

**Forcing Intervention:  
The 1994 intervention in Haiti**

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Many factors drive foreign policy decision-making in the United States. Some posit that a national interest based on ideology or simply the logical conclusion reached when examining the situation at hand drives decision-making. Other scholars contend that the attitudes and opinions of a country's domestic political scene and constituents drive the decisions a nation makes internationally. Many things can be true simultaneously, especially for foreign policy decisions in the United States. This paper attempts to discern how much of an influence these different factors have in relation to making major foreign policy decisions, specifically applying the information gained through the examination of a body of literature related to the United States' 1994 intervention in Haiti.

The examination of the 1994 intervention in Haiti will include a case study of how domestic political factors such as congressional pressure and public opinion about presidential credibility affected the decision to launch an intervention. This intervention is significant as it is one of the first interventions launched in the post-Cold War period, with the aim of restoring democracy rather than preventing the spread of communism. A wide body of literature exists that explains how these different groups, individuals, and beliefs all affect foreign policy decision-making in their own way. The combination or lack of these factors can determine how a decision is made. First, the examination will look at the influence of the foreign policy establishment on the decision-making process.

### **The Foreign Policy Establishment**

When examining the influences on foreign policy decision-making, a group that wields extraordinary influence is what's called the policy planning network. This network is made up of corporate-funded think tanks, institutes, and lobbies with close connections to Congress and

Presidential administrations (Luther-Davies, Doniec, Lavalle, King, Domhoff, 2022). This article focuses solely on the think-tank, the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). It compares the influence wielded by the CFR as a member of the policy planning network to traditional business interests. Both the CFR and business lobbyists play a role in influencing foreign policy; however, their level of influence varies significantly (Luther-Davies et al, 2022). The CFR and other members of the policy planning network exert influence on a wider variety of issues than that of the business community. When examining 295 different foreign policy issues, the CFR exerted influence or had stated policy on each one of them (Luther-Davies et al, 2022). This is in stark contrast to the business community, which exerted influence on only 4.9% of those same issues (Luther-Davies et al, 2022). Furthermore, it was found that the CFR's policy positions were more likely to be implemented than the positions held by other groups (Luther-Davies et al, 2022). This shows that foreign policy think tanks and other institutions have an enormous amount of influence on governmental policy and as such, the corporate backers of these groups have a much more effective way of influencing policy than that of traditional business organizations.

This variety of entities previously referred to as the policy planning network can also be referred to as the foreign policy establishment, or not so affectionately named, "the blob". These agencies and groups have a pervasive influence on the foreign policy of the United States. Understanding the beliefs of "the blob" and its policy positions is necessary in explaining this facet of foreign policy. The modern iteration of the foreign policy establishment traces its roots back to white, protestant, Ivy League-educated elites (Layne, 2017). Since these elites were in prominent positions at the end of World War Two and the beginning of the Cold War, they advocated for the United States to assume a more active role in the world, thus beginning the

grand strategy of primacy (Layne, 2017). Furthermore, this “old guard” made a concerted effort to integrate new personnel from minority groups in the 1950s and 1960s. They sought to promote and retain those who believed in the already established beliefs and positions of “the blob” and encouraged studying at the same academic institutions and participating in the same social circles. Layne asserts this effectively passed on the “old guards” attitude and philosophy related to foreign policy to younger generations of foreign policy officials (2017). This continuity between the generations explains why despite the rotation of foreign policy experts, there is continuity in US grand strategy. Layne also argues that “the blob’s” views continue even in the face of external forces, some of which may be detrimental to the United States (2017).

Members of what would become “the blob,” argued that in the waning days of the Second World War the United States, being economically powerful and relatively untouched by the war, should succeed the British Empire and take the reins of world leadership, becoming a global hegemon (Porter, 2018). This body of thinking, known as primacy, became the grand strategy of the United States and has become an almost universal truth among the foreign policy community (Porter, 2018). Since foreign policy decisions are made by politicians, who depend on advice from experts (who come from “the blob”), the ideas of primacy become written into official policy (Porter, 2018). The strategy of primacy is reflected in US actions in leading the opposition towards the Soviet Union and the conflicts it engaged in throughout the twentieth century. Porter argues that debate exists within “the blob” but centers on items falling below the grand strategy of primacy such as human rights (Porter, 2018). This illustrates that despite conflicting opinions and beliefs, the conflicting groups all accept the idea of primacy and operate within that umbrella.

