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## FAST TRACK, SADDAM HUSSEIN, AND OTHER CHALLENGES TO CLINTON'S LEGACY

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President Bill Clinton's leadership abilities—and his aspirations of being a world leader—have been challenged recently from two very different directions: by Saddam Hussein in Iraq and by his own Democratic Party at home. The first challenge was an affront to the President made by the Iraqi dictator on October 29 as he began prohibiting Americans from participating in United Nations inspections of suspected biological and chemical weapon sites. Hussein's brazen act sparked a severe international crisis which now threatens to explode into armed conflict, but which could have been avoided by the President. Then, a few days after this confrontation began, the President's party handed him a devastating defeat by refusing to approve his request for fast-track authority to negotiate trade deals. Suddenly, there is talk of a lame-duck presidency, and questions about Clinton's ability to handle the role of world leader are being raised once again.

If Clinton's failure on fast track or his inability to avoid the Iraqi crisis were mere aberrations in his record, he could be forgiven. But they are not. They are, in reality, symptomatic of a much larger problem: President Clinton has never put his heart into establishing a strong foreign and defense policy.

One might have expected more from a President so intensely interested in leaving a historical legacy. Unlike other great (and even good) presidents of this century, Clinton has a record of performance in managing key foreign policy issues that is both uneven and ineffectual. From his failures with fast track and Iraq to his mishandling of serious issues concerning Russia, Bosnia, Latin America, and China, the President has demonstrated a fundamental lack of seriousness about international affairs. This incommensurate

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approach may explain, at the very least, why he is having trouble building a record that could stand as the legacy of a singular post-Cold War leader.

## THE FAST-TRACK DEBACLE

President Clinton's failure to secure fast-track negotiating authority is particularly telling, for it reveals not only an astonishing lack of political clout within his own party, but also a lack of commitment that belies the claims of presidential courage and leadership so often made by his supporters. The President certainly deserves credit for supporting fast track—it is one of the few initiatives he has taken that did not appear to serve some political self-interest—but his heart apparently was not in the fight. Even though he had three years to get approval for fast-track authority, he dithered for political reasons such as getting re-elected in 1996 and protecting Vice President Albert Gore for a presidential bid in 2000. This delay gave organized labor and other opponents of free trade time to intensify their opposition. When it became clear that he could not delay his own efforts any longer, Clinton joined the debate. But by that time, he was forced to rely on Republicans to achieve a victory. The Republicans did their part, receiving assurances of votes from up to 165 Republicans and 40 Democrats, but the President was unable to deliver the additional 12 votes needed from his own party and was forced to withdraw the bill in the early morning hours of November 10.

This failure is of no small consequence for the country. Without fast track, the United States will be unable to negotiate trade deals to open markets for American products. The inability to expand exports will slow economic growth, perhaps by as much as one-half a percentage point of gross domestic product (GDP) every year. Lower production could lead to greater unemployment. Worse still, large U.S. corporations will have ever greater incentives to move production facilities out of the country, because they will be denied easy access to growing overseas markets for their U.S.-made goods.

As serious as these consequences are for average Americans, however, they may not be as far-reaching as the impact this failure is likely to have on American leadership in the global economy. Most Latin American countries gave up on signing free trade treaties with the United States a long time ago. They have decided to expand trade on their own, forging foreign free trade agreements not only with each other, but—more important— with Europe and Asia, regions that seem to be more interested than Americans are in finding and promoting new markets. Moreover, Latin Americans are now, because of fast track's failure, more prone to lock out U.S. trade. Indeed, the South American trade pact Mercosur raised tariffs a few days after fast track went down in Congress.

**The Legacy.** Because of the failure of fast track, the United States may be on the verge of losing its 50-year historic role as the leader in liberalizing the world economy. At the very time Microsoft and other American companies lead the world in international business, the U.S. government is retreating. Clinton has squandered the great trade momentum started by Ronald Reagan and George Bush, and thus has abdicated the leadership role the United States has held in international trade. This is not the legacy one would expect of a President who claims that his primary foreign policy goal was, in his own words, to “set about establishing America's credibility in the post-cold war world.”

