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American Public Opinion & Foreign Policy

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, many commentators in the United States and around the world asserted that the world had changed. The fact that the continental United States had been attacked by foreign enemies for the first time since 1812—and with horrendous effect—was bound to change Americans’ thinking about the world and their role in it. The goals and priorities of U.S. defense and foreign policies would shift. Even the international system as a whole might be fundamentally altered.

Even if one did not fully accept such sweeping assertions, it was clear that 9/11 had a profound impact on the American mood. A little more than a decade after the end of the Cold War, a decade in which few foreign issues intruded much on the American consciousness, Americans had been shocked by their own vulnerability to unconventional and faraway threats. Few events in the nation’s history had been felt as widely and deeply.

Almost as immediately, U.S. relationships with old allies and friends as well as former enemies and nations in which we thought we had little stake were seen in a new light. Relations with key European countries, recently troubled, took on added importance. Russia quickly moved to the U.S. side in the war on terrorism.

The salience of the Middle East and Arab nations to American security suddenly increased. Within four weeks the United States was at war in remote Afghanistan.

THE 2002 STUDY

This was the context in which The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations began in late fall 2001 to plan its 2002 study of American public opinion, the eighth in its quadrennial series. Arguably, there had never been a more critical time since the Chicago Council studies began in 1974 to probe American attitudes toward a wide range of international issues and U.S. policy options.

The Chicago Council determined it was unusually well positioned to examine in 2002 whether in fact the world had changed in the minds of Americans, and if so, how. The Chicago Council studies comprise the longest series of surveys of American public and leader opinion on international affairs and U.S. foreign policy ever conducted. They are highly regarded for the rigor of their method, the combination of continuity and variation in questions asked, the quantity of data produced, and the opportunity to compare public and

leader attitudes. They have been widely read and cited by policymakers and analysts, journalists, and scholars.

The 2002 Chicago Council study was greatly enhanced by an agreement between the Council and the German Marshall Fund of the United States to collaborate on a counterpart study of European attitudes. This proposal by the German Marshall Fund's president, Craig Kennedy, came amidst increasing signs in early 2002 of rising tensions between the United States and its European allies and friends over how best to conduct the war on terrorism, policies toward the Arab-Israeli dispute, and other issues. A systematic comparison of American and European public attitudes would allow testing of the proposition that America and Europe were diverging in fundamental ways.

The collaboration between the Chicago Council and the German Marshall Fund on "Worldviews 2002" has been extraordinary in its scope and highly valuable in its findings. It has greatly broadened the relevance of the Chicago Council's 2002 study and resulted in the most comprehensive comparative study of European and American public opinion on international issues ever undertaken.

At the same time, responding to the extraordinary circumstances resulting from the 9/11 attacks required several changes in the conduct of the U.S. survey. First, it was necessary to move up the usual schedule of the survey by about four months if the results were to be available for the first anniversary of 9/11. The U.S. data were gathered in June for release in September-October (as part of the overall "Worldviews 2002" findings) instead of being gathered in October-November for release in February-March as in the past. As a result, the study is dated 2002 instead of 2003, as would otherwise have been the case.

Second, in light of the historic nature of the 2002 study, a much larger amount of data was collected than in any previous Council study. This was made possible in part by a shift from face-to-face interviews, the mode of data collection in all previous Council studies, to telephone interviewing (see Notes on Methodology) for about 2,800 of the approximately 3,200 interviews conducted. The decision to move to telephone interviewing

was necessitated by a change in practices of major survey organizations and by cost considerations. The Gallup Organization, which had fielded all earlier Council surveys (except 1974) through in-person interviews, no longer uses that collection technique for surveys of this magnitude and type. The cost of an in-person survey by other organizations was prohibitive. Harris Interactive was chosen to carry out the survey, including 400 in-person interviews, so that possible "mode effects" of the switch from in-person to telephone interviewing could be assessed.

Third, the Chicago Council and the German Marshall Fund decided to release the findings in two stages. The U.S. findings that were most relevant to the question of how 9/11 and its aftermath have affected American thinking as well as the U.S. and European data most directly related to transatlantic relations were released to the U.S. and European media in late August and early September 2002, in time to be discussed in connection with the first anniversary of the attacks. The full U.S. and European findings are herewith released in early October 2002. The findings are contained in three separate reports, one on the American data, one on the European data, and one on the comparisons between European and American attitudes.

The data from this survey will be placed on deposit with the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, the Roper Center for Public Opinion in Storrs, Connecticut, and NORC (National Opinion Research Center) at the University of Chicago. It will be available to scholars and other interested professionals. This report will also be available on the Internet at www.worldviews.org.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A study of this magnitude and complexity requires the support and participation of many organizations and individuals.

Funding for the U.S. study and for the Chicago Council's work on the European and comparative studies in collaboration with the German Marshall Fund

came from several sources. The Chicago Council is deeply grateful to the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation for its lead support. The MacArthur Foundation has been the principal funder of the Council's study over a number of years. Despite changes in the foundation's guidelines, its president, Jonathan F. Fanton, and Mitchel B. Wallerstein, senior vice president for global security and sustainability, were open to continuing this crucial assistance.

The Chicago Council also wishes to thank the McCormick Tribune Foundation and its president, Richard A. Behrenhausen, for their early and vital support. The German Marshall Fund of the United States contributed much needed funds to the Council to help make possible the extraordinary collaboration between the organizations. The United States–Japan Foundation also provided valuable funding. The Chicago Council is grateful to the foundation's president, George R. Packard, for his interest in this study.

The “Worldviews 2002” project was a team effort from the beginning. I served as co-editor for the U.S. study along with Benjamin I. Page, who is Gordon Scott Fulcher professor of decision making in the department of political science at Northwestern University. Other members of the Council's “Worldviews 2002” team were Steven Kull, director of the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA); Larry Jacobs, professor in the department of political science at the University of Minnesota; Richard Longworth, senior writer for the *Chicago Tribune*; Catherine Hug, president of Hug Communications; Christopher Whitney, program officer at The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, and Dukhong Kim, graduate student in the department of political science at Northwestern University. Martin Kifer, Laura MacDonald and Jane Kim also played important roles in the data analysis for the study. The Chicago Council expresses its great appreciation to these individuals who contributed intellect, experience, and time far beyond the call to the production of this landmark study.

The Council is especially grateful to Benjamin Page, who brought not only his rich insights as one of the United States' leading scholars of public opinion

and foreign policy to this effort, but also the benefit of his involvement in the Chicago Council studies from their inception in 1974. Steven Kull has brought a tremendous wealth of knowledge and experience to the 2002 study and has made invaluable contributions in each of its stages. Catherine Hug has been involved in the Council study for many years, but most importantly brought to the task her extraordinary skills as editor, drafter, designer, and arbiter of continuity and completeness. She has put in very long hours to bring this and the other two reports to press.

Very special credit is due to Christopher Whitney, who is truly the person most responsible on the Chicago Council team for the accomplishment of the “Worldviews 2002” project. From inception, the implementation of the project—design, fundraising, fielding, analysis, dissemination, and publication—were entirely in his very, very capable hands. He has been the Council's highly effective and indefatigable coordinator, manager extraordinaire, problem solver, communicator, and many other roles. It is impossible to imagine this project succeeding without his intelligence, diplomacy, and dedication.

The Chicago Council wishes also to express its thanks and appreciation to the members of the German Marshall Fund team. A collaboration of this type requires leadership, persistence, and flexibility. The Council is grateful to Craig Kennedy for conceiving of this innovative collaboration and making it happen. Steven Grand played the central role for the GMF in the implementation of “Worldviews 2002,” and was throughout a colleague of great integrity, effectiveness, and good humor. Natalie LaBalme and Julianne Smith, the other key members of the GMF team, were valued colleagues in every phase of the project and vital to its success.

We also wish to express our appreciation to Harris Interactive for all the assistance they have provided with the study. In particular, we want to recognize Hal Quinley, Beverly Romanowski, David Krane, and Shawn Wade for all their hard work throughout the various stages of the project.

—Marshall M. Bouton



S U M M A R Y

The Findings in Summary

REFOCUSSED INTERNATIONALISM AFTER 9/11

The tragic events of September 11, 2001, have had a deep impact on Americans' thinking about the world and their role in it. Shocked by a newfound vulnerability to international terrorism, Americans have become more attentive to what is happening beyond their borders and more willing to take action to reduce that vulnerability. American internationalism has been re-focused on containing and defeating the international terrorist threat.

- More Americans cite terrorism as one of the two or three biggest problems facing the country than any other problem, the first time a problem related to foreign policy has been the most cited problem.
- Terrorism is also the most commonly cited *foreign policy* problem and the most commonly viewed critical threat to U.S. vital interests.
- Public interest in world news is the strongest it has been in the last three decades of Council surveys.
- Support for an active foreign policy to deal with a wide range of international problems is up.
- Americans are prepared to expand spending on

programs that protect the homeland, even though domestic spending priorities rank higher.

THE GOAL: SECURITY AT HOME

The terrorist attacks of September 11 have made Americans more keenly aware of many dangers from abroad that threaten the U.S. homeland, especially international terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. Yet the public does not focus exclusively on terrorism in foreign policy. Americans also put a very high priority on protection from threats to their domestic economic health and personal well-being, and are concerned about certain regional conflicts, the global environment, and world hunger.

- The threats of international terrorism, chemical and biological weapons, Iraq developing weapons of mass destruction, and the possibility of unfriendly countries becoming nuclear powers elicit the highest levels of public concern since the threats question was first asked in 1990.
- More Americans today agree that it is very important for U.S. foreign policy to combat the threats of international terrorism and nuclear proliferation

than have agreed on any other foreign policy goal in Council surveys since 1974.

- Strong majorities also consider it very important to protect the jobs of American workers, stop the flow of illegal drugs into the United States, secure adequate supplies of energy, control and reduce illegal immigration, and protect the global environment.
- Threats from regional struggles, including the Arab-Israeli conflict, tensions between India and Pakistan, and Islamic fundamentalism, are also of high concern in the minds of Americans.
- Global hunger remains an important concern of Americans, even as most altruistic pursuits in foreign policy rank comparatively low in importance.

SUPERPOWER WITH LIMITS

While Americans embrace U.S. status as the world's sole superpower and support action to protect American interests, they are not comfortable taking on international problems alone and clearly reject certain unilateral exercises of power. Most Americans favor limits: they seek multilateral support, favor devoting substantial but not unlimited resources to military capabilities, and rule out certain kinds of military action altogether.

- Americans believe it is desirable for the United States to exert strong leadership in world affairs, see the United States as extremely influential in the world, believe it plays a more important and powerful role in the world today than it did 10 years ago, and say it will play a greater role in the next 10 years.
- Americans overwhelmingly support using military force—including U.S. ground troops—to fight international terrorism. They show strong support for using troops in a variety of other situations, including peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.
- Americans strongly support multilateral action and partnership, in many cases favoring the use of force only with the support of the United Nations and of

its allies. This is especially true for an invasion of Iraq.

- Most Americans favor having many military bases abroad and increasing spending on homeland security. Nearly half favor increased defense spending, the highest proportion favoring this position in any Chicago Council survey over the past 30 years.
- Americans do not believe that the United States has the responsibility to play the role of world policeman and believe the United States is playing this role more than it should.
- Majorities of Americans believe NATO is still essential to our country's security and favor the expansion of NATO to include a number of Eastern European countries as well as Russia.
- Americans disavow the first use of nuclear weapons and say the United States should not build a missile defense system right away, but should do more research until such a system is proven effective.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

The U.S. public resists the idea of playing a hegemonic role in the world. It does not automatically turn to the use of military might to enforce its will abroad. Americans tend to look first to diplomatic approaches and to seek out multilateral solutions. Most Americans favor working through international institutions—especially the United Nations—and participating in international treaties and agreements. Even with regard to the war on terrorism, support for nonmilitary instruments based on multilateralism and diplomacy is as strong as for military approaches.

- Americans strongly disagree that the United States should be the preeminent world leader in solving international problems, favoring instead solving problems together with other countries. They strongly agree that the United States and the European Union should be more willing to make decisions jointly even if they have to go along with a policy that is not their first choice.

- A majority of Americans believe the more important lesson of September 11 is that the United States needs to work more closely with other countries rather than act more on its own to fight terrorism.
- Americans show strong support for strengthening the United Nations, paying its UN dues in full, having UN member countries contribute troops to a rapid deployment force, and having joint training exercises among UN member countries.
- Substantial majorities of Americans show support for participating in the International Criminal Court, the Kyoto Protocol on global warming, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and the treaty banning the use of land mines.
- A number of diplomatic options for fighting terrorism elicit at least as high or higher support from Americans than many military options.
- Support for other diplomatic tools in foreign policy, including sanctions, diplomatic relations, trade relations, and certain types of foreign aid generate the solid support of Americans.

THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

Americans show greater confidence about their economic position relative to other countries since 1998. They have a generally positive view of globalization, but there is evidence of growing concern about its effects, especially its impact on the job security of American workers. There is increasing unease about U.S. domestic economic health as well as high concern about immigration. The public's support for free trade is conditioned on the needs of workers being addressed. At the same time, most Americans show a readiness to address certain problems that could entail large economic costs, such as world poverty and hunger.

- The public shows a low and declining level of concern about economic competition from other countries as well as reduced worries about trade, the balance of payments, and the global economy in general.

- A modest majority of Americans say globalization is mostly good for the United States, but most do not think the United States should actively promote it, and about half say it is mostly bad for the job security of American workers.
- Concern about the domestic economy has grown since 1998 and is second only to terrorism as one of the two or three biggest problems facing the country today. Protecting the jobs of American workers is the third highest priority as a goal of U.S. foreign policy (behind combating terrorism and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons) and is at the highest level seen on this item in Chicago Council surveys since 1974.
- Majorities say that large numbers of immigrants and refugees coming into the United States is a critical threat, that controlling and reducing illegal immigration should be a very important goal of U.S. foreign policy, and that legal immigration into the United States should be decreased.
- Americans support the general idea of free trade, but majorities favor placing conditions on that trade for the protection of workers at home and abroad and for the environment.
- Americans generally do not give a high priority to giving economic aid to other countries, although they show strong support for aid that is explicitly aimed at alleviating world poverty and hunger and for helping poor countries develop their economies as a means of combating terrorism. Americans drastically overestimate the amount the United States devotes to foreign aid.

THE CHANGING GEOPOLITICAL LANDSCAPE

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 and their aftermath have significantly altered how Americans view key countries and U.S. relationships with them around the globe. The new sense of vulnerability and imperative of countering terrorism have heightened the importance of old friends and allies, altered the perceptions of foes and threats, and raised awareness of new players and risks.

- More Americans believe old friends and allies such as Great Britain, Canada, Germany, and France are of vital interest to the United States.
- A majority of Americans now believe that Europe is more important to the United States than Asia, and more see the countries of the European Union as reliable partners in the war on terrorism than any other country asked about.
- Russia has been transformed from rival to partner in the minds of Americans, with the perceived threat of Russian military power continuing to decline, feelings toward the country moving from cold to warm, the view of Russia as a reliable partner in the war on terrorism strong, and support for the expansion of NATO to include Russia high.
- Fear of Islamic fundamentalism has risen sharply, and a large majority of Americans say U.S. immigration laws should be tightened to restrict the number of immigrants from Arab and Muslim countries. However, a strong majority rejects the inevitability of a clash of civilizations with Islam.
- Countries with perceived connections to terrorism—Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Iran, and Egypt—are seen by large majorities as being of vital interest, but are generally not well liked and in some cases are considered of questionable support to the United States.
- The salience of the Arab-Israeli conflict is up. Americans show more overall favorability toward Israel than the Palestinians, yet do not think the United States should take sides in the conflict. They are divided on many issues, including whether the United States should actively work to help establish a Palestinian state.
- The perception of a vital interest in India has increased more dramatically than for any other country asked about, and tensions between India and Pakistan are seen by a majority of Americans as a critical threat to U.S. vital interests.
- Japan and China appear to be trading places in terms of salience in the minds of many Americans. Japan is viewed as more friendly if less influential than in the past as concerns about economic com-

petition have faded, while a watchful eye rests on China as its power and influence rises.

- African countries are of low concern to Americans, but the public shows significantly increased support for giving economic aid to Africa.
- Several Latin American countries—Mexico, Colombia, and Cuba—are seen as U.S. vital interests by majorities of Americans, while Brazil and Argentina are not.

THE PRESIDENT'S FOREIGN POLICY PERFORMANCE

Despite the high overall job performance rating they give President Bush, Americans are not completely satisfied—and in some areas are quite dissatisfied—with the Bush administration's handling of various kinds of foreign policy problems.

- President Bush is viewed more warmly on the thermometer scale than any other international leader we asked about except U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell.
- Majorities see the administration's handling of relations with Russia, Europe, and Japan as well as international terrorism and the war in Afghanistan as positive, while most Americans see handling of all other issues asked about, including the Arab/Israel peace process, the situation in Iraq, immigration policy, and global warming as only “fair” or “poor.”
- The president is seen as having the most influence on foreign policy compared to other groups and individuals, and the public believes the president should have even more influence than he does now. The public sees itself as having the least influence on foreign policy, but wants to have a degree of influence second only to the president.

LEADERS AND THE PUBLIC

On a separate survey of a set of influential foreign policy leaders in which questions from the public survey

were asked of the leaders, leaders show agreement with the public on a number of issues, including some that are controversial in policy-making circles. On many other issues, however, this consensus breaks down. Many of the divergences between the public and the leaders are large and have endured for decades. Some probably reflect informational differences, but others appear to reflect genuine discrepancies between the values and interests of foreign policy leaders and those of the American citizenry.

- Leaders, like the public, show the most concern about international terrorism and overwhelming support for preventing the spread of nuclear weapons as a U.S. foreign policy goal, but they show generally less alarm about many international threats.
- Leaders, like the public, support using U.S. troops in a variety of situations, but leaders show much stronger support for using troops in several invasion scenarios, such as an invasion of South Korea by North Korea, an invasion of Israel by Arab forces, a Chinese invasion of Taiwan, and an Iraqi invasion of Saudi Arabia. However, both show strong support for multilateral uses of force.
- The leaders and public both generally support working with allies and through international insti-

tutions, although in many cases public support is higher than that of leaders.

- While both public and leaders share a general confidence about the U.S. position in the world economy, the public is far more concerned than leaders about safeguarding Americans jobs and well-being at home.
- There is surprising consensus among the Chicago Council leadership and public samples on many controversial issues, such as opposition to a unilateral U.S. invasion of Iraq; opposition to the first use of nuclear weapons; and support for conditions on free trade to help workers, protect the environment, and maintain minimum labor standards.
- Various groups within the leadership sample show opposing views to the overall leader and public consensus on several key issues. House, Senate, and the administration subsamples all support the U.S. prerogative to act alone without the support of allies in international crises and oppose participation in the International Criminal Court. The Senate subsample opposes participation in the treaty banning land mines. Majorities in business, the Senate, and the Bush administration subsamples are against participation in the Kyoto agreement to reduce global warming.



C H A P T E R O N E

Refocused Internationalism After 9/11

The tragic events of September 11, 2001, have had a deep impact on Americans' thinking about the world and their role in it. Shocked by their newfound vulnerability to international terrorism, Americans have become more attentive to what is happening beyond their borders and more willing to take action internationally and at home to reduce that vulnerability.

American internationalism has been refocused on containing and defeating the terrorist threat. For 40 years, U.S. foreign policy was focused on containing the Soviet Union and defeating communism. Following the end of the Cold War, absent a new overriding threat and amidst the greatest prosperity in American history, international concerns and foreign policy went out of focus for many Americans.

September 11 changed all that. Americans now see international terrorism as the top problem, though not the only problem, facing the country. They sense heightened danger from weapons of mass destruction that might fall into terrorist hands, but are much less concerned about the global economy and economic competition from abroad. They are willing to play an active part in the world, especially if by doing so they can diminish the terrorist threat. They are more ready to expand government spending on security-related

BIGGEST PROBLEMS FACING THE COUNTRY

Percentage of the respondents citing the following as one of the two or three biggest problems facing the country.

	2002	1998
Terrorism	36	NA
Economy	22	11
Education	11	15
Defense	10	1
Unemployment	9	9
Immorality	8	11
Foreign relations/foreign policy	8	3
Drug abuse	7	21
Health care	7	8
War (threat of war)	7	1

Figure 1-1

matters, at the same time showing continued strong focus on domestic concerns. They are confident that the United States is the most influential nation in the world and that its role will grow in the years ahead, but they want America's role in the world to be marked by cooperation with other nations.

BIGGEST PROBLEMS FACING THE COUNTRY, 1974-2002		
<i>The most cited problem facing the country in Council surveys since 1974 and the percentage of respondents citing that problem.</i>		
2002	Terrorism	36
1998	Crime	26
1994	Crime	42
1990	Budget deficit	30
1986	Drug abuse	27
1982	Unemployment	64
1978	Inflation	67
1974	Inflation	56

Figure 1-2

TERRORISM AS THE TOP PROBLEM

When asked about the two or three biggest problems facing the country today (see Figure 1-1), more respondents (36%) mention terrorism than cite any other problem. This is the first time in the history of Chicago Council surveys that a foreign policy-related problem has displaced domestic concerns at the top of the list (see Figure 1-2). Terrorism did not even make the list of overall problems facing the country cited in 1998 or in any previous Council study—the most mentioned problem in 1998 was crime (26%), followed closely by drug abuse (21%).

The concern about terrorism has heightened Americans' focus on a variety of related problems. Defense, foreign relations, and war are the fourth, seventh, and tenth most commonly cited problems, respectively, in 2002. None of them made the top 10 in 1998.

When added together, problems related to foreign policy are mentioned more frequently as among the two or three biggest problems facing the country (41% of total responses) than in any previous Council study, up 34 points from 7% in 1998 (see Figure 1-3). For every mention of a foreign policy problem in 2002, there is only about one mention of a domestic problem, compared to roughly 15 domestic mentions in 1998.

While terrorism and related international concerns have clearly moved to the forefront, they have not by any means eclipsed domestic, especially economic, concerns. The economy (22%), education (11%), and unemployment (9%) are the second, third, and fifth most mentioned problems respectively, and significant numbers of people cite drug abuse, health care, crime, poverty, and the environment. Among all problems mentioned, domestic issues still predominate.

Turning to Americans' foreign policy agenda, terrorism again clearly stands at the top (see Figure 1-4). When asked to mention the two or three biggest *foreign policy* problems facing the United States, more respon-

Terrorism stands among the most frequently cited foreign policy problems since the Chicago Council surveys began in 1974.

dents (33%) mention terrorism than cite any other problem: almost three times as many as mention the next most salient problem, the Middle East situation (12%). Terrorism stands among the most frequently cited foreign policy problems since the Chicago Council surveys began in 1974. Foreign aid was mentioned by 33% in 1974, and 31% mentioned the arms race in 1986.



Figure 1-3

BIGGEST FOREIGN POLICY PROBLEMS FACING THE COUNTRY		
<i>Percentage citing the following as one of the two or three biggest foreign policy problems facing the country.</i>		
	2002	1998
Terrorism	33	12
Middle East situation	12	8
Don't know	11	21
Unrest in Israel; Arab/Israel/Palestine	9	NA
Foreign aid	8	7
Getting involved in affairs of other countries	7	7
Immigration	7	3

Figure 1-4

Although terrorism also topped the list of foreign policy problems in 1998—that poll was taken shortly after the terrorist bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania—only a much lower 12% of the public mentioned it at that time. In fact, more people (21%) said “don’t know” than gave any other response, showing the relatively low salience of international problems in the minds of Americans prior to September 11. Concerns about the world economy and about the balance of payments were second and third on the list in 1998, at 11% and 10% mentioning them, respectively. In 2002 these concerns dropped to 3% and 2%, respectively.

LESSONS OF SEPTEMBER 11	
<i>“What do you see as the most important lesson of September 11?”</i>	
Need to be more alert	15
Be prepared	12
Americans pulling together	11
Increased security	8
We’re vulnerable	7

Figure 1-5

After 9/11 Americans feel the direct and immediate threat of terrorism. An overwhelming 91% of Americans say international terrorism is a “critical” threat to United States vital interests, the highest level for any threat in this or the previous three surveys in which the question was asked. The terrorist threat has heightened America’s sense of vulnerability to related threats, particularly weapons of mass destruction in the wrong hands (see Chapter 2 for further discussion of threats).

Americans are reacting to the newly felt threat of terrorism with a combination of vulnerability and alertness. When we asked our respondents an open-ended question about what they see as the most important lesson of 9/11, the most frequent answers were clustered around feeling vulnerable, needing to be alert and prepared, wanting to increase security and togetherness, and needing more information (see Figure 1-5).

Accordingly, Americans are more attentive to what is happening outside their borders than ever before in

Americans are more attentive to what is happening outside their borders than ever before in the Chicago Council surveys.

the Chicago Council surveys. Rebounding after a steady decline in attention to international and even national news, the percentage of respondents who say they are very interested in news about other countries has jumped from 29% in 1998 to 42% in 2002 (see Figure 1-6). The percentage who say they are very interested in news about the relations of the United States with other countries has risen sharply from 45% to 62%, with only 7% saying they are hardly or not at all interested. The interest in national news has also increased dramatically, from 47% in 1998 to 62% in 2002.

INTEREST IN THE NEWS

Percentage who are "very interested" in various types of news.

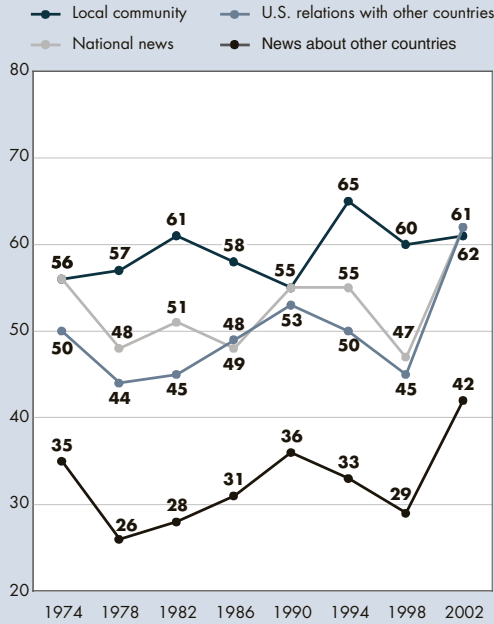


Figure 1-6

ACTIVE IN THE WORLD

Accompanying the increase in attention to the news is increased support for an active American role in world affairs, especially in order to enhance security against terrorism and related threats.

Since 1947 the Chicago Council and other organizations have been asking Americans whether they think it best for the future of the country if we take an active part in, or stay out of, world affairs. In the 2002 Chicago Council/German Marshall Fund study, 71% say the United States should take an active part in world affairs, up from 61% in 1998 and near the highest levels recorded in Chicago Council or other surveys (see Figure 1-7). It is lower than the 81% level of support found in a PIPA study in November 2001, just two months after the 9/11 attacks. Surveys have since found a slight continuing downward trend in the percentages saying the United States should take an active part in the world. But they remain at or near historically high levels.

SUPPORT FOR GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Many Americans are ready to put their money behind their convictions. Much larger percentages are prepared to expand government spending, especially on those programs that will help protect the homeland (see Figure 1-8). Support for increasing spending on gather-

Americans support an active American role in world affairs, especially in order to enhance security against terrorism and related threats.

ing intelligence about other countries has jumped a startling 39 points to 66%. Sixty-five percent support the expansion of homeland security, a new item in 2002. Support for increased defense spending has gone up a more modest 14 points to 44%, the highest level recorded in the Chicago Council surveys and the first time more people favor expanded spending than favor either keeping defense budgets the same (38%) or cutting them back (15%).