With the understanding of the grand strategy of primacy, the next step is to understand the more cultural aspects of foreign policy decision-making and how this influences the role the United States sees itself as possessing. The American national style of foreign policy is characterized by a set of core ideas that are baked into the American way of thinking and the political institutions within the nation (Hastedt, 2018). These core ideas are moralism, idealism, militarism, and global ambition. The United States uses these beliefs about itself to decide on a course of action (Hastedt, 2018). Glenn Hastedt lays out three patterns in US foreign policy that result from the belief in these core ideas (2018). The first pattern highlighted is the willingness to engage in unilateral international actions. It is explained that this pattern emerged from the belief in the exceptionalism of the American system of government, and the rejection of traditional European diplomacy. The second pattern is one of moral pragmatism. The United States will frequently justify its actions based on having the moral high ground, the belief stemming from the influence of traditional protestant religious beliefs (Hastedt, 2018). Another pattern is utilizing legal mechanisms such as treaties or UN resolutions. This can be used to justify United States actions as being legally sanctioned by an international body, and as such the United States will seek the UN to approve its actions. (Hastedt, 2018) The internalized beliefs of the United States help to explain its actions and the source of the US' role in the world.

### **Domestic Politics**

When focusing beyond the national narrative and foreign policy establishment, domestic politics plays a crucial role in the formation of foreign policy. James D. Fearon presents two broad theories of international relations. One which attributes foreign policy decisions to unitary, rational actors, and only attributes domestic politics credit when states enact suboptimal or irrational foreign policy (Fearon, 1998). The other theory posits that states' internal politics,

institutions, and culture do play a role in explaining state behavior in the international system (Fearon, 1998). The first theory argues that the system of international relations is responsible for a state's behavior, while the second theory argues that domestic politics must be considered when explaining a state's behavior (Fearon, 1998). Fearon does not argue which theory is superior, but he acknowledges that a body of scholarship supports the assertion that domestic politics do factor into the creation of foreign policy.

In the article "Who Influences US Foreign Policy?" Jacobs and Lawrence take a collective, systemic view of the different actors who influence US foreign policy (2005). This view breaks down the different domestic political factors that are acknowledged to hold influence in foreign policy. These different actors include business and labor interests, foreign policy experts, and the public. The authors acknowledge that these actors have been the subject of numerous studies, but on an individual level, not looking at who exercises influence relative to the others (Jacobs & Lawrence, 2005). The findings of the study conclude that business interests exert the highest amount of influence on foreign policy, extending over a consistent basis (Jacobs & Lawrence, 2005). Foreign policy experts were found to also exert a substantial level of influence, although it typically doesn't match the extent as that of business (Jacobs & Lawrence, 2005). Labor was found to exert minimal influence directly on US foreign policy, but their influence is felt through congressional elections, which impacts who is sent to Washington D.C. to enact foreign policy (Jacobs & Lawrence, 2005). Interestingly, they found that public opinion does not exert much influence on foreign policy. The only caveat to this is that public opinion did impact decisions on economic and high-salience issues, although to a modest degree when compared to the other interests examined (Jacobs & Lawrence, 2005). This article highlights the

important influence different groups have on foreign policy decisions, although some actors were found to have varying levels of influence.

Previous scholarship acknowledges that business interests, experts, and the public influence the creation of foreign policy. In “Media, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy.” Soroka examines research focused solely on the realm of public opinion. It is found that in early scholarship of international relations public opinion was considered volatile and irrational and thought to have minimal impact on foreign policy (Soroka, 2003). However, since the 1970s thoughts began to shift, with public opinion being found to have a substantial impact on foreign policy and tends to be rational and stable more often than not (Soroka, 2003). Soroka finds that media coverage is the main influence on public opinion (2003). This is the result of the media being the public’s main source of information, and the main source of public opinion polling data used by politicians. It is found that public opinion is particularly impactful on foreign policy issues that are highly prominent. This disproportionately affects violent issues such as war or conflict and thus public opinion is mainly focused on these issues (Soroka, 2003). When public opinion is focused on these salient issues politicians are especially sensitive to the corresponding issue (Soroka, 2003). Overall, it is found that public opinion mainly influences decisions regarding highly prominent issues as these issues are more widely known due to heavy media coverage.