## THE SHOWDOWN WITH SADDAM HUSSEIN

The same diffidence and last-minute crisis management style that lost the fast-track vote has been present in President Clinton's handling of Iraq and the United Nations coalition. Here, as with most other crises involving the possible use of force, the President is given the benefit of the doubt by the press and others. But the unpleasant fact remains that this crisis grew directly out of Clinton's inability to hold the U.N. coalition together as he sought tighter sanctions against Iraq.

Rather than put Saddam back in his box, Saddam has put the United States in a box. The end result is that the U.S. now faces equally disturbing choices: either a military intervention that could split the U.N. coalition or a compromise that could save the coalition but diminish the effectiveness of the inspection regime. One such compromise would be the U.S. offer to relax the terms for U.N. inspections and to modify the U.N. sanctions to allow more food and medicine into Iraq. This proposal would reward Saddam for breaking the U.N.'s rules—a lesson he will surely remember during the next confrontation with the U.N.

Sadly, both this dilemma and the no-win choices arising from it could have been avoided if Clinton had taken a harder line earlier against Iraq in the United Nations and lobbied the coalition earlier to get their approval. Cracks in the coalition probably would never have appeared. Instead, Clinton let his sanctions proposals languish in the U.N. Security Council, creating a vacuum, delay, and uncertainty that allowed the French and Russians to believe they could get away with stopping more restrictive sanctions on Iraq. This vacuum and the subsequent divisions in the U.N. coalition gave Saddam the opening he had long sought to break the coalition and to isolate the United States.

**The Legacy.** If the United States is forced to launch a military strike against Saddam, the American people will rally around Clinton, and he will take on the aura of a world leader. But it should not be forgotten that the risks the country now must face could have been avoided had the President been more serious about managing the coalition and deterring Saddam. Great leadership should be measured by how well one avoids unnecessary crises, not by how well one stumbles through them—with greater risk to the country—after they have broken out.

## THE PITFALLS OF RUSSIAN “PARTNERSHIP”

President Clinton's campaign to gain Russian support for tighter Iraqi sanctions was complicated further by his lopsided Russian policy. For instance, it would have seemed appropriate for Clinton to call on his good friend and purported “strategic partner” Boris Yeltsin to stop the threatened Russian veto of tighter U.N. sanctions against Iraq. But Clinton was unable to do so because he had mortgaged nearly every aspect of U.S. policy in order to get Russia to accept the enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and several strategic arms control agreements.

President Clinton deserves credit for supporting the enlargement of NATO to include Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. But by signing the NATO charter with the Russians, Clinton has created a fiction that Russia accepts NATO enlargement in principle and in practice. In fact, it accepts neither. Russia is bitterly opposed to NATO enlargement, particularly if it includes states from the former Soviet Union.

The price of soothing Yeltsin's ruffled feathers over NATO enlargement has been the loss of leverage with Russia on other issues. Russia has been free to block, without much consequence, U.S. policy initiatives toward Iraq and Iran. Furthermore, Moscow is making new forays, sometimes at U.S. expense, into building relations with China and other countries in Asia and Europe.

The "deal" behind Clinton's strategic partnership with Russia highlights this loss of leverage. The Russians have been invited into NATO's decision-making councils and have been given concessions on the START II and ABM treaties, not to mention continued foreign aid. In return, Russia rejects the very principle of NATO enlargement, even though in public it has not threatened to focus on its "official" opposition. Meanwhile, Moscow will continue to supply missile and nuclear technologies to Iran, complain about U.S. hegemony in the Persian Gulf, and complain in diplomatic circles about the need to stand up to the purported global dominance of the world's only remaining superpower (the United States).

**The Legacy.** If world politics were a game of chess, Clinton might think that he has checkmated the Russians in Europe; but he should remember two things. First, the Russians are now influencing NATO's decision-making process, which means they also can influence its future development as never before. Second, in response to NATO enlargement, the Russians now have a freer hand in trying to "check" the Americans in the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, and Asia.

## BOGGED DOWN IN BOSNIA

What exists today in Bosnia—the indefinite deployment of ground troops in a peace-keeping operation—is precisely what President Clinton originally claimed that his Bosnia policy, developed during his first term, would avoid. This dichotomy between promise and reality, between word and deed, could be overlooked if the situation in Bosnia were improving. But this is not the case. The Bosnian Federation is a political fiction; war criminals remain on the loose; and NATO-sponsored elections have not been successful. Furthermore, the United States is mired in Bosnia because pulling out would invite international blame for the resumption of fighting that undoubtedly would follow.