Interestingly, Americans draw a sharp line between spending for intelligence gathering, homeland security, and defense on the one hand, and military or economic

ACTIVE PART IN WORLD AFFAIRS

Percentage who think it is best for the future of our country if we take an active part in world affairs rather than stay out.

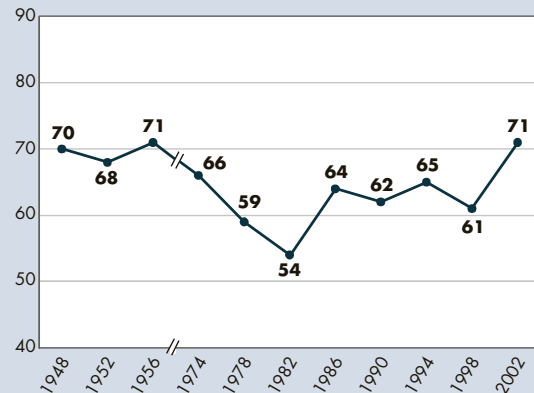


Figure 1-7

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Percentage who want to expand, keep about the same, or cut back the following federal government programs.

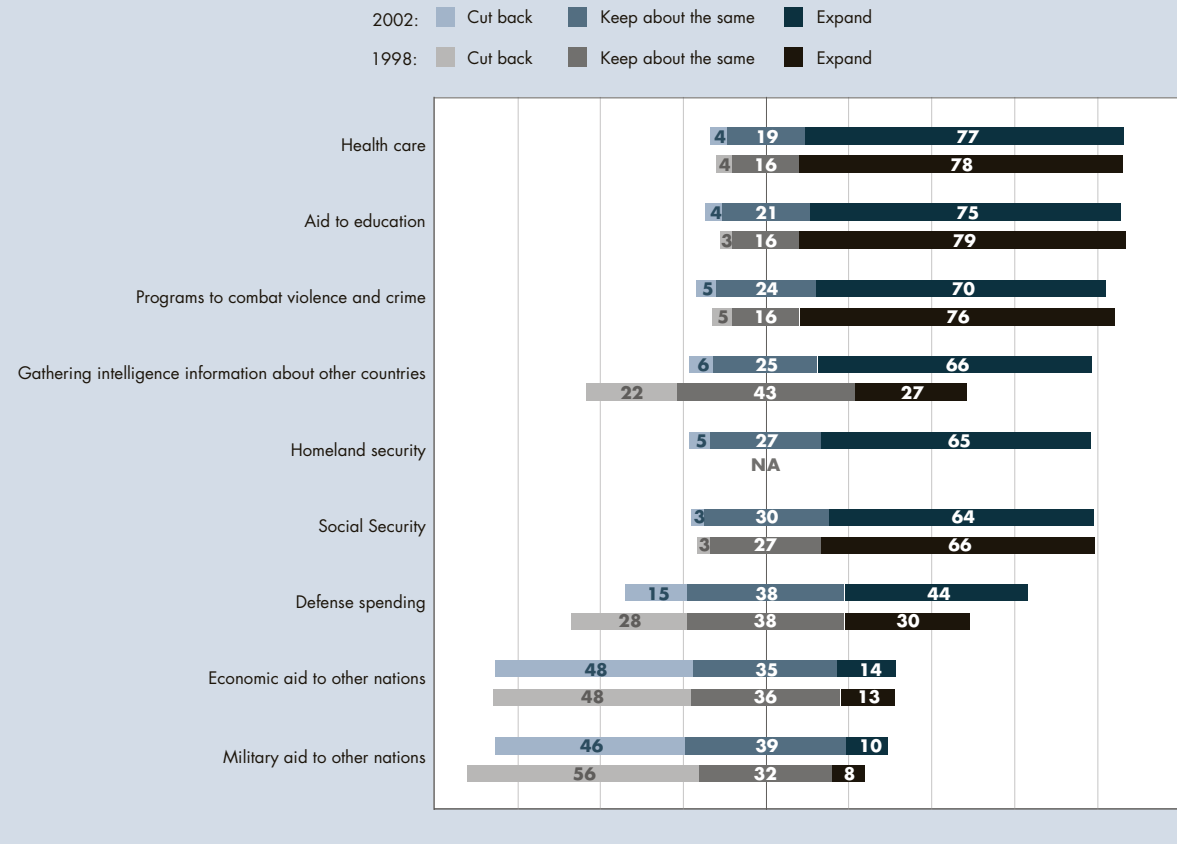


Figure 1-8

aid to other nations on the other hand. The percentages supporting increased spending on those programs are much lower (10% and 14%, respectively) and have not increased appreciably since 1998.

Just as Americans' new focus on terrorism and related problems has not eclipsed concern about domestic problems, so also spending preferences still reflect strong support for expanding domestic programs. In 2002 the percentages of Americans favoring increased spending on domestic programs have hardly changed from 1998, but they are still considerably higher overall

than those favoring expanded international spending: 77% for expanding health care, 75% for education, 70% to combat crime, and 64% for Social Security. Excluding homeland security, the average percentage favoring increased spending on domestic programs (72%) is almost twice that for international programs (34%).

Arguably, homeland security is as much or more a domestic program as an international one. The strong support for it signals how after 9/11 the American focus on security has a strong domestic dimension.



C H A P T E R T W O

The Goal: Security At Home

The terrorist attacks of September 11 have made Americans more keenly aware of dangers from abroad that threaten the U.S. homeland. International terrorism and weapons of mass destruction combine to pose a lethal menace that people are taking very seriously. More Americans today agree that it is very important for U.S. foreign policy to combat the threats of international terrorism and nuclear proliferation than have agreed on any other foreign policy goal in Council surveys since they started in 1974.

Yet the public does not focus exclusively on terrorism in foreign policy. Americans also put a high priority on protection from threats to their domestic economic health and personal well-being. They want policies that help protect the jobs of American workers, stop the flow of illegal drugs into the United States, secure adequate supplies of energy, control and reduce illegal immigration, and improve the global environment.

Many Americans also perceive dangers from regional conflicts that bear on U.S. interests, such as those in the Middle East (the Arab-Israeli conflict), South Asia (tensions between India and Pakistan), and across continents (Islamic fundamentalism). Worries about the global economy and economic competition from other countries have receded since the 1990s, as have con-

cerns about the military power and political stability of Russia. Global hunger remains an important concern of Americans, even as most altruistic pursuits in foreign policy rank relatively low in importance.

INTENSIFYING THREATS: TERRORISM AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

After more than a decade of relative ease on the foreign policy front, Americans in 2002 have heightened their focus on direct threats to the U.S. homeland that come from abroad (see Figure 2-1). As mentioned in Chapter 1, international terrorism as a threat elicits the highest level of public concern of any of the possible threats inquired about since the question was first asked in 1990. Ninety-one percent of the public judge terrorism to be a “critical threat” (rather than “an important but not critical threat,” or “not an important threat at all”) to the vital interest of the United States in the next 10 years, up 7 points since 1998.

This is followed closely by concern about weapons of mass destruction. A very high 86% of Americans, up 10 points since 1998, see chemical and biological weapons as a critical threat. A virtually equal 85%, also up 10 points, call the possibility of unfriendly countries

CRITICAL THREATS

Percentage who view each of the following as a "critical threat" to U.S. vital interests.

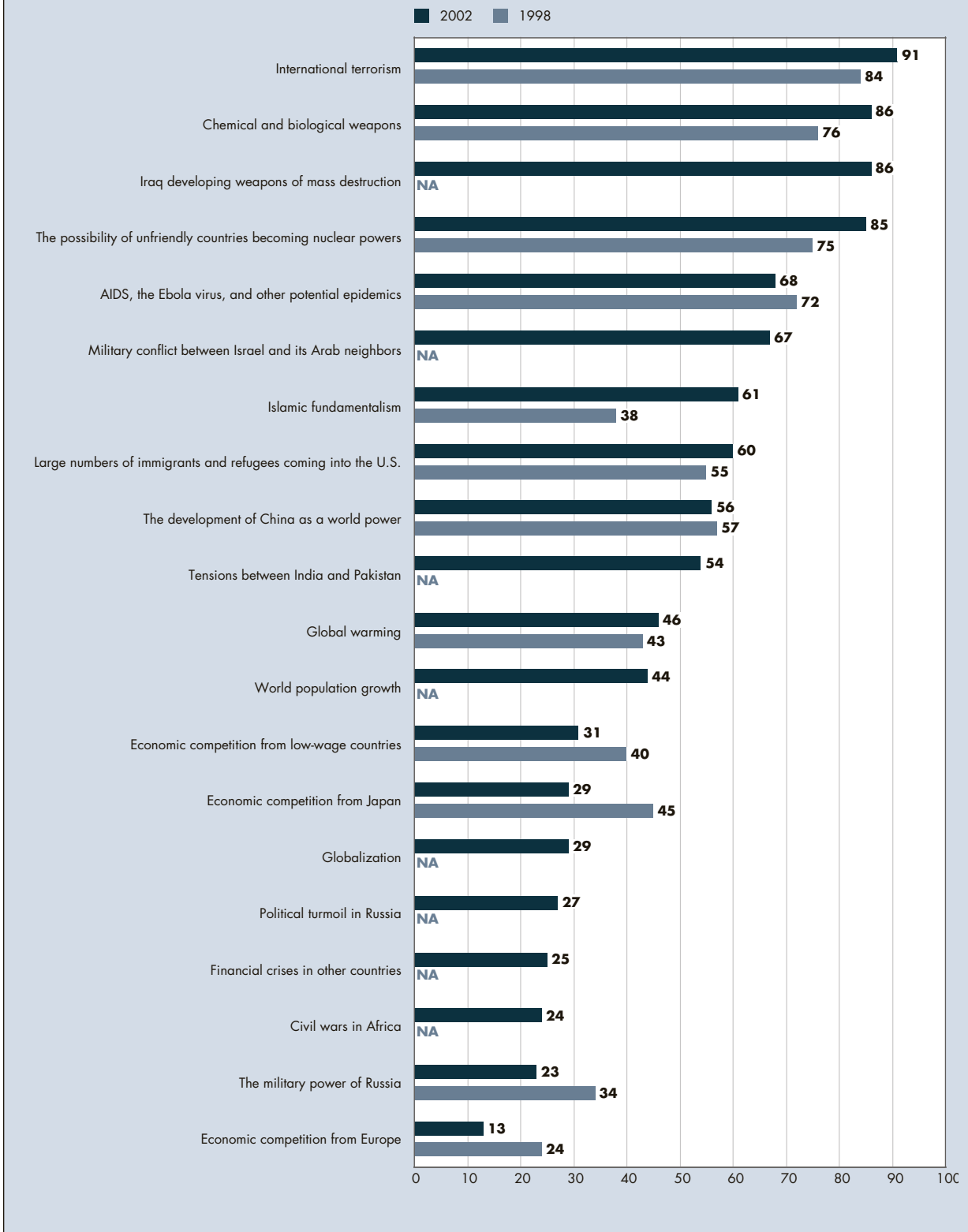


Figure 2-1

becoming nuclear powers a critical threat. Putting these concerns together and focusing on Iraq—which U.S. officials have accused of continued efforts to develop chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons—86% of the public say that “Iraq developing weapons of mass destruction” is a critical threat to the vital interest of the United States.

The concerns about international terrorism and weapons of mass destruction are not new, but after September 11 they have grown in intensity. The top three threats found in 1998, which had been rising in salience through the 1990s, are at the top again in 2002, now eliciting an overwhelming consensus among the public and adding Iraq as a new focal point.

Despite the clear sense of alarm about dangers related to terrorism, these concerns have not eclipsed other worries. In the next tier of threats, viewed by more than one-half to two-thirds of Americans as critical, come concerns about nonmilitary threats to Americans’ personal well-being. The threat of “AIDS, the Ebola virus and other potential epidemics” is considered critical by 68% of the public, and “large numbers of immigrants and refugees coming into the United States” is considered critical by 60%. The concern about immigrants, up from 55% in 1998, but still lower than the 72% found in 1994, likely reflects worries about possible terrorists entering the country as well as fears of economic displacement and cultural anxieties.

Also at this second level of concern are threats spilling over from regional conflicts that bear on U.S. interests. Military conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbors is seen as a critical threat to U.S. interests by 67% of the public. Islamic fundamentalism is seen as critical by 61%. The development of China as a world power is seen as a critical threat by 56%. And tensions between India and Pakistan, the world’s newest nuclear powers, are seen as a critical threat by 54%.

Even though the language of “critical threats” tends to suggest military conflict and imminent crises, pluralities of Americans also see critical threats from the more gradual, nonmilitary problems of global warming and world population growth, viewed as critical by 46% and 44% of the public, respectively.

DECLINING THREATS: ECONOMIC COMPETITION, RUSSIAN POWER

Of significantly lower concern are threats related to the global economy and economic competition. Only one-third or less of the public see economic competition from low-wage countries (31%), economic competition from Japan (29%), globalization (29%), financial crises in other countries (25%), or economic competition from Europe (13%) as critical threats. This is a change from the 1990s, when concern about economic competition (especially from Japan—considered a critical threat by 60% and 62% in 1990 and 1994, respectively) was much higher. The decline of these concerns is reflected elsewhere in this survey (see Chapter 5).

Also of relatively little concern to the public are the military power of Russia (23%, down 11 points), political turmoil in Russia (27%), and civil wars in Africa (24%). In little more than a decade, Russia has gone, in the minds of Americans, from America’s biggest enemy to one of its most reliable partners (see Chapter 6).

COMBATING TERRORISM AS THE CENTRAL FOREIGN POLICY GOAL

The view of terrorism as the nation’s top problem and most critical threat translates into public support for numerous actions to combat it, including the use of troops and other military measures, which are discussed in Chapter 3, and a variety of nonmilitary policies, discussed in Chapter 4. In addition, the overriding concern about terrorism and related threats can be seen in the broad set of U.S. foreign policy goals that Americans view as important (see Figure 2-2).

Just as 91% of Americans view terrorism as a critical threat, 91% also say that combating international terrorism should be a “very important” goal of U.S. foreign policy, up 12 percentage points since 1998. (The alternatives are “a somewhat important foreign policy goal” or “not an important goal at all.”) This puts combating terrorism at the top of the list of 20 possible goals presented in 2002 (it ranked fourth of 17 in 1998) and at the highest level of any goal asked about

in Council surveys since 1974. Without question, combating the threat of international terrorism—characterized by President Bush and others as a “war” on terrorism—has become, for most Americans, the centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy.

The September 11 terrorist attacks have accentuated the worst nightmare of the new century: direct assault upon the United States from weapons of mass destruction in the hands of newfound enemies around

The September 11 terrorist attacks have accentuated the worst nightmare of the new century: direct assault upon the United States from weapons of mass destruction in the hands of newfound enemies around the world.

the world. As mentioned previously, immediately following international terrorism on the list of critical threats to U.S. vital interests are chemical and biological weapons, Iraq developing weapons of mass destruction, and the possibility of unfriendly countries becoming nuclear powers. Related to these concerns is a desire to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, which comes second on the list of U.S. foreign policy goals and is considered a “very important” goal by 90% of the American public.

While nuclear weapons have regularly been a major source of worry to the American public since the early Cold War years, concern about the proliferation of such weapons has now become even more intense than in the 1990s, when we began asking about it. In 1990, 84%¹ of the public thought that preventing the spread of nuclear weapons should be a very important goal of U.S. foreign policy, with 82% saying so in both 1994 and 1998. The jump to 90% in 2002 underscores the

¹Corrected percentage. Reanalysis of the 1990 data has revealed an error in previously reported percentages involving the “goals” and “troop use” questions for that year. The results from two different questionnaire forms were incorrectly combined.

heightened fears generated among Americans by the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

PROTECTING DOMESTIC WELL-BEING

Just behind goals related to terrorism and weapons of mass destruction come nonmilitary goals bearing directly on the personal welfare, economic and otherwise, of Americans. Protecting the jobs of American workers is considered a “very important” goal of U.S. foreign policy by 85% of the public, stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the United States is very important to 81%, securing adequate supplies of energy is very important to 75%, and controlling and reducing illegal immigration is very important to 70% of the public.

These items have appeared at or near the top of the list of foreign policy goals in most Council surveys since 1974. While they have now been displaced at the very top by the goals of combating terrorism and nuclear proliferation, they come close behind. The proportions of the public saying they should be very important foreign policy goals are up substantially since 1998, and stand at or near the highest levels found in these surveys.

These high-priority goals—reflecting concerns about the economy in general, unemployment, and

Protecting the jobs of American workers is considered a “very important” goal of U.S. foreign policy by 85% of the public.

drug abuse that appear among the top 10 items on the list of the country’s biggest problems (see Chapter 1)—are manifested in a number of specific policy preferences elsewhere in the survey. The concern about protecting jobs is seen in reactions to globalization and in attitudes about free trade (see Chapter 5). Concern about drugs has undoubtedly affected attitudes toward Colombia, a major source of drug trafficking, and led to a high level of support for using force against drug lords

FOREIGN POLICY GOALS

Percentage who say each of the following should be a "very important" goal of U.S. foreign policy.

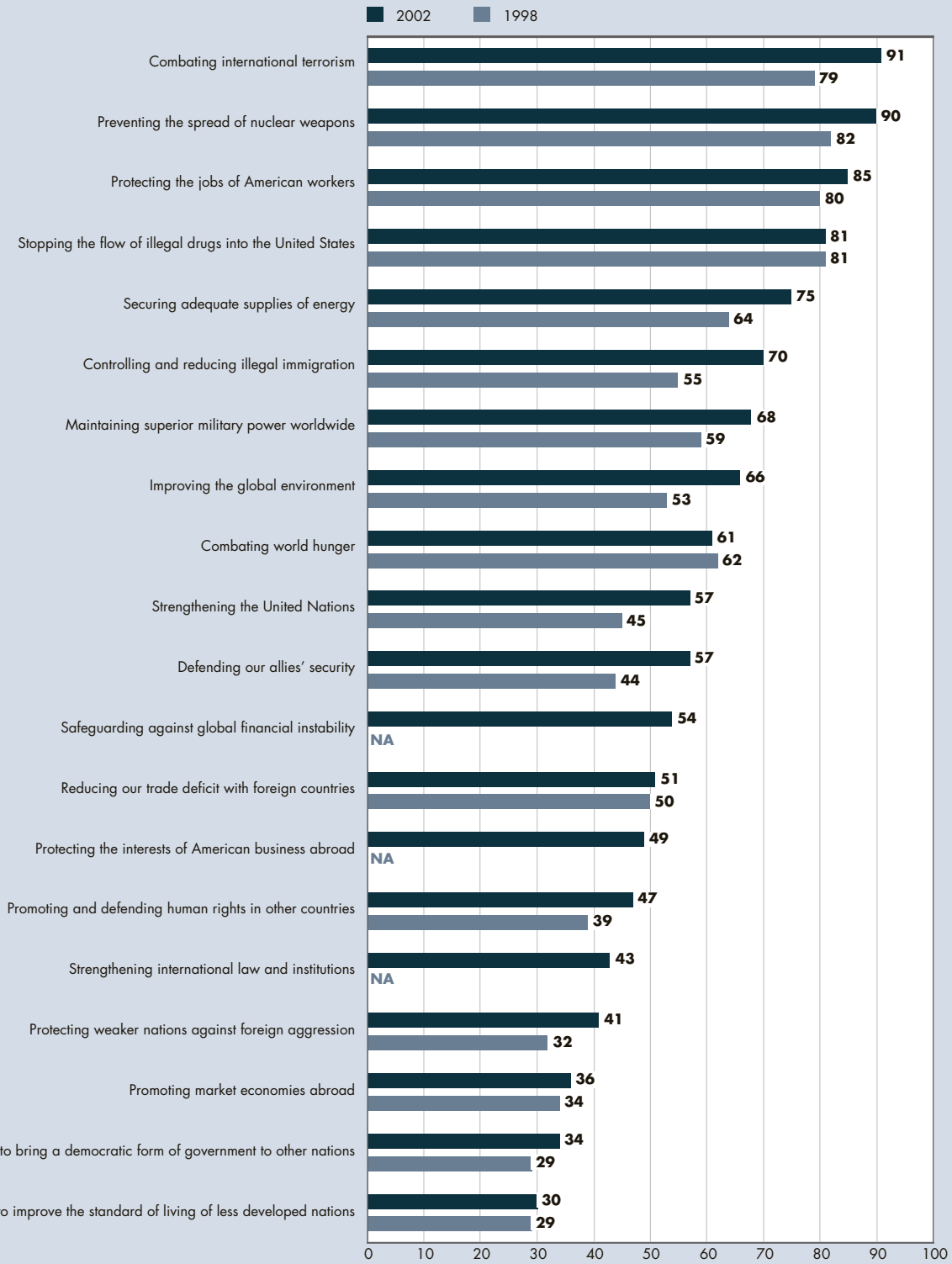


Figure 2-2

there (see Chapters 3 and 6). Concern about oil supplies leads Americans to place a high value on Saudi Arabia as a vital interest and to favor using U.S. troops (in a multilateral context) to resist a hypothetical invasion of that country. The priority of securing energy supplies also shows up in attitudes about the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Finally, the high priority put on controlling immigration is reflected in support for specific restrictive policies.

ADDRESSING OTHER GOALS

Beyond the highest general priorities of combating terrorism and looking out for the personal well-being of American workers, significant majorities of Americans also say that several other traditional international security aims should be “very important” goals of U.S. foreign policy. Maintaining superior military power worldwide is called very important by 68% (up 9 points since 1998), and 57% say that defending our allies’ security should be a very important goal. There are indications of thinking in terms of collective security: the goal of strengthening the United Nations is called very important by 57%, up 12 points since 1998.

The desire to act against world hunger is a recurring theme seen in support for certain types of economic aid and even for the use of troops in certain situations.

Among other aims that majorities of Americans say should be very important goals of foreign policy are improving the global environment (66%), and combating world hunger (61%). Concern about the global environment reverberates through several types of policy preferences, including desires to attach environmental conditions to trade agreements and support for the Kyoto agreement on global warming. The desire to act against world hunger is a recurring theme, seen in sup-

port for certain types of economic aid and the use of troops in certain situations. High percentages of Americans favor food and medical assistance to people in needy countries, many more than support other types of foreign aid. Overwhelming majorities also approve of using troops to assist a population struck by famine.

Bare majorities of Americans see safeguarding against global financial instability (54%), and reducing our trade deficit with foreign countries (51%) as very important goals. The latter has been generally declining in Council surveys since 1986, consistent with the overall decline of global economic concerns documented in this survey.

MOST ALTRUISTIC GOALS SECONDARY, BUT STILL IMPORTANT

Most altruistic goals of U.S. foreign policy, those primarily concerned with the welfare of people in countries other than the United States, are not given very high priority by the U.S. public. While some goals that further U.S. interests also help people in other countries (defending our allies’ security, strengthening the United Nations, improving the global environment), goals that are primarily altruistic in nature mostly rank near the bottom of the priority list.

Combating world hunger, mentioned earlier, is the one notable exception to this general rule. Again, this is consistent with other findings indicating that Americans do not want to see anyone around the world go hungry (see Chapter 5).

But promoting and defending human rights in other countries is rated a very important goal by just 47%, putting it in fifteenth place among 20 goals. Protecting weaker nations against foreign aggression is called very important by a slightly lower 41%, and helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations is rated very important by a still lower 34%. Helping to improve the standard of living of less developed nations comes in last among the 20 goals, with only 30% calling it very important.

Should we conclude from this that Americans do not care at all about poverty, democracy, or human

rights abroad, or about protecting weaker nations from aggression? No. To say that other goals have higher priority is not to say that the public does not consider altruistic goals of U.S. foreign policy to be important.

About a third or more of Americans do say that each of these aims should be “very important.” Moreover, large majorities of Americans say that these should be at least “somewhat” important goals. The combined total of “very” plus “somewhat” important is always at least 83% of the public for all the goals listed. No more than 15% of the U.S. public call any of these goals “not important” at all.

This is not merely a matter of empty verbal adherence to norms that are considered socially approved. Later chapters indicate that a significant humanitarian thread runs through a variety of Americans’ preferred foreign policies. Substantial majorities of the public, for example, favor various kinds of international peacekeeping operations and humanitarian types of foreign aid. Large majorities are willing to risk U.S. troops for humanitarian purposes.

Most Americans want a foreign policy that pursues justice as well as security. But protection of one’s own security and well-being naturally comes first.



C H A P T E R T H R E E

Superpower With Limits

The United States today stands alone as a global economic and military power. No other country can match its ability to act on the world stage. While Americans embrace U.S. status as the world's sole superpower, they are not comfortable taking on international problems alone and reject certain unilateral exercises of power. Most Americans favor limits: they seek multilateral support, favor devoting substantial but not unlimited resources to military capabilities, and rule out certain kinds of military action altogether.

While most Americans are ready to use military force—including U.S. ground troops—in a variety of situations, especially against international terrorism, in many cases approval of the use of force is conditioned upon support from allies and the United Nations. Most Americans favor extensive bases abroad and substantial spending on homeland security and defense, but there is some unease about the number of troops stationed in other countries and clear opposition to the first use of nuclear weapons.

U.S. SUPERPOWER STATUS

Majorities of Americans both recognize and endorse the U.S. role as the world's leading power. A very large



Figure 3-1

majority of 83% say it is either “very desirable” (41%) or “somewhat desirable” (42%) that the United States exert strong leadership in world affairs (see Figure 3-1). Majorities say the United States plays a more important and powerful role as a world leader today compared to 10 years ago (55%) and rate the United States as “extremely influential” in the world, or 10 on a 0 to 10 scale in terms of influence (55%). None of the other eight countries we asked about, including Russia, China, and the European Union, comes close to the United States on the scale of influence (see Figure 6-2).

Most people see the foundation of U.S. influence as economic, with 66% saying economic strength is

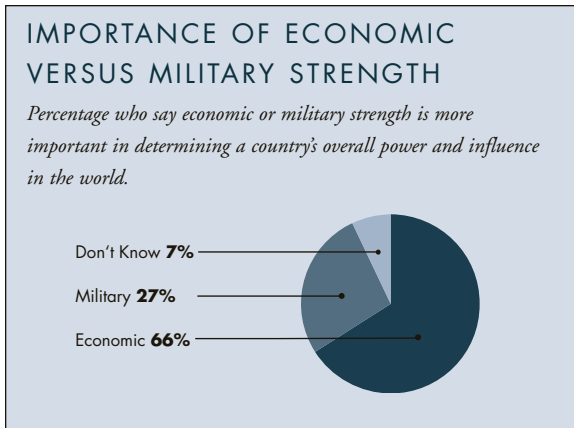


Figure 3-2

more important than military strength in determining a country's overall power and influence in the world (see Figure 3-2). Only 27% percent say military power is more important. However, backing up economic power with military might is also crucial to Americans, with 68% agreeing that “maintaining superior military power worldwide” is a “very important” goal of U.S. foreign policy.

THE USE OF MILITARY POWER

Military power has become particularly important to Americans today in fighting the war on terrorism. Despite a history of some reluctance to use troops abroad, Americans leave no doubt that they are ready to act against the terrorist threat (see Figure 3-3).

