

Public Attitudes Toward Foreign Affairs

An Overview of the Current State of Public Opinion
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Strategic Overview

Americans feel the weight of world leadership. They have no doubt the United States shoulders responsibility for the world's problems and want to move to a position of shared responsibility and shared leadership. This assumption may be the driving force behind many of the opinions the public holds, such as:

- ⇒ the belief the United States spends too much on foreign aid;
- ⇒ the support for shifting away from military intervention and toward humanitarian aid;
- ⇒ the desire to focus on domestic, rather than international, issues; and
- ⇒ the strong support for the UN and NATO, as organizations that allow countries to act in concert to solve global issues.

Importantly, disabusing the public of this core belief in singular world leadership may not move people toward support for an additional focus on global concerns. Some of the research indicates that people are too wedded to their belief in America's disproportionate role to accept any contradictory opinion. They reject the narrow definition of foreign aid to justify their interpretation that all foreign policy involvement by the United States constitutes foreign aid, and is therefore a large percentage of the federal budget.

The public has little interest in news about other countries and generally holds unformed, malleable opinions on most international issues. The challenge is to break through this disinterest and create a debate through which the public can come to resolution on key issues. Strong leadership, with a sensitive understanding of the value structure underlying the public's attitudes on international issues, can have a dramatic impact on forming opinion.

Though Americans express little interest in international news, they care more about global problems than most polls indicate. First, few polls rate domestic and international concerns on equal footing. Instead, polls that are primarily focused on domestic issues point to lack of support for foreign aid as the sole expression of the public's isolationism. However, this simplistic assessment does not address the public's underlying assumptions about foreign aid, which work to undermine support. Furthermore, polls frequently set up false choices by forcing the public to choose between domestic and international concerns. When a variety of

domestic and international issues are rated on the same measures, domestic issues still top the list, but some international concerns compete for the public's attention.

Additionally, the polls themselves pose a problem. Many of the questions that attempt to uncover the public's interest in foreign affairs may subtly undermine response by not being sensitive to the underlying value sets the public brings to the table. For example, asking whether or not the government should have a role on an issue may dilute overall support if the respondent feels it is an important issue, but not for government. Similarly, questions that try to gauge urgency by asking about critical threats to the United States may give too much emphasis to life-threatening issues, and attribute more urgency to them than the public really feels. Even questions about federal budget spending, long felt to be more accurate since the public votes with their pocketbook, may be misleading if the public feels the United States is already doing more monetarily than is fair and wants to see other countries act. These subtleties in wording cause huge swings in public opinion.

Terrorism, war, and weaponry consistently emerge in the top tier of concerns when people are thinking about critical threats facing the country or goals for the U.S. government. American priorities for foreign aid look very different. Rather than self-preservation issues, these concerns are much more altruistic, centering on relieving human suffering around the world. In fact, since the Cold War, people have shifted their priorities for foreign aid away from U.S. security and toward helping others. Global health, frequently ignored in survey questions, may in fact prove to be a top tier issue that bridges the values of self-preservation and altruism.

Surveys that have attempted to document a self-interest reason for support on many of these issues have failed. Americans want to give foreign aid to relieve pain and suffering, not to build trading partners. The public continues to support free trade in principle, even though Americans believe free trade has generally hurt the U.S. economy. They have acted on behalf of the environment, even though most feel good about the quality of the environment where they live. The answer may not lie in addressing or creating a shallow self-interest, but rather in tapping a fundamental value.

There are a handful of core values that act as a prism through which Americans see the world. Individual freedom, opportunity, fairness, and

individual responsibility are dearer to the American spirit than prosperity and democracy. Only by identifying how these values play out in the international arena will we discover how to engage the public in foreign affairs.

The Broad Context for Foreign Policy

The American Outlook

Americans view ours as a frightening, violent world, full of peril and global instability. The end of the Cold War has not resulted in a feeling of security. Instead, the one central enemy has been replaced by a myriad of terrors. Even so, Americans are curious about the world around them, and hope for a more stable world in the future.

The end of the Cold War has not resulted in a safe, secure American psyche. People feel susceptible to terrorism, and fear a future of war and bloodshed. A majority (59%) believes we are “more vulnerable to foreign attack today” compared with five years ago,¹ and 53% believe there will be more “bloodshed and violence in the 21st Century than the 20th.”² Few (18%) believe the world has become safer since the end of the Cold War, while 41% believe it is about the same and 39% believe the world has become more dangerous.³

When they look toward the next 30 years or so, people are most afraid that a major war will occur, with chemical or nuclear weapons (39%). This main concern is followed by lesser concerns: the disappearance of respect for morality and the family (24%), a global economic depression (23%), a global environmental disaster (23%), a new deadly disease (19%), or an authoritarian government coming to power in the United States (9%).⁴

Americans do not necessarily feel “the national security of the United States is seriously threatened” by countries with nuclear capability (41% yes, 58% no), but they do feel the “chances for world peace are seriously threatened” (66% yes, 32% no).⁵

Their reaction is not to close the borders. Instead, Americans express interest in the world around them. When asked to look ahead 100 years at possible lifestyle changes, people are most enthusiastic about the opportunity to live and work around the world.⁶

100 years from now, which one lifestyle change would you be most excited about?

⇒ Opportunity to live and work throughout the world	28%
⇒ Faster or more convenient forms of transportation	24%
⇒ Greater integration of home and office	17%
⇒ Wider variety of consumer products	8%
⇒ Ability to make most purchases over the Internet	7%

The American spirit revolves around the core values of freedom, individuality, opportunity, independence, and responsibility. While Americans believe these ideals represent what it means to be American, they also believe that the rest of the world simply admires the United States for the country’s economic prosperity.

Americans feel the United States “is a unique country that stands for something special in the world” (84%), and that even though “there are many ethnic groups and cultures in the United States, there is a unique American culture” (58%).⁷ That unique culture is founded on personal freedoms, though other countries place more value on American economic prosperity.