It is true that Clinton's policy in Bosnia cannot fairly be described as a failure—at least not yet. After all, the Dayton Accords have stopped the fighting, at least for the time being, and the Europeans, Russians, and Americans are working together more closely to reach a settlement. But there is no real peace in Bosnia: The Dayton Accords have become little more than an elaborate cease-fire buttressed by the presence of thousands of foreign troops, and the underlying causes of the conflict are no closer to being solved than they were when the Dayton Accords were signed.

Clinton has had little success getting Congress to back his Bosnia policy. True, Congress has not yet pulled the plug and brought the troops home. But each time Clinton has had to ask Congress for deployment approval, he has been forced to invoke presidential prerogatives, which Members of Congress are loath to challenge, and make promises he eventually failed to keep. This is a thin reed on which to rest his claim of presidential leadership, and it is certainly not the foundation for an American political consensus in support of his Bosnia policy.

In addition, Clinton has acquiesced to Europeans who seem to believe that security is a one-way street leading only to Europe. The Europeans argue that “we must all share equally the risks of defending European security.”<sup>2</sup> There is one problem with this assertion: Most of these Europeans feel no need to “share” the risks, or even the burden, of defending global or U.S. security interests outside of Europe. Consequently, despite U.S. help in Bosnia, they continue to supply a bitter enemy of the United States (Iran) and a worrisome new “friend” (China) with arms and dangerous technologies. Apparently, they see Americans as “equal partners” only in the defense of specifically European security interests.

**The Legacy.** In Bosnia, Clinton’s “leadership” has led to a situation in which the United States is tethered to the regional interests of Europe. A European failure of leadership has been leveraged into a demand that Americans do what Europeans are unwilling or unable to do—namely, to keep the peace in Bosnia—with no requirement that Europeans provide any assurances of cooperation on vital interests outside of their own continent.

This unbalanced relationship with the European countries should be remembered when the President makes his claims of success in Bosnia, or when his supporters hail the Dayton Accords as a shining example of Clinton’s post-Cold War leadership. If, five years from now, U.S. troops are still bogged down in Bosnia, few people will call the Dayton Accords a success. Indeed, if the situation fails to improve, the Dayton Accords could be seen as one of Clinton’s greatest failures. Even if Bosnia turns out for the best, Clinton’s legacy can only pale in comparison to the truly great leadership roles of Harry Truman at the beginning of the Cold War, or Ronald Reagan and George Bush in ending the Cold War.

## CLINTON’S CHINA POLICY: NO CONSENSUS, NO RECIPROCITY

Yet another success which the President claims for himself is his handling of U.S. relations with China. Clinton hailed his recent summit with President Jiang Zemin as a great success, and was praised by supporters and pundits alike for his deft handling of tricky issues like human rights and trade.

With its hasty, last-minute preparations, relative lack of substance in the agenda, and showy nature, the summit left much to be desired. In fact, the Clinton policy presented at the summit has little political support throughout the country. The House of Representatives passed a total of 11 bills challenging the President on China policy on all fronts by an overwhelming margin; nine of these bills were passed one week after the summit had ended. Members of the House (and most likely the Senate will follow) are demanding a much tougher line. Clinton’s own party is deeply divided over trade and human rights policy on China, as it was with fast-track authority. There is no American consensus on China policy, and Clinton’s failure to articulate a convincing policy is the main reason for this.

The political opposition the President faces regarding his China policy is rooted in the classic Clinton contradiction between word and deed. The President promises progress on human rights in China, but China’s documented human rights record is as dismal and disturbing as ever. The President claims his policy will reduce Chinese arms proliferation, but the Chinese continue to sell dangerous missile technologies to Iran and Pakistan. Clin-

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2 From author’s conversations with European officials.

ton argues that trade with China need not undermine American security interests, but he refuses to curtail trade with the Chinese army and tolerates an appalling confusion in official intelligence circles about the purposes and extent of China's military modernization. And he claims to be interested in defending the security of Taiwan, yet he refuses either to sell the Taiwanese the arms they need or to advance the ballistic missile systems and technologies which they (and Americans, for that matter) could use to defend themselves against Chinese missiles.

