of the foreign policy committees to the Subcommittees on Foreign Operations in both chambers. This would afford congressional members the opportunity to not only voice opinions and concerns on foreign affairs, but also the chance to take concrete actions by backing up their

viewpoints with influence on foreign operations budgets.

Concentrate foreign policy subcommittees under the umbrella of one committee in each chamber. As it stands, the Executive Branch faces a smorgasbord of options if it attempts to secure a congressional sense on foreign policy issues. This is because both chambers have a plethora of subcommittees that have some direct or indirect concern with "foreign" or "international" matters.

To whom does a president turn to get a congressional perspective on a foreign issue? The first logical choice is either the House Foreign Affairs or Senate Foreign Relations Committees. But the Chief Executive may also consult the Appropriations Committees, Agricultural Committees, Intelligence Committees, Armed Services Committees, Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs Committees, Energy and Commerce Committees, and Government Operations Committees, to name but a few. Congress could easily minimize this confusion by consolidating foreign or international considerations under one committee in each chamber.

This assumes that Congress would actually want to minimize confusion. In all likelihood, this is not the case. By fracturing foreign policy into virtually all of its major committees, Congress spreads the foreign policy power base within, thereby keeping this power diffused throughout the houses. Any "sense of Congress" is, therefore, a sense of the entire institution and not the

sense of any one committee in either chamber.

Foreign Policy Committee "perestroika." Considering that both the House's and Senate's foreign policy committees are organized largely along geographic lines, it is fascinating that their individual members and staff view the world largely along issue lines. Regional considerations surface only when a region or country is prominent in the media at any given time, with the lone exception of the Middle East, which respondents collectively voiced as a constant concern. Haiti, North Korea, and Chechnya surfaced as foreign policy concerns only when those countries occupied the front pages.

Based on the issues raised by members of Congress, both the House Committee on Foreign Affairs/International Relations and the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations could reorganize themselves along the very issue-based interests they raised in personal interviews. Such a structure may appear as follows:

- Subcommittee on Proliferation and Technology Transfer
- Subcommittee on Hunger and Immigration
- Subcommittee on Population Issues
- Subcommittee on Economic Policy, Trade and Environment
- Subcommittee on International Operations
- Subcommittee on International Security, International

Organizations and Human Rights⁵

This issue-based approach to committee organization would be welcome in the Department of State.⁶ It would allow the cabinet agency to better coordinate its efforts with Congress, especially as the State Department is shifting its budgeting along issue and not geographical lines.

Furthermore, such a reorganization would allow committee members to better coordinate their own individual efforts. By sitting on geographical subcommittees, as most of them have done, they must therefore become experts on a wide range of issues pertinent to that region. By switching to issue-based subcommittees, members could better target their work by developing expertise on a particular issue and applying it across regional boundaries.

Even better coordination would result across chambers if both the House and Senate adopted this structure and adopted identical committee purpose statements. This latter reform is not really new; both committees in fact did this in the early 1970s.

Research Questions and Answers

⁵These last three were already included in the House Foreign Affairs Committee in the 103rd Congress.

⁶Confidential interview with State Department official, Nov. 1994.

Seven research questions were proposed at the outset of this study. These were:

Research question 1: In the wake of a presidential election where voters confirmed that they wanted "a president who would spend more time on domestic policy than he does on foreign policy," why would a freshman representative or senator even want to seek membership on a foreign policy committee at all? Why has committee turnover changed, especially in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, from being the result of new freshmen to a mix of veterans and freshmen?

Research question 2: How do freshmen, as a group, perceive committees whose work is supposedly of little interest to the public, and what cues or resources do they now employ to vote on legislation emanating therefrom?

Research question 3: Why has some of the sternest criticism of the president's foreign policy come from members of his own party in the 103rd Congress?

Research question 4: How has the passing of the Cold War affected the operations of the two committees, particularly with respect to the Executive Branch?

Research question 5: How has a change in committee leadership concurrent with the post-Cold War era impacted upon committee recruitment and socialization?

