

- It is useful to keep in mind that the U.S. was not doing all that much in the past and that President Clinton himself was reluctant to contribute to "humanitarian" interventions.

4. Domestic Sources of U.S. Foreign Policy

Congress will likely remain active, with sharp ideological and policy differences between the Republicans and the Democrats. The acute tension between hard-line Republicans, on the one hand, and supporters of former President Clinton, on the other, is still playing out in two respects: first, in the escalation of rhetoric and second, in the repudiation of some Clinton-era policies. These tendencies will likely subside in the future and we may expect more continuity than change on foreign policy issues.

The relative sway of key government departments is not yet clear. However, bureaucratic reshuffling and allocation of funds would indicate that more influence is being accorded to the State Department and less to the National Security Council. It is apparent that appointments are targeted at pleasing domestic coalitions.

Domestic constraints on the new administration will include the pressure from conservative Americans as well as issue-based (or ethnic-based) communities (i.e., Cuban Americans in Miami).

The issues which will draw the most attention and will likely have a domestic focus will include:

- economic and trade policy (FTAA, fast track authority, stability of regional markets),
- economic sanctions,
- growing anti-free trade coalitions,
- immigration policy.

The media, newspapers in particular, continue to play a watch-dog role. The new administration has not so far used media in its favour, and demonstrated a lack of consensus on a range of foreign policy issues. While former President Bill Clinton did not particularly like the media either, his staff handled communications well.

The Canada-file has been moved to occupy a space high up within a set of hemispheric priorities. A point was made that personal relationships and "the way one chooses to raise points" are important to President Bush. Relations between the two neighbours will be influenced by these elements.