This criticism is not to imply that there is anything wrong with trading with China. Quite the opposite: Trade and commerce with private entrepreneurs in China will further boost the economic and, eventually, political liberalization of the Chinese system. The ultimate result will be the collapse of the Faustian bargain the Chinese leadership made with economic reform. But this does not mean that China should get a free ride on other issues. There is no reason why more reciprocity could not be demanded from the Chinese. They need the United States for a variety of reasons—to maintain the confidence of foreign investors, to gain access to the World Trade Organization, and even to modernize their economy and society. This is leverage which, in the deft hands of wise leaders and diplomats, can be used to open China more to the outside world, to liberalize its political system, and to ensure that it does not emerge as a threat to the United States or Asia.

**The Legacy.** In this respect, China policy should not be separated from overall defense policy. The United States must remain militarily strong to deter China if it should emerge as a military threat. Asian allies of the United States, particularly Japan, are indispensable in achieving this goal. And though the President's overall Asian policy has improved since his first term in office, he continues to let U.S. military defenses decline to dangerously low levels. He still refuses to provide adequate funding to maintain American overseas commitments, and his indifference to maintaining high standards of military readiness is an unsettling indication which surely is not lost on the Chinese. One of the best ways to tempt the Chinese leadership to try its hand at hegemony in Asia is for Beijing to believe that the United States is becoming a military paper tiger in Asia. American weakness in Asia will create a power vacuum which either the Chinese or the Japanese will step in to fill.

## A WEAKER, MORE VULNERABLE AMERICA

American leadership in the world is indeed ultimately dependent on U.S. military power. Without the ability to project power abroad, to defend allies and friends, and to maintain peace and stability, there would be little reason even to talk of U.S. global leadership. No American President who has engendered or tolerated U.S. military weakness has ever gone down in history as a great President.

Recognition of this fact raises serious doubts about the historical legacy President Clinton will leave in national defense. Defense experts project that, unless Clinton's defense spending plans change, there will be nearly a \$100 billion shortfall in overall defense spending over the next five years. Moreover, morale and readiness problems within the armed forces are legion and well-known. The resignation last week of the Army's top personnel official, Sarah Lister, who had dismissed the Marines as "extremists," is only the latest in a long and sad tale of the Clinton Administration's assault on military standards. Social experimentation in the military, as well as the frenetic pace of operational deploy-

ments, have taken a severe toll: Morale has plummeted, recruiting has fallen off, and a record number of experienced Navy and Air Force pilots are leaving the services.

**The Legacy.** One part of President Clinton's national defense legacy is already known: The great military machine that won the Persian Gulf War in such short time and with such low casualties is gone. Worse still, the decline of U.S. military power shows no signs of abating.

President Clinton could very well be out of office by the time the armed forces are called upon to fight a major battle. He therefore may feel that declining military weakness is not his problem. Politically speaking, he may be right in making this assumption; but no matter what he avoids today, he cannot escape the judgment of future historians, Presidents, and generations of Americans. Their judgment of his legacy in national defense may be not only that he squandered what was achieved in strength and stature before his term, but also that he has mortgaged America's national defense so that future Presidents would be responsible for solving what he neglected.

It is bad enough that President Clinton is letting U.S. military power atrophy. But he also has not done enough to curtail the growth of the greatest danger facing the United States today—the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. To be sure, he succeeded in getting ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC); but as critics warned at the time of ratification, and as Saddam Hussein's latest crisis has shown, the CWC can do nothing to stop the real and most pressing chemical weapons threats—those arising from rogue states like Iraq that refuse to sign the CWC or comply with its terms.

In fact, the proliferation of nuclear weapons is getting much worse, not better. For example, the Chinese and Russians are helping Iran obtain a nuclear weapons and missile capability. Moreover, China is helping Pakistan develop nuclear weapons and missiles. The Clinton Administration has talked a great game in countering proliferation, but it is a game the Administration is losing. Instead of preparing the United States to defend itself from these threats with ballistic missile defense, the Administration has spent a far greater effort negotiating deals with the Russians to strengthen the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which intentionally keeps the U.S. vulnerable to the very missiles that are proliferating.

