



*Washington's Identity Crisis*  
**Uncertain America**

by Maureen S. Steinbruner and Michael Spirtas

The United States enters the new millennium as an incredibly strong, prosperous country, with enormous military, economic, and technological advantages over most other countries in the world, and with a popular culture that has penetrated the global consciousness. In any country finding itself in such a situation, it is predictable that such perceived dominance would generate an interest on the part of political leaders, and probably the citizenry as well, in extending national influence and exercising national leadership abroad. But America at present is ambivalent, conflicted, and highly uncertain about its international role. In particular, there is no effective political consensus in the United States today about emerging issues of international governance.

Many references to the American polity's current stance toward international cooperation emphasize what is seen as an increasing attitude of neoisolationism. While we do not deny that there is an isolationist element within the public, we will argue that upon closer examination, a more complex picture emerges. We believe that Americans are experiencing something of a national identity crisis at present, that national identity and the politics of international cooperation are intrinsically related issues, and that U.S. leaders thus face a significant challenge in framing this country's view of itself and its international agenda.

**AMBIVALENT HEGEMON**

Reflecting its unassailable status as the one "superpower" left standing after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the unusually impressive performance of the U.S. economy throughout the 1990s, America appropriately ended the "American century" in a position of unquestioned dominance in policy-setting within international organizations. Its position of leadership among the Permanent Five at the United Nations is not unique. The United States tends to cast an overwhelmingly large vote in Brussels, in Geneva, and in Washington, as well as in New York. And, where it counts, the United States generally has a veto as well.

In spite of its undeniable stature, however, in the aftermath of the cold war, America's leaders have seemed to find it increasingly difficult to settle on a consistent, bipartisan line of policy with respect to U.S. participation in international institutions. While there were sharp arguments over the details of policy and the choice of

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strategies, the cold war consensus largely assumed agreement about the overall goals. Now, arguments about UN contributions, controversy over World Bank and International Monetary Fund lending policies, stalemate over future World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations, disputes about the role of human rights in U.S. policy, and congressional defiance of the Kyoto Protocol, along with the Senate's rejection of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT),<sup>1</sup> reflect a significant amount of domestic political conflict over the ends, as well as the means, of U.S. participation in international agreements and organizations.

Partisans on both sides of these disputes blame their opponents for failing to respond appropriately to international imperatives. In reacting to the defeat of some of its central international initiatives, the Clinton administration has characterized the Republican majority in Congress as isolationist. Republican opponents of the administration, in turn, have accused the Clinton foreign policy team of too tepid a defense of engagement policies, inattention to problems prior to the WTO talks in Seattle, and bad timing in bringing ratification of the CTBT before Congress. Observers in the foreign policy community tend to fault policymakers in both parties for inadequate leadership on these issues. Leaders respond with reference to public opinion, citing what they see as a growing indifference on the part of the public, if not outright hostility, to foreign involvements.<sup>2</sup> Critics, however, point to countervailing evidence of strong and continuing public support for international engagement and for American participation in international institutions. They contend that policymakers who cite negative public views as determinative are out of touch, misreading public intentions, or selectively using poll results to suit their own agendas.<sup>3</sup> While Americans may not place foreign policy priorities very high on their lists of concerns, it is argued, they nonetheless remain fundamentally internationalist and committed to sharing global burdens fairly.

Can these perspectives be reconciled? Are American leaders today simply out of touch with public feelings about the issue of U.S. international participation, as charged? Or is there some other explanation for the widely held perception that Americans are more seriously conflicted about global engagement than they used to be? One interpretation that needs to be considered is that the American body politic—including both policymakers and the public—is wrestling to reestablish a clear sense of national identity now that exercising leadership in the cold war is no longer relevant to their sense of who they are.

Frequently overlooked in assessing the meaning of specific disputes about international participation, perhaps because it is assumed to be self-evident, is the relationship of any given policy decision to the prevailing sense of "nation" that it is intended to express.<sup>4</sup> As political scientist Kenneth Hoover put it, "What formal political systems do is institutionalize procedures and policies that shape and manage identities so as to serve some concept of the common good. . . . The policies that get made apply to groups of people: welfare recipients, business people, polluters, or maybe everybody."<sup>5</sup> Everybody, indeed. Foreign policy decisions, and especially decisions about participation in international institutions, require reflection on the nation as a whole, what the

United States is about, and most important, whether particular international relationships are or are not consistent with national self-definition.