Research question 6: How have foreign policy staff operations changed, and how does this represent a departure

from previous studies of congressional staff behavior?

Research question 7: Can the Cold War structure cope with present-day realities? Must this structure be forced to work absent the variable that led to its inception? Can it do so? If not, is there a better way?

Two motivations emerged for service on a foreign policy committee: the time-tested desire for a chance to exercise in an area that had long held the members' interest, and party assignment to maintain a semblance of balance and party strength within the committees. Senior members new to a foreign policy committee and who sought a seat therein viewed the opportunity to serve there as a way to bolster their own credentials and work on assignments that held their interest. Freshmen not on the committee generally did not want a foreign policy committee seat because of negative perceptions in their districts.

Not all freshmen, of course, avoided service on the House Foreign Affairs Committee or the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Many members viewed these committee assignments as a way to bring benefits of foreign trade to their districts or states. Some members went into committee service with this expectation; others adopted this expectation when they were forced onto the committee by the chamber's party leadership. Once on the committee, members generally reported having to work harder to maintain credibility with their constituents. This credibility

maintenance took one of two forms: increased visits to the district or state to reassure voters, or accompanying service on a committee with a high district or state payoff, such as Education and Labor.

Even during periods of unified government, nothing approaching party unity existed in foreign policy. If anything, party unity vanished. Some of President Clinton's strongest congressional criticism came from members of his own party, such as Indiana Representative Frank McClosky. There are at least two sources for this dilemma: first, the president came to office with no clear idea of foreign policy and an open distaste for the field. Second, the consultation that was a hallmark of previous administrations practically disappeared, leaving many in Congress to question what, exactly, the president was doing with regard to foreign policy. Key Executive Branch documents vital to the foreign policy process languished for months before publication, and many documents that stem from the release of those publications have gone without updating, in direct violation of the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act. Representatives and Senators of the president's political party wanted the president to succeed, but they could not generate that support without a constant stream of information coming from the White House. Congress reacted to this "damming" of information by taking public stances against the president or by using their own

information networks and special interest groups to bring pressure on the president to side with their foreign policy causes.

The passing of the Cold War has affected the operations of congressional foreign policy committees, but not nearly to the degree as the influence of the respective chairmen. Congressional foreign policy committees continue to seek out their identity, struggling with finding the proper mix of regional and functional subcommittees. These committees appear to be slowly siding with the functional component, but in the 104th Congress, the "new" Committee on International Relations has reduced its total number of committees by either eliminating them or by reserving the jurisdiction of the abolished subcommittees to the committee as a whole. Interaction between these committees and the Executive Branch, overall, was higher during periods of divided government than during the 103rd Congress, a Congress of unified government. If the pattern of activity during divided government holds, then the 104th Congress will be marked by a greater and keener degree of interaction between the Executive and Legislative Branches.

Changes in the committee most certainly occurred because of a change in chairmen. One of the most difficult hurdles to clear in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, at least at the beginning of the 103rd Congress, was adjusting to the presence of a new chairman. In the Senate Foreign

Relations Committee, change occurred because of the erosion of the chairman's interest and competence, coupled by the rise of renegade subcommittee chairmen and, perhaps, an aggressive and vocal ranking minority member. This ranking minority member now chairs the committee in the 104th Congress.

Personal staff operations maintained and increased their focus on constituency service. Both representatives and senators had significant groups within their constituencies that were extremely attentive to foreign policy matters, but these matters were so diverse that they required a high degree of specialization. Looking at the committees' membership, foreign policy considerations from district to district and state to state included, for example, Israel, Atlantic and Pacific fishing rights, trade with Japan and Europe, industrialization, general exports, African matters, and treatment to the former Soviet Republics. Maintaining expertise in any one of these areas, the personal staff reported, was a full time job, simply because of the range of issues and developments on-going in any one.

The committee staffs approached nonpartisanship, especially in the House Foreign Affairs Committee. This is a continuance from previous Congresses. While the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff keeps its focus on providing service to the Senate as a whole, partisanship is

higher among the members, especially in consideration of the "purge" at the beginning of 1992.