### **The President and Deference**

Arguably, the biggest influence on foreign policy has come from the office of the president. Stephen E. Ambrose argues that since World War Two the power of the presidency has increased in its ability to conduct foreign policy. Highlighting different foreign policy actions taken by the presidents who have held office reveals that presidential power is continually

expanding. However, foreign policy decisions that proved unpopular, such as the Vietnam War, can cause Congress to assume more authority in making foreign policy (Ambrose, 1991).

However, precedents set by previous presidents, continue to allow the executive branch to unilaterally act and then answer to Congress about it later (Ambrose, 1991). Thus, the examples laid out by Ambrose prove that despite sometimes butting heads with Congress, the president still takes the lead in foreign policy agenda-setting and actions.

The previous piece of literature highlights that over time Presidential power has expanded and throughout much of modern history Congress has been deferential to the President. Jeffrey Peake seeks to examine when exactly is the President most influential in foreign policy agenda setting. "Presidential Agenda Setting in Foreign Policy" examines theories that challenge the traditional model of presidential influence. The traditional model suggests that the President wields an extraordinary amount of influence and Congress will show deference to the executive office (Peake, 1991). The assumption being made by the challenging argument is that the President is reactive to international events and the media for setting his agenda. The study by Peake examines issues that are not highly salient. What is found is that the President is far more successful in setting an agenda on issues that are non-salient and don't present a time constraint (Peake, 1991). When the President can introduce an issue to the media and make it a priority, Congress and public opinion are more likely to align with the view held by the President. However, when Presidents are pressed for time or an issue is highly salient, this decreases the amount of agency the executive will have and places them in a more reactionary state (Peake, 1991).

Another important part of Presidential decision-making is who the President has appointed as advisors within his cabinet. Advisors can play different roles depending on the



experience level that the President has with foreign policy issues. Elizabeth Saunders argues that since foreign policy is made via group decisions, it is imperative to understand the balance of experience within a group, in this case, the Presidential cabinet (2017). This paper examines the effect that experience level has on the dynamic between the leadership position (the president) and the cabinet. Saunders identifies three mechanisms through which decision-making is affected (2017). The first is how the experience level of the executive affects the ability to monitor or control advisors. The second is that the experience level of the leader can affect the quality of their advisor's decisions. Third, the experience level of the leader can affect the diversity of advice that is heard within the group. The experience level of the executive can influence the risk level of policy, as an inexperienced leader can rely more on advisors who allow their own bias to creep into policymaking, as they do not fear pushback from an inexperienced executive (Saunders, 2017). The second mechanism was found to reveal that a more inexperienced executive has the potential to attract more inexperienced advisors, resulting in a lower quality of information being used to influence the decision-making process. The third mechanism reveals that depending on an executive's experience level this can limit the diversity of advice received. With a more experienced executive, more questions would be asked, and more policy options would be considered and discussed (Saunders, 2017). Overall, the experience level of the executive leadership can affect what options are considered for foreign policy, and what quality of information these decisions are based on. Another important facet of an experienced executive is the ability to monitor advisors to produce more diverse options.

However, strong presidential cabinet leadership and influence can allow a president to undertake a radical change in US foreign policy. Olsen conducts a case study on how Trump was able to shift the United States away from the continuous strategy of primacy and liberal

internationalism to one of quasi-isolationism (2019). Trump was able to severely alter policy by condemning the idea of US international involvement and viewing US participation in alliances and other international organizations as being an unfair arrangement and the US as being taken advantage of (Olsen, 2019). This was contrary to the view of those in the foreign policy establishment, who advocated for America to be the leading force in the world. Trump also shut out competing voices and appointed those who shared his view of an “America first” agenda (Olsen, 2019). This shifting of American foreign policy benefited from the polarization taking place in American politics and allowed the foreign policy shift to gain support (Olsen, 2019). This article provides a clear example of how a narrative of international interventionism can be changed into one of isolation. Switching the narrative of America being a leader of the international community to one that portrays the United States as a victim of manipulation allows Trump to justify the shift of foreign policy.