An overwhelming majority (87%) now favor U.S. air strikes against terrorist training camps, up 13 percentage points since 1998. A hefty 84% favor similar attacks by U.S. ground troops, up a remarkable 27 percentage points, perhaps because of the nearly casualty-free success of the war in Afghanistan. The use of military troops to “destroy a terrorist camp” is approved by fully 92% of the public.

Smaller, but still quite substantial, majorities of the public also favor using U.S. troops to assist the Philippine government in fighting terrorism (78%), to topple unfriendly regimes that support terrorist groups threatening the United States (73%), and to help the government of Pakistan—if requested—against a radical Islamic revolution (61%). Two-thirds (66%) of

Americans favor the assassination of individual terrorist leaders, up 12 points since 1998. A majority (54%) would use U.S. troops to help the government of Saudi Arabia against an attempt to overthrow it.

While force against terrorism stands out as an American priority, the public is also willing to use troops in other circumstances, including humanitarian operations and peacekeeping (see Figure 3-4). Among the highest support for using U.S. troops is to assist a population struck by famine (81%). Three-quarters or more would also use troops to stop genocide (77%), to liberate hostages (77%), and to uphold international law (76%).

General support for taking part in UN peacekeeping forces is a solid 64%. About the same proportion of the public favors participation in peacekeeping in Bosnia (64% “strongly” or “somewhat” in favor) and

SUPPORT FOR MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM		
Percentage who...	2002	1998
Approve of the use of U.S. troops to destroy a terrorist camp	92	NA
Favor U.S. air strikes against terrorist training camps and other facilities to combat terrorism	87	74
Favor attacks by ground troops against terrorist camps and other facilities to combat terrorism	84	57
Favor the use of U.S. troops to assist the Philippine government to fight terrorism	78	NA
Favor toppling unfriendly regimes that support terrorist groups threatening the U.S.	73	NA
Favor assassination of individual terrorist leaders	66	54
Favor the use of U.S. troops if the government of Pakistan requested our help against a radical Islamic revolution	61	NA
Favor the use of U.S. troops if the government of Saudi Arabia requested our help against an attempt to overthrow it	54	NA

Figure 3-3

SUPPORT FOR USE OF TROOPS IN VARIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES	
<i>Percentage who favor or approve of the use of U.S. troops in the following situations.</i>	2002
HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS	
To assist a population struck by famine	81
To stop a government from committing genocide and killing large numbers of its own people	77
To liberate hostages	77
To uphold international law	76
PEACEKEEPING	
To be part of an international peacekeeping force in Afghanistan	76
To be part of an international peacekeeping force to enforce a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians	65
To take part in a UN international peacekeeping force in a troubled part of the world when asked rather than leaving this job to other countries	64
To participate in the peacekeeping operation in Bosnia	64
OTHER ACTIONS	
To fight drug lords in Colombia	66
To ensure the supply of oil	65
To help bring peace to a region where there is civil war	48

Figure 3-4

participation in a peacekeeping force to enforce a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians (65%). An even larger majority of 76% favor using U.S. troops as part of an international peacekeeping force in Afghanistan.

About two-thirds of Americans favor using troops in still other situations: to fight drug lords in Colombia (66%) and to ensure the supply of oil (65%). But only a bare plurality (48%) would use troops to “help bring peace to a region where there is civil war.”

To execute these various operations, Americans show solid support for the stationing of U.S. troops abroad. A majority of Americans (57%) say the United States should have about as many long-term bases overseas as it has now, with 25% saying the United States should have more bases, and 14% saying fewer.

When asked about 10 actual or potential locations for U.S. military bases, a majority favors having bases in all but one of those locations (see Figure 3-5). Support is highest for bases on the soil of longtime allies or in well-established locations: in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

While force against terrorism stands out as an American priority, the public is also willing to use troops in other circumstances, including humanitarian operations and peacekeeping.

(much in the news for housing detainees from the Afghan war; 70% say we should have bases); in Germany (69% should), South Korea (67%), the Philippines (66%), Saudi Arabia (65%), and Japan (63%). Somewhat smaller proportions of the public say we should have bases in Turkey (58%), Afghanistan (57% should, 40% should not), and Pakistan (52% should, 41% should not). The public is evenly split (41% should to 42% should not) regarding bases in Uzbekistan, a very recent partner in the war against terrorism.

While a strong majority supports the United States having troops based in Europe and Japan, rather large minorities favor a reduction in the actual numbers of troops. When reminded in two separate questions that the United States now has about 100,000 troops in Western Europe, and about 44,000 in Japan, including Okinawa, 53% and 45% of the public, respectively, judge those numbers to be “about right.” But one-third (33%) say we have “too many” troops in Europe (only

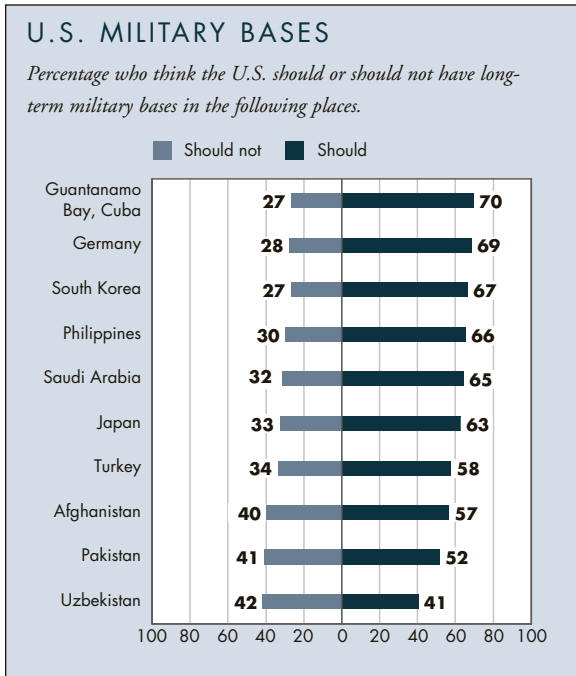


Figure 3-5

8% “too few”), and an even higher 43% say “too many” in Japan (only 5% “too few”).

SPENDING ON DEFENSE, HOMELAND SECURITY, AND MILITARY AID

A slight majority of Americans (53%) believe we are now spending enough (or too much) on defense, with 38% saying keep defense spending about the same and 15% preferring to cut back. However, a very large minority (44%) say they want to expand defense spending (see Figure 3-6). This is an increase of 14 percentage points since 1998 and the highest number in support of a defense spending increase in any of the Council’s surveys over the past 30 years (other surveys reveal a spike during 1979-81). It reverses the balance of opinion over most of the last 30 years, when more people wanted to cut back than to expand defense spending.

A recent PIPA survey indicates that most of the people who support expanded defense spending want to focus this increase on antiterrorism efforts and military personnel; that most people think it would be safe to shift money from other uses to those; and that there may be no net balance of sentiment for expanding

defense spending as a whole. As Figure 1-8 indicates, the proportion of the public wanting to increase defense spending also falls well short of the large majorities wanting to expand spending on several domestic programs: health (77%), education (75%), programs to combat violence and crime (70%), and Social Security (64%).

Much more robust support for increased spending related to international challenges can be seen in the two-thirds of Americans who favor expanded spending on gathering intelligence information about other countries (66%, up a dramatic 39 points from 1998) and on homeland security (65%), a new item in 2002.

Americans are not very supportive of spending on military aid to other nations (see Figure 3-7). A plurality (46%) want to cut back military aid to other nations, with 39% saying military aid should be kept about the same and only 10% saying it should be expanded. While support for military aid has historically been low in Council surveys, however, the percentage who want to cut back aid has been steadily declining, from a high of more than 70% in 1990 to the 46% we see in 2002. (The proportion wanting to expand it has increased a bit over time, from 5% to 10%).

Large majorities of the public have also historically been opposed to selling military equipment to other

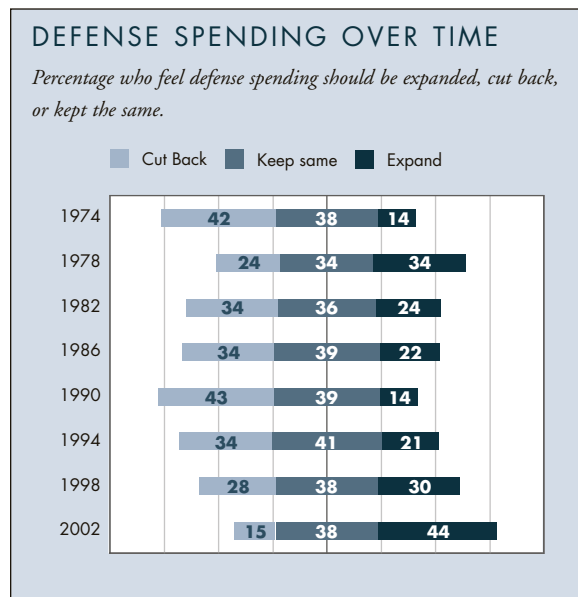


Figure 3-6

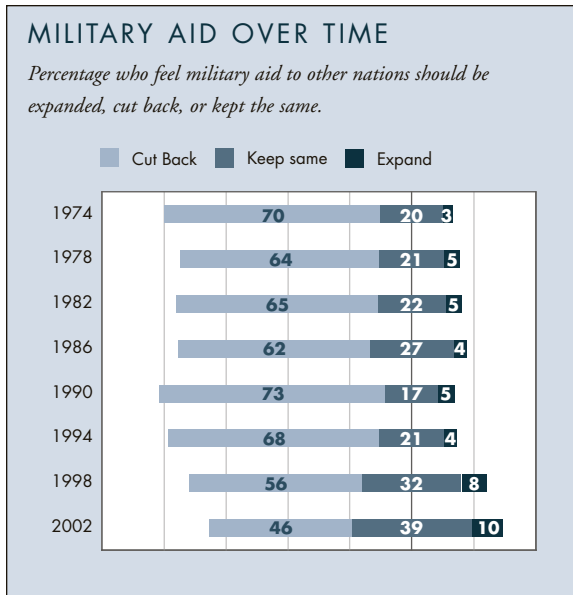


Figure 3-7

countries. That remains true, with no significant post-9/11 change in the level of opposition: 77% of Americans say they oppose our government selling military equipment to other nations, with only 18% in favor. Apparently, the threat of U.S. arms falling into the wrong hands is seen as outweighing the benefits of strengthening allies or making money through arms sales.

MULTILATERALISM AND THE NEED FOR PARTNERS

Despite the acceptance of American global power and the readiness to engage in various military actions around the world, most Americans do not want the United States to have sole responsibility for world problems. A solid 62% deny that the United States has the responsibility to play the role of “world policeman,” fighting violations of international law and aggression wherever they occur. In response to a different question, 65% say that the United States is currently playing the role of world policeman more than it should (see Figure 3-8). On a question about the division of labor between Europe and the United States in military conflicts, most Americans (56%) disagree with the suggestion that the United States should “take the lead responsibility and

supply most of the forces,” while Europe should “emphasize things like assisting poor countries and helping reconstruct their economies after a war.”

This preference for burden sharing is also clear in many other responses. A substantial majority of 61% say that in responding to international crises, the United

Most Americans decisively reject the notion of the United States as a unilateralist global hegemon.

States should not take action alone if it does not have the support of its allies (see Figure 3-9). Offered a choice among three statements about U.S. responsibility for world problems (see Figure 3-9), 71% choose the statement, “The U.S. should do its share in efforts to solve international problems together with other countries,” while only 17% choose, “As the sole remaining superpower, the U.S. should continue to be the preeminent world leader in solving international problems.” Nine percent choose, “The U.S. should withdraw from most efforts to solve international problems.” Indeed, in response to a different question, 70% agree (only 27% disagree) that the United States and the European

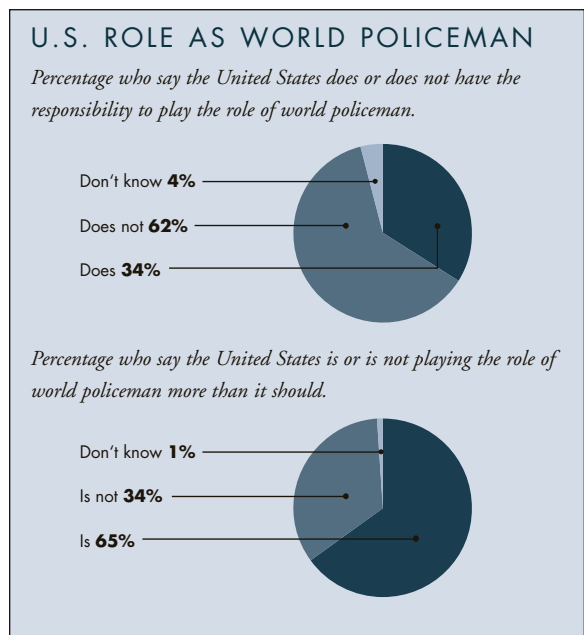
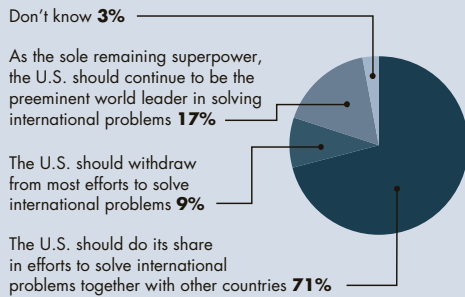


Figure 3-8

WORKING TOGETHER WITH OTHER COUNTRIES

Percentage who choose each statement as closest to their view.



Percentage who say in responding to international crises, the United States should or should not take action alone if it does not have the support of its allies.

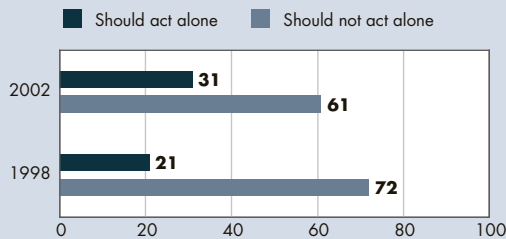


Figure 3-9

Union should be more willing to make decisions jointly, even if this means that the United States as well as Europe will sometimes have to go along with a policy that is not its first choice.

This general stance of favoring strong U.S. leadership while insisting upon multilateralism is consistent with opinions about concrete issues involving the use of force.

INVADING IRAQ

When asked in general terms, a strong majority of 75% favor using U.S. troops to overthrow Saddam Hussein's government, with only 21% opposed. But in responses on another question that differentiates among alternative approaches, it becomes clear that multilateralism is essential to this support. Only 20% say the United States should invade Iraq "even if we have to go it alone." Fully 65% say the United States should only invade Iraq "with UN approval and the support of its allies."

invade Iraq "with UN approval and the support of its allies," while 13% say that the United States should not invade Iraq in any case (see Figure 3-10).

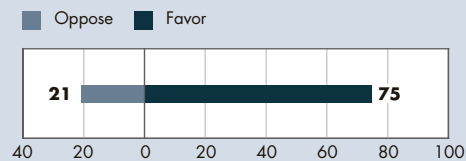
RESPONDING TO INVASION SCENARIOS

Multilateralism also plays a key role in attitudes about the use of U.S. troops in response to hypothetical invasions of other countries, where heavy combat and numerous casualties might be expected to occur (see Figure 3-11).

If Iraq were to invade Saudi Arabia, a high 77% of Americans favor the United States "contributing military forces, together with other countries, to a UN-sponsored effort to reverse the aggression." But when no such collective action is suggested, only 48% favor using U.S. troops. Similarly, 57% favor contributing troops to a UN-sponsored effort if North Korea were to attack South Korea, but only 36% favor using U.S. troops (with 56% opposed) if no multilateral context is specified. Indeed, in not one of the four invasion scenarios asked about did a majority of Americans favor using U.S. troops when no multilateral context was specified.

ATTITUDES ON USING FORCE IN IRAQ

Percentage who favor or oppose the use of U.S. troops in order to overthrow Saddam Hussein's government in Iraq.



Percentage who choose each of the following as closest to their view.

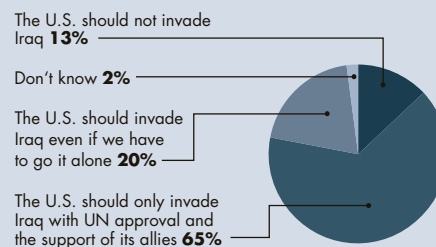
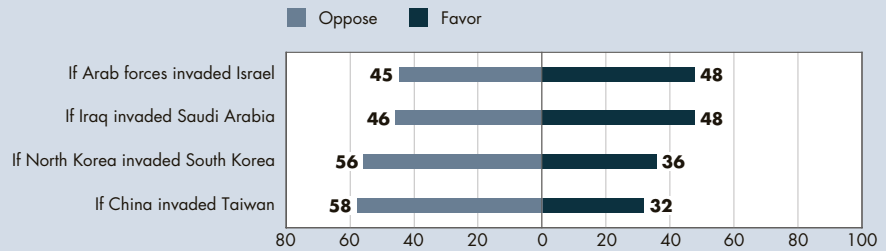


Figure 3-10

TROOP USE IN INVASION SCENARIOS

Percentage who favor or oppose the use of U.S. troops in the following situations.

Without multilateral involvement specified:



With multilateral involvement specified:



Figure 3-11

If Arab forces invaded Israel, just 48% of Americans say they favor using U.S. troops, with 45% opposed. A hypothetical invasion of Taiwan by China elicits only 32% support for using U.S. troops, with 58% opposed.

APPROVAL OF NATO

Americans' support for multilateral approaches to security includes approval of the NATO military alliance. When asked to react to two views of NATO, 56% pick as closer to their own view the assessment that "NATO is still essential to our country's security;" only 30% say "it is no longer essential." Given four choices about the future level of U.S. commitment to NATO, 65% say keep the commitment what it is now and 11% say increase it, while only 11% say decrease and 6% say withdraw entirely. Increase plus keep-the-same responses are up by 8 percentage points since 1998.

Indeed, majorities of Americans favor the expansion of NATO to include a number of Eastern European countries (see Figure 3-12). Fifty-six percent favor expansion of NATO to include Romania; 53% favor including Slovakia; 52% favor including Slovenia; 52% favor including the Baltic states (Lithuania,

Estonia, and Latvia). Only about one-third of the public opposes including each of these countries in an expanded NATO.

Most striking, however, is that—little more than 10 years after the end of the Cold War, when NATO was dedicated to defense against the Soviet Union—fully 68% favor expanding NATO to include Russia, which is not currently a candidate country. Only 24% oppose the idea.

EXPANSION OF NATO

Percentage who favor or oppose expansion of NATO to include the following countries.

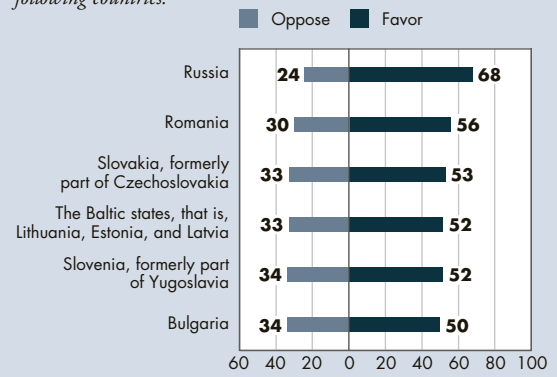


Figure 3-12

LIMITS ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND MISSILE DEFENSE

On two other important and controversial military issues, the public favors restraint on U.S. capabilities or actions. The public disavows the first use of nuclear weapons (see Figure 3-13). Only 21% take the position that “in certain circumstances, the United States should use nuclear weapons even if it has not suffered a nuclear attack.” Fifty-five percent favor their use only in

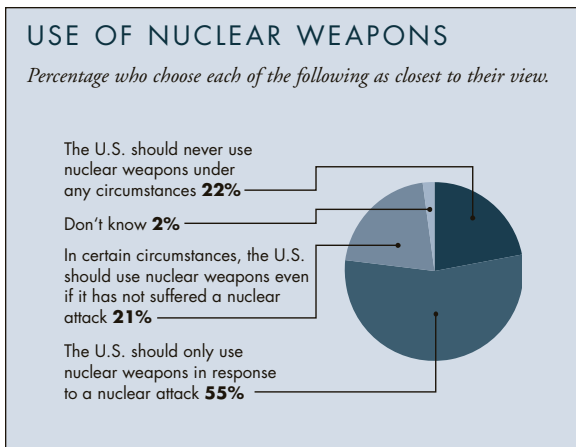


Figure 3-13

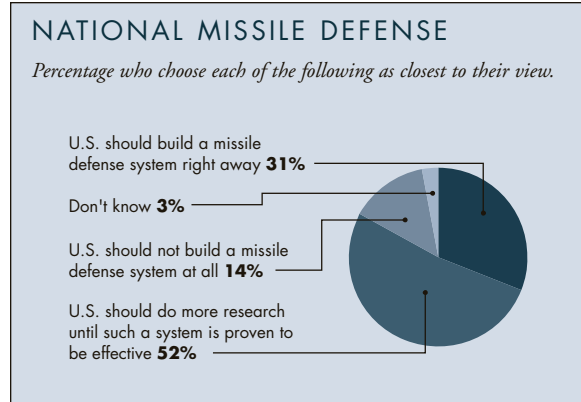


Figure 3-14

response to a nuclear attack. Twenty-two percent say the United States should never use nuclear weapons under any circumstances.

Nor is there great enthusiasm for hurrying to build a national missile defense (see Figure 3-14). Only 31% of Americans say the United States should build a missile defense system “right away;” 52% say we should do more research until such a system is proven to be effective, while 14% say the United States should not build a missile defense system at all.



CHAPTER FOUR

International Cooperation

A fear sometimes expressed around the world is that the United States will use its extraordinary military and economic preeminence to impose American hegemony over the globe. As discussed in previous chapters, Americans support an active role for the United States and are willing to use military force for a variety of purposes, especially in the fight against terrorism. The U.S. public, however, resists the idea of the United States playing a hegemonic role in the world. Americans do not auto-

Most Americans favor working through international institutions—especially the United Nations—and participating in international treaties and agreements.

matically want their country to turn to the use of military might to enforce its will abroad. Instead, most Americans tend to look first to diplomatic approaches and to seek out multilateral solutions to international problems. While there is little evidence of devotion to the abstract idea of international law, in a broad range

of specific cases most Americans favor working through international institutions—especially the United Nations—and participating in international treaties and agreements. Even with regard to the war on terrorism, support for nonmilitary instruments based on multilateralism and diplomacy is as strong as for military approaches.

SUPPORT FOR A MULTILATERAL U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

As discussed in Chapter 2, 71% of Americans say the United States should do its share in efforts to solve international problems together with other countries, rather than saying that as the sole remaining superpower, the United States should continue to be the preeminent world leader in solving international problems (17%) or that the United States should withdraw from most efforts to solve international problems (9%). This is not a new sentiment; similar results have been found in Times-Mirror and Pew surveys in 1993, 1995, and 1997, with more than 7 in 10 saying they favor a shared leadership role for the United States.

Americans are not put off by the possibility that multilateralism may require the United States to make

accommodations to a collective decision-making process. Seventy percent agree that when dealing with common problems, the U.S. and the European Union should be more willing to make decisions jointly, even if this means that the U.S. as well as Europe will sometimes have to go along with a policy that is not its first choice. Just 27% disagree.

HIGH SUPPORT FOR MULTILATERALISM SINCE SEPTEMBER 11

It appears that this attitude has been affirmed by the experience of September 11. Asked whether the more important lesson of September 11 is that the United States needs to work more closely with other countries to fight terrorism or that the United States needs to act on its own more to fight terrorism, 61% say the United States needs to work more closely with other countries. Thirty-four percent say it needs to act on its own more (see Figure 4-1).

While September 11 has enhanced the public's support for acting multilaterally, it may have also expanded the minority that is ready to act unilaterally if necessary. On the question of whether in responding to international crises the United States should or should not take action alone if it does not have the support of its allies (see Figure 3-9), the proportion saying the United States should take action alone, rose from 21% in 1998 to 31% in 2002. Even though a clear majority (61%) say the United States should not take action alone, this number is down from 72% in 1998.

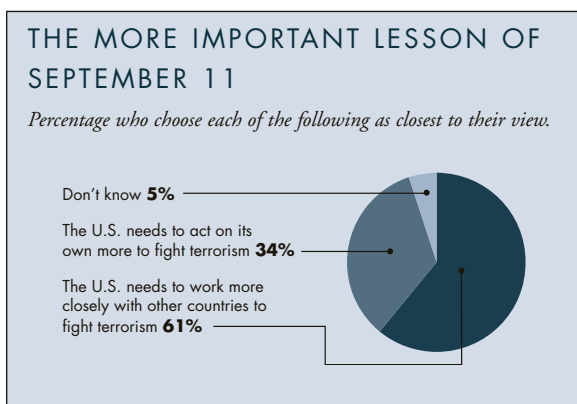


Figure 4-1

SUPPORT FOR STRONGER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, ESPECIALLY THE UNITED NATIONS

Consistent with their support for multilateral approaches to solving international problems, Americans show robust support for stronger international institutions, especially the United Nations.

Most Americans express warm feelings toward the UN. On a thermometer scale, the average response is a

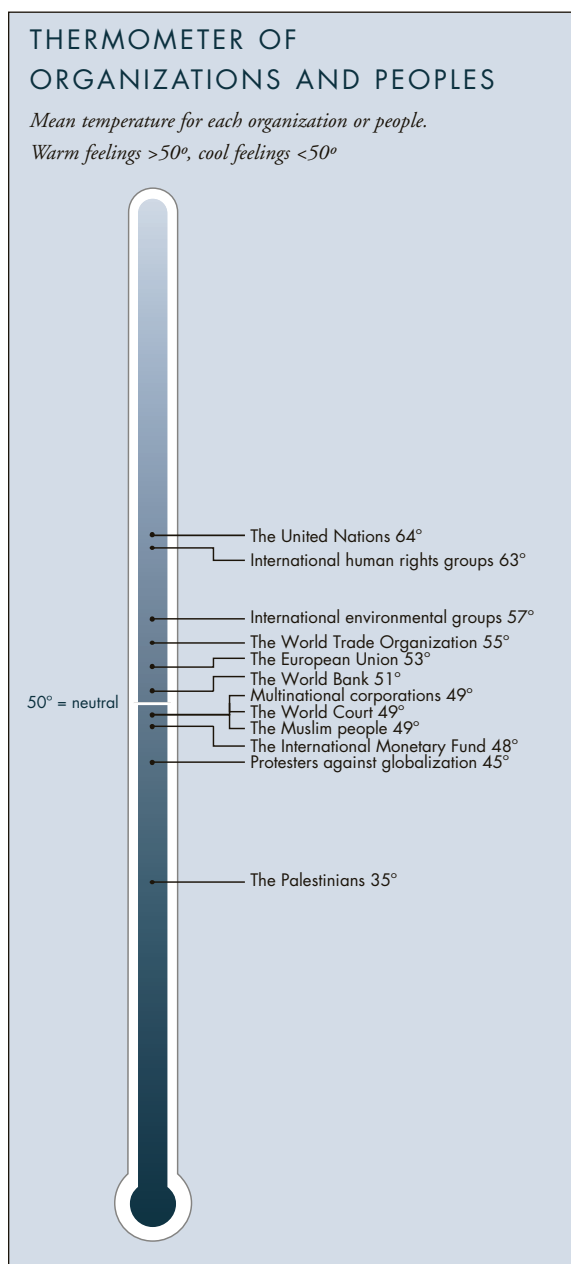


Figure 4-2

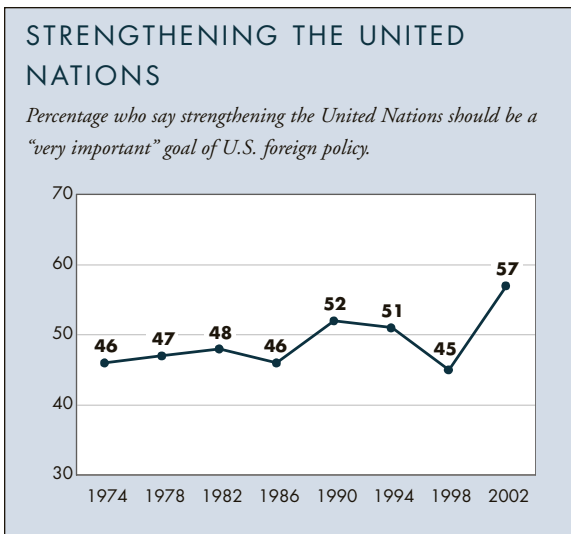


Figure 4-3

very warm 64 degrees, giving the UN the top rating among the 12 international organizations and peoples that were asked about (see Figure 4-2), and putting the UN ahead of all 28 individual countries that were rated except for Canada, Great Britain, and Italy (see Figure 6-8). UN Secretary General Kofi Annan receives a warmish average thermometer rating of 53 degrees, about comparable to those of Russian President Vladimir Putin and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder (see also Figure 6-8).