The personal and committee staffs deserve a special note of praise. They could have easily become an uncoordinated mess under a weak chairman in the Senate. That they did not reveals a commitment to the success of their committees even though Chairman Pell did not exactly share that enthusiasm.

The House Foreign Affairs Committee was a different matter under Hamilton. The committee staff initially viewed him with fear. They had been used to Dante Fascell's approach of being involved in virtually every aspect of committee business. Upon assuming the chairman's role, Hamilton's first act was to observe the totality of the committee without comment, watching the operations of it and the staff in silence. This caused some to fear, at least at the outset, that they may be in danger of losing their jobs. As his assertiveness as chairman increased, the staff's understanding of him rose accordingly, increasing the overall morale of the committee.

In the case of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, age deleteriously affected the leadership abilities of the chairman as much as it did his body physically. *Laissez-faire* has no place in an arena that so directly affects the world standing of the United States. Coupled with committee structures that may have outlived their usefulness, Senate

committee and subcommittee chairmen may have presided over their own demise into irrelevance. Whether they will be able to resurrect themselves as competent authorities is a question that only time and events will tell.

Closing Remarks

Both the House and Senate have committees dedicated to consideration of foreign policy matters. The prominence afforded to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, derived from the Constitution, has been accompanied by a loss of prestige for that committee due to its past chairman as well as in-fighting among subcommittee chairmen for prominence within the committee and within the Senate.

The House Foreign Affairs Committee, now called the Committee on International Relations, became a place where representatives could represent multiple constituencies, particularly along ethnic or religious lines, not only for domestic but for foreign policy considerations as well. Despite no formal constitutional role, the House Foreign Affairs Committee became a place for congressmen to get their "feet wet" on international issues, even if they were not held in high regard over in the Senate or in the Executive Branch.

Both committees have a tremendous potential to contribute to foreign policy debate, particularly in an age

of a chief executive who does not have an openly professed love of foreign affairs. The primary question that guided this study was whether institutions grounded in the Cold War, namely the subcommittee structure of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, could be made to work in a post-Cold War era.

The regions along which these two committees were organized reflected the regions of interest for the Soviet Union and the regions that the old foe would attempt to influence. By the 103rd Congress, regions may have been the focus of subcommittee organization, but they were not the focus of the individual members and staffs.

Perhaps because the United States was in a new age of foreign policy, or perhaps because the individual members were tinkering with new thinking in a new age, regional orientation took a decided back seat to interests of foreign policy committee members. Soviet excursions into various world regions, at least for the present, were a thing of the past. Because these excursions were no longer on the foreign policy "radar," members could now push themselves in new directions that may have been previously untested.

Despite that, the committees kept their regional focus, both in the 103rd Congress and into the 104th following the Republican takeover of Congress. In the new Congress, regional subcommittees prevailed with the rules charging members to acquire and maintain regional expertise even

though issues expertise was uppermost in the members' minds.

Congress will therefore continue to cope with the post-Cold War world with a committee structure that reflects a largely Cold War orientation. If increasing their legitimacy or vitality in the foreign policy debate was a goal of the post-Cold War Congresses, they certainly did not attempt to accomplish that through their organization.

Of equal importance, especially in the post-Cold War era, is the selection of committee and subcommittee chairmen. If Congress appears to flounder on foreign affairs, much of the explanation can be found (with the exception of Lee Hamilton) in the representatives and senators who have been selected to lead such committees and subcommittees. This is why seniority, in this day and age, should no longer be a viable consideration in the selection of chairmen. Neither senators nor representatives are like wine, i.e. they do not necessarily get better with age.