	Which of the following is most important to you personally? Which do you think other countries most admire the U.S. for? ⁸	
	%	%
	Important	Admire
Personal freedoms	61	28
Prosperity and economic opportunity	25	56
Political freedoms	13	12

The values Americans hold most dear are religious freedom, opportunity, fairness, and individual responsibility. Prosperity, democracy, and specific religious values are seen as far less central to the American spirit. These core values are a prism through which Americans see the world.

American Ideals That Are Absolutely Essential⁹	
	%
Everyone should have the right to their religious beliefs	89
There should be equal opportunity for people regardless of their race religion or sex	88
The police should follow strict rules on how they collect evidence and treat the people they arrest	81
People should work and earn their living – they should not rely on the government	76
People can protest or criticize the government without fear of punishment	67
People are supposed to be tolerant of others whose backgrounds or lifestyles are different	61
People can enjoy a better standard of living here than in most countries	55
The United States helps to promote and defend democracy around the world	41
We live in a society that is based on Judeo/Christian beliefs	36

Americans feel the United States will continue to be the world leader into the next century. Military strength is the driving force behind this belief.

Three-quarters (76%) believe the United States will play an even more important role in the world in 10 years,¹⁰ and a clear majority (62%) believe the United States will be the greatest power of the next century.¹¹ However, only 28% believe the United States will be the “only major world power,” while 61% believe the United States will share world power status. Reacting to which country will most challenge the United States’ world power status over the next 100 years, China is the clear leader (50%), followed by the Middle East (22%).¹²

Americans do not want to cede military strength to any country. A firm majority (59%) believes it is important to be first in the world militarily, while only 41% believe it is important to be first economically. A slight majority (51%) believes the United States is currently first militarily, while 46% believe the country is one of several military leaders. Americans may be feeling some concern about the country’s military

superiority, since this finding is substantially lower than the 63% who believed the United States was first militarily in March of 1993.¹³

While military might is important to Americans, they recognize it does not solely determine a country's global influence. In fact, 63% believe that economic strength is more important in determining a country's power and influence in the world, while only 28% point to military strength as being more important.¹⁴

Americans are confident of the country's future leadership. Three-quarters see continued American strength in a variety of areas tested. Majorities believe the United States will not only be strong, but also maintain a leadership role into the next century in pop culture (60%) and in the military (55%). Fewer believe the United States will maintain leadership in technology (46%), the world economy (44%) or creativity and innovation (44%), but do see continued strength.¹⁵

Interestingly, people believe the biggest threat to the United States is from our own domestic problems (64%) rather than from threats outside the country (33%).¹⁶ Moral decline is a greater threat to U.S. power status than economic weakness (74% compared with 20%), and terrorist attack is a greater threat to U.S. power status than military conflicts (63% compared with 32%).¹⁷

Role in the World

Americans want to be actively involved in world affairs, but do not want the responsibility of being the sole leader in the world. Most firmly believe that the United States does far more than its fair share.

Americans do not want to disengage from the world, but neither do they want to carry the burden of the rest of the world's problems alone. Fully 81% believe the United States spends more as a percentage of the GNP on foreign aid than other industrialized nations and 68% believe we should be giving about the same amount.¹⁸

Gallup/CNN/USA Today Poll Trend	
% Wanting an Active Part in World Affairs	
6/99	61
5/99	69
10/98	61
1994	65
1990	62
1982	54
1973	66

Consistently, public opinion demonstrates that Americans want to share leadership and responsibility with other countries. Half of Americans (50%) believe we should share a leadership role with other nations and be as active as they are, while 22% want to share leadership but be the most active nation. Equal percentages are at the extremes, with 12% wanting the United States to be the single world leader, and 11% not wanting any leadership role at all.¹⁹

Americans want to act in concert with allies. In responding to international crises, fully 72% believe the United States should not act alone without the support of allies.²⁰ Nearly as many (69%) reject the belief that "since the United States is the most powerful nation in the world, we should go our own way in international matters, not worrying too much about whether other countries agree with us or not." Furthermore, 82% agree "in deciding on its foreign policies, the United States should take into account the views of its major allies."²¹ A majority (53%) rejects the notion that "the United States has the responsibility to play the role of 'world policeman.'"²² In fact, in March of 1999, a solid majority of Americans (61%) said that the United States should not be the primary peacekeeper for the world.²³

When asked to choose between three candidates for Congress, two-thirds (66%) would support the candidate who says that "the United States should do its fair share in efforts to solve international problems together with other countries." They would be far less attracted to the candidate

who says that “as the sole remaining superpower, the United States should continue to be the preeminent world leader in solving international problems” (15%), or one who asserts that “the United States should withdraw from most efforts to solve international problems” (18%).²⁴

Generally, people prefer being a diplomat to being a bully. When asked to respond to the problem of an oil producing country engaging in human rights violations, people prefer that the United States maintain economic ties while using diplomacy to convince this country to change behavior (61%).²⁵ Generally, a majority feel “good diplomacy” (53%) rather than military strength (36%) is the best way to ensure peace.²⁶

Foreign Affairs Interest and Priority

Americans have historically had far less interest in news about other countries than in news about their local community.