Therein lies a terrible irony: The Clinton Administration claimed that one of its top national security goals was to curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, but instead of achieving this goal, it has focused much of its arms control efforts on forging deals with the Russians that keep the United States undefended against missile attack. In other words, the President not only has failed to curb the growth of the nuclear missile threat, but also has taken steps that make the United States more vulnerable to it.

The Clinton Administration would claim that its greatest arms control achievements, in addition to ratifying the CWC, are the ratification of START II and the signing of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). But like the CWC, START II was negotiated and signed by President George Bush. Therefore, this agreement, like START I and other arms control agreements of the 1980s, will be recognized by history mainly as a Republican achievement. In addition, the CTBT has little chance of being ratified by the Senate and will likely die for lack of interest.

Clinton's other major nuclear arms control initiative—the “de-targeting” of American and Russian nuclear missiles—is a source of much ridicule by nuclear arms experts who know that these missiles can be “re-targeted” in only a matter of minutes. Yet another, and perhaps most lasting, arms control achievement by the President, which might best be described as a “non-achievement” or “failure” by arms controllers, is his refusal to join an international ban on land mines. He indeed deserves credit for refraining from joining an agreement that could have endangered the lives of American troops in Korea, but it should be remembered that he made this decision only after intense lobbying from the U.S. armed forces.

The Clinton legacy in arms control will be seen as the breaking of an important arms control consensus achieved by the Reagan Administration in the late 1980s. This consensus required that arms control agreements should be based on mutual restraint and that they should meet objective standards, such as being verifiable and enforceable. The Administration's policy, however, is based on a double standard: Arms control is now designed to control American arms more than the arms of other countries. This is the case with the CWC, which forces the United States to eliminate chemical weapons even as other countries retain them. Moreover, it is simply not a priority for the Clinton Administration that arms control agreements be enforceable or verifiable.

When contemplating this Clinton legacy in arms control and defense, a remark from Harry Truman comes to mind: “Most of the problems a President has to face have their roots in the past.”<sup>3</sup> Future Presidents will learn well the truth of this observation when they are challenged by the ramifications of a defense legacy bequeathed to them by President Clinton.

## LOST OPPORTUNITIES IN LATIN AMERICA

A final area of concern is that it is practically impossible to find any central theme in the President's policy toward Latin America. Reading the high rhetoric at the Summit of the Americas in December 1994 and throughout Clinton's 1997 trips to Latin America would make it appear that the centerpiece of the President's Latin American policy would be the expansion of trade. But both his feeble efforts to build support for fast track and fast track's subsequent failure in Congress would belie that notion. Moreover, the 1994 military intervention in Haiti to “restore democracy” could suggest that democracy-building lay at the heart of his strategy. But Clinton has done little to support democracy elsewhere in Latin America; and more than three years after the Haiti intervention, democracy in Haiti has not been institutionalized, the United Nations peacekeepers have not yet left, and former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide is blocking President Rene Preval's efforts to reform the economy.

The conclusion is unavoidable: President Clinton does not have a tenable Latin American policy. Instead, he has done little more than assemble a kaleidoscope of speeches, initiatives, military interventions, summits, foreign trips, and photo opportunities that never quite comes into focus.

This inability to develop a sound and sustainable policy toward Latin America will have serious consequences for the United States. The United States trades with Latin America more than with any other region of the world, including Asia. Latin American economies

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3 Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs*, 1955–1956.



are becoming more open and free; in fact, the 1998 edition of The Heritage Foundation/Wall Street Journal *Index of Economic Freedom* shows that, of all regions of the world, Latin America made the most progress toward achieving economic freedom in the period from 1996 to 1997.

More important, Latin American countries are tired of waiting for trade deals with the United States, and have been reaching out instead to Europe and Asia. It may be only a slight exaggeration to say that the U.S. already has “lost” South America, where the Mercosur trade bloc almost certainly will close its trade deal with the European Union before doing so with the United States.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, Chile has all but given up on its effort to join the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), preferring instead to forge trade deals with its South American neighbors. Thus, a South American–European trade bloc could emerge to stymie American trade in this growing region. It seems like a century has passed since George Bush was leading his Enterprise for the Americas Initiative toward establishing a great free trade zone of the Americas spanning the continents from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego.