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APPENDICES

A-1

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONS CONCERNING SERVICE ON THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS OR
SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

(Individually tailored for each senator or representative)

1. Why did you seek membership on the House Foreign Affairs Committee?
2. What factors in your background contributed to your membership and service on the committee?
3. When you first joined the committee, or after the committee changed chairs, did you go through any socialization process to introduce you to committee norms and procedures? If so, what was it?
4. Do you or did you try to bring perspectives gained in other committees, such as Interior and Insular affairs or the Select Committee on Hunger, to your work on Foreign Affairs, or vice versa? If so, how?
5. How did you select your staff members that assist you on Foreign Affairs? Were there any special qualities you sought?
6. What constituency benefit do the citizens of Samoa receive from your membership on Foreign Affairs? Have you found that opponents try to use your membership against you during campaigns?
7. How do you define the national interest? In other words, what criteria do you use to determine whether an issue is or is not in the national interest?
8. What are your perspectives on relationships with the Executive Branch? Has there been any significant change since the advent of a new administration?
9. What are your perspectives on the people within the administration responsible for foreign policy and policies the administration is pursuing?
10. Do you find that your representation of Samoa inhibits or enhances, if either, your ability to actively contribute to the work of the committee?
11. Do you feel, and if so, how, that you bring to the Foreign Affairs Committee a perspective, opinion, and background unique among your Democratic and Republican brethren?

12. What are the most important issues facing the committee?

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL AND COMMITTEE STAFF MEMBERS OF THE
HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS OR SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. Where are you from? What is your background?
2. How and why were you hired? What do you look for in people who wish to join the staff? Do you try to determine their ambitions or motivations, and if so, how?
3. Do you consider yourself (or the staff) proactive or reactive? How?
4. How do you interface or share information with the House/Senate counterpart?
5. What are the individual and staff actions once legislation goes to conference committee?
6. How well do you interface with the White House? How often do you interact? What are the differences between working with a Republican and Democratic Administration?
7. How well do you interface with the State Department? How often do you interact? Are there any major differences now that party control of the Administration has changed hands?
8. How do you define the national interest? In other words, what criteria do you use to determine whether an issue is or is not in the national interest?
9. What are the most important issues facing the committee?

APPENDIX 3

QUESTIONS FOR NONMEMBERS CONCERNING ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE
HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS OR SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE
(Individually tailored for each senator or representative)

1. When you were first elected, were you approached about or offered a seat on the Foreign Affairs/Foreign Relations Committee?
2. What were your impressions of the committee at that time?
3. Why did you decline?
4. What are your impressions of the committee now?
5. How do you prepare yourself for votes on legislation coming out of the Foreign Affairs/Foreign Relations Committee?
6. How do you monitor the work of the committee in the development of legislation?
7. How do you define the national interest? In other words, what criteria do you use to determine whether an issue is or is not in the national interest?
8. Is your definition in harmony or at odds with members of the Foreign Affairs/Foreign Relations Committee? Does that affect your perception of committee work?
9. How attentive to or interested in foreign matters do you consider your constituents? Do you ever receive constituent input on foreign affairs?
10. What do you think are the most important foreign matters confronting the United States at this time?

APPENDIX 4

QUESTIONS FOR EXECUTIVE BRANCH INSTITUTIONS THAT ROUTINELY INTERACT WITH THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS OR SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. Where are you from? What is your background?
2. How and why were you hired? What do you look for in people who wish to join or be hired by your agency? Do you try to determine their ambitions or motivations, and if so, how?
3. Do you consider yourself (or the staff) proactive or reactive, particularly to demands or requests from the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees? How?
4. How do you interface or share information with House Foreign Affairs or Senate Foreign Relations?
5. Do you ever attempt to ascribe or determine congressional motivations when you interact? What have you concluded?
6. What are the major differences in the way your agency operates today compared with past administrations you're familiar with?
7. Do you think Congress, especially the foreign affairs committees, fully understand the message behind your office? Why or why not? What do you do to try to educate them on your perspective of your institution's responsibilities and activities?
8. How do you or your superiors define the national interest? In other words, what criteria do you or they use to determine whether an issue is or is not in the national interest?
9. Is that definition in harmony or at odds with members of the Foreign Affairs/Foreign Relations Committee? Does that affect your perception of the committees' work?
10. From the perspective of your operation, what do you think are the most important foreign issues confronting the United States at this time?