

INTERVENTIONISM



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INTERVENTIONISM

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The Gulf War, where the United States led a UN-sanctioned coalition to free Kuwait from Iraqi aggression, represented a shift away from the nation's history of mostly unilateral military operations and toward a more collective approach to national security. In response to post-Cold War security threats and humanitarian crises worldwide, the United Nations, with strong U.S. leadership, must set up a law-enforcement-type collective security arrangement able to respond quickly to regional conflicts.

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ments should donate a reserve of equipment to be deposited at locations throughout the world; and each member should keep a reserve of specially trained personnel and troops available for UN operations. Economic development must be viewed as an indispensable part of social and political stability and international peace.

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The expansion of UN peacekeeping operations is based on the mistaken belief that state sovereignty and national interests have eroded in the post-Cold War era. Future UN peacekeeping operations will be successful only where peace and humanitarian concerns are in the national interests of warring parties.

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The end of the Cold War has brought an explosion of civil wars. If the United Nations is to deal with these conflicts, it must stress prevention over intervention; it must act decisively and avoid half-measures when it does intervene; and it must be more selective in deciding which battles to fight, choosing those that can be won and avoiding those that are lost causes.

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Calls for the expansion of the UN's military role are based on the mistaken belief that the end of the Cold War will give the United Nations more responsibility for international peace and security. UN attempts to resolve conflicts will be no more successful than past efforts, will damage the UN's neutrality, and may hinder successful action by others. The United Nations should focus on preventing conflict in the numerous places it is likely to start.

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The United States has turned its attention to domestic issues with the end of the Cold War. This leaves a vacuum of leadership in the world, encouraging some states to commit aggression. If the United States does not take a leading role to stop aggression, anarchy will follow.

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For the foreseeable future, international peacemaking efforts will only succeed with strong U.S. leadership. The United States, therefore, must be willing to forcefully intervene to help new democracies, to end ethnic and nationalist conflicts, and to prevent religious terrorism. Such disorders directly threaten the interests of the United States.

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American foreign policy has always had two components: a moral component that seeks worldwide democracy and a practical need to protect national interests. In order for foreign interventions to succeed, the United States must balance its pursuit of national interests with its democratizing mission.

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Military interventions cannot promote peace and democracy without a long commitment of troops. U.S. military force, therefore, should be used only to protect vital national interests, and only in situations in which armed intervention will prove effective at an acceptable cost.

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Ignoring the advice of past military leaders has left the United States

with the burden of defending South Korea and other allies. The United States should let these nations defend themselves—with nuclear deterrents, if necessary—so long as no vital U.S. interests are threatened.

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The end of the Cold War has not changed the nature of interventions. Intervention should still be opposed because it is difficult to distinguish between good and bad interventions, because outsiders cannot solve internal problems, and because military force is counterproductive. Allowing exceptions to the rule of noninterventionism creates dangerous precedents.

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Foreword

By definition, controversies are “discussions of questions in which opposing opinions clash” (Webster’s Twentieth Century Dictionary Unabridged). Few would deny that controversies are a pervasive part of the human condition and exist on virtually every level of human enterprise. Controversies transpire between individuals and among groups, within nations and between nations. Controversies supply the grist necessary for progress by providing challenges and challengers to the status quo. They also create atmospheres where strife and warfare can flourish. A world without controversies would be a peaceful world; but it also would be, by and large, static and prosaic.

The Series’ Purpose

The purpose of the Current Controversies series is to explore many of the social, political, and economic controversies dominating the national and international scenes today. Titles selected for inclusion in the series are highly focused and specific. For example, from the larger category of criminal justice, Current Controversies deals with specific topics such as police brutality, gun control, white collar crime, and others. The debates in Current Controversies also are presented in a useful, timeless fashion. Articles and book excerpts included in each title are selected if they contribute valuable, long-range ideas to the overall debate. And wherever possible, current information is enhanced with historical documents and other relevant materials. Thus, while individual titles are current in focus, every effort is made to ensure that they will not become quickly outdated. Books in the Current Controversies series will remain important resources for librarians, teachers, and students for many years.