Thus, it is possible to see arguments over issues like UN dues, or the propriety of placing U.S. troops under international command, as part of a necessary and possibly inevitable struggle to resolve who Americans now are as a nation, and where and how they fit into some larger and still emergent post-cold war international system.

#### CURRENT PUBLIC OPINION IN THE UNITED STATES

For several years, with increasing insistence, general opinion surveys have reported that the U.S. public is turning inward and away from international engagement.<sup>6</sup> This is typically expressed as low priority given to foreign policy concerns, indifference to news coverage of foreign affairs, or negative responses to the idea of troop commitments overseas or funding for international initiatives. Such survey findings reinforce the view among political analysts that there is a growing mood of isolationism among the American public.

On the other hand, opinion specialists who follow international affairs in particular have for some time argued that such findings are subject to misinterpretation. They believe, and have evidence to indicate, that more extensive, more probing analyses show a more favorable public view of U.S. foreign involvement, and thus provide a truer picture of the public's actual perceptions and policy assessments.

When you sit them down and really talk, this line of inquiry indicates, Americans care about international stability, are willing to spend much larger amounts than the United States actually does on foreign aid, are not as casualty-averse as political leaders assume, and so forth. A recent example of this analysis that was especially thorough in its methodology is *Misreading the Public: The Myth of a New Isolationism* by Kull and Destler.<sup>7</sup> The authors describe a multistage process that involved an initial round of interviews with policymakers, a comprehensive analysis of existing poll data, focus groups, a further set of workshops with policymakers, and lastly a nationwide poll and a set of congressional district polls. The results document a wide variance between what policymakers believe as to negative public attitudes and what the study actually shows. In particular, broad public support for U.S. participation in the United Nations, specifically favoring UN peacekeeping operations and paying UN dues, is documented, along with a willingness to provide foreign aid. For example, a 1995 poll found the public favoring UN action over U.S. unilateral moves in trouble spots by a margin of 66% to 29%.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, when shown information on actual foreign aid spending, the public supports current levels, and giving in general, although as a low priority.<sup>9</sup>

These findings are contrasted with the strong belief expressed by policymakers that the public is hostile or indifferent in these areas. Authors Kull and Destler offer a useful analysis of the reasons for this gap. They cite a generally low salience of foreign policy issues in congressional elections, candidates' disinclination to poll on these issues, and executive-branch officials' view that less public attention to foreign policy is preferable, to provide room for difficult decisions to be made without provoking large

public controversies. Another important reason given for the gap between policymakers' views of public attitudes and the reality as expressed by Americans is the inaccurate information most members of the public have about details, such as the fact that U.S. spending on foreign aid actually is a much smaller portion of the budget than what they say they expect and want it to be. Typical perceptions are around 15%, whereas the real number is closer to 1.5%.<sup>10</sup>

The basic conclusion drawn from the analysis is that policymakers do not understand public views and values and are wrong in their interpretations of the public mood on these issues. Yet policymakers might not be so far out of touch as it would seem if the larger question of U.S. national identity is brought into the picture.

### THE AMERICAN VOTER

Current opinion, primarily what general opinion surveys of issues in the news tend to measure, is important as a reflection of what the public is thinking at a given moment in time. Such surveys reveal how much attention is being paid to a subject, what information is being communicated about it, and so on. As a practical matter, any current policy decision being made by the government must, out of necessity, take some account of such views. But these opinions are generally quite volatile and do not necessarily reflect the considered thoughts that deeper and more systematic survey methods can reach.

As a practical matter, the primary way that decision makers assess these more fundamental leanings on the part of the public is in their effect on voting behavior. The salience of issues in a given election campaign, and the intensity of voters' views on issues even of high salience, are aspects of opinion that are particularly important to evaluating the relevance of those opinions to political leaders. Moreover, it is the conjoint expression of attitude over a wide range of issues, in relation to a particular candidate and party, in relation to the options being offered, that matters. When faced with constrained choices and specific tradeoffs, and confronted with sharp disputes about the desirability of specific policy courses, what issue tends to override what? And why?