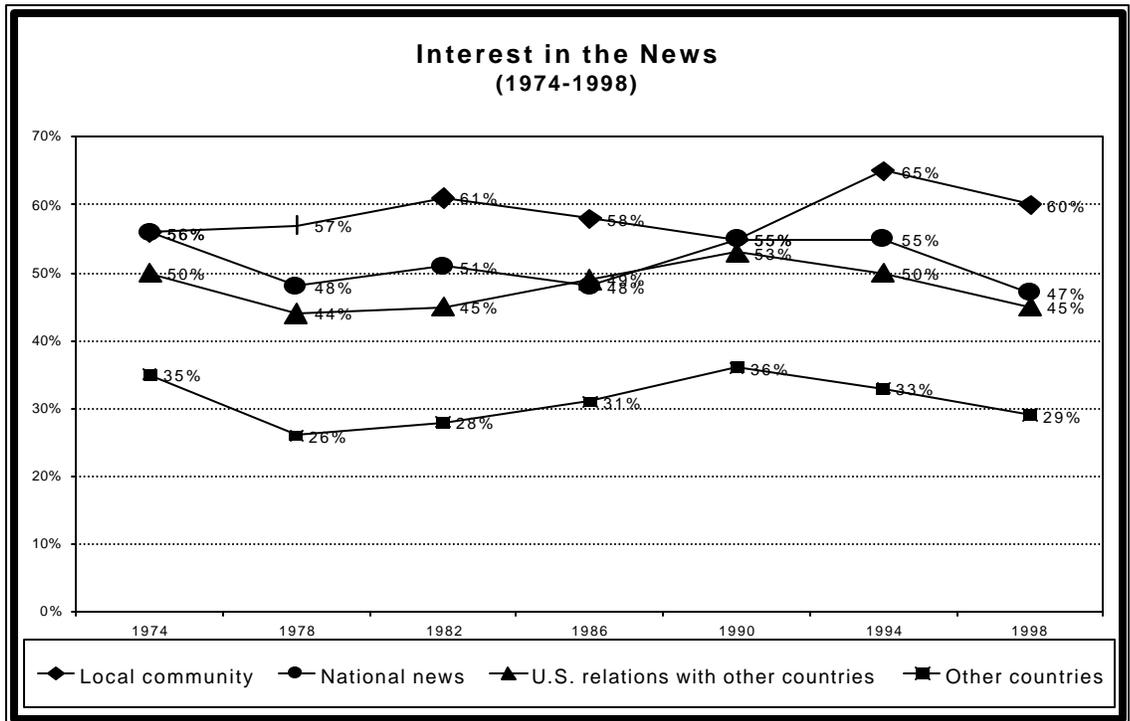


Figure -- Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 1999

Only 29% of Americans say they are “very interested” in news about other countries, compared with 60% who are “very interested” in news about their local community. Interest in national news and news about U.S. relations with other countries historically tends to show about the same levels of interest, with national news running only slightly ahead of news concerning U.S. relations with other countries.²⁷

The public consistently rates foreign policy as less important than domestic policy. When posed as a trade-off, Americans choose domestic concerns over international concerns every time.

Americans continue to want to put energy into domestic problems over international problems. More than two-thirds (68%) agree “we should not think so much in international terms, but concentrate more on our own national problems and building up our strength and prosperity here.”²⁸ Part of the reason people center their energies more on domestic issues is because they believe the bigger threats to our society are from domestic problems (64%) rather than threats from outside the country (33%).²⁹

The night of the 1999 State of the Union Address, respondents were asked which of the three priorities the President addressed was the most important. A plurality (47%) chose Social Security and Medicare, closely followed by education (43%). A mere 9% felt that foreign policy/military spending was the most important issue.³⁰

Even at the presidential level, a candidate’s ability to handle foreign affairs is among the least important issues in deciding the votes of citizens.

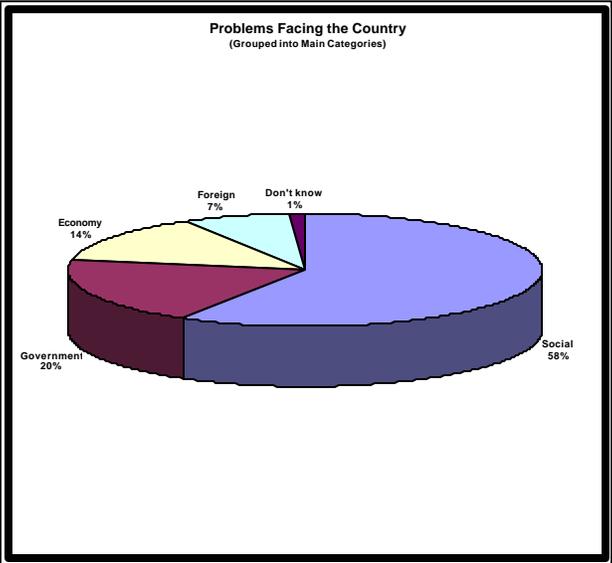
Importance of Issues in Determining Year 2000 Presidential Vote³¹	
	%VeryImportant
Improving education and the schools	79
Handling the national economy	74
Managing the federal budget	74
Handling crime	71
Protecting the Social Security system	68
Encouraging high moral standards and values	67
Protecting patients’ rights in the health care system	65
Protecting the Medicare system	64
Protecting the environment	62
Upholding the dignity of the presidency	62
Helping the middle class	61
Handling the issue of gun control	56
<i>Handling foreign affairs</i>	54
Cutting taxes	44
Reforming election campaign finance laws	30

While foreign affairs are generally not a high priority for Americans, pollsters may inadvertently pre-ordain a response by the context of the questions asked. Over time, these types of questions could reinforce the assumption that Americans do not care about the world around them.

Subtle question wording has a dramatic influence on how people respond to issues regarding foreign affairs. Pollsters may inadvertently encourage a focus on national problems by the wording of the questions they ask. For example, the typical question wording “What do you feel are the two or three biggest problems facing the country today?” puts the respondent in the mindset of problems in *this* country:³²

<i>What do you feel are the two or three biggest problems facing the country today?</i>	
Crime	26%
The President/Clinton	22%
Drug abuse	21%
Education	15%
Poverty	11%
Economy	11%
Immorality	11%

It is little wonder, then, that when these questions are categorized into main types of issues, foreign issues constitute only 7% of all concerns listed.³³ Taken for what it is, an assessment of the issues facing the United States, this is a perfectly appropriate response to a circumscribed question. However, some interpret this as an indication of Americans’ lack of concern about foreign issues.



By contrast, when people are asked about the most important problems facing the world, the response is very different. The top responses for world problems are concerns about nuclear weapons (15%), poverty and homelessness (12%), war (10%), and the environment (6%).³⁴

Many close-ended or directive surveys that ask for an assessment of priorities tend to focus on domestic priorities, with just one or two references to a “military” or “foreign aid” priority. For example, the

following set of priority ratings includes only one direct reference to foreign policy, and even that question wording has a distinctly American perspective.

