

for conflict: ethnic dominance, group inequality and regime transition also appear to be causal factors. Finally, conflict in certain regions of the world (eg. Africa) has resulted from the lack of an 'American pacifier' in the region.

Historically, the U.S. has demonstrated a powerful unilateralist impulse. Nevertheless, because the U.S. relied on alliances during the Cold War, American unilateralist tendencies have only more recently become apparent. As well, the U.S. swings toward multilateralism only when it is compelled to do so. Keeping with this worldview, it was argued that the U.S. only sees international organizations as useful when it is able to play a dominant role in their operations. Given the American trend towards further unilateralism, and presupposing that playing a pacifying role require multilateral behavior, it is increasingly unlikely that the U.S. will be able to play a pacifying role.

In fact, public debate on foreign policy issues in the U.S. is mostly between Realists and 'superhawks.' Other approaches have been marginalized. Amongst the most strongly unilateralist American thinkers, the notion that the U.S. should be the sole imperial power goes unquestioned. Keeping with this point of view, any move toward multilateralism or alliance formation is resisted because of a fear of potential peer competitors. In particular, the U.S. administration has been pursuing a policy of containing China (which is viewed, in the long term, as a potential peer competitor).

However, others argue that the U.S. has been multilateral in the past, and efforts must be made to push the current administration in that direction. Past multilateralist actions of the U.S. were noted. Can allies' views have an impact on the Bush Administration policies, as opposed to internal factors (ie: public opinion)? It is worth noting that perhaps fewer than 50% of Americans support an attack on Iraq, and of those who do, perhaps 60% say it must be done multilaterally. Given that American public opinion is not well-formed on Iraq, an opportunity exists to win over "hearts and minds," and it is all the more pressing that Canada encourage the Bush administration to pursue a multilateral route. A respondent felt that if all allies refused to support a war on Iraq, American public opinion would not support an attack. It was recommended that Canada can also influence the American government by looking to European allies for support, especially France, Germany and Spain. However, this approach is fraught with difficulty, as European allies are seen by some as unreliable partners.

An opposing viewpoint argued that Canada should unequivocally back an American attack on Iraq, based on Iraqi contravention of international norms. Further, according to this view, Iraq represents a threat to the region and must be contained. Proof of Saddam Hussein's weapons program will be impossible to obtain. Yet, others responded that a high standard of proof of an Iraqi weapons program is required given that the consequences of an attack on Iraq could be very serious.