The act of voting is an extremely complex one, very different from expressing a current view—even a well-formed and well-informed view—on a particular subject. It reflects the reduction of a broad set of concerns into a single, usually binary, choice. An individual's personal attitudes, values, and sense of self-interest must be melded in this choice with the individual's feelings about the needs of self, family, and community, as well as a judgment about the party or candidate most likely to satisfy these needs effectively.

At the broadest level, the act of voting for national officials adds to other factors a distant but often critical set of concerns having to do with the larger collective interest, both in the nation as a nation and, in the end, in its role in the world. If we assume that, for example, for the purpose of voting for president, it is primarily with regard to the sense of oneself as "American" that one holds the most meaningful view of what the "United States" as a whole should do, then in some sense the voter must

carry into the polls a feeling or idea about what America is and should be doing as a nation.

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### **When they vote, citizens are acting not only as individuals but also as part of a shared American identity.**

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Separate and distinct from one's personal attitudes about, say, compassion for the poor overseas or how much funding, ideally, the U.S. government might contribute to alleviating world hunger is a more basic issue that each citizen must confront, or feel, as he or she considers whether to vote in a national election, and for whom. That is the question of how the country, as a country, is doing, and where it should be going. In this, citizens are acting not as individuals alone in the world but rather as part of a shared identity as Americans. As pollster Frederick T. Steeper put it, "We have found that respondents' voting behavior—whether they reward or punish the incumbent—correlates with their answers about how the country is doing far more than do their responses about how they themselves are getting along."<sup>11</sup>

Some evidence from recent focus groups shows a public concerned and distressed about how the country as a country is doing.<sup>12</sup> Beyond this, participants in focus groups for some time have found it difficult to say what it means today to be "American," while expressing the view that it was easier to do so in the past.<sup>13</sup> They also have trouble articulating what they have in common with other Americans.

Before addressing some possible implications of Americans' current feelings of national identity for U.S. international decision-making, it is useful to look at a couple of recent non-U.S. examples in which issues of national identity seemed significant in framing policies of international cooperation.

#### **NATIONAL IDENTITY AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

Most scholars of international relations argue that states cooperate internationally when they perceive it to be in their national interest to do so, but this statement invites the question: how are national interests formed? Even studies that uphold the importance of national interest show the difficulty in defining such an interest a priori.<sup>14</sup> It is often difficult to determine what is in the national interest, but more centrally, at issue in any such determination is the very sense of nation and purpose that frames the calculus.

The relationship between the central question of national identity and decisions relating to international cooperation is a complex one, and there is no consensus among scholars about a single way to approach the topic.<sup>15</sup> Social psychologists have established through experimentation that individuals who believe themselves to belong to a common group are more likely to engage in cooperative behavior with other members of that group.<sup>16</sup> If we apply this principle to international politics, one measure of a state's tendency to cooperate (or not) with other states could be to examine its relationship to the states that would be involved in the cooperative agreement. Presumably, if a leader considers his state to be part of a group of states, he is more

likely to favor cooperation within this group. For leaders in open, democratic societies with frequent elections, what they believe in this respect ought to bear some kind of relationship to what, in turn, the public believes.

A few examples of international cooperation involving Britain and France help to illustrate this argument.<sup>17</sup> Both countries are industrialized democracies of about 60 million citizens. Both are former great powers that had to learn to adapt to their changed status in international politics following World War II. Despite these similarities, however, the two states have followed quite different policies toward economic and military cooperation with other states in the postwar period.

The French joined the European Monetary System (EMS) upon its formation in 1978–79, while the British requested only observer status. The British did eventually enroll the pound in the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) of the EMS in 1990, but withdrew during the “Black Wednesday” currency crisis of September 1992. The French championed the formation of a single European currency in 1999, while the British have refrained from actively participating in European monetary cooperation to this day.

The French and British economies are different, but not in any way that explains their different stances toward European monetary cooperation. Instead of looking solely to economic causes to explain the differences in British and French policy, our approach suggests that we examine the differences in French and British popular conceptions of their own identity.