Should be a Top Priority³⁵	
	% Top Priority
Reducing crime	76
Improving the educational system	74
Taking steps to make the Social Security system financially sound	73
Taking steps to make the Medicare system financially sound	71
Dealing with the problems of poor and needy people	60
Protecting the environment	59
Dealing with the problems of families with children	58
Regulating health maintenance organizations and managed health care plans	57
Reducing federal income taxes for the middle class	57
Dealing with the moral breakdown in the country	55
Improving the job situation	54
Strengthening gun control laws	51
Working to reduce racial tensions	49
Paying off the national debt	45
<i>Developing a policy about the use of American military forces in other countries</i>	42
Cutting the capital gains tax	28
Reforming the campaign finance system	28
Limiting access to abortions	26
Providing Internet access for everyone who wants or needs it	11

The assumption underlying a question can dramatically affect the response given. Using defense as an example, note the differences in priority depending on the question asked in the following three tables. In responding to whether government should play a major, medium, or minor role in several issues, “maintaining a strong national defense” emerges as the area with the highest support for a major role for government. However, it is rated far lower when people are reacting to the importance of government programs. It is at the bottom of the public’s preferences for increased spending.

Just one of these questions would give an incorrect state of the public’s opinion. Taken together, these questions draw a more complex picture for the nation’s defense. This suggests a public that sees maintaining a strong national defense as a key task for government, but as a less important program for Americans personally, and as an area that does not need any additional funding. Note also that foreign aid ranks last as a major role for government and as an important program.

Major Role for Government³⁶	
(International Problems in Italics)	
	% Major Role
<i>Maintaining a strong national defense</i>	77
Improving education	70
Making college education affordable	68
Providing help to senior citizens	67
Finding a cure for cancer, AIDS, and other diseases	67
Reducing violence	66
Cleaning up the environment	63
Expanding health insurance coverage	58
Fighting discrimination against women and minorities	57
Reducing poverty	57
Supporting scientific research	53
Improving the nation's moral values	46
Helping people become homeowners	38
Exploring outer space	30
<i>Providing assistance to poor nations</i>	21

Very Important Federal Program³⁷	
(International Problems in Italics)	
	% Very Important
Social Security	85
Medicare	80
Federal aid to public schools	71
Medicaid	67
Federally subsidized loans for college students	55
<i>Defense spending</i>	48
Food stamps	26
Welfare	24
<i>Foreign aid</i>	14

Top Priorities for Budget Surplus³⁸	
(International Problems in Italics)	
	% One of Top Priorities
Helping make the Social Security program financially sound	73
Helping make the Medicare program financially sound	57
Increased spending on domestic programs, such as health, education, and the environment	50
Cutting taxes	43
Paying off the national debt more quickly	38
<i>Increasing defense spending</i>	16

Americans' level of concern for some global problems can compete with their concern for domestic issues. Domestic concerns still top the list of issues for the public, but several international concerns are seen as serious problems as well.

Most public opinion surveys primarily focus on *either* domestic *or* international concerns. Those that focus on domestic issues may include one or two mentions of international issues, but the responses generally reinforce the belief that Americans only care about domestic policy. In 1994, The Pew Charitable Trusts sponsored a study that included ratings of both domestic *and* international problems. While domestic concerns topped the list, several international concerns were given a high rating as well.

Rating of Severity of Problem on a 1-10 Scale³⁹	
(International Problems in Italics)	
	Mean Rating
Crime	8.8
Gun violence	8.3
Government spending	8.3
<i>Disease and hunger in other countries</i>	7.7
Cost of health care	7.6
Our education system	7.4
Poverty	7.2
<i>Rapid population growth</i>	7.1
<i>The spread of nuclear weapons</i>	7.1
<i>The threat of civil wars and international regional conflicts</i>	6.9
The economy	6.9
<i>Threats to the global environment</i>	6.9
Immigration	6.6
Race relations	6.5
Environmental threats	6.4
Overconsumption of resources	6.4

Foreign Policy Goals and Priorities

Even when people are focused solely on foreign affairs, their priorities can change depending on the subtlety of the question. The mix of top, middle, and low tier responses is slightly different depending on whether people are thinking of threats to and problems for the United States or reacting to what the goals and priorities for government should be.

Whether worded as threats or goals, concerns about terrorism and nuclear safety or biological weapons consistently emerge in the top tier of responses. This is a powerful set of issues tapping the core values of safety and self-preservation. People are concerned about these issues and believe that government needs to make them a key priority. There are other issues that are not seen as very threatening but that people believe are important goals for government nevertheless. For example, economic issues are in the lowest tier of *threats* but tend to be in the top or middle tier for *goals* for government. Similarly, illegal drugs are in the middle tier of problems but are in the top tier of important goals and priorities for government. Even the environment moves up from the lowest tier of threats to the middle tier of goals.

Human rights, ethnic conflict, and promoting democracy and market economies ranked near the bottom of the issues tested.

The top two tiers of responses tend to tap the values of self-preservation or self-concern, while the bottom tier of responses (particularly the series on goals and priorities) tends to include more selfless concerns. The one notable exception is combating world hunger, which is the one altruistic goal in the middle tier of government goals.

The following four graphs and tables outline specific public opinion responses to these observations concerning response to threats, problems, priorities, and goals.