### **Case Study: Haiti 1994**

In the final days of 1991 the Soviet Union, America’s mortal enemy for the past 45 years and the object of most of their foreign policy decisions, had collapsed and was no more. This left the United States adrift, behind the wheel of world politics but with no destination in sight. The previous strategy of containment, focused on using all foreign policy options to stop the spread of communism, was no longer relevant. This idea of containing the spread of communism was utilized by the United States as justification for undertaking multiple coups and interventions in Latin America and the Caribbean. However, in 1994 no such justification could be used to explain the United States intervention in Haiti. With no communism to contain, and seemingly steaming along aimlessly, this paper seeks to understand how the influence of public opinion,

domestic political pressures, and presidential ideology drove the United States to intervene in Haiti in 1994.

### **Situation Haiti: The Election of Aristide**

Haiti has had a tumultuous relationship with leadership. The island nation had never known true democracy, being led by colonial overlords, and then dictators who seized power using force. However, in 1990 that would change. Fair and free elections would be held, and Jean-Bertrand Aristide would become Haiti's first democratically elected leader. Aristide, a former priest, would run for president as a champion of the people, cultivating grassroots support from the poor and working-class people of Haiti (Ballard, 1998, p.47). Aristide had done a remarkable thing in the context of Haitian politics; he won political office by winning the popular vote. Aristide had won 67 percent of the popular vote while receiving a turnout encompassing 85 percent of the electorate (Ballard, 1998, p. 46).

However, his election was won without the support of the traditional elites of Haiti, the wealthy business class. Aristide preached a platform of economic reform, particularly favoring those on the lower-income side of the population. He also sought to reduce the power of the Haitian military and separate the military from the country's police force (Ballard, 1998, p.48). His planned reforms targeted the most powerful segments of Haitian society, particularly the wealthy and the military. Before taking office in 1991, he was the victim of two attempted coups, one that almost resulted in his death, which resulted in rioting in Port-Au-Prince (Ballard, 1998, p.48). Eight months after the first two unsuccessful coups a third would overthrow the radical Haitian president. The Haitian military would orchestrate a coup that would overthrow Aristide and his entire administration. It was led by Lieutenant General Raoul Cedras (Clinton

Presidential Library, n.d.). Under Cedras human rights violations were abundant with thousands of Haitians being killed or forced to flee to neighboring countries, including the United States (Clinton Presidential Library, n.d.). The ensuing refugee crisis and violence became a political campaign issue in the 1992 presidential election.

### **The Context of Clintonian Foreign Policy**

Due to the situation in Haiti becoming an important issue for the United States, understanding how the President who eventually ordered the intervention viewed foreign policy is key to explaining the decision to intervene in 1994. After the fall of the Soviet Union, US foreign policy shifted from a policy of containment to one of promoting democracy (Carothers, 1995). Particularly democracy promotion was a big theme of the 1992 Presidential election with Clinton placing heavy emphasis on promoting democracy and accusing his opponent, Bush, of being lax on the issue (Carothers, 1995). Carothers asserts that depending on the situation and what country was being focused on, the United States was either sympathetic to the nation's shift to democracy, or indifferent to it (1995). When focusing on Haiti, both Bush and Clinton wanted democracy to prevail in Haiti but disagreed over whether Aristide should be President. Clinton forcefully restored democracy in Haiti in 1994, but this was done at least in part, to ease domestic concerns over increasing numbers of refugees (Carothers, 1995). The idea of a shifting foreign policy interest toward promoting democracy is portrayed as adhering to and promoting the morals of the United States and its history. However, the reality is that the promotion of democracy is much more conditional and depends on the country seeking to promote democracy.

When looking at the 1994 intervention in Haiti, it is imperative to understand the broad foreign policy of the Clinton administration which ordered the intervention. Stephen Schlesinger

describes the Clinton administration's foreign policy as disorganized and "adrift" (Schlesinger, 1998). Coming into office Clinton's foreign policy espoused liberal democracy, internationalism, and multilateral cooperation (Schlesinger, 1998). However, after a year these ideals were seemingly abandoned in favor of a foreign policy of practicality. Schlesinger writes that Clinton seemed not to be very hands-on with foreign policy, often deferring to the military or dragging his feet on issues like intervention or humanitarian assistance (Schlesinger, 1998). Clinton often showed reluctance to make international moves without the backing of institutions like the Department of Defense, or significant domestic political support. This emphasized a fixation with domestic political popularity as opposed to heavily focusing on foreign policy. The President also showed a pattern of ignoring international institutions, unless they suited American national interests, such as blaming the Somalia intervention on the U.N., while later utilizing a U.N. resolution to invade Haiti. Clinton's presidency was rife with inconsistent and sometimes contradictory foreign policy positions.