The French have shown a high level of identification with Western Europe from the late 1970s to today. In 1982, 61% of French respondents to a Eurobarometer poll answered that they either “often” or “sometimes” felt themselves to be Europeans in addition to being French, indicating a high level of French affinity with Western Europe.<sup>18</sup> French public opinion on this question fluctuated throughout the 1980s, reaching a high in 1986, when 69% of French respondents noted that they “often” or “sometimes” felt themselves to be Europeans, and a low in 1987, when 53% responded similarly. Even the low of 53% for 1987 was higher than the European Community average of 48% for that year. On the whole, public-opinion data show relatively high French identification with Europe.

Despite the switch in prime minister from moderate conservative Giscard d’Estaing to socialist François Mitterrand, through change from socialist experimentation to rigueur, during periods of one-party rule and cohabitation, the French government repeatedly expressed its willingness to coordinate its currency’s exchange rate with those of fellow European states. During the pressure of the Black Wednesday crisis, the French refused to withdraw the franc from the ERM, even though international currency traders threatened to bid the franc lower in world markets. Such policy continuity would have been unlikely without strong French identification with Europe.

Comparatively, British identification with Europe has been lower. As was the case with French public-opinion data, British respondents’ attitudes toward Europe varied from year to year. Although there is support for the supposition that British affinity

toward Europe rose over time, it still remained low when compared to that of France. Of the nine times that Eurobarometer polled the British public between 1978 and 1992, the lowest combination of respondents who answered that they “often” or “sometimes” thought of themselves as European in addition to being British was 24% in March/April 1983. Subsequent polls show that the percentage of respondents answering similarly rose over the next few years, reaching a high of 36% in autumn 1988. Two subsequent polls show that this feeling of European citizenship dropped to 28% in both 1989 and 1990, then rose to 31% in 1991. While the difference between the poll responses between the early 1980s and the late 1980s/early 1990s is not overwhelming, it does indicate that British identification with Europe grew over time.

Growth in group identity allowed the British to bring the pound into the ERM in 1990 and to sign the Maastricht Treaty, the document outlining the concrete steps that would eventually lead to creation of the euro, in 1991. Still, the ambivalent nature of British identification with Western Europe influenced London’s insistence on an “opt out” clause in the Maastricht Treaty and their decision to pull the pound out of the ERM during the Black Wednesday crisis. Today, it is clear that the Blair government would like Britain to join the euro, but lack of national identification with Western Europe has helped prevent this momentous step.

One might be tempted to argue that the British are more concerned with their independence than the French, and that this explains the difference in their policies toward European monetary cooperation. However, an examination of their policies toward security cooperation shows that this is not the case. If we look at the two states’ policies toward the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), we see that here the French seem to be more concerned with their independence than the British.

Both Britain and France were founding members of NATO in 1949. Since standing side by side at the alliance’s formation, however, the two countries’ experiences with NATO have been profoundly different. The British overall have worked within alliance channels, while the French have expressed disapproval of American leadership of the alliance. Eventually, the French withdrew from the alliance’s integrated military command and asked that NATO’s headquarters and equipment be moved out of France in 1966.

French policy toward NATO was affected by the fact that in this case, alliance cooperation involved working not just within Europe but with a North Atlantic group of states, including the United States. Polling data indicate that the French identified quite a bit with the North Atlantic group of states in 1949 but that this identification dropped over time. When French poll respondents were asked to rank other states by French feelings for each of their peoples, more than 25% ranked Americans first and more than 30% ranked the British second.<sup>19</sup> Between 1946 and 1948, more than 70% of French respondents consistently supported the presence of American troops in France. The high level of affinity that the French exhibited with respect to the North Atlantic in 1949 showed some signs of erosion by 1954. For example, when asked to name a country that sought to dominate the world in 1953, 25% of French

citizens surveyed named the United States, quite close to the 26% who named the USSR. In a series of polls between November 1954 and December 1957, more than 50% of French respondents regularly answered that they had a “very good,” “good,” or “average” opinion of the United States and United Kingdom, while 30% to 40% answered similarly for the USSR. In December 1957, 62% answered this way for the United Kingdom, 59% for the United States, and 37% for the USSR. In 1963, 59% of French respondents supported the idea that a unified Western Europe could promote its own policies independently of the United States. In the same year, 45% answered that France should act independently of U.S. policies, in contrast to 31% who agreed that France would be better off if it were narrowly associated with the United States. By the mid-1960s, the French tended to identify their interests independently of fellow North Atlantic countries, particularly the United States.