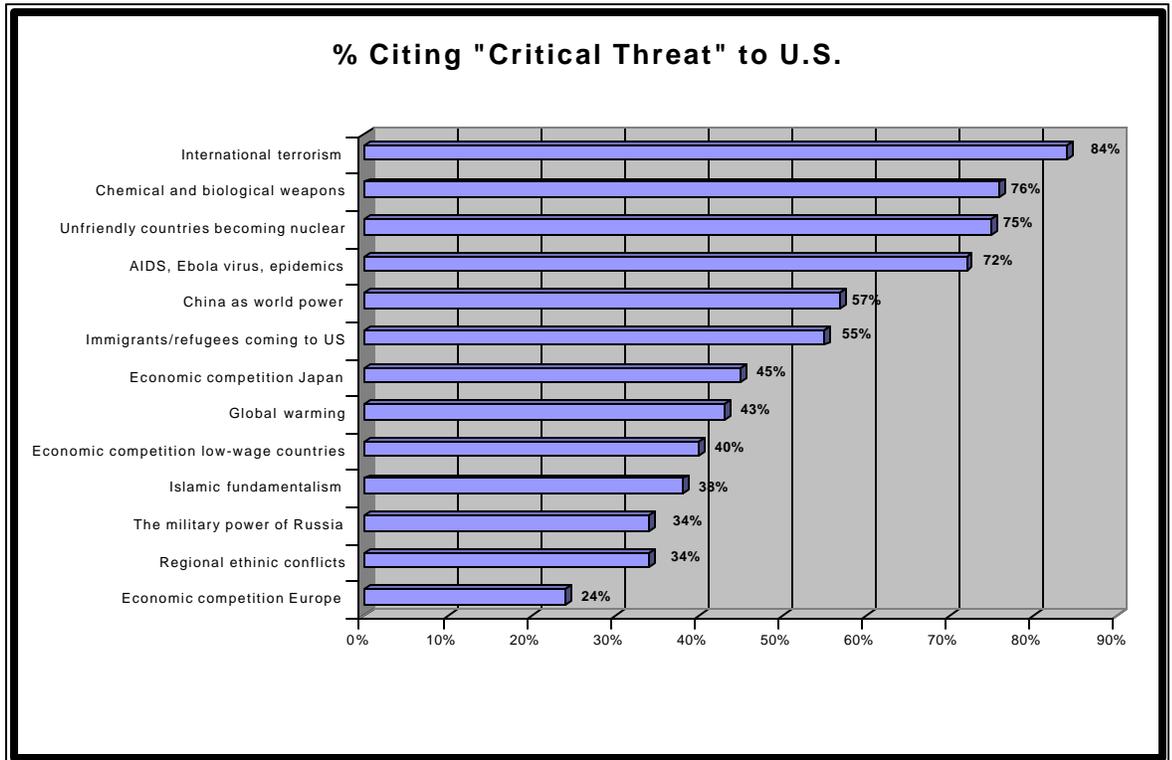


Figure -- Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 1999

Very Serious Problem for the United States⁴⁰

Problem	% Very Serious
The possibility that North Korea will build nuclear weapons	73
Testing of nuclear weapons in India and Pakistan	68
Allegations that China stole nuclear technology from the United States	68
Drug corruption in Mexico	61
The presence of Saddam Hussein in Iraq	58
Human rights violations in China	40
Ethnic conflict in Kosovo	38
Financial crisis in Asia	27
Financial problems in South America	25

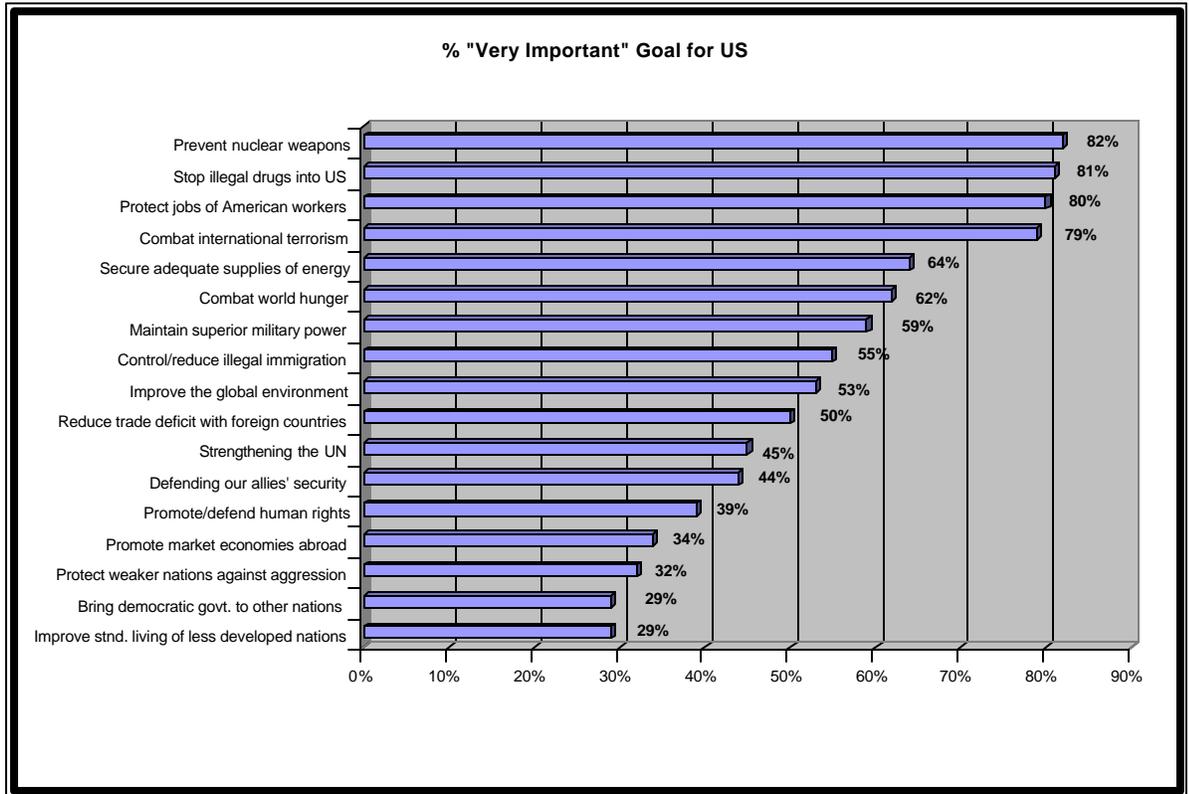


Figure -- Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 1999

Top Priorities for the U.S. Government⁴¹

	% Top Priority
Reducing the threat of international terrorism	75
Stopping international drug trafficking	72
Stopping the spread of AIDS around the world	65
Protecting the global environment	62
Getting Saddam Hussein out of Iraq	60
Making the world financial system more stable	60
Keeping a close watch on the development of China as a world power	52
Monitoring the emergence of China as a world power	42
Better managing our trade and economic disputes with Europe	40
Better managing our trade and economic disputes with Japan	38
Preventing human rights abuses in other countries	37
Bringing about a permanent settlement between Israel and the Arabs	35
Ending the warfare in the Balkans	34
Insuring democracy succeeds in Russia and the other former Soviet states	30
Countering the threat of North Korean militarism	29

Importantly, people may not be rating these issues according to their personal assessment of the importance of the issue itself. Since the goals and priorities questions were asked through the prism of the role for the U.S. government, people may feel that a role is inappropriate for the United States, or that government is an ineffective actor in that arena.