In addition to keeping the titles focused and specific, great care is taken in the editorial format of each book in the series. Book introductions and chapter prefaces are offered to provide background material for readers. Chapters are organized around several key questions that are answered with diverse opinions representing all points on the political spectrum. Materials in each chapter include opinions in which authors clearly disagree as well as alternative opinions in which authors may agree on a broader issue but disagree on the possible solutions. In this way, the content of each volume in Current Controversies mirrors the mosaic of opinions encountered in society. Readers will quickly realize that there are many viable answers to these complex issues. By questioning each au-

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thor's conclusions, students and casual readers can begin to develop the critical thinking skills so important to evaluating opinionated material.

Current Controversies is also ideal for controlled research. Each anthology in the series is composed of primary sources taken from a wide gamut of informational categories including periodicals, newspapers, books, United States and foreign government documents, and the publications of private and public organizations. Readers will find factual support for reports, debates, and research papers covering all areas of important issues. In addition, an annotated table of contents, an index, a book and periodical bibliography, and a list of organizations to contact are included in each book to expedite further research.

Perhaps more than ever before in history, people are confronted with diverse and contradictory information. During the Persian Gulf War, for example, the public was not only treated to minute-to-minute coverage of the war, it was also inundated with critiques of the coverage and countless analyses of the factors motivating U.S. involvement. Being able to sort through the plethora of opinions accompanying today's major issues, and to draw one's own conclusions, can be a complicated and frustrating struggle. It is the editors' hope that Current Controversies will help readers with this struggle.

"What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of postwar history, but the end of history as such."

Francis Fukuyama

Introduction

The end of history, as defined by Francis Fukuyama, an analyst at the RAND Corporation and author of *The End of History and the Last Man*, was the end of the conflict between the ideologies of Soviet-promoted communism and Western-style democracy, inevitably leading to "the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government." Western liberal democracy—characterized by free and fair elections, the rule of constitutional law, and respect for human rights—emerged from the Cold War as the only acceptable and viable form of government, in Fukuyama's view. However, the uncontrolled spread of ethnic and nationalist conflict in many parts of the world made some people question the inevitability of the victory of democracy. In the words of Max M. Kampelman, a lawyer formerly with the Department of State, "The question may well be asked: Are we entering an age of democracy or an age of disorder?"

The "universalization" of democracy has been less than the smooth process that Fukuyama's thesis seemed to predict. The promise of democracy in countries formerly under authoritarian rule has prompted many subnational ethnic groups to clamor for official recognition and representation, seek redress for discrimination, and press claims to historic lands, according to *New Yorker* writer Robert Cullen. Many have discovered, writes Cullen, that "transitions to democracy, rather than ameliorating conflicting claims to collective rights, can exacerbate them." Ethnic war, the breakdown of government, and the rise of military dictatorship—typified by the cases of Bosnia, Somalia, and Haiti—stand out as stumbling blocks on the road to the "end of history."

In former Yugoslavia in 1991, the republics of Slovenia, Macedonia, and Croatia declared independence, precipitating a war between Croatia and what was left of the federal Yugoslav government in Serbia. As a UN-brokered cease-fire was signed in January 1992, European governments quickly extended diplomatic recognition to these newly independent countries. Following the others' lead, in 1992 the republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina also declared independence from Yugoslavia. Bosnian Serbs who wanted to remain part of Yugoslavia then began a civil war and rapidly took control of more than two-thirds of Bosnian territory. The Bosnian Serbs defend their action in the civil war by asserting their right to live in a nation-state that unites all of Yugoslavia's Serbs. Others perceive their campaign as an especially violent instance of nationalist

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extremism. *Los Angeles Times* reporter Carol J. Williams, for example, describes the civil war as a "nationalist quest to force an ethnic division with bombs and bullets." UN forces entered the country in May 1992 to protect civilians and relief efforts, but as of October 1994 had been unable to negotiate a lasting settlement.

In Somalia, the overthrow of Mohammed Siad Barre, who ruled from 1969 until 1991, plunged that country into anarchy, with so-called warlords from various clans vying to succeed Siad Barre as dictator. According to Michael W. Doyle, writing in *Dissent*, "Three hundred thousand Somalis died in 1991–1992 in a famine brought about by the murderous competition of the Somali warlords." Throughout 1991 and 1992, the United Nations attempted to mediate a cease-fire and resolution. The failure of the cease-fire and the worsening of the famine caused by the civil war prompted the United States to intervene in December 1992 to protect the flow of relief supplies. In October 1993, U.S. forces clashed with Somalis, resulting in the deaths of 18 U.S. soldiers and hundreds of Somalis. U.S. armed forces departed Somalia in March 1994, leaving UN-led forces in their place. As a result of the warlords' struggle for power and the subsequent U.S.–UN intervention, writes Doyle, "the population was divided into rival clans and united only in their rejection of foreign rule."