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### **A country’s perception of its national identity affects its attitudes toward engagement with the rest of the world.**

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In contrast to the French, British identification with the North Atlantic group has been strong throughout NATO’s history. In October 1954, 49% of British respondents reported either a “very good” or “good” opinion of the United States, while 6% reported similar opinions of the USSR, and 4% for China.<sup>20</sup> The gap between British opinions of the United States, on the one hand, and of China and the USSR, on the other, supports the proposition that the British perceived themselves as sharing an affinity with a group of states associated with the United States. In November 1956, the month of the ill-fated Suez intervention, 77% of British respondents argued that the basic interests of the United Kingdom were either very much (20%) or fairly well (57%) in agreement with those of the United States. In comparison, only 29% of French respondents answered similarly. A slight 13% of British respondents noted that their interests were very different or rather different from U.S. interests, compared to 36% of French responses for these options.

These trends continued into the 1960s. In 1962, 74% of respondents answered that British interests were either “very much in agreement” or “fairly well in agreement” with those of the United States. When compared to the 47% of French citizens who responded similarly, the high level of affinity becomes apparent. A February 1963 poll showed that 70% of British citizens felt that British interests were either “very much” or “fairly well” in agreement with those of the United States. In February 1965, 56% of British respondents noted that they regarded America as Britain’s best friend. At the same time, it is important to note that 47% answered in a March 1965 poll that British foreign policy depended too much on the United States, so the perception of identification was tempered with some yearning for independence.<sup>21</sup>

The British and French examples are relevant for understanding the U.S. approach toward international cooperation, in the sense that a country’s perception of its national identity affects its attitudes toward engagement with the rest of the world. Presently, it is unclear, in the aftermath of the cold war, to what extent Americans identify with groups of states, and for what purposes.



**AMERICAN IDENTITY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

From the time of its founding, a sense of America as above the fray has characterized U.S. attitudes toward events abroad, from Washington's warning of "foreign entanglements" up through arguments over U.S. participation in World War II prior to Pearl Harbor and on to the present day. A sense of America as unique has also been important, reflected in concepts like Henry Luce's "American Century."<sup>22</sup> In the United States, events of the past several decades generated a positive idea internally of America as an international participant—as "leader of the free world"—for the first time. The level of U.S. international cooperation after World War II was grounded in this identity. It gave Washington a clearly defined role from which it exercised leadership in establishing a new set of international organizations intended to promote global economic stability and maintain "Western" security.

This is not to say that the postwar perception of the U.S. role in international cooperative ventures went unchallenged, either at home or abroad. The British and French attempted, unsuccessfully, to present the United States with a *fait accompli* by intervening militarily against Egypt over Suez in 1956; the French chafed at what they saw as excessive U.S. influence in the world, eventually withdrawing from NATO's integrated military command in 1966; and Americans vigorously debated the desirability of stationing U.S. troops in Europe throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Moreover, Washington's almost solitary involvement in Vietnam showed most clearly the limits of U.S. ability to achieve international security cooperation, as only a few other countries could be brought to support U.S. intervention there. But for the most part, America's identity as "leader of the free world" proved robust and functional over time, providing a solid base of public opinion tolerant of specific foreign policy initiatives, from the Truman Doctrine to Reagan's initial intervention in Central America.

Since the end of the cold war, however, U.S. political leaders have been working to articulate an effective new vision of American national identity in an international context. President George Bush posited a "New World Order" in which America would exercise strong international leadership to maintain a system of sovereign states and stable international relationships. The Clinton administration attempted "assertive multilateralism,"<sup>23</sup> later rejecting this phrase in favor of viewing the United States as the "indispensable nation."<sup>24</sup> Prior to becoming secretary of state, then U.S. ambassador to the UN Madeleine K. Albright elaborated on the latter phrase by outlining what it would mean in terms of specific tasks, such as promoting peace and democracy and preventing nuclear proliferation.<sup>25</sup>

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**What America means to the rest of the world is at present very open to interpretation.**

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This ongoing effort to define America's place in the world reflects a real need to address underlying public uncertainty: an uncertainty about issues much more fundamentally deep-seated than the specifics of individual policy decisions about international cooperation and involvement.