Religious organizations and the military are among the most trusted institutions in the country, while the federal government and international charitable institutions are among the least trusted institutions. This lack of faith in the effectiveness of government may affect people's willingness to support certain roles for the government.

Of over a dozen charitable institutions tested, those dealing with international issues (culture exchange or relief organizations) have the lowest level of confidence among the American public (25% have “a great deal” or “quite a lot of confidence”). Religious organizations rate far higher (55%). Among non-charitable institutions, the military is among the most trusted (54%), while political organizations (15%), Congress (16%), organizations that lobby for a cause (20%), and the federal government (23%) hold the lowest levels of confidence of the institutions tested.⁴²

Asked who would be the most effective and useful source of help to foreign countries, a plurality choose religious organizations (37%) followed by the U.S. government (19%), the UN (14%), private charities or aid organizations (11%), UNICEF (8%), and then private companies (4%).⁴³ But when thinking about reaching the largest number of people in the fastest time and lowest cost, the United Nations comes out on top (47%), followed by the U.S. government (18%), private charities (16%), and private businesses (15%). (Religious organizations were not included).⁴⁴

When thinking about problems facing the world, without a reference to the United States or government, people point to poverty and hunger as the most important problem in the world – even higher than weapons of mass destruction.

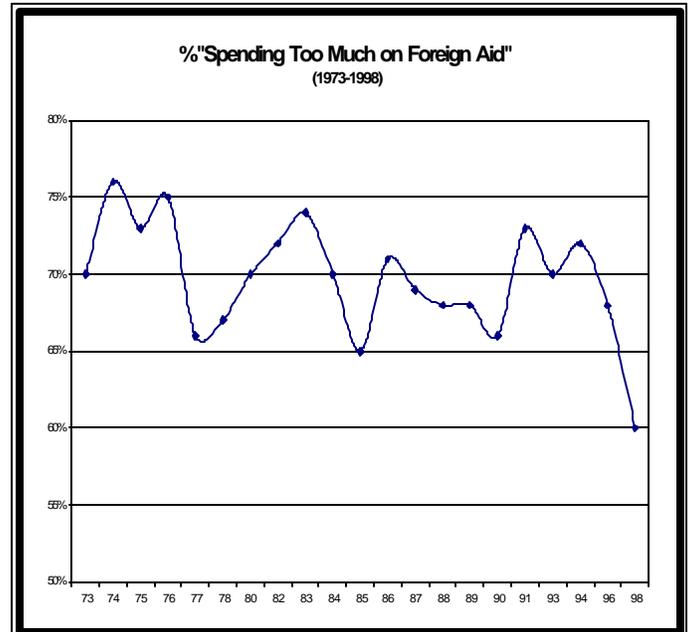
When asked “How important are the following problems in the world today?” with no assumption of a government role, or the affect on the United States, people rate poverty and hunger as the most important of the concerns suggested.

<i>How important are the following problems in the world today?⁴⁵</i>	
	<i>% Very Important</i>
Poverty and hunger	81
The development and spread of biological and chemical weapons	72
The spread of global infectious diseases	70
Pollution and other environmental problems	65
Regional warfare and civil wars	58

Specific Foreign Policy Areas

Foreign Aid

The public continues to insist that the United States spends too much on foreign aid, though this response is currently at its lowest point in 25 years. This belief is based on the perception that the United States gives far more to international efforts than other industrialized nations. Americans want to do their share, but do not want to shoulder the bulk of the responsibility. Importantly, correcting this misperception may or may not lead to increased support for foreign aid.



Sixty percent (60%) of Americans believe the country is spending too much on foreign aid; however, this percentage is currently at its lowest point since the early '70s. For roughly the past 25 years, the percentage that believes too much is spent on foreign aid has generally hovered between 65% and 75%. As of the 1998 General Social Survey, this response had dropped to 60%. Now may be the best time for a conversation about foreign policy and the United States' role in the world.⁴⁶

Over the years, several polls have demonstrated that the public believes the United States spends much more on foreign aid than is the case. Fully 81% believe the United States spends more as a percentage of the GNP than other industrialized nations, and 68% believe we should give about the same amount.⁴⁷ Even when given the description that "*foreign aid includes things like humanitarian assistance, aid to Israel and Egypt, and economic development aid. It does not include the cost of defending other countries militarily,*" on average, Americans believe the United States spends 23% of the federal budget on foreign aid. They believe 13% is more appropriate.⁴⁸

PIPA has released several polls that indicate the public shifts perceptions when they hear foreign aid spending is 1% of the budget. For example, in a 1995 study, the percentage of people who originally wanted to cut foreign aid spending dropped from 64% to 35% after hearing actual spending levels. However, only 25% then said they wanted to increase spending levels, while 37% wanted to keep it the same.⁴⁹

A qualitative study by John Doble Research Associates in 1996 indicates that educating people about the real budget percentage for foreign aid or the comparison with other countries' GNP does not change the public's core belief system about foreign aid. According to this study, Americans define "foreign aid" very broadly – including *any* defense spending that benefits other countries.⁵⁰ With this definition in mind, it is no surprise that people believe a high percentage of the budget goes toward foreign aid. Furthermore, it helps to explain the reasons underlying the public's desire to shift the United States' emphasis on foreign aid away from military support and toward more humanitarian or developmental support.

The public's goals for foreign assistance are based on their desire to relieve pain and suffering in the world. This represents a shift from Cold War days when Americans wanted to use foreign aid to protect the security interests of the United States.

Unlike the top goals for U.S. foreign policy generally, the top goals for foreign assistance are very altruistic. When asked to rate the priority of several goals for U.S. government assistance programs, relieving human suffering was seen as most important, while military support to friendly governments was least important.