A large majority of Americans support a stronger UN. Fifty-seven percent say it should be a very important foreign policy goal to strengthen the UN—up 12 points since 1998 (see Figure 4-3). On another ques-

Seventy-seven percent of Americans say the United Nations needs to be strengthened even after being introduced to an argument against it.

tion, 77% say the United Nations needs to be strengthened, even after being introduced to an argument against it: “Some say that because of the increasing interaction between countries, we need to strengthen international institutions to deal with shared problems. Others say that this would only create bigger, unwieldy

bureaucracies.” The 77% for strengthening the UN is a 10 point increase from 1999, when PIPA asked the same question. In the 2002 Chicago Council/German Marshall Fund survey it is near the top of the eight international institutions we asked about strengthening, second only to the World Health Organization, and well above the World Bank and IMF (see Figure 4-4).

Most Americans support concrete measures to increase UN capabilities and resources. Fifty-eight percent favor the U.S. paying its UN dues in full, while 32% are opposed. When presented with a list of possible ways to strengthen the UN, two options for giving the UN greater capacity to use military force receive very high support (see Figure 4-5). Seventy-seven percent favor having UN members each commit 1,000 troops to a rapid deployment force that the UN Security Council can call up on short notice when a crisis occurs. The same percentage favor joint training exercises of UN member countries so that their militaries will be better prepared to work together in combat situations. Despite Americans’ alleged aversion to taxes, a slight majority of 51% even favor giving the UN the power to fund its activities by imposing a small tax on such things as the international sale of arms and oil.



Figure 4-4

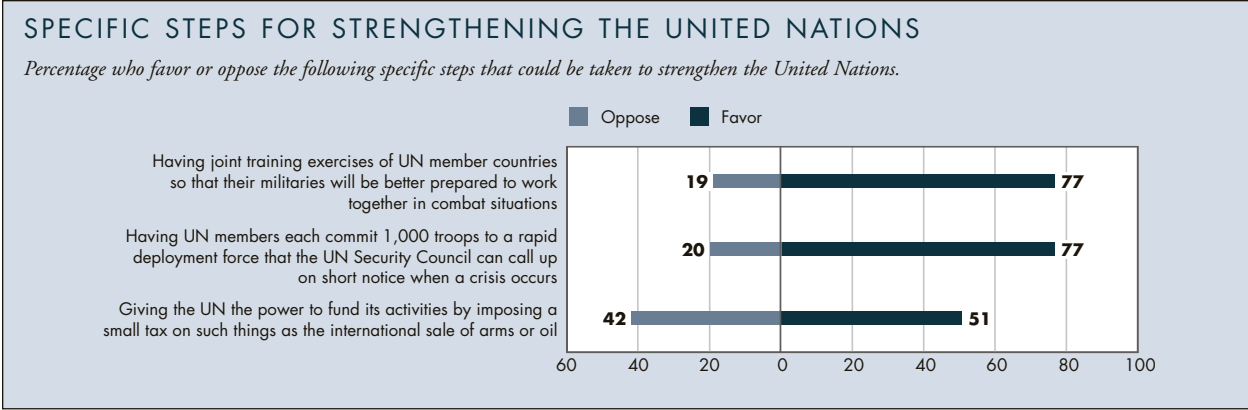


Figure 4-5

Strengthening other UN-related organizations also receives very high support. Eighty percent of the public favor strengthening the World Health Organization, and 56% favor strengthening the World Court (the latter figure is unchanged from a PIPA survey in 1999). This is true even though the mean thermometer rating of the World Court is a neutral 49 degrees—perhaps because respondents do not have enough information about the actual performance of the court to form a distinct feeling one way or the other.

Strengthening international economic institutions, e.g., the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, receives more mixed reviews (see Chapter 5), perhaps because of high-profile criticisms regarding the effectiveness of their efforts rather than general attitudes about the value of having such institutions.

Support for the UN and related institutions does not necessarily translate into strong support for the abstract principle of strengthening international law and institutions. Only 43% say strengthening international law and institutions should be a “very important” foreign policy goal. (Another 43% rate it as “somewhat” important; just 10% say it is not important.) Still, in many cases Americans give a high level of support to international institutions, treaties, and agreements.

INTERNATIONAL TREATIES AND AGREEMENTS

Substantial majorities of Americans support several new international treaties and agreements, including the

International Criminal Court, the Kyoto Protocol on global warming, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and the treaty banning land mines, that have been controversial among U.S. policymakers and opinion leaders (see Figure 4-6).

International Criminal Court

Especially prominent is the controversy over the newly forming International Criminal Court, which the Bush administration has strongly opposed. When simply asked if the United States should participate in the

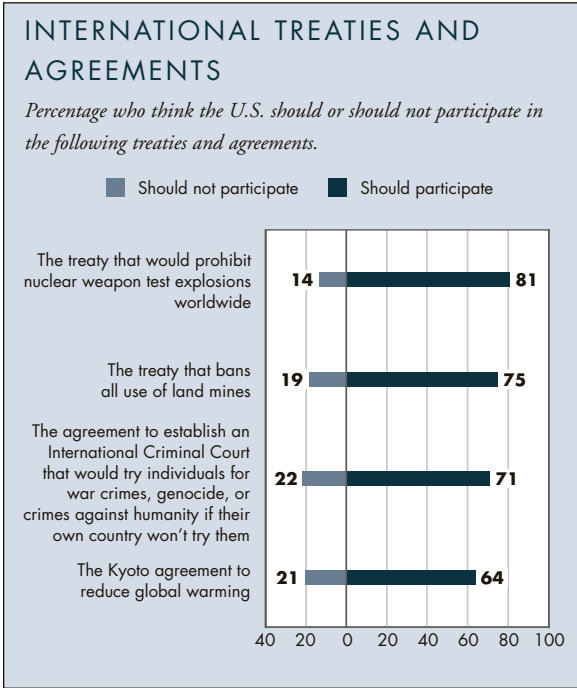


Figure 4-6

agreement to establish an International Criminal Court that would try individuals for war crimes, genocide, or crimes against humanity if their own country won't try them, 71% say the United States should participate, while only 22% are opposed. In order to determine whether this response would be significantly different if

When asked if the United States should participate in the agreement to establish an International Criminal Court, 71% of Americans say the United States should participate.

respondents heard arguments for and against it, including the key objection voiced by U.S. officials, a separate sample was asked the following:

“A permanent International Criminal Court has been established by the UN to try individuals suspected of war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity. Some say the United States should not support the court because trumped up charges may be brought against Americans, for example, U.S. soldiers who use force in the course of a peacekeeping operation. Others say that the U.S. should support the court because the world needs a better way to prosecute war criminals, many of whom go unpunished today. Do you think the U.S. should or should not support the permanent International Criminal Court?”

In response to this question, support for the ICC was only slightly lower, at 65%, with 28% opposed.

Kyoto Agreement on Global Warming

Another recent international agreement that has been prominent in the news is the Kyoto Protocol to address the problem of global warming. The agreement has been ratified or assented to by 94 countries but not the United States. When respondents were simply asked

whether or not the United States should participate in the Kyoto agreement to reduce global warming, 64% said that the U.S. should participate. A separate sample was presented arguments for and against the treaty in the following way:

“An international treaty calls on the U.S. and other industrialized nations to cut back on their emissions from power plants and cars in order to reduce global warming, also known as the greenhouse effect. Some people say this would hurt the U.S. economy and is based on uncertain science. Others say this is needed to protect the environment and could create new business opportunities. What's your view—do you think the United States should or should not join this treaty requiring less emissions from U.S. power plants and cars?”

In response to this question, support actually goes up, with 70% saying that the United States should join the treaty and 25% saying it should not.

This is consistent with the view that global warming is a critical threat to vital U.S. interests (held by 46%) or an important but not critical threat (33%). Sixty-six percent of Americans also say that improving the global environment should be a very important foreign policy goal—up 13 points from 1998. International environmental groups are given a warm average rating of 57 degrees on the feeling thermometer.

The public's concern about the global environment and its support for the Kyoto agreement may help explain why they give the Bush administration—which has opposed the treaty—a remarkably low rating for its handling of the problem of global warming. Only 25% say the administration's handling of global warming is excellent (6%) or good (19%), while 55% say it is fair (33%) or poor (32%). This is the lowest level of approval for any of the 14 policy areas evaluated.

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

There is an even higher level of public support for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty—a treaty that the United States has signed but that has not been ratified

by the Senate. Asked about the treaty that would “prohibit nuclear weapon test explosions worldwide,” an overwhelming 81% say that the United States should participate in the treaty. This is consistent with the extremely high priority Americans place on stopping the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Fully 90% say that preventing the spread of nuclear weapons should be a very important goal of U.S. foreign policy goal, putting nonproliferation in second place (behind only combating international terrorism) in the ranking of 20 foreign policy goals.

Land Mines Treaty

A very large majority of Americans also support the United States participating in the treaty that “bans all use of land mines,” another agreement that has been rejected by U.S. policymakers. Seventy-five percent say they favor participating, with only 19% opposed.

THE USE OF DIPLOMATIC TOOLS

Accompanying the support for international institutions, treaties, and agreements is strong support for the use of diplomatic tools in foreign policy. Despite the extraordinary military preeminence of the United States, most Americans do not want the United States to rely exclusively on military means to achieve its international objectives. Most look to nonmilitary foreign policy tools, or forms of “soft power.” These include diplomatic measures, economic sanctions, foreign aid, and the promotion of democracy abroad. Support for these diplomatic tools is often as high as or higher than support for military methods, even in the context of the war on terrorism.

Combating Terrorism

Some options for addressing the problem of terrorism that receive the highest levels of public support do not involve military force but are entirely diplomatic (see Figure 4-7). Eighty-nine percent of Americans favor diplomatic efforts to apprehend suspects and dismantle

DIPLOMATIC TOOLS FOR FIGHTING TERRORISM	
<i>Percentage who favor the following measures to combat international terrorism.</i>	
	2002
Diplomatic efforts to apprehend suspects and dismantle terrorist training camps	89
Setting up an international system to cut off funding for terrorism	89
Working through the UN to strengthen international laws against terrorism and to make sure UN members enforce them	88
Trial of suspected terrorists in an International Criminal Court	83
Diplomatic efforts to improve U.S. relations with potential adversary countries	80
Helping poor countries develop their economies	78
Making a major effort to be even-handed in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict	66
Sharing intelligence information with other countries	58

Figure 4-7

terrorist training camps, compared to 84% who support the use of U.S. ground troops for the same purpose and the 87% who favor the use of air strikes. Eighty percent favor diplomatic efforts to improve U.S. relations with potential adversary countries. Making a major effort to be even-handed in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a means of combating terrorism is favored by 66%.

Americans also show strong support for working through international institutions to fight terrorism. The trial of suspected terrorists in an International Criminal Court is supported by an overwhelming 83%. Eighty-eight percent favor working through the UN to strengthen international laws against terrorism and to make sure UN members enforce them. Setting up an international system to cut off funding for terrorism is favored by 89%.

Finally, and perhaps surprisingly, most Americans support development assistance for fighting terrorism. A

strong 78% say that they favor helping poor countries develop their economies as a way of combating terrorism, with only 19% opposed. Apparently, most Americans see poverty as a breeding ground for terrorism and development assistance as a way to ameliorate it (see Chapter 5 for more on the public's attitudes about world poverty).

Dealing With “Countries of Concern”

In dealing with “countries of concern” to the United States, including those dubbed the “axis of evil” by President Bush (Iran, Iraq, and North Korea), a majority of the public tends to support a mix of nonmilitary tools, including diplomatic relations, economic sanctions, and trade relations.

Despite the cold feelings Americans have toward North Korea, Iran, and Iraq (see Chapter 6), pluralities to majorities of the public still favor having diplomatic relations with these countries. Sixty-five percent favor diplomatic relations with North Korea (32% oppose) and 58% favor relations with Iran (38% oppose). A bare plurality of 49% even favors diplomatic relations with Iraq (47% oppose). As surveys taken during the Cold War confirm, Americans tend to want to talk and negotiate even with their bitterest enemies.

At the same time, however, a majority of Americans favor the use of economic sanctions against all three of these countries (see Figure 4-8). Iraq receives the largest percentage favoring sanctions, with 66% in

favor and 27% opposed. Iran comes next, with 63% in favor and 29% opposed. Fifty-eight percent of Americans favor sanctions against North Korea, with 31% opposed.

A majority or plurality also opposes trading with these countries. Seventy-two percent oppose trade with Iraq, 60% oppose trade with Iran, and 50% oppose trade with North Korea.

Attitudes about Cuba—whose leader, Fidel Castro, receives a cold, 22-degree average thermometer reading—are significantly different from attitudes about the “axis.” There may be something of a thaw among the public. A solid 65% favor diplomatic relations with Cuba, and a small majority of 52% favor trade, with just 46% opposed. Only a bare majority of 51% favor economic sanctions, down 7 points from 1998.

While China is not officially considered a country of concern, a slight majority of 51% favor economic sanctions against it, while just 38% oppose them. However, a strong 71% favor U.S. trade with China, and 80% favor having diplomatic relations. These somewhat conflicting responses highlight the complicated U.S. relationship with China, in which disagreements over issues like human rights as well as wariness of its growing power coexist with a desire to engage China in the international community.

Using Foreign Aid Strategically

Foreign aid as a diplomatic tool of foreign policy generates little enthusiasm from the public. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, Americans feel positive about aid for clearly humanitarian purposes, but most do not place a high priority on giving foreign aid to fulfill strategic purposes, such as building up allies militarily. Few want to increase economic aid to most of the traditional recipient countries, and substantial minorities want to decrease it, even to countries where terrorism is a threat (see Figure 4-9).

Even for Israel, for example, 41% want to cut aid (26%) or stop it altogether (15%), while 37% want to keep it the same, and only 18% want to increase it. Similarly, for Egypt, the second largest recipient of U.S.

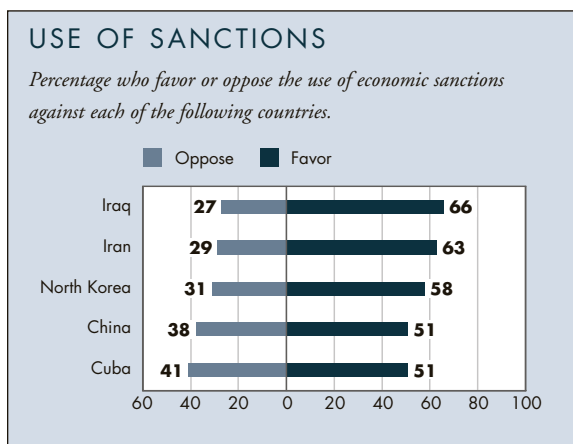


Figure 4-8

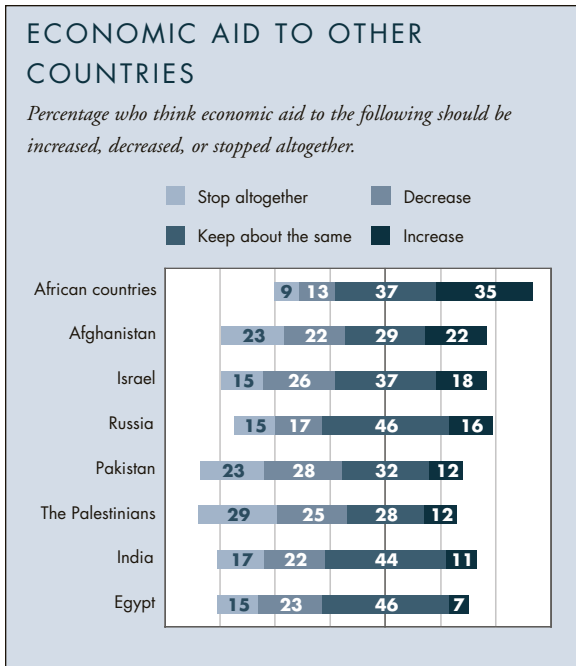


Figure 4-9

aid, 38% want to cut (23%) or stop (15%) aid, while 46% want to maintain it at the same level, and 7% want to increase it.

Russia fares a bit better. Only 32% say they want to cut (17%) or stop (15%) aid, down 6 points from 1998. Forty-six percent want to keep it the same, and 16% want to increase it.

The most popular place for giving aid is African countries, which offer the clearest humanitarian rationale. Thirty-five percent of Americans favor increasing aid to African countries, up 11 percentage points since 1998. Thirty-seven percent prefer keeping aid to Africa at the present level, and only 22% want to cut it (13%) or stop it (9%). While India is also arguably a humanitarian case, public support for aid to India is lower, perhaps because of India's nuclear weapons program or perceptions of its economic progress. Only 11% favor increasing economic aid to India, 39% favor cutting (22%) or stopping it (17%), and 44% favor keeping it the same.

Despite the large majority of Americans that favor helping poor countries develop their economies as a way of combating terrorism (78%), specific countries and populations closely associated with terrorism receive low levels of support for U.S. economic aid. For Pakistan,

51% of Americans want to cut (28%) or stop (23%) aid, while 32% want to keep it the same and just 12% want to increase it. Even Afghanistan has 45% wanting to cut (22%) or stop (23%) aid, while 29% want to keep it the same and 22% want to increase it. The least popular recipients of all are the Palestinians, with 54% of Americans wanting to cut (25%) or stop (29%) aid, 28% wanting to keep it the same, and just 12% wanting to increase it.

Promoting Democracy Abroad

Another nonmilitary strategy for pursuing U.S. interests (and humanitarian aims as well) is to promote democracy and human rights, with the hope of producing more friendly and peaceful as well as happier populations abroad. As compared with other goals for U.S. foreign policy, such aims score low on the "very important" rankings. But only very small percentages of Americans say that such goals are not important at all.

The goal of promoting and defending human rights is rated as very important by 47% of Americans (putting it just fifteenth among 20 goals ranked), but an additional 43% rate it as somewhat important; only 10% say not important. While few Americans give promoting and defending human rights a high priority compared to other goals of U.S. foreign policy, they clearly do not have a negative view of such efforts, giving international human rights groups a quite warm mean thermometer rating of 63 degrees.

The foreign policy goal of helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations is rated as very important by only 34%, placing it nineteenth of 20 goals. But 49% say that spreading democracy should be somewhat important and only 15% rate it as not important. When asked about promoting democracy in the context of various types of foreign aid for humanitarian causes and not in the context of competing foreign policy goals, 64% say they favor assistance to promote democracy abroad.



C H A P T E R F I V E

The Global Economy

One of the most dramatic facts that Americans encounter as they look out at the world is the increased globalization of the world economy. Flows of trade, investment, and immigration pour across international boundaries, and economic conditions in other parts of the world impact Americans' daily lives in multiple ways, some positive and some negative.

Today, Americans are generally confident about their economic position in the world relative to other countries since 1998. They show an overall positive attitude toward globalization, but there is evidence of growing concern about its effects, especially its impact on the job security of American workers. There is increased concern about U.S. domestic economic health as well as high concern about immigration. The public's support for free trade is conditioned on the needs of workers being addressed. At the same, most Americans show a readiness to address certain problems that could entail large economic costs, such as world poverty and hunger.

DECLINING CONCERN ABOUT ECONOMIC COMPETITION

As Chapter 2 indicated, the public shows a low and declining level of concern about economic competition

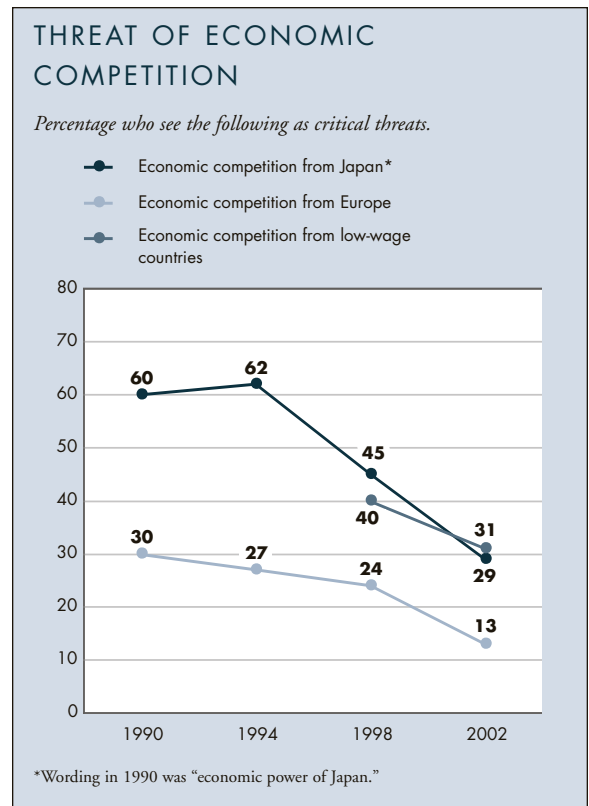


Figure 5-1

from other countries (see Figure 5-1). Only 29% see economic competition from Japan as a critical threat—down 16 points from 1998 and down a remarkable 33



Figure 5-2

points from 1994. Lower still is concern about economic competition from Europe, which only 13% see as a critical threat, as compared to 24% in 1998. Even competition from low wage countries is seen as a critical threat by only 31%, down 9 points from 1998.

Similarly, there is low and declining concern that other countries are practicing unfair trade (see Figure 5-2). Just 20% think that the countries of the EU are practicing unfair trade (down from 24% in 1998), while 41% feel this way about Japan (down from 55%), 36% about Mexico, and 10% about Canada. Only China is now viewed by a majority as practicing unfair trade, with 53% feeling this way.

Accompanying reduced worries about economic competition and trade is declining concern about other aspects of the global economy. While 54% of Americans still regard safeguarding against global financial instability as a “very important” goal of U.S. foreign policy, when people are asked about the importance of financial crises in other countries as a threat to the vital interest of the United States, only 25% regard such crises as a critical threat. Alarm associated with the Asian financial crisis and other events of the 1990s has apparently faded from the public mind.

Reducing the U.S. trade deficit is seen as a very important goal by 51%, essentially unchanged from 1998, but down from highs around 60% in the 1986, 1990, and 1994 surveys. In 1998 the world economy and the balance of payments were the second and third

most cited foreign policy problems facing the United States, mentioned by 11% and 10% of the public, respectively. In 2002 they are way down on the list, mentioned by only 3% and 2%, respectively.

REACTIONS TO GLOBALIZATION

It appears, however, that Americans hold a complex—and perhaps ambivalent—mix of attitudes about the impact of globalization. On the one hand, when asked if globalization is mostly good or mostly bad for the United States (see Figure 5-3), only 27% say it is mostly bad; 56% say it is mostly good (8% volunteer that it is equally good and bad). Antiglobalization protesters are viewed at a cool 45 degrees on the thermometer scale.

On the other hand, there are signs of an increased wariness about globalization. The percentage saying that globalization is “mostly bad” for the United States has risen 7 points since 1998. When asked whether it should be a goal of the United States to actively promote further globalization, simply allow it to continue, try to slow it down, or try to stop or reverse it, only 14% say that the United States should actively promote it, down from 28% when PIPA asked this question in 1999. Thirty-five percent say allow it to continue, and 39% percent overall take the negative positions, with 24% saying slow it down, and 15% saying reverse it, up from 9% in 1999.

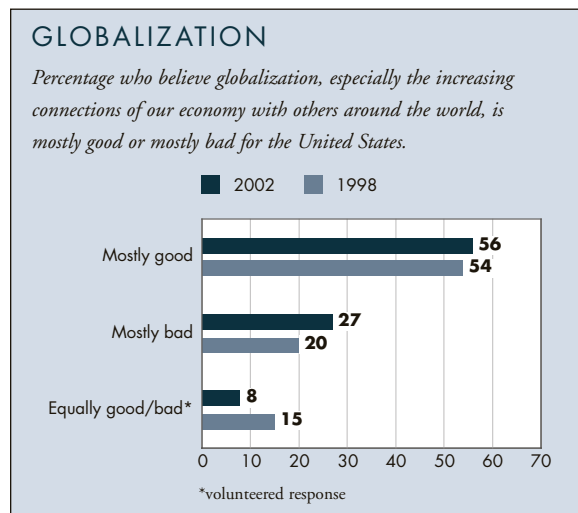


Figure 5-3

When asked about the impact of globalization on a variety of economic and social conditions, the response is mixed (see Figure 5-4), with an overall negative trend over time. Americans seem to view globalization as most beneficial for other countries. Sixty-four percent think it is good for providing jobs and strengthening the economy in poor countries, though this is down from the 75% that Harris Interactive found in response to the same question in 2000. Sixty-one percent feel that globalization is good for democracy and human rights abroad. Perhaps surprisingly, 53% even see globalization as good for maintaining cultural diversity in the world. This may stem from a belief that it promotes the exchange of cultural influences, rather than an impression that it helps preserve indigenous cultures.

Modest majorities of 55% think globalization is good for American companies and good for “consumers like you,” but the latter figure is down from 68% in the 2000 Harris Interactive survey. Bare majorities (52%) see globalization as good for the U.S. economy—down from 64% in 2000—and for “your own standard of living” (51%).