### **Public Opinion**

Foreign policy can often be shaped by the views of the United States domestic constituency, for example, the public turning against the Vietnam War. However, when it came to Haiti leading up to 1994, the public was rather disinterested. Public opinion polling, as recent as one month before the September 1994 intervention, reported that around one percent of Americans listed Haiti as the biggest problem facing the country (Girard, 2004a, p. 62). Media coverage related to Haiti mainly centered on the death of Haitian refugees fleeing the island. But attention afforded to the issues facing Haiti was lost in a symphony of other hot-bed issues such as the Rwandan genocide, US forces in Somalia, and the conflict in Bosnia (Girard, 2004a, p. 62). Where media coverage and public opinion polling were taken into consideration was relative

to presidential credibility and Clinton's foreign policy approval rating. Public opinion also influenced the United States' decision to intervene in Haiti multilaterally to avoid public scrutiny.

When focusing on interventions, whether the operation is unilateral, or multilateral matters a great deal to the American public. A unilateral operation is one where a country acts alone, outside of the scope of international coalitions or resolutions. A multilateral operation is the exact opposite, where a country undertakes an operation as part of a larger international force. Originally planned as a unilateral operation, public opinion made the Clinton administration seek to undertake the operation multilaterally. Due to the recent failure in Somalia, and the highly publicized death of nineteen US soldiers, the public had grown skeptical of interventions (Kreps, 2007, p. 467).

While the public is usually in favor of humanitarian interventions, the type of intervention being planned in Haiti was one that sought internal political change (Kreps, 2007, pp. 467-468). Public opinion polling showed support for armed intervention in Haiti at anywhere between 37 percent to as low as 10 percent (Kreps, 2007, p. 468). Polls showed a majority of those asked were in support of intervention in Haiti, but only if the operation was done by international forces and not solely American troops (Kreps, 2007, p. 468). The only way the United States could conduct an internal political intervention was to do so multilaterally and in cooperation with other nations. This would shield the administration from public backlash if the operation encountered any mishaps or failures, as this could be blamed on the international coalition and not the planning of the Clinton Administration (Kreps, 2007, p. 469).

## **United States and Presidential Credibility Under Attack**

Public opinion polling mainly centered on the issues of the refugee crisis and the controversy around armed intervention. However, Clinton and his administration were extremely sensitive to his presidential approval rating and his international credibility. According to an article from the Washington Post written in June of 1994, public opinion was souring on Clinton's leadership. According to polling, Americans were increasingly labeling Clinton as a "mistake-prone leader" and as someone lacking decisiveness (Broder and Morin, 1994). Clinton's foreign policy leadership was being criticized due to highly publicized mistakes involving US forces in Somalia, and accusations from Republicans in Congress that Clinton was a weak leader (Girard, 2002, p. 143). The media was increasingly drawing attention to Clinton's poor foreign policy track record and decreasing credibility, along with growing fears that the U.S. couldn't control a small Caribbean Island only miles from its coast (Girard, 2002, p. 143-144). With Clinton's credibility under attack, and a presidential election being a mere two years away, Clinton's need to be decisive and provide a foreign policy win to add to his resume was at the forefront of his mind. Mounting domestic pressure and this pressing need for a win certainly influenced Clinton's decision to prove he could lead a decisive military action.

Another area where Clinton was taking a major hit to his credibility, was his inability to solve the crisis of Haitian migrants fleeing to the United States. When running against incumbent President Bush in 1992, Clinton criticized Bush's policy of forced repatriation (Morley and McGillion, 1997, p. 367). However, upon taking office, fearing a huge wave of Haitian migrants, Clinton reversed course and kept the Bush-era policy in effect (Morley and McGillion, 1997, p. 367). Throughout 1993 and 1994 the number of Haitians making risky journeys via boat seeking asylum in the United States was increasing. Efforts to stem the tide, such as resettling Haitians

temporarily in other Latin American nations, all began to fail, for example with Panama backing out of their agreement to house around ten thousand Haitians (Morley and McGillion, 1997, p. 379). The feelings within the Clinton administration were that the refugee crisis was spiraling out of control, and that something needed to be done and fast.

