

people. Nixon eventually was forced to resign in 1974 over the constitutional crisis of Watergate. Meanwhile, Nixon's détente policies, which continued under Ford, were attacked by both the Left and Right. Carter attempted to promote a post-cold war internationalist foreign policy but was placed on the political defensive by the Right with the Iran hostage crisis and Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Reagan entered office as a cold warrior, only to encounter liberal resistance which culminated in the Iran-Contra affairs and criticism from the Right as he pursued arms control and a more open relationship with the Soviet Union.

What about the future? It is likely that presidents will continue to experience difficulty in governing foreign policy as long as efforts to establish a new consensus are overwhelmed by diversity of thought in American society. The contemporary domestic political environment is made particularly fluid by the dramatic changes taking place in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and elsewhere. President Bush and his foreign policy have had to navigate carefully through treacherous and unstable environments both at home and abroad since entering office. The successful military outcome in the Persian Gulf War has strengthened President Bush's ability to govern in the immediate future. Yet, in a post-cold war era, presidents must operate in a domestic political climate where the diversity and volatility of the public and its beliefs create both considerable opportunities and uncertainties in the politics of U.S. foreign policy.

With regard to public opinion, prolonged habits of interest, information, and thinking about national and international affairs will not change overnight. Americans, especially members of the mass public, are likely to retain very short attention spans, as well as superficial knowledge and simplistic understandings of national and international affairs. These characteristics are reinforced by the fact that most Americans do not realize the extent to which national and international affairs directly and indirectly affect their daily lives, trends which are likely to grow as interdependence increases throughout the country and the world. The post-Vietnam War diversity of ideological and foreign policy beliefs is also likely to continue and may, in fact, increase in the future. While anticommunism was the foundation of the ideological and foreign policy consensus during the cold war years, the end of the cold war and discussions of a "post-cold war world" may give rise to new interpretations of events and a new great debate. Whatever the case, one thing that can be predicted with great certainty is that the foreign policy views competing for control over the future of U.S. foreign policy will be consistent with the moral foundation of American culture and nationalism.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY

Since the 1970s, there has been a proliferation of works studying the role of public opinion, political ideology, and political culture in U.S. foreign policy. One of the best overviews of ideology and culture in American society and its relevance for understanding American politics is presented by Godfrey Hodgson in *America in Our Time* (New York: Vintage, 1976). He offers an excellent history and analysis of the rise of the liberal-conservative ideological consensus since World War II and its decline due to the impact of the 1960s and the Vietnam War. A good anal-

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## NOTES

1. See Bernard C. Cohen, *The Public's Impact on Foreign Policy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973); Charles W. Kegley, Jr., and Eugene Wittkopf, *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process* (New York: St. Martin's, 1987); and Burtin Sapin, *The Making of United States Foreign Policy* (New York: Praeger, 1966). The Kegley and Wittkopf volume is the most sophisticated because it recognizes the indirect and subtle role of the public on foreign policy. Nonetheless, Kegley and Wittkopf emphasize direct influence on policymakers and foreign policy, concluding that the role of the public is low overall.