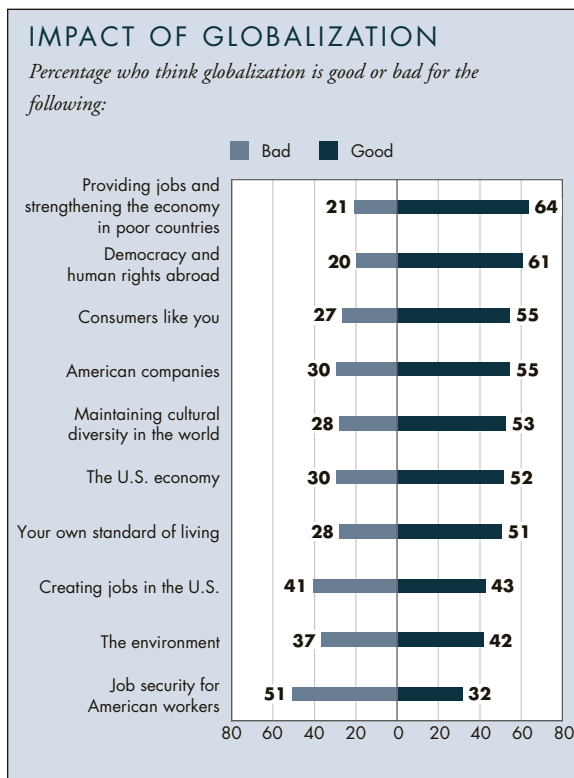


Figure 5-4

Globalization is seen as having the most negative impact on American jobs. Fifty-one percent think globalization is mostly bad for the job security of American workers, with only 32% saying it is good. Interestingly, respondents make some distinction between globalizations’ impact on job security and on the creation of jobs. A bare plurality (43%) say globalization is good for creating jobs in the United States, down from 50% in 2000, with 41% saying it is bad.

Just 42% say that globalization is good for the environment—down slightly from 45% in 2000. This suggests that Americans may be concerned that globalization is detrimental to the environment or may lead corporations to build plants in countries with lower environmental standards.

Many Americans are even responsive to the idea that globalization poses a threat to the vital interest of the United States. When presented with a list of possible threats, 29% say that globalization poses a critical threat, while 44% say it is an important but not critical threat. Only 15% say it is not important.

The decline in enthusiasm for globalization may be explained by changes in the U.S. economy. At the time of the 1998-2000 polls by the Chicago Council, PIPA and Harris Interactive, the economy was enjoying a remarkable boom, which some attributed to globalization and the growth of trade. As the U.S. economy weakened in 2001-02, the public’s optimism about the impact of globalization apparently weakened with it.

ECONOMIC PRIORITIES IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

Consistent with their declining enthusiasm about globalization and its impact on jobs, most Americans want policymakers to place a high priority on domestic economic concerns. Though there is less concern about economic competition, concern about the domestic economy has grown substantially since 1998, when 11% mentioned it as one of the two or three biggest problems facing the country, placing it sixth on this list of problems. Today, 22% mention the economy as a problem, putting it second only behind terrorism as a

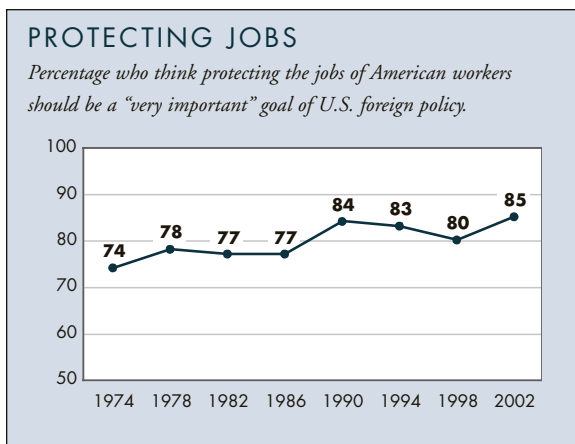


Figure 5-5

big concern. An additional 9% mention unemployment as a concern. As indicated in Chapter 2, an overwhelming 85% say that protecting the jobs of American workers should be a very important goal of U.S. foreign policy, making it the third highest-ranking goal and the highest level seen on this item in all Chicago Council surveys (see Figure 5-5). Considerably lower, though still a plurality, is the 49% who regard protecting the interests of American business abroad as very important.

The goal of securing adequate supplies of energy, essential to economic health, is also highly rated, with 75% saying it is very important, up 11 points since 1998. This increase may reflect concern about terrorism and instability in the Middle East as well as President Bush's widely publicized emphasis on finding alternate energy supplies, especially in Alaska. Sixty-five percent of Americans say they approve of using U.S. troops to ensure the supply of oil, with only 30% opposed.

In geopolitical terms, economic vitality is clearly seen as important by the American public. By more than a two-to-one margin (66% to 27%), they believe that economic strength is more important than military strength in "determining a country's overall power and influence in the world"—a ratio that has increased slightly after September 11.

IMMIGRATION

Related to the public's concern about jobs for American workers is its uneasiness about immigration. Majorities

of Americans favor reducing both legal and illegal immigration. Of special concern is controlling and reducing *illegal* immigration, which 70% say should be a very important goal of U.S. foreign policy. This percentage is up a substantial 15 points from 1998 when the U.S. economy was stronger, and is about comparable to the figure in 1994 when the economy was relatively shaky. Sixty percent say that large numbers of immigrants and refugees coming into the United States is a critical threat. This figure is up a bit from 1998, but substantially lower (by 12 points) than it was in 1994.

When asked directly if *legal* immigration should be kept at its present level, increased, or decreased, 55% favor decreasing immigration, 27% favor keeping it at the same level, and only 15% favor increasing it.

As one might expect, desires to decrease legal immigration are correlated with the concern about jobs as well as cultural anxieties. Both the goal of protecting the jobs of American workers and thermometer ratings for Mexico correlate at significant, though modest ($r = .15$) levels with immigration attitudes.

However, concern about terrorists entering the country also appears to be contributing to the high level of support for reducing immigration. Desires to decrease legal immigration are fairly strongly correlated ($r = .30$) with negative thermometer feelings about the

Concern about terrorists entering the country appears to be contributing to the high level of support for reducing immigration.

Muslim people, and 77% of Americans say they favor restricting immigration into the United States as a way to combat terrorism. About the same number (76%) say that based on the events of September 11, 2001, U.S. immigration laws should be tightened to restrict the number of immigrants from Arab or Muslim countries into the United States (see Figure 5-6). A small majority of Americans (54%, with 43% opposed) also support using racial profiling in airport security checks.

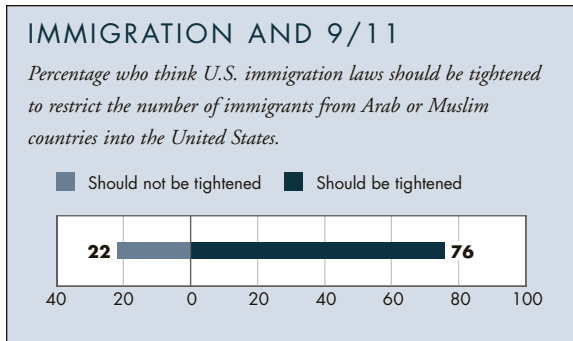


Figure 5-6

In addition, a comparison of CBS/ New York Times and Gallup polls that asked identical questions about immigration shortly before and after the September 11 attacks shows a 10 percentage point increase after the attacks in the proportion of Americans that favor reducing immigration. This is further evidence of the correlation between concerns about terrorism and immigration policy, although the sentiment for reducing immigration appears to have dropped a bit since October 2001. In any case, unease about immigration has been an enduring feature of U.S. public opinion, long preceding the terrorist attacks.

CONDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR FREE TRADE

Many public opinion surveys, including the Chicago Council's, have long sought to determine whether more Americans favor free international trade or protectionism. However, the 2002 Chicago Council/German Marshall Fund survey reveals that most Americans do not fall neatly into one or the other of these categories. While Americans support the general idea of free trade, majorities favor placing conditions on that trade for the protection of workers and the environment.

The impact of trade upon American workers is, again, paramount. When given arguments for and against the use of tariffs and restrictions on imported goods—to protect certain manufacturing jobs from less expensive imports versus reducing the cost of goods for everyone—only 38% of Americans say they sympathize more with those who want to eliminate tariffs, while 50% say they sympathize more with those who think

such tariffs are necessary. Clearly, concern about jobs trumps the attractiveness of lower prices.

But this does not mean that most Americans altogether oppose free trade, because when concerns about Americans workers are addressed, opposition to free trade all but dissipates. When offered three options about trade—free trade without government programs to help workers who lose their jobs, free trade with government programs to help workers who lose their jobs, and no free trade at all, 73% choose free trade with government programs to help workers, with only 9% say-

While Americans support the general idea of free trade, majorities favor placing conditions on trade for the protection of workers and the environment.

ing they do not favor free trade at all. Only 16% choose the pure free market option, with no government programs to help workers (see Figure 5-7).

This conditional support for free trade seems to be gaining ground. Compared to 1999 when PIPA asked the same question, the percentage against free trade is down by 5 points and the percentage supporting it on the condition of helping workers is up 7 points.

Americans also favor other conditions on international trade, including provisions for labor standards in other countries and the environment. An extraordinarily high 93% say that countries that are part of international trade agreements should be required to maintain minimum standards for working conditions. According to the 1999 PIPA survey, this high level of support for labor standards remains unchanged even after respondents are given a series of strongly stated pro and con arguments on the issue.

On the environment, a near unanimous 94% say that countries that are part of international trade agreements should be required to maintain minimum standards for protection of the environment.

In a show of fairness, Americans do not seem to be concerned about certain conditions that other countries

FREE TRADE	
<i>Percentage who choose each of the following statements as coming closest to their view.</i>	
	2002
I favor free trade and I believe that it is necessary for the government to have programs to help workers who lose their jobs.	73
I favor free trade and I believe that it is not necessary for the government to have programs to help workers who lose their jobs.	16
I do not favor free trade.	9

Figure 5-7

may place on trade with the United States. On the issue of U.S. genetically modified food exports, a solid 66% of Americans say the EU and Japan should be able to require labeling of such food even if this might keep consumers from purchasing it. Only 26% say the EU and Japan should not be able to do this. On the general issue of using biotechnology in agriculture and food production, Americans are divided, with 48% supporting its use (14% strongly and 34% moderately) and 45% opposing it (25% strongly and 20 moderately).

THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION AND THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

Consistent with their support for trade in principle, Americans show a fairly warm attitude toward the World Trade Organization (WTO), giving it an average rating of 55 degrees on the feeling thermometer. When asked whether or not the WTO should be strengthened, a substantial majority of 63% says it should—more than favor strengthening most of the six other international institutions they were asked about.

Most Americans also seem comfortable with the WTO having power to make decisions that bear on the United States. When asked whether the United States should comply with a ruling against the United States as the result of a complaint filed by another country, a strong 64% say the United States should comply with the ruling, while just 24% say that it should not.

By contrast, the public shows limited enthusiasm for the International Monetary Fund. On the feeling thermometer, the IMF gets a coolish 48 degree rating. Asked whether the IMF needs to be strengthened, just 42% say it does need to be strengthened, while 38% say it does not. This is the lowest level among eight international organizations evaluated (see Figure 4-4). It appears that some criticisms of IMF policies (e.g., of stringent conditions on loans) may have filtered through to the public.

FOREIGN AID

In line with the high priority given to addressing domestic economic concerns and for spending on domestic programs, Americans do not generally consider giving economic aid to other nations a high priority. Only a modest majority of 54% says it favors giving economic aid on the whole, with 38% opposed (see Figure 5-8). As discussed in Chapter 1, asked whether economic aid to other nations should be expanded, cut back, or kept the same, 48% say they want to cut back, 35% say keep it about the same, and just 14% want to expand economic aid. This is a consistent, long-term finding in Chicago Council and other surveys.

Interestingly, it seems that one of the most important reasons that so many Americans say they want to cut foreign aid is that they drastically overestimate the amount of money that is being spent on it (see Figure 5-9). When asked what percentage of the federal budget they think goes to foreign aid, the median estimate is an extraordinary 25% of the budget, more than 25 times the actual level of just under 1%. Only 2% of



Figure 5-8

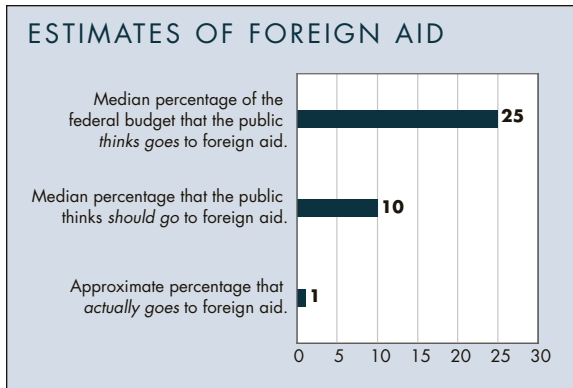


Figure 5-9

Americans give a correct estimate of 1% of the budget or less. When asked how much of the federal budget should go to foreign aid, the median response is a remarkable 10% of the budget, or more than 10 times as much aid as is currently being given. Only 13% of Americans say that the appropriate percentage would be 1% or less.

Given these extreme overestimations—estimates considerably larger than the entire U.S. defense budget—it is not surprising that many people propose cutting back from what they believe to be a very high current level of spending.

Another reason for the desire to cut foreign aid in general terms could be that people associate it more with types of aid that they support less—such as aid for strategic purposes to countries that are not necessarily poor as well as military aid—as opposed to aid for the humanitarian purposes that they most roundly endorse. As discussed in Chapter 4 and in the following section, when the purposes of the aid are made explicit, Americans make sharp distinctions and, indeed, show strong support for certain, especially humanitarian, types of foreign aid.

WORLD POVERTY AND HUNGER

Americans favor addressing the problems of hunger and poverty in the world and giving foreign aid for this purpose, despite the low priority they give to the general idea of foreign aid and to many altruistic goals of U.S. foreign policy. This support appears to proceed largely, but not solely, from humanitarian motives.

As discussed in Chapter 2, world hunger stands fairly high on the public agenda, with 61% of Americans saying that combating world hunger should be a very important goal of U.S. foreign policy. On a question about support for various humanitarian types of foreign aid (see Figure 5-10), 84% say they favor food and medical assistance to people in needy countries, with only 12% opposed. Seventy-four percent favor aid that helps needy countries develop their economies.

According to the same series of questions, aid for programs to reduce population growth and to combat AIDS is also very popular. Seventy-one percent favor aid for birth control in poor countries to help reduce population growth. An even higher 80% favor aid for women's education in poor countries to help reduce population growth. Seventy-nine percent favor assistance with the prevention and treatment of AIDS in

Americans favor addressing the problems of hunger and poverty in the world and giving foreign aid for this purpose, despite the low priority they give to the general idea of foreign aid and to many altruistic goals of U.S. foreign policy.

poor countries. In none of these instances of humanitarian foreign aid does the level of public opposition rise above 27%.

In other contexts, the priority of poverty receives mixed responses. When associated with a direct strategic threat, there is strong support: 78% favor helping poor countries develop their economies as a measure to combat international terrorism. However, when placed among many other competing goals of foreign policy, including fighting terrorism per se and protecting jobs, only 30% of Americans say that helping to improve the standard of living of less developed nations should be a very important goal of U.S. foreign policy, putting it at the very bottom of the ranking of 20 goals. (Still, 56%

FOREIGN AID FOR HUMANITARIAN PURPOSES

Percentage who favor or oppose the following types of foreign aid.

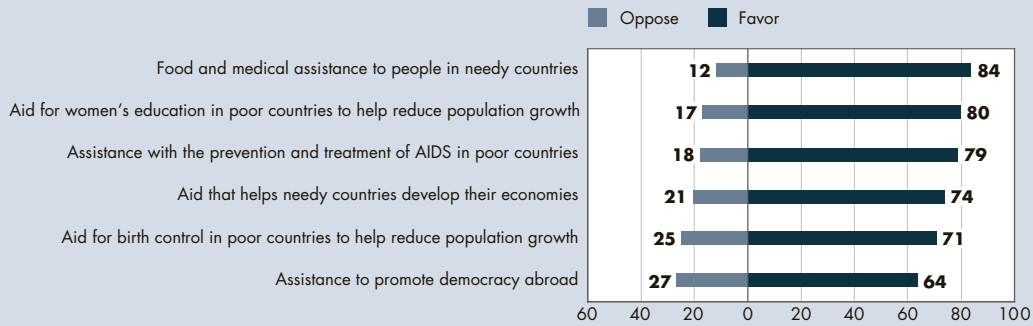


Figure 5-10

say this should be a “somewhat” important goal, and only 12% say it is not important.)

Despite Americans’ support for efforts to address the problem of world poverty and their general support for multilateral efforts, the public shows limited enthusiasm for the World Bank. On the feeling thermometer,

the World Bank, one of the world’s largest sources of development assistance, receives a lukewarm average rating of 51 degrees. Asked whether the World Bank needs to be strengthened, 49% say it does need to be strengthened and 39% say it does not.



CHAPTER SIX

The Changing Geopolitical Landscape

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 and their aftermath have significantly altered how Americans view key countries and U.S. relationships with them around the globe. The new sense of vulnerability and the imperative of countering terrorism have heightened the importance of old friends and allies, altered the perceptions of foes and threats, and raised awareness of new players and risks.

One marked response is a “huddling impulse,” a greater priority attached to long-time, reliable partners, especially principal U.S. allies in Europe and Canada. A very notable addition to the “huddle” is Russia. A nation seen as the principal threat to the United States only little more than a decade ago is now thought to be an important and reliable friend.

There have been dramatic shifts related to countries directly connected in American thinking to the terrorist threat, particularly Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Iran, and Egypt. These nations are seen by large majorities as being of vital interest, but as generally unlikable and in some cases of questionable support to the United States.

Countries that may be considered possible counterweights to terrorism and to states sponsoring it, such as India and Turkey, are also seen as more important, even though general feelings toward these countries remain

unchanged. September 11 also raised the salience to Americans of conflicts in regions where terrorism is rampant, particularly the Arab-Israeli and India-Pakistan conflicts.

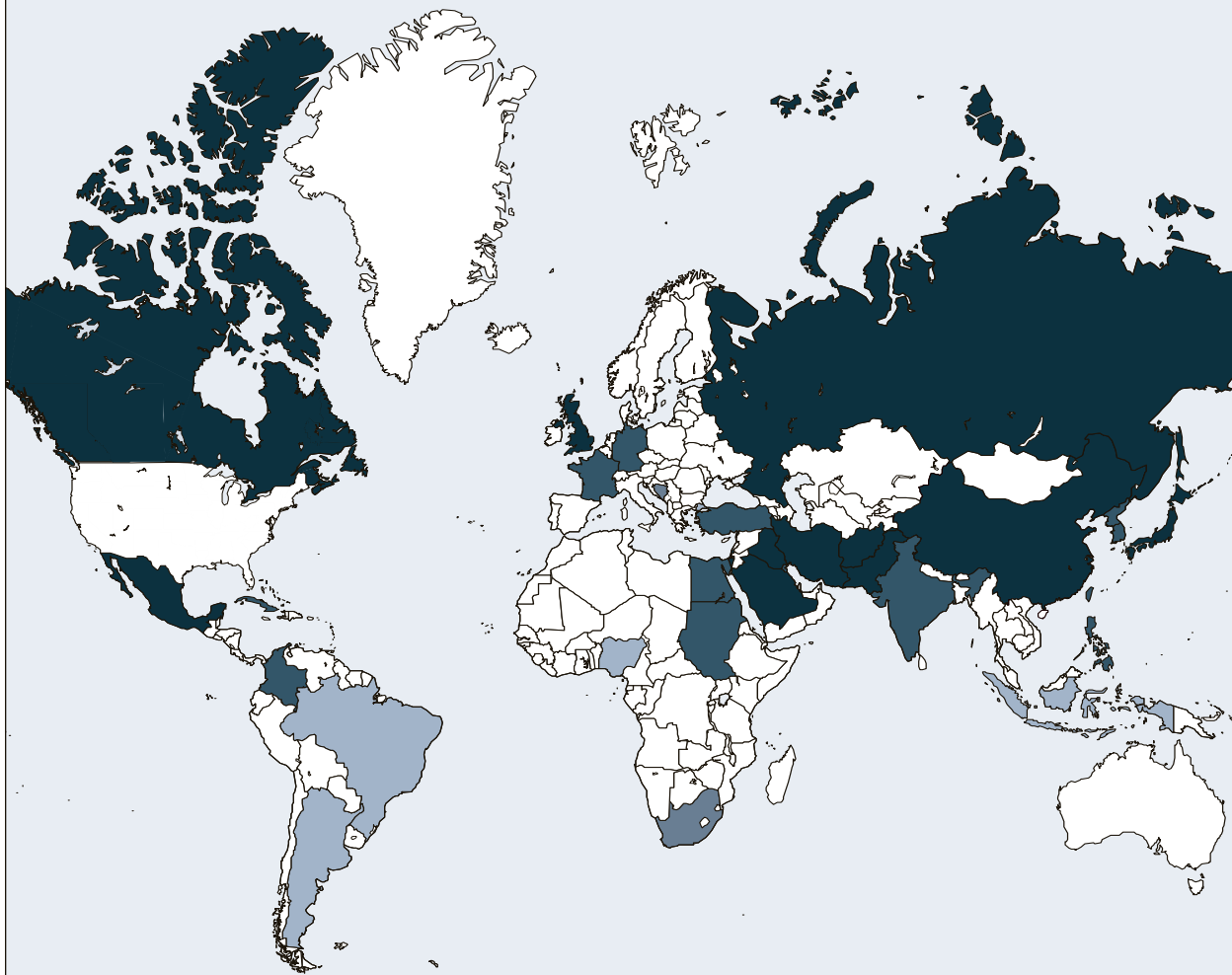
At the same time, Americans are not so preoccupied with terrorism that they do not sense other important geopolitical changes. A uniting Europe, a rising China, a less competitive but also less influential Japan, and a struggling Africa are all part of the changing American worldview.

EUROPE AND CANADA

Despite much discussion of a rift between Europe and the United States, the American public strongly affirms the importance of European allies and neighbor Canada to American interests after 9/11. The countries of the European Union are seen by the highest percentage of respondents (77%) as reliable partners in the war on terrorism (see Figure 6-7). Large and in most cases increased majorities believe Great Britain (78%), Canada (76%), Germany (68%), and France (53%) are of vital interest to the United States (see Figure 6-1). Three of the four, Canada, Great Britain, and Germany, are also rated more favorably on the “feeling thermome-

U.S. VITAL INTERESTS

Percentage who think the United States has a vital interest in each country.



Over 70%	
Japan	83
Saudi Arabia	83
China	83
Russia	81
Israel	79
Great Britain	78
Canada	76
Pakistan	76
Iraq	76
Iran	75
Afghanistan	73
Mexico	72

51% to 70%	
South Korea	69
Germany	68
Taiwan	65
India	65
North Korea	62
Columbia	62
Philippines	62
Cuba	60
Egypt	53
France	53
Turkey	52
Sudan	52

41% to 50%	
South Africa	49
Bosnia	43

Under 40%	
Argentina	39
Brazil	36
Indonesia	33
Nigeria	31

Figure 6-1

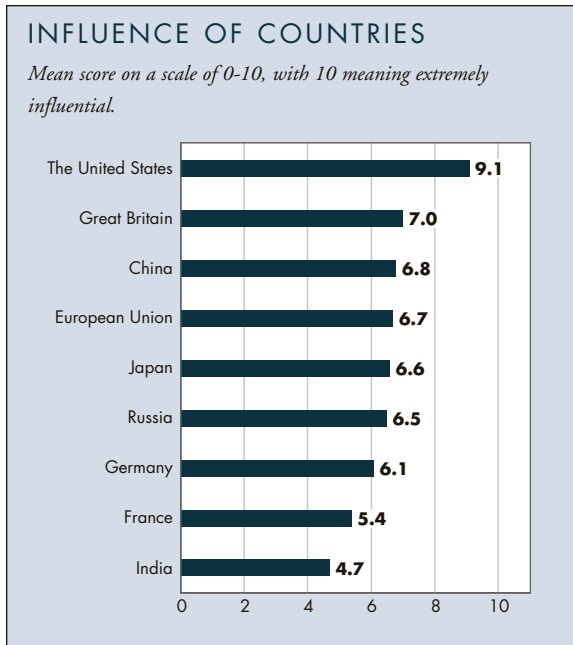


Figure 6-2

ter” (see Figure 6-8), receiving warmer readings than in 1998 (77, 76, and 61 degrees in 2002, respectively, up from 72, 69, and 56 in 1998, respectively). On the thermometer of world leaders, British Prime Minister Tony Blair is rated as favorably as President Bush, up from 59 degrees in 1998 to 72 (see also Figure 6-8).

Americans clearly recognize and welcome the growing power and influence of Europe as it unites within the European Union. The European Union is seen as highly influential in the world—6.7 on a scale of 0 to 10 (see Figure 6-2). Only the United States at 9.1 and Great Britain at 7.0 are clearly higher, with China at 6.8 approximately the same. Fifty percent of Americans see

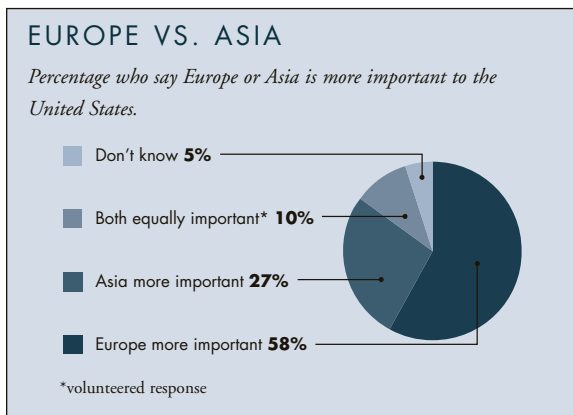


Figure 6-3

the EU as playing a more important and powerful role as a world leader than it did 10 years ago, and 60% expect the EU to play a greater role in the world over the next 10 years (see Figure 6-13). This is the same percentage (60%) that see Great Britain’s role rising, in contrast to the small majority (54%) and a plurality (47%) that see France and Germany, respectively, playing lesser roles in the future. Although more respondents (72%) see China as playing a greater role in the next 10 years than see Europe playing a greater role, when asked to compare Europe’s importance specifically with that of Asia, 58% say Europe is more important (see Figure 6-3), up sharply from 42% in 1998.

Americans also see strong EU leadership in world affairs as desirable, with 31% saying very desirable and 48% saying somewhat desirable. Seventy percent agree that the United States should make decisions jointly with the EU in dealing with common problems. However, a slight majority of 52% believe the United States should remain the only superpower in the world, and only 33% would like to see Europe become a superpower, even though a plurality (38%) would like to see the EU increase defense spending.

(See the companion report “Comparing American and European Public Opinion on Foreign Policy” for a full discussion of American thinking about Europe.)

RUSSIA

One of the striking shifts in the geopolitical terrain is the transformation of Russia from perceived threat to current and future partner of the United States. Greater stability in Russia and cooperation with the United States in the war on terrorism and other problems have apparently advanced the process of normalization of U.S.-Russian ties begun only a dozen years ago.

Russia is seen as second only to the countries of the European Union as an at least somewhat reliable partner in the war on terrorism out of seven countries asked about (see Figure 6-7). A large majority of respondents (81%) see Russia as a vital interest of the United States in 2002. Russia is seen as having more influence in the world than Germany and France.



Figure 6-4

The proportion of Americans who see Russian military power as a critical threat has declined from 34% in 1998 to 23% in 2002 (see Figure 6-4), while only 27% see political turmoil in Russia as a critical threat. Dealings with Russia are mentioned as a foreign policy problem for the United States only by 1% of the public, down from 4% in 1998.

The degree to which Russia has been transformed from enemy to partner is perhaps most striking in the 68% of respondents who say they favor the expansion

Sixty-eight percent of respondents favor the expansion of NATO to include Russia.

of NATO—founded to counter the Soviet threat—to include Russia. Americans also support economic aid to Russia, with 62% believing it should be kept the same (46%) or increased (16%). This is more than for any other aid recipient mentioned apart from African countries.