### **Domestic Politics: Congressional and lobbyist Pressure**

However, while interest on the situation in Haiti remained small for the public, Clinton did receive significant pressure to toughen his stance from key political allies. In March of 1994, the Congressional Black Caucus sent President Clinton a scathing letter criticizing his administration and calling for increased pressure on Haiti (New York Times, 1994). The Congressional Black Caucus accused Clinton of being weak and called for increasing sanctions and severing air links with Haiti along with denying Haitian military access to visas (New York Times, 1994). This was a significant condemnation, as Clinton held a narrow majority in Congress (Girard, 2004a, p. 64). He also faced losing support from representatives hailing from districts with significant Haitian populations, such as those in New York, Boston, and Miami (Girard, 2004a, p. 63-64). Florida representatives were particularly worried about a potential “migrant invasion” of Haitians on the shores of their state (Girard, 2002, p. 142). Losing any support in Congress could threaten Clinton’s domestic initiatives he so desperately wanted to get passed.

However, while members of the Black Caucus and representatives from states with significant Haitian populations pushed Clinton to take further action, other factions within Congress and the U.S. government were opposed to any form of intervention. The CIA vehemently opposed the return of Aristide to power, citing psychological evaluations



characterizing the exiled president as “a manic depressive” who frequently faced schizophrenic episodes (Pezzullo, 2006, p. 213). This drew condemnation from those opposed to the intervention in the House, arguing that Clinton was trying to “...return a maniac.” (Pezzullo, 2006, p. 214). The CIA and the Department of Defense were pushing Clinton to review his policy towards Haiti and reconsider the return of Aristide to power (Pezzullo, 2006, p. 213).

In addition to the conflicting nature of congressional pressure, the president also faced pressure from lobbyists. After President Aristide fled Haiti, he began operating as a president in exile, and spent his time as an activist. Aristide, being given access to frozen Haitian government funds, hired an army of lobbyists. Many of these, including Michael Barnes (a former member of the House Foreign Relations Subcommittee) were very close to members of the US government and contributors to the Democratic Party (Girard, 2002, p. 133). Aristide’s public relations and lobbying campaign was not targeted towards the public, but mainly focused on those in Washington DC, and those in the Clinton administration (Girard, 2002, p. 133). Clinton’s national security advisor was one of the people who was lobbied very heavily, and successfully, by Aristide (Girard, 2002, p. 133). Members of Congress were slamming Clinton with conflicting waves of condemnation. On one side, the president’s key allies, demanding him to resolve the crisis as quickly as possible. On the other side, lay members of the opposition in the House and members from within his own CIA and Defense administrations, who wanted the president to completely change course regarding his Haiti policy.

### **Failure of Diplomacy**

Since taking office Clinton had sought to resolve the situation in Haiti through diplomatic means. Attempting to use sanctions and negotiations between Aristide and Cedras, the military

dictator of Haiti, would be undertaken. The two parties would eventually sign a deal, the Governors Island Agreement on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1993. It called for the return of Aristide by the end of October of that same year, among other reforms such as the modernization of the Haitian military (Office of the Historian). This agreement would lift the economic sanctions placed on the island and grant the perpetrators of the 1991 amnesty and a power-sharing agreement (Morley and McGillion, 1997, p. 369). This agreement relied on both sides making significant concessions, and while Aristide was flexible in what he was willing to give up, the military dictators were not. During this time the Haitian military stepped up its attacks on Aristide allies still residing within Haiti and increasingly resorted to political violence (Morley and McGillion, 1997, p. 369). The failure of the agreement to achieve its objectives made the situation in Haiti begin to look like another blemish on Clinton's foreign policy resume. Due to a failure to reach a conclusion diplomatically, Clinton's National Security Council advisor Tony Lake ordered administration officials to begin drawing up plans for a military intervention, seemingly out of options ((Morley and McGillion, 1997, p. 370).

### **Ideology: Restoring Democracy and Enlargement**

Amid questions of presidential credibility and a refugee crisis, the intervention in Haiti allowed Clinton the opportunity to act on his rhetoric. In the 1992 presidential election, Clinton ran on an ideology of promoting democracy called enlargement, as detailed in the section "The Context of Clintonian Foreign Policy." In his address to the American people, Clinton emphasized the importance of Haiti's struggle for democracy. He stresses the importance of Haiti's difficult path to democracy, and how after finally achieving it, it was torn away by a return to dictatorship (Clinton, 1994). Clinton made parallels to the achievement of countries like

Poland in Eastern Europe which recently achieved a democratic government, and that Haiti's backsliding away from a democratic government poses a threat to all democratic governments (Clinton, 1994). He also makes callbacks to the wildly popular interventions in Grenada and Panama. The point of his speech to the American people is to sell them on the fact that the failure of democracy in Haiti puts the entire region's security, including that of the United States, at risk. This dispatch shows that, at least rhetorically, Clinton sought to use the United States, and other countries' struggle for democracy to justify the action they will be taking in intervening in Haiti.