Despite a pervasive optimism about the future in general, Americans are concerned and anxious about global developments. For example, looking at what the public thinks about “America’s Place in the World,” the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press on two occasions in the 1990s found Americans expressing strong dissatisfaction “with the way things are going in the world.”<sup>26</sup> In more recent surveys, asking somewhat different but related questions, Pew researchers found a predominating optimism about self, family, and the country overall but also some dire predictions about the likelihood of calamities to come, with emphasis given to problems associated with globalism. The pattern of global fears “extends to the American view of the U.S. economy and the country’s role in the world. Although two thirds of the public believes the U.S. economy will grow stronger in the next 50 years, half expect that the average American will be hurt by the global economy.”<sup>27</sup>

It seems that, ironically, events of the later years of the “American Century” left Americans with a weakened, or at least a murkier, sense of their identity with respect to the rest of the world. The public appear to be reacting to this national identity dilemma, at least in part, by turning its attention whenever it can away from problematic, anxiety-provoking news stories about international affairs. While members of the public do seem to accept the idea of global participation in principle, they have no clear idea of America’s role in the world today around which to organize a comfortable sense of national identity.

## CONCLUSION

Psychologists suggest that individual identity is at once both a personal and a social construct. Who we think we are is based on a sense of our uniqueness as a person but also is grounded in a view of the groups of which we do and do not feel a part. We believe that national identity too is framed in these two important and related ways, and that like some other countries in the post-cold war era, Americans are having problems establishing a clear sense of who they are as a nation. The ongoing process is taking them through a reexamination of values, a rediscovery of what Americans have in common with each other as a people, and—not insignificantly—a reconsideration of what they have in common with various groupings of nations around the world.

If this assessment is correct, it poses both an opportunity and a challenge for U.S. political leaders over the coming years. The opportunity arises because of the very vagueness with which Americans today appear to be defining their sense of nation. What America is about, what it means in the world and to the rest of the world, is at present very open to interpretation, and a reasonable but compelling interpretation should, presumably, have great effect. The challenge, though, will be to find a positive definition of American identity that is consistent with the restrictions on sovereignty necessarily imposed by the framework of international cooperation and engagement. The public wants to see the United States lessen the country’s direct share of world responsibility, at a time when an increase might be reasonably called for. The public wants the United States to remain engaged, but prefers acting in concert with other

states or through international organizations so as to bear fewer burdens of leadership. Yet, Americans' willingness to accept others' agendas and objectives is quite limited. Thus political arguments currently under way in the United States about the future direction of its participation in the international arena, addressing issues of both substance and procedure, come at a time of critical uncertainty among the public with respect to the appropriate U.S. international role. These arguments and the policy outcomes that will result as they are resolved are likely to have a profound and formative effect on public support for a U.S. global role during the next several decades. This is one of the most important issues at stake as voters choose between two different kinds of internationalist leaders in the presidential election, and as they form a Congress and Senate to work with a new president in the years ahead.



### Notes

<sup>1</sup> On which see Robert G. Torricelli, this issue, pp. 33–37.

<sup>2</sup> Many political analysts, including members of the U.S. Congress, viewed the 1994 congressional election as a blow against the UN. See Steven Kull and I.M. Destler, *Misreading the Public: The Myth of a New Isolationism* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution Press, 1999) p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230.

<sup>4</sup> We often refer to the “nation” instead of the “state.” The former refers more to the community of people residing in a given territory, while the latter refers to the legitimate legal authority with jurisdiction over this community of people.