General feelings toward Russia among Americans are moderately warm (55°), up from 49 degrees in 1998 and well above the chilly levels found during the Cold War era (ranging between 26 degrees and 34 degrees in 1978, 1982, and 1986). Russia’s leader, Vladimir Putin, receives a similar 56 degrees on the thermometer, just ahead of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, French President Jacques

Chirac, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, and Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi.

ATTITUDES TOWARD ISLAM/MUSLIMS

There has been a sharp shift toward increased wariness of Islam in post-9/11 America. The proportion of the public calling Islamic fundamentalism a critical threat to vital U.S. interests has jumped 23 points to 61%, putting it in seventh position out of 20 threats ranked (see Figures 6-5 and 2-1). In addition, four out of ten Americans say that the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon represent the true teachings of Islam “to a great degree” (21%) or “to some degree” (18%). Seventeen percent say “not very much” and 40% “not at all.”

Suspicion and concern extends to Arab and Muslim people. By more than a three-to-one margin (76% to 22%), Americans say that based on the events of 9/11, U.S. immigration laws should be tightened to restrict the number of immigrants from Arab or Muslim countries into the United States, and 77% say that in order to combat terrorism they favor restricting overall immigration into the United States. A small majority of 54% to 43% also favor using racial profiling in airport security checks in order to combat international terrorism.

At the same time, a large majority of Americans reject the “clash of civilizations” notion (see Figure 6-5).

VIEWS ON ISLAM AND MUSLIM PEOPLE	
<i>Percentage who say...</i>	2002
Islamic fundamentalism is a critical threat to the vital interests of the U.S.	61
<i>Percentage who choose each of the following as closest to their view.</i>	
Clash between Muslims and the West is inevitable	27
We can find common ground and clash of civilizations is not inevitable	66

Figure 6-5

Only 27% endorse the idea that because Muslim religious, social, and political traditions are incompatible with Western ways, violent conflict between the two civilizations is inevitable. Instead, 66% believe that because most Muslims are like people everywhere, we can find common ground and violent conflict between the civilizations is not inevitable. Supporting this point, “the Muslim people” receive a neutral 49 degree average rating on the feeling thermometer.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Americans’ wariness of Islam and Muslims in general is also affecting attitudes toward Muslim/Arab countries. As a region linked to the attacks of September 11 and terrorist activity in general, the Middle East, a long-time priority in U.S. policy, is an intense focus of changing American perceptions. The Arab and Muslim nations in the region thought to be associated directly or indirectly with the attacks or to be sponsors of terrorism—Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, and Iraq—are viewed as important but unreliable or hostile. Turkey, a neighboring, moderate Muslim country and U.S. ally, has grown in importance. The Arab-Israeli conflict has also taken on new relevance, with Americans largely preferring not to take sides in the conflict.

Connections to Terrorism: Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, Iraq

Americans see clear vital interests in Middle East nations with links to terrorism. Small to large majorities of Americans believe the United States has vital interests in Egypt (53%), Iran (75%), and Saudi Arabia (83%). Seventy-six percent see Iraq as a vital U.S. interest.

At the same time, feelings toward these countries are decidedly negative. Despite the U.S. partnership with Saudi Arabia in the Gulf War against Iraq and support for having long-term military bases there (65%), feelings about Saudi Arabia have gone from almost neutral to quite chilly, dropping 13 degrees from 46 degrees to 33 degrees (see Figure 6-6). This is almost as low as feelings toward Iran (28°) and Iraq (23°). Egypt suffers

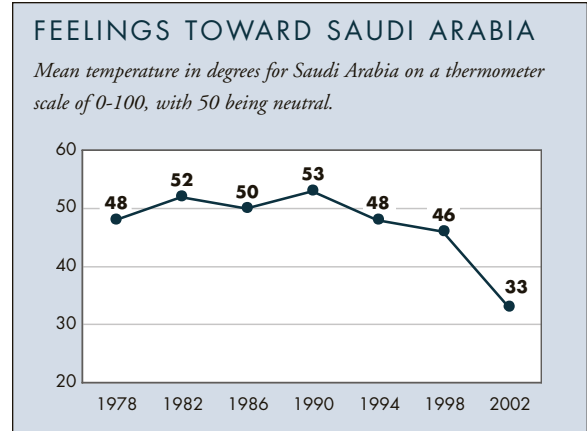


Figure 6-6

less from ill feelings on the thermometer scale, but still receives a cool 45 degree rating.

Other views on Saudi Arabia are also mostly unfavorable. The country is seen as a reliable partner in the war on terrorism by only 31% of Americans, the lowest reliability of any of the seven partners mentioned (see Figure 6-7). A bare majority (54%) would favor using U.S. troops to prevent the overthrow of the Saudi government, but there is not a majority today (48%) that would favor using U.S. troops if Iraq were to invade

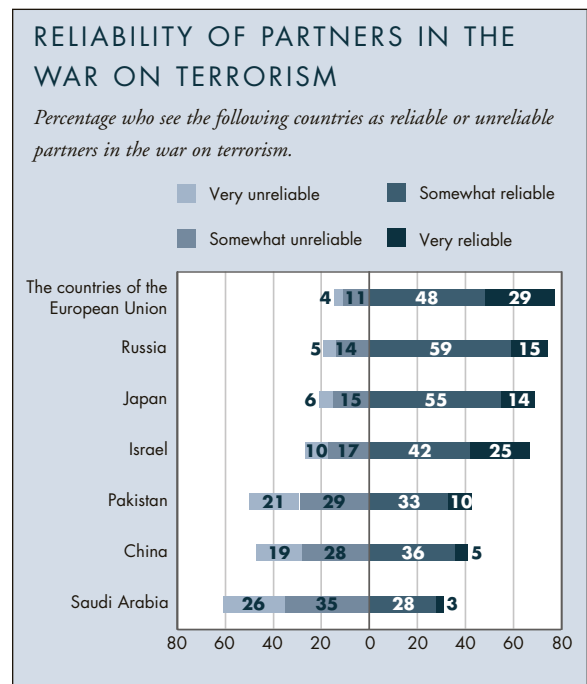


Figure 6-7

Saudi Arabia, unless it was part of a UN-sponsored action together with other countries (77%).

There is no sign of thaw with Iran, labeled part of the “axis of evil” by President Bush, despite some signs of movement toward reform in the country. Long seen as associated with terrorist activity, Iran has held steady at or near the bottom of the thermometer scale in Council surveys since the Islamic revolution there two decades ago. As mentioned in Chapter 4, while 58% of

Americans favor having diplomatic relations with Iran, 63% favor sanctions against it, and 60% oppose engaging in trade.

America’s most hostile feelings are reserved for Iraq (although feelings toward terrorist leader Osama bin Laden and the al Qaeda network were not surveyed). In addition to Iraq ranking the lowest of all 28 countries asked about on the thermometer, its leader Saddam Hussein barely registers on the scale at a frigid 8

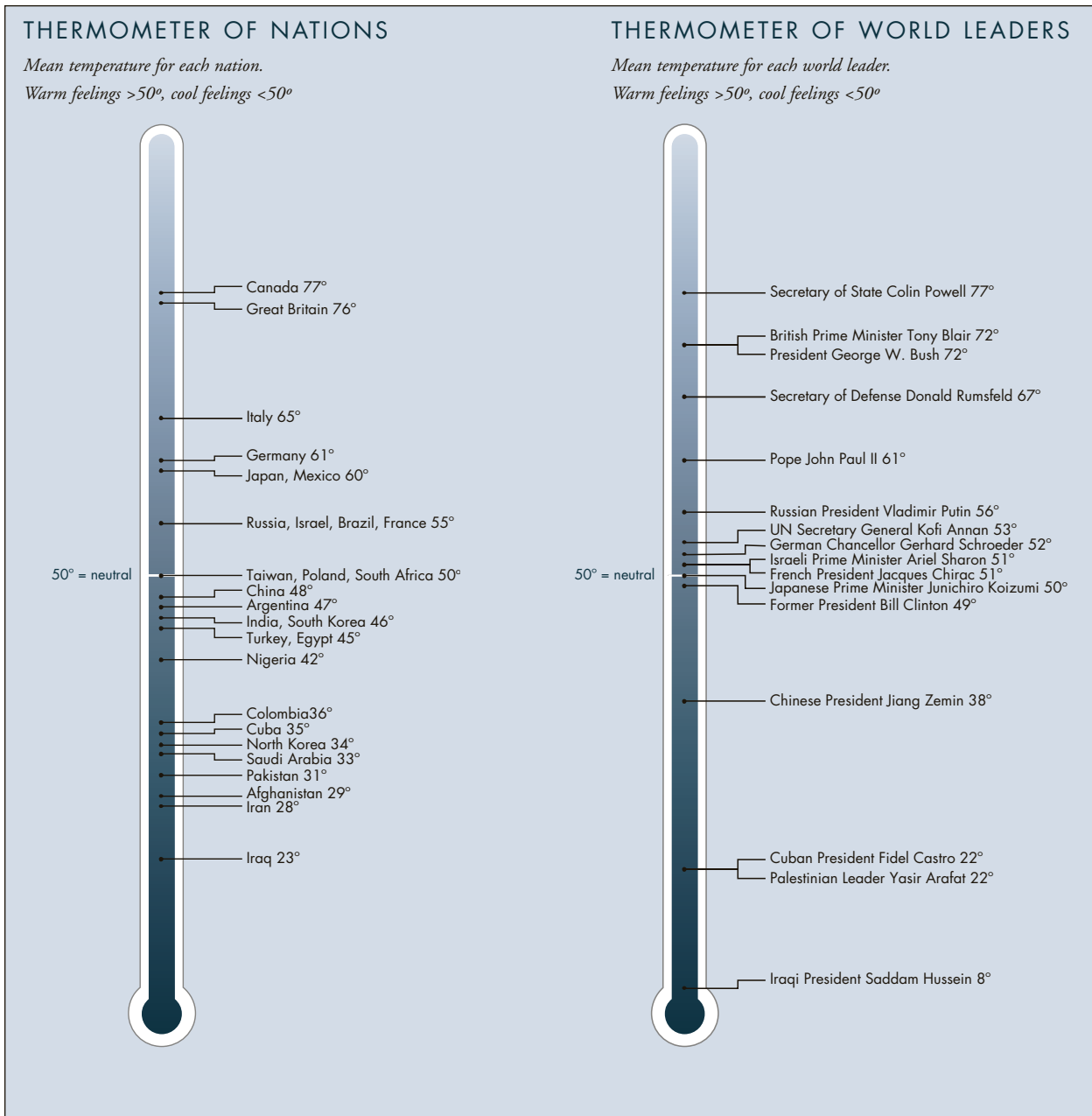


Figure 6-8

degrees. As discussed earlier in this report, Iraqi development of weapons of mass destruction is the focus of this concern, with 86% of Americans considering it a critical threat. This translates into support for invading Iraq, with a total of 85% of Americans supporting an invasion, 65% with the condition of UN approval and the support of allies and 20% even if we have to go it alone (see Figure 3-10). Iraq also receives the strongest

Eighty-five percent of Americans support an invasion of Iraq either with the condition of UN approval and the support of allies (65%) or even if we have to go it alone (20%).

support of five “problem countries” (Cuba, Iraq, Iran, North Korea, China) for the use of economic sanctions (66% in favor, see Figure 4-8) and the strongest opposition for engaging in trade (72% opposed). It is the only country of the five for which there is not a clear majority favoring diplomatic relations (49%).

It is noteworthy that despite the strong reactions to questions posed on the subject of Iraq, not much concern about Iraq emerges spontaneously when people are asked about big problems facing the country. Fewer than 1% mention Iraq or Saddam Hussein among the two or three biggest problems facing the country and only 3% mention it as one of the two or three biggest foreign policy problems. This low concern may be attributable to the timing of the survey, which was taken in June 2002, just before the Bush administration’s vocal campaign to generate support for its plans to attack Iraq. However, the finding is still an interesting measure of the low salience of the issue to the general public given its centrality to the Bush administration.

Turkey, a moderate Muslim nation and NATO member sitting on the periphery of the unstable Middle East, has risen sharply in the perception of vital interest, up 19 points to 52%, though feelings toward the country are unchanged at 45 degrees. Fifty-eight percent of

Americans favor having long-term military bases in Turkey, an important regional ally in the war on terrorism and a model for success against Islamic extremism.

The Arab-Israeli Conflict

Since the September 11 attacks and the escalation of violence in Israel and the occupied territories, the Arab-Israeli conflict has risen again as a high concern in the minds of Americans. While often at the top of American concern in Council surveys, the “Mideast situation” is the second most cited foreign policy problem facing the country (12%) after terrorism (33%) in 2002, up 4% since 1998 (see Figure 1-4). “Unrest in Israel and Palestine” is third on the list, at 9%. Military conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbors is seen as a critical threat by 67%. The perception of Israel as a U.S. vital interest has risen 10 points since 1998, with 79% seeing it as vital today.

While the salience of the conflict is up, feelings toward Israel have remained largely the same. Israel receives a moderately warm 55 degrees on the thermometer, virtually the same as it received over the past four Council surveys.¹ Prime Minister Ariel Sharon rates a neutral 51 degrees on the thermometer scale,

Seventy-one percent of Americans do not think the United States should take either the Israeli or the Palestinian side in the Middle East conflict.

similar to Benjamin Netanyahu in 1998 (48°) and Yitzhak Rabin in 1994 (51°), and higher than Yitzhak Shamir in 1990 (44°). The country is seen by 67% of Americans as a reliable partner in the war on terrorism. By contrast, Palestinians are rated at a cold 35 degrees and Arafat a very cold 22 degrees, down 16 degrees.

¹ Israel’s mean thermometer rating among only in-person interviewees is just 49 degrees. This figure may be more comparable with the 1998 data on this item, which was also gathered in person, and suggests a possible drop in feelings toward Israel. For more information on mode differences, see “Notes on Methodology” at the end of this report.

While Americans show much more favorability toward Israel than the Palestinians, a substantial majority (71%) does not think the United States should take either Israel's or the Palestinians' side in the conflict, even though a majority (58%) think the United States generally takes Israel's side (see Figure 6-9). Americans are ambivalent on the issue of establishing a Palestinian state, with 40% favoring it and 35% against it (25% don't know). Yet a majority (58%) says President Bush's endorsement of an independent Palestinian state was a good idea. Forty-six percent believe the United States should actively work to help establish a Palestinian state, while 45% think it should not.

The public is divided on several other issues. In a situation in which the United States disapproves of Israeli military operations against Palestinians, 46% of Americans favor telling Israel not to use U.S.-provided battlefield weapons, while 44% oppose. Forty-eight percent would favor coming to Israel's aid in the event of an invasion by Arab forces, while 45% would not.

There is also division about economic aid to Israel, with opinion tilting more toward a decrease than an increase. While 18% of Americans want it increased,

26% want it decreased and 15% want to stop aid altogether, for a total of 41% on the down side. Thirty-seven percent want economic aid to Israel kept the same (see Figure 4-9).

SOUTH ASIA—AFGHANISTAN, PAKISTAN, INDIA

In the past year the terrorist threat from Afghanistan and Pakistan, the conflict between nuclear-armed Pakistan and India, and India's emerging power status have thrust South Asia into new prominence in American thinking about the world.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan, the ultimate breeding ground for the September 11 attacks and initial target for the war on al Qaeda, has jumped 28 points in perceived vital interest to 73%. Problems related to "the situation in Afghanistan," not mentioned at all in previous surveys, are mentioned by 3% of the public as one of the two or three biggest foreign policy problems facing the country, in addition to the related items of terrorism and war that are much higher on the list. Despite the defeat of the Taliban and the successful change of government in Afghanistan, however, the country rates a very cold 29 degrees on the feeling thermometer.

Consistent with their view of Afghanistan as a vital interest, a majority of Americans (57%) favor having long-term military bases there. Seventy-six percent favor committing U.S. troops to an international peacekeeping force in Afghanistan. But American sentiment about economic aid to Afghanistan tends toward decreasing it. While 22% want to increase aid and 29% want to keep it the same, 22% want to decrease aid and 23% want to stop it altogether (see Figure 4-9).

Pakistan

Pakistan—once a supporter of the Taliban, now a front-line state in the war against terrorism and itself threatened by Islamic radicalism—has also leapt to the fore-

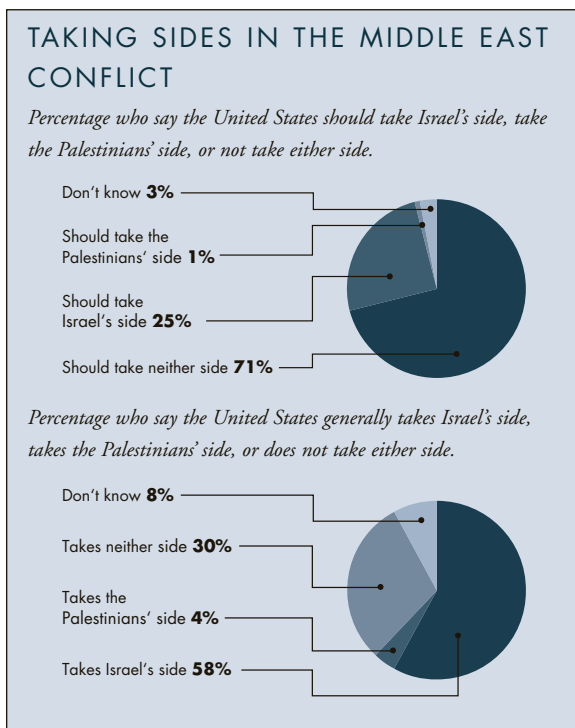


Figure 6-9

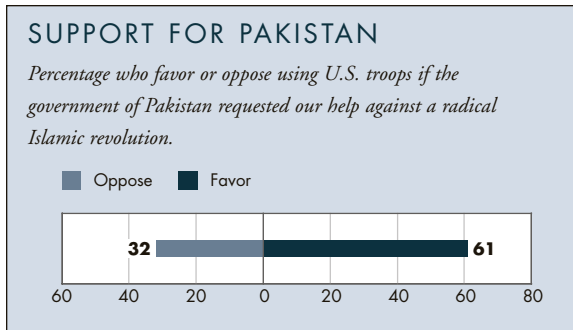


Figure 6-10

front of American concern. Asked for the first time whether Pakistan is a vital interest of the United States, 76% say yes. But Americans are at best divided over how much to expect of Pakistan. Feelings toward Pakistan have grown distinctly colder, dropping from 42 to 31 degrees on the thermometer. Fifty percent of respondents think Pakistan is an unreliable ally in the war on terrorism, while 43% think it is reliable (only Saudi Arabia and China are seen as less reliable among the countries mentioned, see Figure 6-7).

Nevertheless, 61% favor using U.S. troops to help the government of Pakistan against a radical Islamic revolution (see Figure 6-10), more than would use troops to defend the government of Saudi Arabia against an attempt to overthrow it (see Figure 3-3). Fifty-two percent think the United States should have military bases in Pakistan. Yet only 12% think economic aid to Pakistan should be increased, while 51% think it should be decreased (28%) or stopped altogether (23%), and 32% want to keep it the same (see Figure 4-9).

India

For the first time ever in Chicago Council surveys, tensions between India and Pakistan have surfaced as a major concern, not surprising, perhaps, given the prolonged and dangerous standoff between the two nuclear-armed countries during the first half of 2002. Fifty-four percent think these tensions are a critical threat, and India-Pakistan issues are mentioned among the top 15 biggest foreign policy problems.

As a result, India is seen in a new light in the 2002 survey. The percentage of respondents saying the United

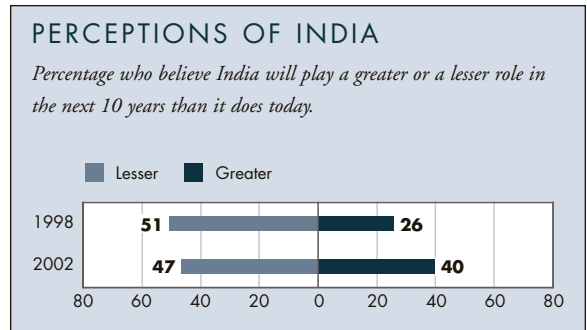


Figure 6-11

States has a vital interest in India has increased by 29 percentage points to 65% since 1998—the largest increase for any country. While India is seen as having the least influence in the world today of nine countries asked about (with a mean score of 4.7 on a 1-10 scale, see Figure 6-2), the percentage of respondents who see it as playing a greater role in the next 10 years has jumped from 26% in 1998 to 40% in 2002, the largest increase for any country asked about (see Figure 6-13). All this has not led, however, to Americans feeling more warmly toward India—it rates an unchanged, somewhat cool 46 degrees on the thermometer.

EAST ASIA—JAPAN, CHINA, KOREA

Although East Asian nations have not been prominent among post-9/11 concerns, Americans are clearly

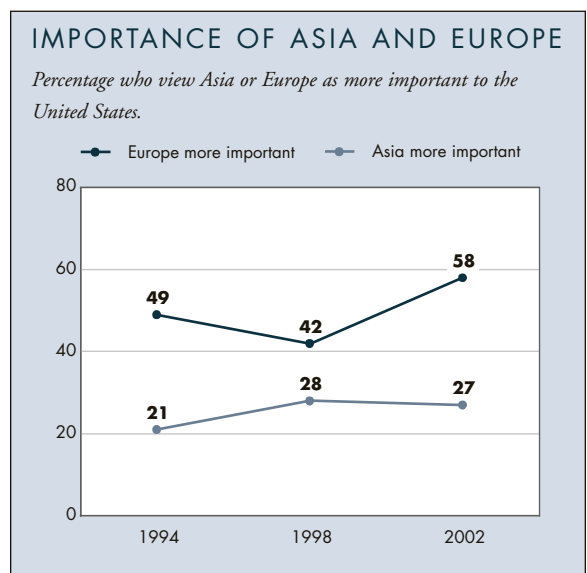


Figure 6-12

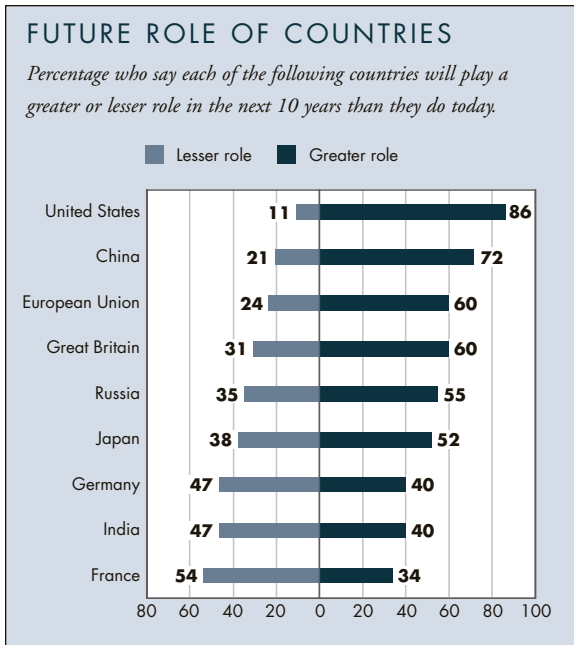


Figure 6-13

attuned to what they believe are important changes in the region. Perceptions of Asia's overall importance to the United States have declined vis-à-vis Europe, even as the perceived influence of China and Japan, East Asia's two major powers, is the same as that of Europe. Japan and China seem to be trading places in terms of salience in the minds of many Americans. Japan is viewed as more friendly if less influential than in the past as concerns about economic competition have faded, while a watchful eye rests on China as its power and influence rise. South Korea's importance is up, but views on how to deal with North Korea are mixed.

As mentioned earlier, Asia's overall importance to the United States relative to Europe has declined (see Figure 6-12), with only 27% seeing Asia as more important and Europe up from 42% in 1998 to 58% (10% volunteer that Asia and Europe are equally important). Only 41% of Americans see Japan as a more important and powerful leader than it was 10 years ago, while 50% say the same for the European Union. Nevertheless, the perception of China and Japan's current influence in the world (6.8 and 6.6, respectively, on a 0 to 10 scale) is on par with that of Europe (6.7), and more people view China's influence as on the rise than that of Europe, with 72% believing China will play a

greater role in the next 10 years compared to 60% for Europe (see Figure 6-13).

In another significant shift of opinion, Japan and China are each now seen by the same numbers of Americans (43%) as more important than the other (see Figure 6-14). This is a big change from 1998, when more Americans still saw Japan as more important than China by 19 percentage points (47% for Japan more important to 28% for China). Similarly, Japan and China are now viewed as vital interests of the United States by equal proportions of the public (83%), with the percentage for Japan somewhat down (from 87%) and the percentage for China somewhat up (from 74%) since 1998 and the highest ever since the question was first asked in 1978. As mentioned, the two countries are seen as equally influential in the world today, both with a mean score of approximately 7.

Looking to the future, more Americans see China playing a greater role than Japan. Seventy-two percent of respondents see China playing a greater role in the next 10 years, while only 52% see Japan playing a greater role. Thirty-eight percent see Japan playing a lesser role, up from 29% in 1998 and 21% in 1994.

Japan

At the same time that Americans see China's importance rising relative to that of Japan, they clearly see the U.S.-Japan relationship as one of friendship and mutual support, in contrast to a U.S.-China relationship that is

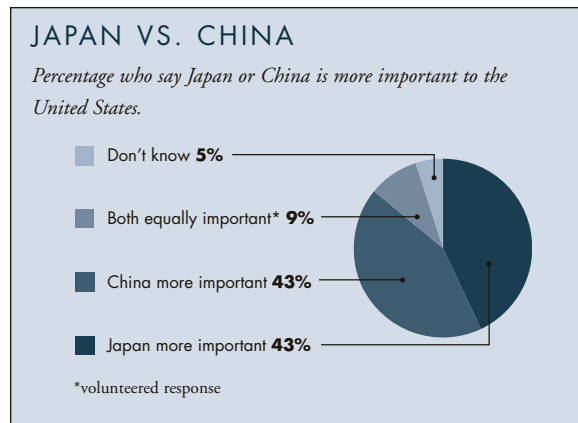


Figure 6-14

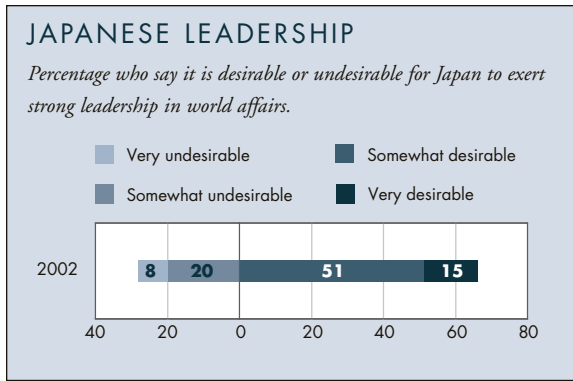


Figure 6-15

often strained and possibly threatening. Japan gets a warm 60 degrees on the thermometer, which has been steadily climbing since 1990 and is up from 55 degrees in 1998. Only 17% of Americans have negative feelings toward Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, with 22% expressing neutral and 21% expressing positive feelings toward him (40% do not know). Almost two-thirds of Americans (62%) say U.S. relations with

Despite the perceived decline in Japan's influence and competitiveness, Japan is still viewed as an important ally and partner.

Japan are friendly, while only 7% say they are unfriendly. Relations with Japan today do not even appear on the list of foreign policy problems mentioned by the public. In 1990 they were mentioned by 4%.

