



FOREIGN POLICY AGENDA

APRIL 2006

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN U.S. FOREIGN RELATIONS

1900 - 2001





FOREIGN POLICY AGENDA

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COVER PHOTOS

Center top: President Ronald W. Reagan (right) talks with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev at a three-day summit in Washington December 8, 1987. AP/WWP

Right: Chairman Mao Zedong (left) and President Richard M. Nixon meet for the first time in February 1972 in Beijing. AP/WWP

Center bottom: British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (left), U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt (center), and Soviet Marshal Josef Stalin (right) meet in the Livadia Palace gardens, Yalta, on February 12, 1945. AP/WWP

Left: President John F. Kennedy proclaims a U.S. naval blockade against Cuba in a nationwide television and radio broadcast from the White House in Washington on October 22, 1962. AP/WWP

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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Focusing on a number of seminal world events, this issue of *eJournal USA: Foreign Policy Agenda* offers a framework for examining how U.S. foreign relations have evolved over the past century, influenced by the legacy of America's founding ideals of protecting individual rights and freedom.

Like other countries operating on the global stage, the United States has both played an active role in and been acted upon by international events—and occasionally forced into a role not of its own choosing.

The Editors recognize that any selection of “major events” will ultimately be arbitrary, but it is our hope that those in this journal will provide insight into the American character and stimulate dialogue among international audiences.

Many of these past occurrences have been significant in shaping the current U.S. response to the crises, opportunities, and complex trade-offs of international relations.

One enduring political dynamic for the United States, as for most nations, is the desire to live in a free society, secure and at peace, and working in harmony with allies and trading partners toward prosperity. But America also comes to foreign policy with a unique blend of idealism and realism that combines generosity with self-interest, follows defensive wars with economic recovery programs, builds institutions that are then turned over to others, and seeks to help others find their own way toward democracy.

Walter Russell Mead, Scott Erwin, and Eitan Goldstein of the Council on Foreign Relations analyze many of the events and ideas that have shaped the evolution of American foreign relations in the last 100 years and explain why they still have significant impact in today's world. David Ellwood of the University of Bologna and Johns Hopkins University, Bologna Center, examines the role of the post-World War II Marshall Plan on the economic recovery and reconstruction of Western Europe. Warren I. Cohen of the University of Maryland at Baltimore County examines the impact and influence of President Nixon's historic opening of U.S. relations with the People's Republic of China in 1972. Maarten Pereboom of Salisbury University discusses the enormous role that trade and economics has historically played in American foreign relations. And Walter Laqueur of the Center for Strategic and International Studies examines how the United States has sought to exercise power responsibly following the end of the Cold War in 1991 as the world has sought to adjust to the new security environment.

These and other experts share their thoughts in Significant Events in U.S. Foreign Relations. We welcome you to this edition of *eJournal USA*.

The Editors



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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE / APRIL 2006 / VOLUME 11 / NUMBER 1

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