<sup>5</sup> Kenneth Hoover (with J. Marcia and K. Parris), *The Power of Identity: Politics in a New Key* (Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House Publishers, 1997), p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> For example, *U.S. News and World Report* reported a Roper poll finding that only about 2% of persons surveyed put “protecting the country” at the top of their list of priorities. See Richard J. Newman, “Why Missile Politics Is Taking a Right Turn: Washington’s Roiled, But Nobody’s Listening,” *U.S. News and World Report*, Oct. 18, 1999.

<sup>7</sup> See note 2.

<sup>8</sup> Kull and Destler, *Misreading the Public*, p. 79.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> From focus groups conducted for the Center for National Policy in Aug. 1999 by Lake Snell Perry & Associates with John Deardourff. These groups also happened to produce a number of volunteered anti-foreign aid comments, and even the suggestion that there should be less emphasis placed on foreign language instruction in high schools.

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, “Diagnosing Voter Discontent,” report on a series of focus groups and personal interviews prepared by Strategic Frameworking, Inc., for the Center for National Policy, Washington, D.C., Apr. 1996.

<sup>14</sup> Stephen Krasner, *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investments and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978).

<sup>15</sup> For a sample of approaches, see Glenn Chafetz, Michael Spirtas, and Benjamin Frankel, eds., *The Origins of National Interests* (London: Frank Cass, 1999).

<sup>16</sup> See Harvey A. Hornstein, “Promotive Tension: The Basis of Prosocial Behavior from a Lewinian Perspective,” *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 28, no. 3, 1972, pp. 191–218; *idem*, *Cruelty and Kindness: A New Look at Aggression and Altruism* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1976) esp. ch. 7; John C. Turner, “Towards a Cognitive Redefinition of the Social Group,” in Henri Tajfel, *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982); and *idem*, “Social Categorization and Social Discrimination in the Minimal Group Paradigm,” in Henri Tajfel, ed., *Differentiation between Social Groups* (London: Academic Press, 1978).

<sup>17</sup> This section draws from Michael Spirtas, “With and Without: British and French Policies Toward Economic and Military Cooperation” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia Univ., 1998).

<sup>18</sup> Unless noted otherwise, all public-opinion data are from various editions of Eurobarometer surveys (Brussels: Commission of the European Communities).

<sup>19</sup> *Sondages: Revue Française de l'Opinion Publique*, vol. 15, no. 2, 1953, p. 7. These results and those noted subsequently in this section are taken from a poll administered in 1950, which was after the French signed the North Atlantic Pact, so French entrance into the pact could have inflated these figures. If other French opinion data at this time are indicative of French opinion before 1949, however, this poll gives a fairly accurate indication of French regard for the Americans and British prior to the establishment of the North Atlantic Pact.

<sup>20</sup> Richard L. Merritt and Donald J. Puchala, *Western European Perspectives on International Affairs: Public Opinion Studies and Evaluations* (New York: Praeger, 1968). For the discussion that follows, see pp. 244–255.

<sup>21</sup> George H. Gallup, ed., *The Gallup International Public Opinion Polls: Great Britain, vol. II, 1965–1975* (New York: Random House, 1976) pp. 789, 794.

<sup>22</sup> For a general discussion of the roots and character of early isolationist elements in American foreign policy, see Felix Gilbert, *To the Farewell Address: Ideas of Early American Foreign Policy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1961). The Luce essay can be found in William Appleman Williams et al., eds., *America in Vietnam: A Documentary History* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press, 1975).

<sup>23</sup> For analysis of assertive multilateralism, see Michael N. Barnett, “The United Nations and Global Security: The Norm Is Mightier than the Sword,” *Ethics & International Affairs*, vol. 9, 1995, pp. 37–54.

<sup>24</sup> For example, see President Bill Clinton’s second inaugural address, Jan. 20, 1997 (available online: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/html/1997-01-20.html>).

<sup>25</sup> Madeleine K. Albright, “America the Indispensable” (remarks at the Edmund S. Muskie Distinguished Public Service Award Dinner, Center for National Policy, Washington, D.C., Sept. 19, 1996).

<sup>26</sup> The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, “Candidate Qualities May Trump Issues in 2000,” Oct. 18, 1999; and idem, “America Looks to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” Oct. 24, 1999 (available online: <http://www.people-press.org>).

<sup>27</sup> Pew Research Center, “America Looks to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”