The friendlier view of Japan is consistent with its decline as an economic competitor. Most Americans no longer feel as threatened by Japan's economic power as they once did. In 2002 only 29% of respondents see economic competition from Japan as a critical threat, down from 45% in 1998 and a high of 62% in 1994. For the first time in over a decade, Japan is not perceived as practicing unfair trade by a majority of Americans. Forty-seven percent now see Japan as practicing fair trade (the numbers were 31% in 1998 and 17% in 1994), and only 41% say its trade is unfair (55% in 1998 and 71% in 1994).

Despite the perceived decline in Japan's influence and competitiveness, Japan is still viewed as an important ally and partner. In line with their perception of high vital interest in Japan, 63% of Americans believe the United States should maintain long-term bases in Japan, second only to support for the U.S. presence in Europe (see Figure 3-5). While 43% of Americans believe the 44,000 U.S. troops stationed in Japan, including Okinawa, are too many, 45% believe the number is about right and 5% say it is too few. Further, Americans see Japan as a reliable partner in the war on terrorism (69%) and do want Japan to exert strong leadership in world affairs, with 51% seeing this as somewhat desirable and 15% seeing it as very desirable.

China

Japan's more amicable relationship with the United States contrasts with a wariness in the U.S.-China relationship. The perception of China as a vital interest has risen from 74% in 1998 to 83% in 2002 (see Figure 6-16). China's development as a world power is seen as a critical threat to the United States by 56% of Americans and as either a critical or an important threat by 90%. Relations with China are mentioned as one of the two or three foreign policy problems facing the United States by 2% of respondents.

China is seen as practicing unfair trade by 53% of Americans, while 32% see it practicing fair trade (see Figure 5-2). These are almost exactly the proportions



Figure 6-16

given to Japan only four years ago. Only 41% see China as a reliable partner in the war on terrorism, with 47% saying it is unreliable. While overall feelings toward the country are just slightly cool (48°), China's President Jiang Zemin gets a chilly 38 degrees, the fourth lowest average rating for the 16 leaders we asked about.

Despite their concerns about China, Americans do not favor isolating or confronting China. Eighty percent favor having diplomatic relations with China and 71% favor having trade relations with China. A bare majority of 51% favor using economic sanctions against China. Only 32% would favor using U.S. troops to counter a Chinese invasion of Taiwan; 58% would oppose, even though 65% of Americans see Taiwan as a vital interest of the United States.

Korea

The Korean Peninsula, long an area of high international tension, is a focus of continuing but somewhat muted concern. Sixty-nine percent of Americans see South Korea as a vital interest of the United States, up sharply from 54% in 1998, perhaps as a result of its being seen as a bulwark against either terrorism or aggression from the North. South Korea's reading on the feeling thermometer, however, is a coolish 46 degrees, down a bit from 50 degrees in 1998.

Americans are ambivalent about how to handle the North Korean threat. As in 1998, only about a third (36%) of the respondents favor using U.S. troops in the event of a North Korean invasion of the South, unless it is part of a UN-sponsored effort with other countries to reverse the aggression, in which case support rises to 57% (see Figure 3-11). Two-thirds (65%) favor establishing diplomatic relations with the North. But 58% favor applying economic sanctions against the North, and 50% oppose trading with it.

AFRICA

The American public does not consider key African countries to be of very high concern, and expresses cool to lukewarm feelings toward them. Nevertheless,

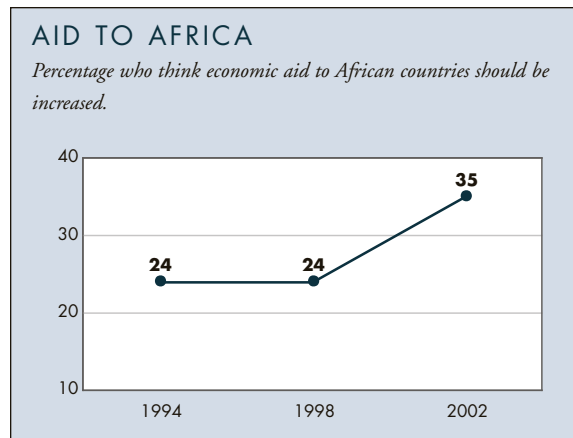


Figure 6-17

Americans show significantly increased support for giving economic aid to Africa.

Comparatively low proportions of the public say that the United States has a vital interest in the Sudan (52%) or South Africa (49%). Nigeria, at 31%, is at the bottom of the 30 countries we asked about. Similarly, civil wars in Africa are rated a “critical threat” by only 24% of the public, ranking third from the bottom of 20 possible threats that were inquired about. South Africa gets an average rating of 50 degrees, exactly neutral, on the feeling thermometer, while Nigeria averages a cool 42 degrees.

At the same time, more Americans—35%—favor increasing economic aid to “African countries” than to any of the seven other countries or peoples we asked about. The 35% figure is up substantially from 1998 (see Figure 6-17). Only 22% are in favor of decreasing or stopping aid altogether (37% say keep the same).

LATIN AMERICA

Although the war on terrorism has directed media attention elsewhere, several Latin American countries—most notably Mexico, Colombia, and Cuba—remain quite important in Americans’ views of the world and U.S. foreign policy.

Mexico, our next-door neighbor and key trading partner, is seen as a vital interest of the United States by 72% of the public. Despite some tensions over illegal immigration and trade (36% say Mexico practices



Figure 6-18

unfair trade, though this is lower than the 50% who say it practices fair trade, see Figure 6-18), Mexico gets a quite warm 60 degree average rating on the feeling thermometer, which puts it alongside key American allies Germany and Japan.

Colombia is seen as a vital interest by a substantial 62% of the public, but has a quite chilly average thermometer rating of 36 degrees, presumably because of the drug problem. Stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the United States is considered a very important

goal of U.S. foreign policy goal by 81% of Americans. A solid 66% of Americans favor using U.S. troops to fight drug lords in Colombia.

Cuba and its leader, Fidel Castro, long-time nemeses of U.S. foreign policy, continue to be viewed quite coldly by the U.S. public, with average thermometer ratings of 35 and 22 degrees, respectively. But there are signs of a thaw in American attitudes about Cuba. A solid majority (65%) favors having diplomatic relations with Cuba, and a slight majority (52%) favors engaging in trade with Cuba (46% opposed). Only a bare majority of Americans (51%) now favor economic sanctions against Cuba (down 7 points since 1998), with 41% opposed (up 11 points since 1998).

Other Latin American countries are less salient to the U.S. public. Brazil, though receiving a fairly warm average thermometer rating of 55 degrees, is seen as a vital interest of the United States by only 36%. Argentina, rated a bit more coolly (47 degrees on the thermometer) is seen as a vital interest by only 39%.



CHAPTER SEVEN

The President's Foreign Policy Performance

Evaluations of the foreign policy establishment—the performance of President Bush and his administration and the balance of authority among the government officials and groups who influence American foreign affairs—are important indicators of whether the public feels its interests are being represented and its opinions heard. In 2002 the Chicago Council/German Marshall Fund study finds that while Americans like President Bush overall, they are not completely satisfied—in some areas quite dissatisfied—with the administration's handling of many foreign policy problems. Nonetheless, most Americans continue to give the president relatively wide latitude in conducting American foreign affairs as compared to the influence they want Congress, interest groups, or other key members of the government to have on foreign policy, perhaps because of their high concern about the threat of terrorism.

PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESS IN FOREIGN POLICY AND OVERALL FAVORABILITY

President Bush's overall standing relative to past presidents is generally positive. When asked about the foreign policy success of the country's four most recent presidents (George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George Bush,

and Ronald Reagan) seventy-six percent of Americans say that President Bush has been “very” (29%) or “somewhat” (47%) successful, with 16% saying “somewhat unsuccessful” and just 7% saying “very unsuccessful”

While Americans like President Bush overall, they are not completely satisfied—in some areas quite dissatisfied—with the administration's handling of many foreign policy problems.

ful.” This 76% figure for very or somewhat successful is comparable to the overall success ratings given former President Bush (76% successful) and Ronald Reagan (78% successful); only 63% now say Bill Clinton was successful. When looking at the “very successful” category only, Ronald Reagan comes ahead of the current President Bush at 37% compared to Bush's 29%.

In the last two Council surveys (1998 and 1994), which inquired about all U.S. presidents back to Truman, the only presidents with similarly high numbers were former President Bush (75% successful) in

BUSH ADMINISTRATION HANDLING OF FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES

Percentage who rate the Bush administration's handling of the following as "excellent," "good," "fair," or "poor."

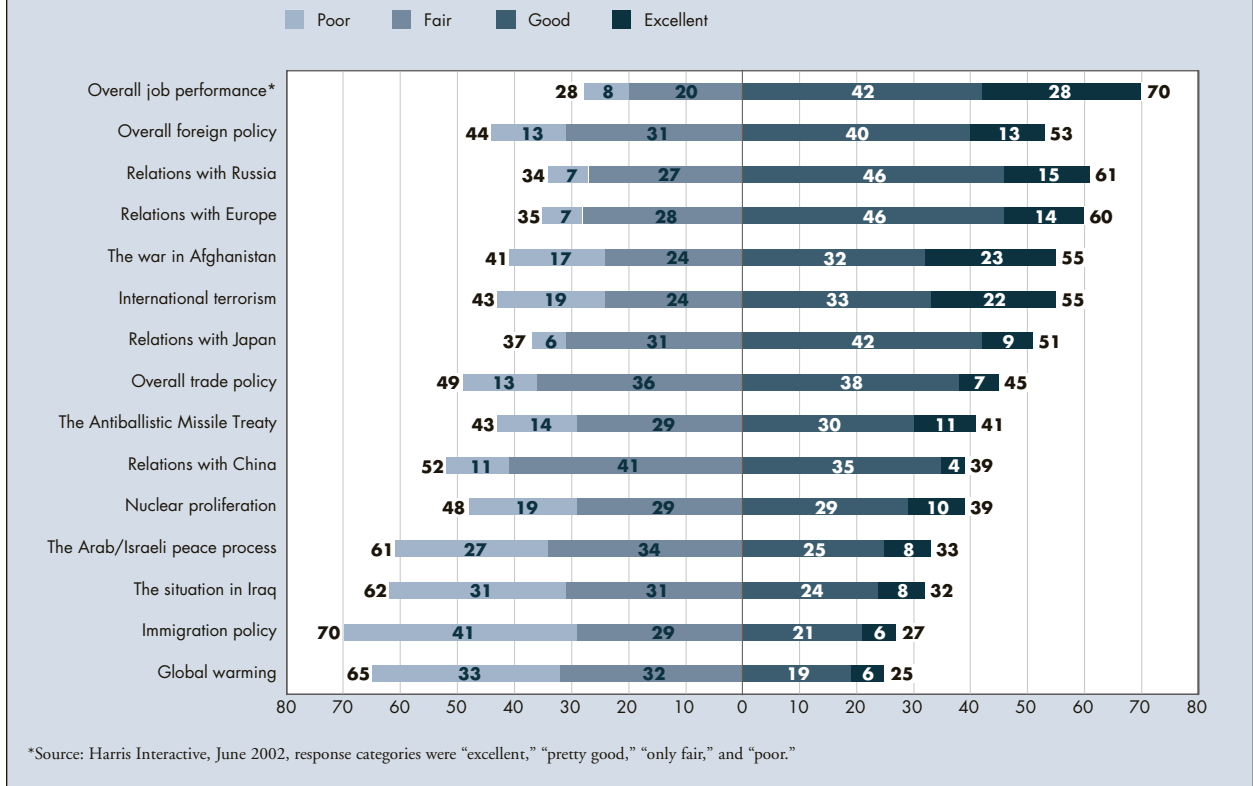


Figure 7-1

1994, and Ronald Reagan (73%) and Bill Clinton (77%) in 1998. If "don't know" responses (which are higher for earlier presidents and therefore deflate the percentages) are excluded, however, Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy—in that order—do even better than Bush.

The public also feels quite warmly about President Bush. His 72 degree mean thermometer rating is matched among other heads of government only by British Prime Minister Tony Blair; it surpasses the ratings of the Russian, German, French, and Japanese leaders by about 20 degrees (see Figure 6-8). Only U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell is regarded more warmly (at 77 degrees) out of 16 world leaders asked about. By contrast, President Clinton's average thermometer rating was substantially lower when he held office—58 degrees in 1998 and only 54 degrees in 1994. (In 2002, Clinton's mean thermometer rating has dropped to 49 degrees). Similarly, the elder President Bush rated 63

degrees in 1990, President Reagan rated 68 degrees in 1986 and 54 degrees in 1982, and President Carter rated 65 degrees in 1978.

POLICY EVALUATIONS

Although the public likes President Bush and grades his success in conducting foreign policy rather high compared to his predecessors, the Bush administration's handling of overall foreign policy is rated more moderately (see Figure 7-1). Fifty-three percent of Americans consider it "excellent" (13%) or "good" (40%), while 31% say "fair" and 13% say "poor." In a few specific policy areas the administration scores higher, but in most it scores lower. (Subsequent figures combine "excellent" and "good" ratings as being positive.)

The Bush administration's job in responding to the terrorist attacks and rallying allies has earned quite positive scores from Americans. Its handling of relations

with Russia is rated positively by 61%, putting the handling of Russia at the top of the 13 policy areas we inquired about. The only time an administration has been seen as doing better with Russia was in 1990, when the Soviet Union was collapsing and the first Bush administration won a 74% positive rating. The current Bush administration's handling of international terrorism is rated positively by 55% of the public (16 points higher than the Clinton administration's rating in 1998), and 55% also approve the Bush administration's handling of the war in Afghanistan. The 22% and 23% "excellent" ratings on terrorism and Afghanistan are

The public is especially critical of the administration's job on the Arab-Israeli peace process, immigration policy, and global warming.

higher than in any other area. Handling of relations with Europe and with Japan are rated positively by 60% and 51%, respectively. The high rating for relations with Europe is notable given disputes over such matters as international treaties, policy toward Iraq, and trade in steel and agricultural goods.

The Bush administration receives ratings from the public that are mediocre at best, however, on a larger set of policy areas, including its handling of overall trade policy (45% positive), the Antibalistic Missile Treaty (41%), relations with China (39%), and nuclear proliferation (39%), though the latter is up 8 points compared to the Clinton administration in 1998. The public is especially critical of the administration's job on the Arab-Israeli peace process (only 33% positive, down 11 points from the Clinton administration's rating), immigration policy (27% positive, with a high of 41% giving the administration a "poor" grade), and global warming (only 25% positive).

The public gives the Bush administration a remarkably weak evaluation of its handling of the situation in Iraq: only 32% rate it "excellent" or "good," while 62% say "fair" or "poor."

THE MAKERS OF FOREIGN POLICY: HOW MUCH INFLUENCE?

In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the public has accepted President Bush's strong assertions of executive power in conducting American foreign policy and has accepted a less influential role for Congress. On a scale running from 0 ("not at all influential") to 10 ("extremely influential") about how much influence various people or groups have on U.S. foreign policy, the proportion of Americans who estimate that the president is a 10, or "extremely influential" over foreign policy (27%), is more than double that for any other group or individual inquired about (just 13% say Congress is extremely influential). The president's mean rating on the scale is 7.7, while Congress rates a 6.9. The public's average rating for the secretary of defense as influential in foreign policy is 7.0, for the secretary of state is 6.6, for interest groups is 5.7, and for the American public is 4.5 (see Figure 7-2).

Strikingly, when the same scale is used to judge how much influence the public thinks these people or groups *should* have on U.S. foreign policy, the president's average rating rises significantly to 8.2. The pro-

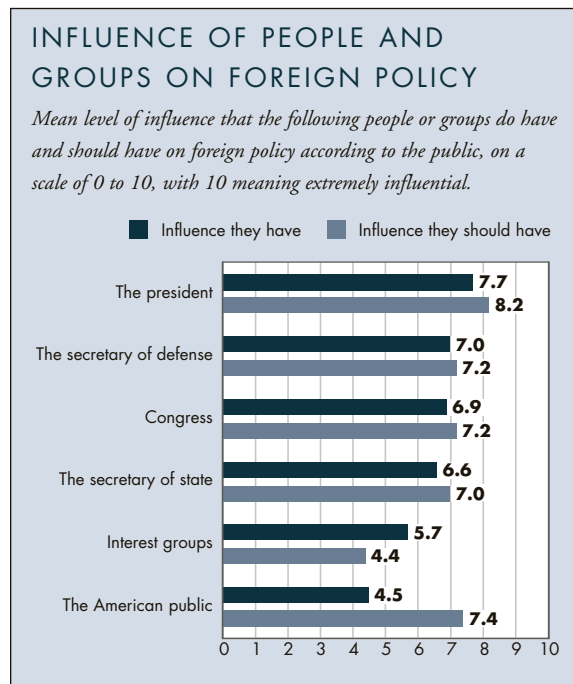


Figure 7-2

portion thinking that the president should be extremely influential (10) over foreign policy rises sharply to 40%, 13 points higher than the proportion thinking he is now extremely influential. The ratings for Congress, the secretary of defense, and the secretary of state (despite Colin Powell's very high thermometer score) rise only slightly.

On another question, the proportion of Americans who say that Congress is playing "too weak" a role in determining foreign policy compared to the role of the president has fallen to 21%, its lowest level since it hit a high point during the constitutional crisis of 1974. The proportion seeing the legislative branch's role as "about right" has risen to 49%, its highest level since 1974.

In short, the public appears willing to grant President Bush abundant power to take the initiative in

foreign affairs, but so far most Americans are not terribly impressed with how well his administration has handled a number of problems.

Two other points stand out when comparing the public's assessment of how much influence various people and groups have now over foreign policy with how much influence they should have. The public's average rating of how much influence the American public itself should have, 7.4, is sharply higher than its rating of how much influence it actually has now (4.5), and higher than that for any other group or individual except the president. This suggests that the American public does not necessarily feel that their views on foreign policy are being fully represented. And the public would like interest groups to have substantially less influence (4.4) than they are seen to have now (5.7).



CHAPTER EIGHT

Leaders and the Public

Previous chapters have dealt with the foreign policy opinions and perceptions of the general public. This chapter examines the attitudes of a set of influential foreign policy leaders and assesses how well those attitudes do or do not align with the views of the public.

The leaders surveyed agree with the public on a number of issues, including some that are controversial in policy-making circles. On many other issues, however, this consensus breaks down. Many of the divergences between the public and the leaders are large and have endured for decades. Some probably reflect informational differences, but others appear to reflect genuine discrepancies between the values and interests of foreign policy leaders and those of the American citizenry.

This analysis is based on a comparison of views expressed in the Chicago Council/GMF public survey with the views of a sample of “leaders” with foreign policy power, specialization, and expertise, who were asked many of the same questions as the public. Specifically, 397 U.S. opinion leaders and decision makers were interviewed by telephone between May 17 and July 15, 2002. They were drawn from eight distinct groups in society: administration officials in the State, Treasury, Commerce, and other departments and agencies dealing

with foreign policy; members of the House and Senate or their senior staff with committee responsibilities in foreign affairs¹; senior business executives from Fortune 1000 firms who deal with international matters; university administrators and academics who teach in the area of international relations; presidents of major organizations or large interest groups active in foreign affairs; presidents of the largest labor unions; religious leaders; and journalists and editorial staff who handle international news. For purposes of analysis, data for each of the individual groups were also reviewed separately for comparisons among them and with the leader sample as a whole as well as with the public.

The individuals interviewed (or their immediate superiors) hold key leadership positions. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the inner circle of foreign policy decision makers in the White House or the Department of Defense, few of whom were interviewed. However, many of the interviewees exercise direct authority over U.S. foreign policy, while others may affect policy indirectly, through lobbying, expert writing and testimony, and contributions to public debate.

¹Although several members of Congress completed the survey, most of our congressional respondents were senior staff, who we believe largely reflected the attitudes of the members for whom they work.

In all seven previous Chicago Council studies, starting in 1974, simultaneous surveys of leaders and of the general public were conducted, using many identical questions. This chapter focuses on the 2002 data but draws upon surveys from previous years as well.

WHERE THE PUBLIC AND LEADERS AGREE

As indicated later in this chapter, there are many substantial disagreements between leaders and the public. But there are also areas of agreement. On just over a third (38%) of all the questions asked of both leaders and the public in 2002, the difference between the proportion of leaders and the proportion of the public taking a given position is less than 10 percentage points. Differences that small are taken as constituting agreement.

Some percentages given in this chapter differ by small amounts from those reported in previous chapters. Here, for the sake of comparability, all “don’t know” and “not sure” responses were excluded before calculating percentages.²

Refocused Internationalism After 9/11

The tragic events of 9/11 have had a deep impact on leaders as well as the public. Eighty-three percent of leaders, like 91% of the public, identify terrorism as a critical threat to U.S. vital interests, and 61% percent of each group judge Islamic fundamentalism to be a critical threat. Eighty-seven percent of leaders, like 92% of the public, say that combating international terrorism should be a very important foreign policy goal.

The Goal: Security at Home

The terrorist attacks spurred leaders, like ordinary Americans, to focus on security against threats to the U.S. homeland. Eighty-nine percent of the leaders, like 91% of the public, say that preventing the spread of

nuclear weapons should be a very important goal of U.S. foreign policy. Leaders and the public also agree on some traditional issues of national security, with 55% of leaders and 58% of the public saying that defending our allies’ security should be very important.

Similar proportions of leaders and the public (59% of the public, 61% of the leaders) say that combating world hunger should be a very important foreign policy goal, while similar proportions give lower priority to other altruistic goals: only 46% of leaders, like 47% of the public, rate promoting and defending human rights in other countries as a very important goal, and only a third of each say that helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations should be a very important goal of U.S. foreign policy.

Superpower With Limits

Following 9/11, the deployment and conditional use of military force has enjoyed extensive support among leaders as well as the public. Ninety percent of both leaders and public favor U.S. air strikes against terrorist training camps. Similarly large majorities of leaders (83%) and public (88%) favor using U.S. ground troops to attack terrorist camps. Nearly two-thirds of both leaders and the public favor using U.S. troops to help the government of Pakistan—if requested—against a radical Islamic revolution. While force against terrorism stands out as a priority, both leaders and public are willing to use troops in other circumstances, with majorities of more than 80% in favor of using troops for the humanitarian purpose of stopping genocide.

To execute military operations, similar proportions of both leaders and the public support the stationing of U.S. troops abroad in five of the 10 actual or potential locations for bases that we asked about. Among leaders, like the public, support is highest for bases on the soil of longtime allies or in well-established locations: about two-thirds or more of leaders, like the public, support bases in South Korea, Germany, Japan, and the Philippines. Support for tackling international challenges is also evident in the 68% of leaders and 63% of the public who favor expanded spending on gathering

²The proportions of “don’t know” responses frequently differ across questions, over time, and between the public and leaders (with the former often expressing more uncertainty). In order to compare the opinions of those who actually hold opinions, it is necessary to exclude “don’t knows.”

intelligence information about other countries. Moreover, opposition to military aid to other countries has declined significantly in both groups: the overwhelming support by three-quarters of leaders and of the public for cutting military aid to other nations in earlier Chicago Council surveys has dwindled over time by about 30 points, to 41% for leaders and 48% for the public. (By contrast, three-quarters of both groups continue to support expanded spending on education and health care.)

Leaders and ordinary Americans do, however, share some ambivalence about the extent and the conditions under which U.S. military might is deployed. Both are split concerning establishing bases in Uzbekistan and whether 44,000 troops in Japan is “too many” or “about right.” (Forty-nine per cent of leaders, like 46% of the public, say too many.) Leaders and the public join in disavowing the first use of nuclear weapons, with only a fifth of each taking the position that in certain circumstances, the United States should use nuclear weapons even if it has not suffered a nuclear attack.

International Cooperation

The substantial convergence of the public and leaders on support for an active U.S. role in the world is premised on working with allies and through international organizations and agreements. Two-thirds of leaders and of the public favor the United States keeping its current commitment to the NATO military alliance with Western Europe the same. Very large majorities of three-quarters or more of each group favor the treaties to ban all use of land mines (75% of leaders, 80% of the public) and to prohibit nuclear weapons testing (83% of leaders, 85% of the public.) Majorities of 80% and more among both leaders and public favor “having joint training exercises of UN member countries so that their militaries will be better prepared to work together in combat situations.”

Leaders and the public both look to diplomatic and other nonmilitary foreign policy tools. A similar 49% of leaders and 44% of citizens agree that “strengthening international law and institutions” should be a very

important foreign policy goal. By overwhelming margins of 90% or more, both leaders and citizens favor diplomatic efforts to apprehend suspects and dismantle terrorist training camps, working through the UN to strengthen international laws against terrorism and to make sure UN members enforce them, and setting up an international system to cut off funding for terrorism. For countries targeted as part of the “axis of evil,” similarly high proportions of leaders and the public favor the use of economic sanctions, with a little over 60% favoring them against North Korea and a bit over 70% favoring them against Iraq.

The Global Economy

The public and leaders share a general confidence about the U.S. position in the world economy that is intermixed with uneasiness and concern. Wariness about globalization is reflected in the 49% of leaders who agree with 56% of the public that safeguarding against global financial instability should be a very important U.S. foreign policy goal.

Both leaders and the public strongly support international trade under specific conditions. Nearly three-quarters of both leaders and the public agree with the statement that “I favor free trade and I believe that it is necessary for the government to have programs to help workers who lose their jobs.” A remarkable consensus of 89% of leaders and 95% of the public agree that countries that are part of international trade agreements should be required to maintain minimum standards for working conditions. Eighty-eight percent of leaders and 96% of the public say the same about minimum standards for protection of the environment. Oversized majorities of both leaders and public acknowledge the right of other countries to take certain actions that might limit U.S. sales abroad; more than 70% of both accept that the European Union and Japan should be able to require labeling of genetically modified food, even if this might keep consumers from purchasing food imported from the United States.

The public and leaders both show strong support for certain types of foreign aid for humanitarian purposes-

es. Approximately three-quarters of leaders and the public favor aid for birth control in poor countries to help reduce population growth, while even larger majorities, in the 80% range, support “aid for women’s education in poor countries to help reduce population growth.”

The Changing Geopolitical Landscape

In the aftermath of 9/11, leaders and the public share a revised view of several allies and foes. Only a quarter of each group view political turmoil in Russia as a critical threat to the United States. Two-thirds of leaders and the public feel that military conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbors is a critical threat, and majorities of 70% or more in both groups prefer that the United States not take either side in the conflict. Tensions between India and Pakistan have surfaced as a new concern for both leaders and the public, with majorities of more than 55% identifying this as a critical threat.

The President’s Foreign Policy Performance

In terms of the foreign policy process, both leaders and the public agree that the president exercises the most influence on U.S. foreign policy and that he should continue to do so.

General Agreement on Controversial Policies: Iraq, Nuclear Weapons, Trade, UN Rapid Deployment Force

A substantial level of agreement between the public and the leaders we surveyed (though not always meeting the criterion of a less than 10 percentage point difference) is especially striking on a dozen or so issues that are controversial in Washington. Figure 8-1 shows that only a fifth of leaders and of the public support the United States using its troops to invade Iraq and overthrow the government of Saddam Hussein even if we have to go it alone. No majority or even plurality among any of the individual groups that comprise the leadership sample supports a U.S. initiative to go it alone.