Rating of Importance of Goal on a 1-10 Scale⁵¹	
	Mean Rating
Relieving human suffering brought about by civil war and natural disasters	7.1
Protecting the global environment	7.0
Promoting democracy	6.9
Promoting human rights	6.5
Improving the status of women	6.3
Helping countries slow their rate of population growth	5.9
Improving economic conditions in developing countries	5.7
Preventing civil wars and regional conflicts	5.7
Giving military support to governments friendly to us	5.5

In voting with their taxes, a majority supports increased spending in only one area, child survival (56%). However, the ranking of priorities clearly places humanitarian issues over military concerns:

- 56% favor increasing spending for child survival programs
- 47% for the Peace Corps
- 41% for humanitarian relief
- 38% for environmental aid to poor countries
- 36% for family planning for poor countries
- 29% for assistance to help poor countries develop
- 20% for Socialist countries
- 6% for military aid
- 6% for Turkey and Greece
- 4% for Israel and Egypt⁵²

There was clearly a shift in foreign aid priorities after the Cold War. In 1986, a plurality of 44% said the most important countries to receive aid were those “important to U.S. security.” By 1992, this number dropped to 22%. At the same time, the percentage choosing “the countries with the poorest economies” climbed from 33% in 1986 to 44% in 1992. Those choosing “the countries needed by the United States as trade partners” also climbed from 19% to 27%.⁵³

Views of the UN and NATO

As outlined in the previous “Role in the World” section, Americans do not want to shoulder responsibility for the world’s problems alone. This finding helps to explain the public’s strong support for the United Nations and NATO, since they symbolize the U.S. ability to cooperate with other nations without necessarily having to lead them. These organizations represent the type of collaboration with allies the public wants to prioritize.

The public holds similar views toward both the UN and NATO, though American are slightly more positively predisposed toward the UN. Fully 70% of Americans have a favorable (19% very favorable) opinion of the United Nations, while 67% have a favorable (17% very favorable) opinion of NATO.⁵⁴ Two-thirds (65%) also agree that “the United States should cooperate fully with the United Nations.”⁵⁵

Since 1991, roughly 60% of Americans have consistently supported maintaining the NATO alliance, until this past March when the figure jumped to 74%.⁵⁶ Nearly two-thirds (63%) believe that NATO is “very important”⁵⁷ and 59% want to keep the commitment to NATO the same, with 9% wanting to increase our commitment.⁵⁸

The NATO alliance should be maintained: (% agree)			
<u>3/99</u>	<u>1/97</u>	<u>12/94</u>	<u>6/91</u>
74%	61%	60%	62%

Last fall, just over a majority of Americans (57%) agreed that the United States should take part in UN peacekeeping forces, with only 20% disagreeing.⁵⁹ By June of this year, with the United States engaged, fully 75% approved of American troops participating in peacekeeping forces under UN command, while 69% approve if under NATO command.⁶⁰

Americans clearly distinguish between the U.S. sole responsibility to help other countries and a shared responsibility. When asked if “NATO, including the United States, has a responsibility to do something about the fighting between ethnic groups in Kosovo,” a clear majority (60%) said NATO has that responsibility. However, the other half sample of adults in the same poll demonstrated far less support when asked whether or not “the United States has a responsibility” (47%).⁶¹ This finding further substantiates the public’s desire for shared actions.

The Global Economy and Foreign Trade

The public’s attitudes toward the global economy and foreign trade are malleable and erratic, though they are based on a firm foundation of core values. Americans believe economic strength is critically important and that the world’s economy is becoming more interconnected. They also believe the United States has not been treated fairly by other countries (particularly Asian countries) and want our first priority to be American jobs. They are divided on whether that means protecting current jobs or adapting to a changing world, but want the first priority to be the best interests of the American workforce.

Nearly two-thirds (63%) of Americans believe a country’s economic strength is more important than its military strength (28%) in determining a country’s power and influence in the world.⁶² However, they do not

necessarily believe the economy of the world will have much of an impact on their own work lives. Nearly half (47%) believe the new global economy will make no difference to their own job prospects, while 29% believe it will improve their prospects and 16% believe it will hurt their prospects.⁶³ Whether or not their personal jobs will be affected, being prepared for a global economy is critical for the future. Fully 76% believe that “being prepared for working in a global economy” is more critical today than when they were in school, and a majority (54%) believe that learning a foreign language is more critical today.⁶⁴

While a majority of Americans (59%)⁶⁵ say they approve of free trade agreements with other countries, they also consistently indicate that they believe the United States has not been treated fairly in most of these agreements. Nearly two-thirds (64%) believe countries in Asia have unfair trade practices toward the United States, while only 47% would say the same for countries in Europe.⁶⁶ Of two statements, a majority (58%) believe that “foreign trade has been bad for the U.S. economy, because cheap imports from abroad have hurt wages and cost jobs,” while only 32% believe that “foreign trade has been good for the U.S. economy, because demand for U.S. products abroad has resulted in economic growth and jobs.”⁶⁷

American jobs are the focus of concern. The public wants to prioritize jobs, even at significant cost. Fully 86% agree (62% strongly agree) that U.S. companies “should train U.S. workers to perform jobs in some technical fields, even if it is faster and less expensive to fill the jobs with foreign professionals.”⁶⁸ A similar high percentage (82%) opposes “Congress allowing U.S. companies to sponsor 190,000 additional foreign technical workers as temporary employees for up to six years.”⁶⁹

It is interesting that people hold such negative assessments of the country’s foreign trade position, considering that 63% work for companies that neither import nor export and 67% say that trade with other countries has had no effect on their job.⁷⁰

Intellectually, the public is divided between those who want to protect jobs (47%) and those who believe workers should compete in the global marketplace (45%).⁷¹ They are similarly divided about whether their own financial security is more threatened by economic problems within the United States (44%) or economic problems in countries that do business with the United States (41%).⁷² Finally, they are also divided about what

to do about the trade issue, with 49% supporting active involvement of the federal government, and 41% saying we should rely on the private sector and free enterprise system.⁷³

These beliefs are based on little knowledge of trade issues. Three-quarters (75%) are not aware that the United States is the world's largest exporter. They also readily admit they have no knowledge of the trade issue (62%), and don't know the stance of their member of Congress (75%). Trade is not a top priority for people, with only 9% saying it was "top of the list" in their issues to consider in the 1996 Congressional vote.⁷⁴

Global Health

Global infectious disease may prove to be the strongest issue with which to engage Americans in foreign affairs. It is frequently overlooked in public opinion research, but when it is included, it competes in the top tier of issues and results in a desire to increase funding to other countries.