Relations with Cuba have not been handled much better. In 1992, Fidel Castro was backed into a corner. He was isolated and discredited, and the United States was close to building an international coalition that would bring global pressure to bear on him. Today, Castro has been reborn and again looms large on the international scene.

How did this happen? Fidel Castro manipulated Clinton, making a surprisingly strong play from a very weak hand. When Clinton first entered office, he thought he could normalize relations with Cuba. Castro responded to Clinton’s overtures by launching the 1994 raft crisis that resulted in thousands of Cuban refugees coming to American shores. Clinton tried to stop this crisis by ending the 30-year U.S. policy of automatically admitting all Cuban refugees, and later secretly agreed with Castro behind the State Department’s back that any Cuban rafters intercepted by U.S. ships would be forcibly repatriated to Cuba. Instead of reciprocating Clinton’s concession, Castro turned up the heat, ordering his air force to shoot down two civilian American planes flying in international air space in 1996. Castro knew full well that this provocative act would embarrass Clinton and force him to sign the Helms-Burton Act, tightening the embargo on Cuba.

Since then Clinton’s halfhearted implementation of Helms-Burton has created the worst of both worlds: It has neither sufficiently pressured Castro nor appeased the Europeans and others who are angered by the trade implications of this legislation.

On other Latin American fronts, the results have been equally disappointing. Relations are civil with Mexico, but the era of good feeling enjoyed right after NAFTA was approved is over. Today, U.S.–Mexican tensions exist over illegal immigration and narcotics, and notwithstanding Clinton’s bailout of the Mexican economy in 1995, Mexico’s economic reforms have not advanced sufficiently. Moreover, despite U.S. efforts to cooperate with Colombia to stop the illegal drug trade, the flow of drugs from Colombia continues to increase. Colombia has become seriously corrupted by the narco-guerilla drug cartels and is on the verge of a civil war that could eliminate democracy and possibly spill over into neighboring Panama, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Brazil. These drug cartels are, in

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4 Mercosur, the South American common market, includes Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. Chile and Bolivia are associates of Mercosur; the Andean Pact is also negotiating its admission to Mercosur, to include Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru.

fact, the most dangerous threat to democracy in Latin America, and just as powerful as ever.

**The Legacy.** On all fronts—trade, democracy, and security—U.S.–Latin American policy has been a disappointment. It has been doubly disappointing because the President raised such high expectations of American leadership with the Summit of the Americas, the Haiti intervention, and even his recent trip to Latin America. These expectations have not been fulfilled. What is worse, they are no longer taken seriously by Latin American leaders. It is a sad day indeed for the United States when the Latin American capitals look to Beijing, Brussels, and Tokyo, rather than to Washington, for leadership.

## CONCLUSION

President Clinton has made some good calls in foreign policy. He backed the North American Free Trade Agreement, fast track, and NATO enlargement. Even though his China policy is weak and confused, he also did the right thing in supporting the extension of most favored nation trade status for China. It is true that Clinton took the lead on these policies away from the conservatives and the Republican Party, but to the extent that he has succeeded on these issues, it has been because of the political backing of Republicans and conservatives. Clinton deserves credit for taking up these policies, even more so because it cost him politically within his own party.

But the fact that these successes were not really his own doing since they were taken more or less from the opposition may account in part for the often desultory and episodic performance of Clinton as Commander in Chief. The most important reason for this is that Clinton is not really interested in foreign affairs and, despite all his talk of being a world leader, believes his political fortunes rise and fall on domestic politics.

The President left himself open for criticism and unflattering comparisons when he began suggesting that he held some great vision for creating a post–Cold War world. This he clearly does not have. If he did, fast track would have been approved a long time ago (and new trade agreements already would have been negotiated); Saddam would be tightly wrapped in his box; China and Russia would be more cooperative; the Europeans would be doing more of their share in the defense of Europe, Bosnia, and the Persian Gulf; and the nation's defenses would not be waning to such a precarious degree.

Past presidents who left a great legacy in foreign affairs were blessed with two things: vision and character. The great 20th century foreign policy presidents—Roosevelt, Truman, and Reagan—were deeply committed to understanding and advancing America's role in the world. Compared with Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, or Reagan, however, Bill Clinton is playing an entirely different game. In fact, he is not even in the same league.

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