### **Analysis**

The crisis in Haiti, encompassed a government coup, massive human rights violations, and an ensuing refugee crisis. President Clinton was forced to act to resolve this multilayered crisis and faced a cacophony of influences and suggestions. While faced with an indifferent public related to Haiti and the crisis it faced, the public was heavily scrutinizing him on his foreign policy record. This is an interesting twist on the literature by Soroka covering public opinion and foreign policy actions. Soroka argued that public opinion when focused on highly salient issues can force the government to act. In this case the public was not focused on the situation in Haiti but the ensuing refugee crisis and the President's credibility. In the public eye Clinton was thought of as a weak and ineffective leader, who mishandled and caused the death of US soldiers in Somalia and was indecisive in dealing with conflicts in Bosnia. Within Congress, representatives criticized the president for not having an effective policy in dealing with the constant stream of refugees originating from Haiti. This caused worry, as Clinton had a very slim majority in Congress, and losing their support would dampen his plans for domestic policy. This

gives credence to theories postulated by Fearon, regarding domestic politics having a significant influence on foreign policy. It also shows that despite Congress being deferential to the President on foreign policy issues, as suggested by Stephen Ambrose, Congress can and will force the President's hand in the decision-making process. In addition to the United States' domestic politics, the exiled President of Haiti, Aristide, lobbied members of Clinton's administration convincing them to restore him to power.

While these forces pushed the president to solve the crisis, and towards intervention, other forces criticized the president in the other direction. Members of the Republican party, and even some Democrats who were opposed to Clinton, decried his plans to restore Aristide to power. These Representatives echoed the sentiments of the CIA and Defense Department who disliked Aristide and thought him to be unreliable. There were also public opinion polls that showed the public being opposed to armed intervention when the situation wasn't seen as a key national security risk. These two conflicting domestic political pressures, and public opinion pressures, put Clinton in a position where he would be criticized regardless of whether he acted or not.

However, one aspect that needs to be addressed is that Clinton's foreign policy advocated the idea of enlargement. Which sought to expand democracy in the post-Cold War era. This can be seen in his rhetoric both when running against Bush in 1992 and in his address announcing the military intervention in Haiti in 1994. That despite, the misgivings about Aristide that members of his administration expressed, the fact was that Aristide was the elected President of Haiti, one who was illegally ousted. Clinton's rhetoric essentially reframed the idea of primacy, which is the ideology of US foreign policy. He reshaped it from being anti-communist to being pro-democracy. He also tapped into the American style of foreign policy, as articulated by

Hastedt. Clinton sought a U.N. resolution, as a way of legitimizing his intervention. This fact coupled, with Clinton's propensity to advocate for the enlargement of democracy, showed his commitment to restoring Aristide to power.

President Clinton wanted to restore Aristide to power through diplomatic channels, such as the failed Governors Island Agreement. This was done to avoid a public relations fiasco so soon after the disaster in Somalia. However, the breakdown in diplomacy and the desire to restore Aristide to power drove Clinton to consider armed intervention. Also, with his credibility as a foreign policy president under attack, Clinton wanted to serve the American people a victory internationally. Careful of the Public's dislike of unilateral intervention, Clinton cleverly sought a U.N. resolution to protect himself if things went awry with the operation.

### **Conclusion**

President Clinton's 1994 armed intervention in Haiti can be used as a case study to see practical examples of aspects of public opinion polling, internal domestic political struggles, and the use of ideology and the American national style of legalism. This can be seen in the pressures from Congress, the public, and President Aristide. He also sought to utilize American foreign policy traditions, by seeking a legal resolution to intervene, to legitimize his operation in Haiti. While organizations like think tanks were not very influential in the 1994 intervention in Haiti, other factors were. This shows that despite heavy influence from multiple sources, they do not have equal influence on all issues, and some sources of influence have a heavier hand in certain issues than in others.

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