In Haiti in September 1991, military generals deposed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who had been elected the previous December. Fearing that the military would execute him, Aristide fled Haiti and formed a government in exile in the United States. The United States and the Organization of American States implemented an embargo against Haiti, with the aim of restoring the democratically elected government. But because the embargo failed to produce results, in January 1993 the United Nations imposed trade sanctions on Haiti. Under pressure from the United States, the military rulers of Haiti signed the Governor's Island Accord in June 1993, agreeing to allow Aristide to resume his presidency. The military broke the accord, however, and in October 1993 new, stronger sanctions were imposed. According to Randall Robinson, director of the human rights organization TransAfrica, the military then "unleashed a reign of terror in Haiti," assassinating supporters of Aristide and other political opponents and tightening their grip on power. This political repression prompted thousands of refugees to flee Haiti and seek political asylum elsewhere. However, on September 18, 1994, under the threat of invasion by U.S. military forces, the military rulers once again agreed to observe the Governor's Island Accord. As of October 1994, 17,000 U.S. and multinational troops were monitoring Aristide's resumption of the Haitian presidency.

While there are signs that democracy may succeed in Haiti, conflicts like those in Bosnia and Somalia continue to simmer in many countries, making the spread of disorder sometimes seem more likely than the "universalization" of democracy. Francis M. Deng, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, attempts to explain the post-Cold War contradiction between the hopes for

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Western-style democracy and the spread of conflict in the Third World. Those countries that were already internally democratic are moving toward a more cooperative, democratic world order with more active international organizations, Deng asserts, while nations emerging from the control of oppressive, totalitarian regimes are struggling to assert self-determination independent from outside interference in their internal affairs. The solution Deng proposes for both a democratic world order and resolution of Third World conflict is “a third party as mediator, moderator, peacemaker, and lawgiver.” The most obvious institution to play this role, according to Deng, is the United Nations.

UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali also supports this new role for the United Nations and envisions expanded duties for UN peacekeeping forces. The traditional role for these peacekeepers involves lightly armed troops from UN member countries who observe agreed-upon cease-fires and separate the combatants, but only use force to protect themselves. Boutros-Ghali believes that UN troops should be prepared to take on a more assertive role, forcibly intervening to impose cease-fires and protect civilian populations. In his words, “Protecting the flow of relief supplies, preventive deployment, and sanctions on commerce and communications are only part of what may be involved in the future. Beyond these measures, when established rules of engagement are no longer sufficient, United Nations forces may need authorization to use force.”

Many of those writing on foreign policy are opposed to such an expanded role for UN forces. Among them is Stephen John Stedman, assistant professor at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, who sees a danger in the “new interventionism.” According to Stedman, new interventionists “believe that active international intervention is necessary to bring about a semblance of order to the post-Cold War world, based on the dubious presumption that the Cold War’s end makes internal violence somehow more tractable.” In his view, those who call for interventions lack an understanding of ethnic war, government breakdown, and military dictatorship and how to resolve these conflicts. Intervention through aid to civilians or imposed cease-fires, according to Stedman, by protecting and feeding weaker groups, may simply prolong resistance to an inevitable military or political solution, and may cost more lives. In his words, “Most civil wars become amenable to settlement only after they have played themselves out with ferocity. . . . There are no panaceas for internal conflicts.”

There is strong debate over Francis Fukuyama’s thesis that the end of the Cold War has resulted or will result in the “universalization” of Western-style democracy, with its emphasis on law and human rights. Western countries have attempted to promote democracy by intervening to uphold human rights and constitutional law in some Third World countries but have had mixed results so far, as exemplified by the cases of Bosnia, Somalia, and Haiti. Whether Western countries should intervene to promote democracy and protect human rights is among the issues debated in *Interventionism: Current Controversies*.