In relation to a number of questions about nuclear weapons, a similar pattern emerges. Overall, only about a fifth of leaders and of the public support the United States using nuclear weapons even if it has not suffered a nuclear attack. No majority or even plurality among the nine groups of leaders supports the first use of nuclear weapons. Majorities of Americans and of all groups of leaders support participation in the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Likewise, large majorities of the public and of all individual groups of leaders favor free trade when it is linked to government programs that help workers who lose their jobs, and they believe that international trade agreements should require participating countries to maintain minimum standards for working conditions and for protecting the environment. Large majorities of both leaders and ordinary Americans also believe that the EU and Japan should be able to require labeling of genetically modified food even if it reduces U.S. imports. Oversized majorities from the public and all groups of leaders support joint training exercises of UN member countries to prepare their militaries to work together in combat situations.

Where Public and Leaders Tend to Agree Overall, But Some Leaders Disagree

On a different set of issues, leaders as a whole tend to agree with the public, but divisions among leaders mean that majorities of certain groups of leaders—especially those involved in government policy-making—may not be in line with the public’s views (see Figure 8-1 for data).

- Overall, majorities of the public and leaders believe that the United States should not act alone in responding to international crises. Groups of leaders outside of government agree with the public that the United States should not take action alone if it does not have the support of its allies, but majorities in all three policy-making bodies (House, Senate, and the administration) support the United States acting alone—and these are the

THE PUBLIC AND LEADERS ON CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES					
<i>Percentage who say...</i>					
	PUBLIC	LEADERS	SENATE	HOUSE	ADMINISTRATION
U.S. should invade Iraq even if we have to go it alone	20	23	26	33	19
U.S. should use nuclear weapons even if it has not suffered a nuclear attack	21	19	29	19	36
U.S. should participate in the Kyoto agreement to reduce global warming	75	64	40	63	35
U.S. should participate in the treaty that bans all use of land mines	80	75	33	61	64
U.S. should participate in the treaty that would prohibit nuclear weapons test explosions worldwide	85	83	62	67	78
U.S. should participate in the agreement to establish an International Criminal Court	76	66	33	49	47
U.S. should take action alone if it does not have the support of its allies in responding to international crises	33	43	67	56	56
To strengthen the UN, UN members countries should have joint training exercises so their militaries will be better prepared to work together in combat situations	80	86	95	86	91
To strengthen the UN, UN members should commit 1,000 troops to a rapid deployment force	80	62	33	54	41
U.S. should take Israel's side in a Middle East conflict	26	26	50	19	6
Favor free trade and believe it is necessary for the government to have programs to help workers who lose their jobs	75	71	81	76	74
Countries that are part of international trade agreements should be required to maintain standards for working conditions	95	89	95	82	77
Countries that are part of international trade agreements should be required to maintain environmental standards	96	89	91	75	82
EU and Japan should be allowed to require labeling of genetically modified food even if it might keep consumers from purchasing food imported from the U.S.	72	81	71	65	62

Percentages for the public and leaders calculated with "don't know" excluded.

Figure 8-1

bodies that are responsible for conducting American foreign policy.

- Although majorities of the public and leaders overall support committing 1,000 troops to a rapid deployment force that the UN Security Council can call up in short notice, most respondents in the administration and in the Senate oppose this idea.
- Large majorities of the public and leaders as a

whole believe the United States should participate in the Kyoto agreement to reduce global warming. But majorities of leaders in business, in the Senate, and especially in the Bush administration indicate that the United States should not participate in the agreement. The Senate's constitutional responsibility in the treaty process makes its support of the administration particularly important.

- Substantial majorities of the public and of leaders overall believe that the United States should adopt the international treaty to ban the use of land mines. All individual groups of leaders agree to the treaty, with one exception that is decisive in the constitutional process for treaty ratification—the Senate, where two-thirds oppose participation.
- Large majorities of the public and leaders overall believe that the United States should accept the international agreement to establish an International Criminal Court (ICC) to try individuals for war crimes, genocide, or crimes against humanity if their own country won't try them. Although all groups of leaders outside government support participation in the ICC, none of the groups within the national government support it: majorities in the Bush administration, Senate, and House oppose participation.
- Although large majorities of the public and leaders overall say the United States should not side with either Israel or the Palestinians in the Middle East conflict, there is disagreement among leaders, with the Senate split and a majority of religious leaders favoring the United States siding with Israel.

GAPS BETWEEN LEADERS AND THE PUBLIC

Although most or all groups of leaders agree with the public on a substantial number of controversial and noncontroversial issues, there are many more issues upon which the foreign policy preferences of leaders and the public are at odds. A deep divide between American leaders and citizens—especially if such a divide has persisted over the years—could be worrisome from two distinct points of view. To the extent that we want leaders to educate the public, to help citizens understand and thereby embrace the leaders' views of good public policy, a deep and continuing divide in opinions would signal a failure of leadership. By the same token, to the extent that we want leaders (especially elected or appointed political leaders) to respond to the wishes of the citizenry, a deep and continuing divide between the

two would cast doubt on the extent of democratic responsiveness in the making of foreign policy.

The evidence from 28 years of Chicago Council surveys indicates that discrepancies between the foreign policy views of leaders and the U.S. public tend to be frequent and, in many cases, quite large. Rather often, majorities of leaders disagree with majorities of the public. Moreover, the discrepancies or “gaps” tend to be enduring. Many gaps found in 2002 are noteworthy for their durability and staying power over all eight surveys since 1974. Some probably reflect informational differences between leaders and citizens (suggesting a failure of leaders to educate and persuade), while others probably reflect genuine differences in values and interests.

The Frequency of Leader–Public Discrepancies over the Years

To determine the frequency of leader-public gaps over time, we first counted the number of identically worded survey items presented to public and leaders in each of the Council's eight surveys since 1974. We then calculated the percentage point difference between the public's and leaders' opinions (with “don't know” responses excluded) for each item. Finally, we calculated the percentage of total items in each year on which there were discrepancies (gaps) of 10 percentage points or more and the percentage on which majorities of the public and majorities of leaders took opposite positions.³ The results are displayed in Figure 8-2.

In 2002 there were leader-public gaps of 10 percentage points or more on nearly two-thirds (62%) of all the questions that were asked in both the public and the leadership surveys. On 19% of all questions, majorities of leaders disagreed with majorities of the public. A number of the gaps were quite substantial in size: 18 gaps of 20-29 percentage points; 17 gaps of 30-39 percentage points, and six gaps of a remarkable 40 percentage points or more.

³Responses to the open-ended “biggest problems” questions are excluded from these calculations. The “problem” questions were not asked consistently over the years of both leaders and the public. Further, the multiple response categories create difficulties in calculating the number of distinct “questions” (the denominator) for which the proportion of gaps is computed.

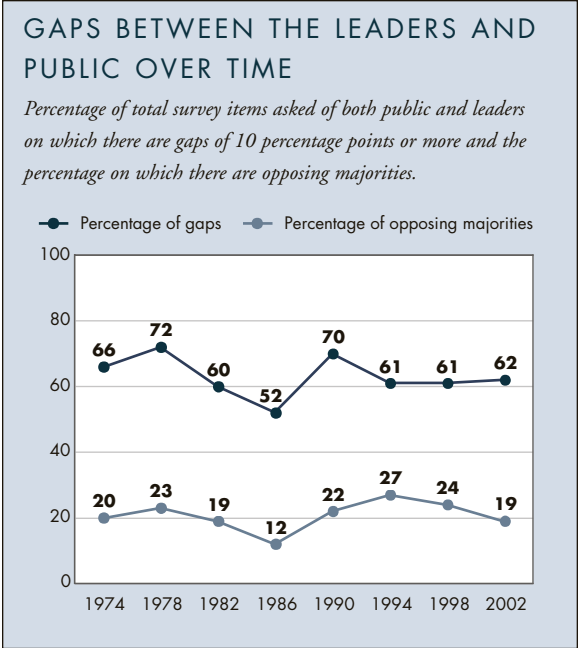


Figure 8-2

As shown in Figure 8-2, the figures for 2002 confirm a persistent pattern of leader-public discrepancies since 1974. The 62% of questions with gaps in 2002 is almost identical to the average figure for all eight years (63%), though it is lower than the peak frequencies of gaps in 1978 and 1990. Similarly, the 19% of survey questions upon which majorities of leaders in 2002 disagree with majorities of the public almost matches the average level for all eight surveys (21%).

These findings are sobering. Leaders have persistently been at odds with majorities of citizens on a fifth of survey questions and have significantly different positions on nearly two-thirds of the questions. One might conclude that leaders need to do a better job either educating the public or following their preferences.

Disagreements Between Leaders and the Public on Foreign Policy

More Leaders Embrace Active Internationalism

Although 9/11 refocused public attention on the world, leaders have consistently been more supportive of the United States assuming an active part in world affairs. Figure 8-3 shows a pattern of more leaders than ordinary Americans supporting active internationalism; the

gap in 2002 is 23 points, as compared with 29 or 30 point margins in 1990, 1994, and 1998.

Higher Public Priority on Domestic vs. Foreign Policy Programs

The public generally places higher priority than leaders do on domestic as opposed to foreign policy programs. The public has consistently been more supportive than leaders of expanding Social Security (66% of the public versus 31% of leaders, a 35 point gap in 2002) and expanding government programs to combat violence and crime (71% of the public versus 41% of leaders, a 30 point gap in 2002). Previous Council surveys have revealed greater public support for expanding health care and education as well.

By contrast, leaders place a higher priority than the public on expanding economic aid to other countries by a 45 point margin (59% versus 14%) and are more supportive of economic aid in general by a 32 point margin. Figure 8-4 shows that leaders are more supportive than the public of many types of foreign aid. They are more supportive of increasing aid to Afghanistan (67% vs. 23%, a 44 point gap), African countries (75% vs. 37%, a 38 point difference), the Palestinians (43% vs. 13%, a 30 point margin), and Russia (38% vs. 17%, a

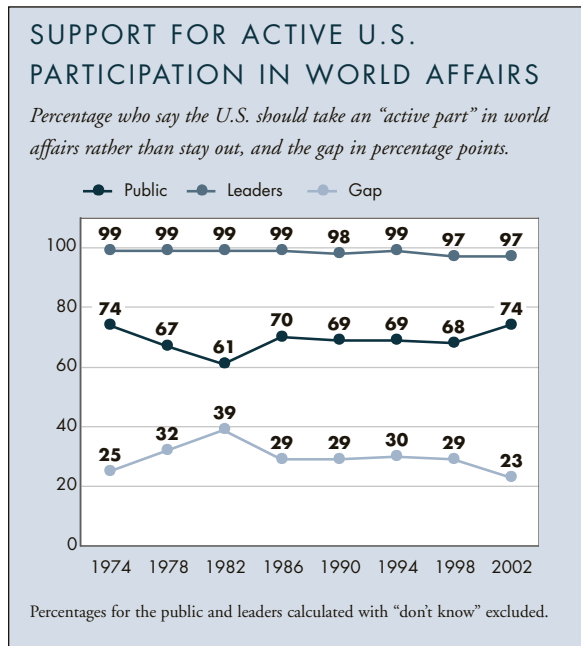


Figure 8-3

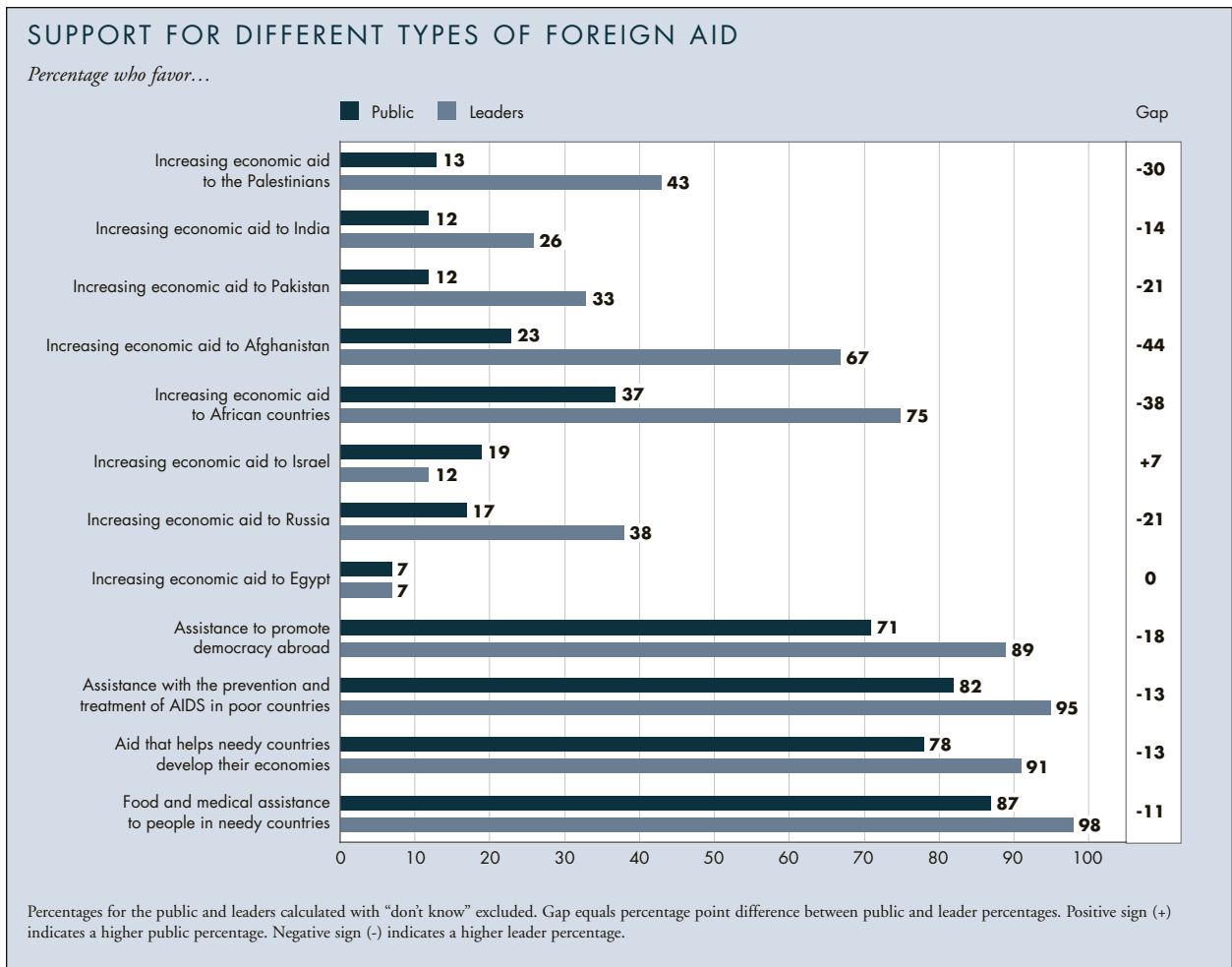


Figure 8-4

21 point gap). The public's lesser support for economic aid may result in part from its erroneous belief that the United States spends substantially more on these programs than it actually does. The mean public estimate of the proportion of the federal budget that goes to foreign aid (31%) is a startling 26 percentage points higher than the leaders' mean estimate (5%). Only 1% or less of the budget actually goes to foreign aid.

Less Leader Alarm About International Threats

The world seems to be a much scarier place for the public than for leaders. When it comes to assessing perceived "critical" threats to U.S. interests, leaders are less alarmed than the public by Iraqi development of weapons of mass destruction (72% vs. 88%, a 16 point gap), and chemical and biological weapons (67% vs. 86%, a 19 point margin). More leaders than members

of the public dismiss the military power of Russia as a critical threat (42% vs. 20%, a 22 point difference) and dismiss civil wars in Africa as a critical threat (9% vs. 25%, a 16 point margin). Leaders are also far less concerned than the public about various perceived social, economic, and environmental threats. More ordinary Americans than leaders rate as critical the threat of large numbers of immigrants and refugees coming into the United States (60% vs. 14%, a 46 point gap); the threat of low-wage competition (31% vs. 7%, a 24 margin); and the threats of global warming (48% vs. 28%), epidemics like AIDs (68% vs. 48%), and population growth (45% vs. 25%).

More Public Support for Steps to Protect the Homeland

The public's greater sensitivity about threats to the homeland translates into stronger public support for

several military measures to fight terrorism than among leaders. Leaders' support for assassinating individual terrorist leaders is 22 points lower than it is among the public (50% versus 72%). By a 16 point margin, leaders are less supportive than the public of having long-term military bases in Guantanamo Bay (56% vs. 72%) or in Saudi Arabia (51% vs. 67%). Similarly, just 40% of leaders favor bases in Pakistan, compared with 56% of citizens. The exception to the pattern of generally greater public support for bases is Turkey, where leaders are more supportive by 15 points (78% vs. 63%), possibly owing to NATO commitments.

While the public does not support building a missile defense system "right away" (32% in favor), leaders are even less supportive (15% in favor), a gap of 17 points. The public lags behind the near consensus of leaders in favor of sharing intelligence information in the fight against terrorism (60% vs. 94%, a 34 point gap), which may stem from its uncertainty about the feasibility of sharing intelligence without compromising American security.

The public's more intense commitment than leaders' to protecting the country's physical safety translates into greater support for increasing defense spending and less support for cutting back on it. The public's noticeably stronger support for defense spending reemerged in 2002 after a dozen years in which the preferences of leaders and the public were similar.

Greater Public Aversion to Putting Troops at Risk

The public's alarm at threats to the homeland and its willingness to protect against these dangers are tempered by a consistent aversion to putting troops at risk. Figure 8-5 shows that in 2002 far fewer ordinary Americans than leaders support using U.S. troops in four hypothetical scenarios in which allies are invaded: a North Korean invasion of South Korea (only 39% of the public versus 83% of leaders would use U.S. troops, a 44 point gap), a Chinese invasion of Taiwan (35% versus 54%, a 19 point gap), an Iraqi invasion of Saudi Arabia (51% vs. 83%, a 32 point gap), or an Arab invasion of Israel (52% vs. 79%, a 27 point gap). A greater reluctance among the public than leaders to send Americans

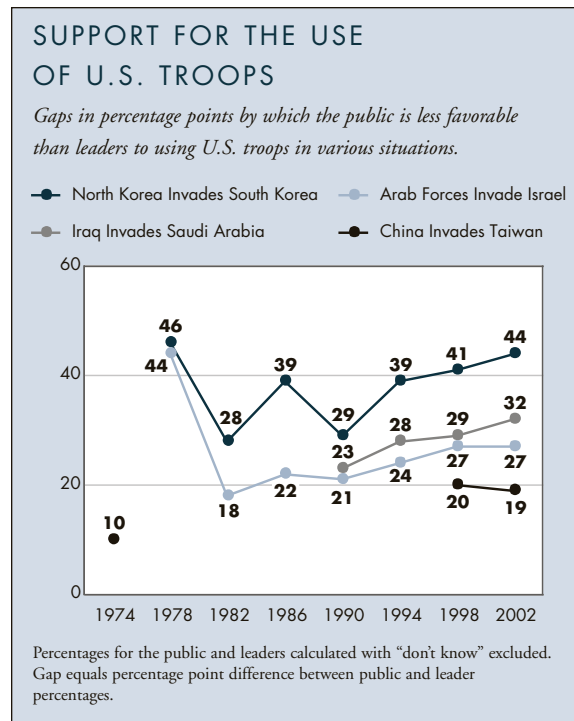


Figure 8-5

troops into harm's way is a consistent pattern stretching back to 1974.

Less Leader Commitment to International Cooperation

In several areas, the public is more supportive than leaders of relying on cooperative and multilateral approaches to foreign policy. By a 30 point margin (58% vs. 28%), more of the public than leaders say that strengthening of the UN should be a "very important" U.S. foreign policy goal. The public, by an 18 point margin (80% vs. 62%), is also more supportive of strengthening the UN by committing 1,000 troops to a rapid deployment force. But more leaders (89% vs. 64%, a 25 point margin) say they favor paying U.S. dues to the UN in full. This may result from public and/or leader confusion over whether recent payments have satisfied the "full" amount that was owed.

The public's embrace of multilateralism is evident in its stronger support for participating in the Kyoto agreement (75% vs. 64%, an 11 point gap) and the International Criminal Court (76% vs. 66%, a 10 point gap), even though two-thirds of leaders support both. On another point, leaders disagree much more strongly

than the public, by a 17 point margin (24% vs. 41%), with the idea of a division of labor with Europe in which the United States would supply most of the forces in military conflicts while Europe contributed economic assistance after the war.

More Public Support for Safeguarding Jobs and Well-Being at Home

Although the public and leaders both see benefits from the global economy, the proportion of ordinary Americans who see globalization as “mostly good” is 25 points lower than among leaders (61% vs. 86%). Leaders are more inclined than the public (17% vs. 47%, a 30 point margin) to dismiss economic competition from Japan as a “not important” threat to U.S. vital interests. Leaders are also 24 points more prone to dismiss the threat of low-wage economic competition (7% critical for leaders vs. 31% critical for the public).

Ordinary Americans are far more concerned than leaders about safeguarding American jobs and fending off economic competition from abroad. Figure 8-6 shows that an overwhelming 85% of the public say that protecting the jobs of U.S. workers should be a “very

important” foreign policy goal, as contrasted with just 35% of leaders. This has been one of the largest and most persistent gaps in Chicago Council surveys; the gap in 2002 represents the widest gulf between leaders and the public since CCFR began polling in 1974.

Immigration—widely seen as a threat to low-wage American workers and as a possible source of terrorism—draws remarkably stronger reactions from the public than leaders. The foreign policy goal of reducing illegal immigration is a far higher public priority by a 48 point margin. The public is substantially more alarmed by immigrants and refugees coming into the United States as a critical threat to U.S. interests by a 46 point margin (60% of the public versus only 14% of leaders). By large, 39 point gaps, the public is more favorable to decreasing legal immigration (57% vs. 18%) and to combating international terrorism by restricting immigration from Arab and Muslim countries 79% vs. 40%).

Similarly, the public is more worried about perceived threats to its well-being from the importation of drugs. By 36 points (81% vs. 45%), the public puts a higher priority on the goal of stopping the flow of illegal drugs. A large 69% majority of ordinary Americans favor using U.S. troops to fight drug lords in Colombia, while only a 32% minority of leaders back it.

The public is also more concerned than leaders with the environment. A 66% majority of ordinary Americans say that improving the global environment should be a very important foreign policy goal, while only 43% of leaders share this position, producing a 23 point gap. More members of the public than leaders see global warming as a critical threat by 20 points (48% vs. 28%). As noted earlier, there is a smaller 11 point gap in support for the Kyoto agreement (75% of the public vs. 64% of leaders).

Greater Leader Sensitivity to Changes in the Geopolitical Landscape

Leaders are generally quicker to perceive changes in the geopolitical landscape. A lag in public knowledge about changing international conditions may help explain why the public is more impressed than leaders with how

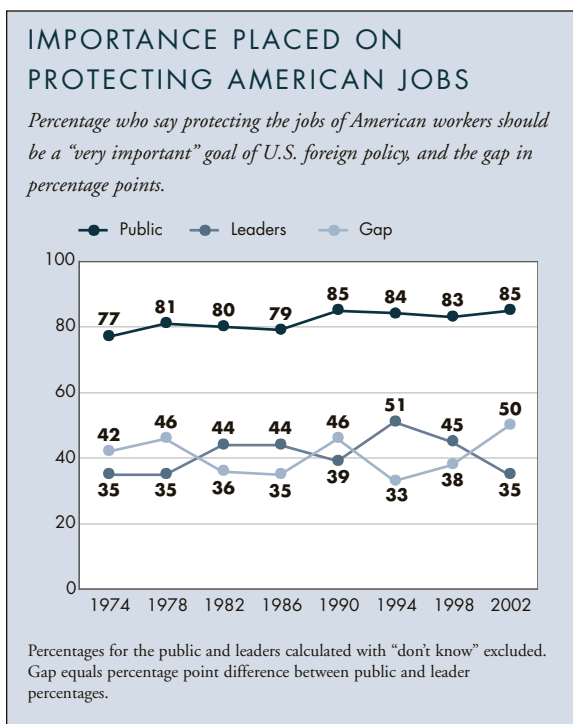


Figure 8-6

much influence Japan has in the world, by a 28 point margin (43% of the public vs. 15% of leaders think Japan plays a more important role as a world leader today compared to 10 years ago). As shifting patterns of trade and economic health have elevated the significance of China over that of traditional American allies, the public has continued to see Japan as more important than China by a 19 point gap over leaders 54% vs. 35%). Even more strikingly, a 57% majority of the public favors economic sanctions against China, as contrasted with 28% of leaders. The resilience in the public's mind of geopolitical maps from the Cold War period may explain why 56% of the public, as contrasted with 25% of leaders, favor economic sanctions against Cuba.

With regard to the Middle East, informational differences may have contributed to why leaders are far more inclined than the public to rank the Middle East as among the country's biggest foreign policy problems (38% vs. 12%, a 26 point margin). More leaders favor the United States actively working to establish a Palestinian state (85% vs. 50%, a 35 point gap) and favor being even-handed in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a way to combat terrorism (89% vs. 70%, a 19 point difference). Even as American and Iranian officials have begun to gingerly explore possible avenues for resuming normal diplomatic relations, the public is more supportive than leaders of imposing economic sanctions against Iran (68% vs. 51%, a 17 point gap).

Harris Interactive conducted 2,862 telephone interviews in the United States among men and women 18 years of age and older, using a random digit dialing technique with a national probability sample. In order to ensure comparability with the in-person Chicago Council studies of 1998 and previous years, personal in-home interviews with a national probability sample of 400 men and women 18 years of age and older were also conducted, using an abridged version of the telephone questionnaire that concentrated on questions repeated from 1998. All interviewing of the general public was conducted between June 1 and June 30, 2002. Data for the telephone and in-person interviews were weighted separately according to known demographic characteristics of the population and merged to form a combined sample (n=3,262).

In order to explore a very extensive set of topics, many questions were asked only of randomly selected subsamples of approximately 700 telephone respondents. “Core” questions, including most of those repeated from 1998, were also asked of the 400 in-person interviewees. Certain key questions were asked of all 2,862 telephone interviewees or all 3,262 respondents.

The margin of sampling error in response frequencies varies negatively with the number of respondents asked a question and positively with the closeness of opinion division. For a fifty-fifty division of opinion (where margins of error are highest), at the $p \leq .05$ level the margins of error in this study range from 1.7 percentage points (for questions asked of all respondents) up to 4 percentage points (for questions asked of 700 respondents.)

Separate analysis of the telephone and in-person data reveals that, as the literature would predict, there tend to be certain systematic “mode” differences in responses. Telephone interviewees, for example, tend to

give fewer “don’t know” responses and to give more “positive” or first-option responses (e.g., more perceptions of vital interests and more ratings of goals as “very important”). This does not mean that either method is incorrect; both meet professional standards and accurately reflect responses by the populations from which they sample. But mode differences do complicate the assessment of opinion changes from the in-person surveys of 1998 and previous years. This report is based on the combined 2002 telephone and in-person data set, which mitigates mode differences. In addition, only those contrasts with previous Council surveys that appear in both the 2002 combined data set and the 2002 in-person interviews taken separately are interpreted in this report as demonstrating opinion changes. An exception is made for the “active part in world affairs” question, for which the in-person responses do not show a significant change from 1998, but the much higher level of activism displayed in the 2,862 telephone responses is confirmed as indicating a real opinion change by others’ surveys conducted in 2002.

Chicago Council surveys have been carried out every four years since 1974. Prior to 2002, all but the first were conducted by the Gallup Organization; Harris conducted the 1974 survey.