Global infectious disease competes strongly in the top tier of global issues. After weapons and terrorism, AIDS, the Ebola virus, and epidemics are viewed as the next most pressing "critical threats to the United States" (72% say critical threat).⁷⁵ Stopping AIDS (not the strongest phrasing) is the third highest priority for the U.S. government after terrorism and drugs (65% say it should be a top priority).⁷⁶ When thinking of important problems in the world, 70% point to the spread of global infectious diseases as a very important problem. This follows poverty and hunger as the greatest problem (81%), and is just behind the development and spread of biological and chemical weapons (72%).⁷⁷

This is an issue that personally touches a significant number of Americans. Nearly half (48%) of Americans know someone who has had TB, hepatitis, AIDS/HIV, or malaria. They see the problem getting worse compared with a decade ago, particularly AIDS/HIV (81% say it has become more of a problem in the past 10 years), followed by hepatitis (63%), TB (42%), and malaria (16%). This perception has caused 36% of Americans to be very worried about the spread of global infectious disease.⁷⁸

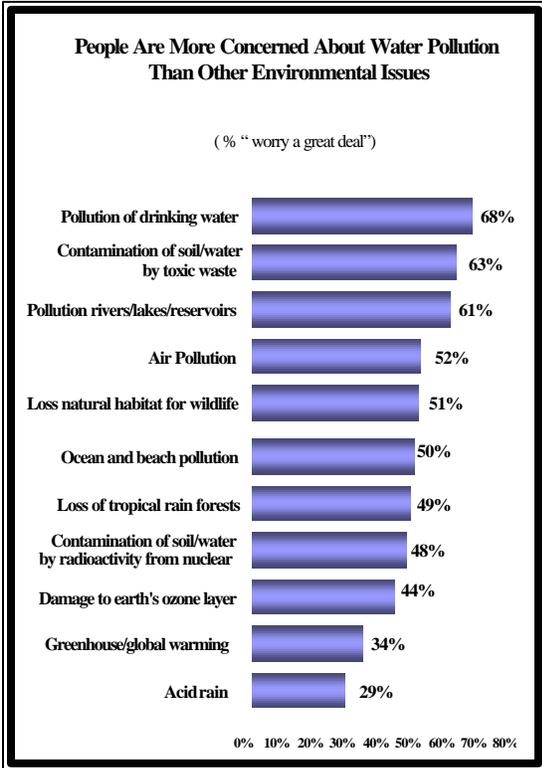
Furthermore, global health is an issue that allows a conversation about engaging in a proactive, positive role with other countries. Americans are near unanimous (90%) in their agreement that “fighting diseases at their source before they spread” is a very important tool in fighting global infectious diseases.” Nearly as many (86%) find compelling the argument that “the safest and cheapest way to stop the spread of these diseases is to fight them where they start, which is mostly in the third world.”⁷⁹

Lastly, global infectious disease is an issue that causes Americans to support increased aid to other countries. Nearly half (47%) support increased funding for fighting global infectious diseases abroad. This percentage increases to 57% after hearing brief arguments for and against funding.⁸⁰

The Environment/Global Warming

Environmental protection is a central value for most Americans. However, the issue has lost urgency in recent years, the reasons for which are unclear. The environmental concerns that most compel people are those that are close to home and have a direct impact on their health – water pollution, air pollution, toxic waste.

Environmentalism is a core value for most Americans. More than two-thirds consider themselves to be sympathetic (57%) or active (12%) on environmental issues.⁸¹ Nearly everyone (93%) has voluntarily recycled something, more than two-thirds have conserved water (69%) and energy (74%), nearly half (48%) have contributed to an environmental group, 29% have boycotted a company’s products because of its environmental record, and 22% have even done volunteer work for the environment.⁸²



While the environment is a core value for Americans, it is not an urgent top-of-mind priority. Throughout current public opinion data, it typically

ranks in the middle tier, and frequently in the lower tier, of priorities and concerns when compared with other domestic or international issues.

Furthermore, environmental issues close to home, such as water pollution and toxic waste, are generally the environmental issues that most concern Americans, even though 69% feel good about the quality of the environment where they live.⁸³ Global warming and damage to the ozone layer, which are more typically referred to as global environmental issues, are less urgent environmental concerns for the public.⁸⁴

There is some indication that the level of concern on specific environmental issues has eroded over the past decade. From May 1989 to March 1999, Gallup has noted drops of about 16 points in the percentage who “worry a great deal” about a variety of environmental problems.⁸⁵ It is unclear what is causing this declining sense of urgency – a feeling that progress is being made, or that everyone shares concern for the environment and will enact change when solutions arise.

Finally, global warming is a particularly difficult environmental issue around which to create public urgency. The public has heard conflicting information about whether or not global warming is a real problem. While 74%⁸⁶ say they believe global warming is real, they are split on whether or not scientists believe it is a serious threat (42%), or if scientists are divided on the issue (44%).⁸⁷

Questions for Further Research

There is a significant body of research to indicate where public opinion currently stands on foreign policy. There is also a sizable body of work to indicate some of the barriers that keep Americans from being supportive of more active engagement globally. What is lacking is the type of research that lays out a strategy for moving public opinion forward. From this review of public opinion data, the following three questions emerge as the necessary questions to resolve to build the foundation of a successful strategy.

What level of intensity is necessary to engage the American public and maintain their interest?

Americans demonstrate little interest in international news. Furthermore, their opinions on many international topics are fluid and unformed. They have a high level of “don’t know” response throughout surveys on international topics, and subtle changes in question wording can cause a dramatic shift in response. Short of a war, what international topic can get and keep the attention of the American people (and the media) to create a debate through which they can form solid, lasting opinions and commitment to the issue? Once engaged, does the public experience “fatigue” or has the media invented this notion?

Is it possible to disabuse people of fundamental beliefs concerning foreign policy? Is it even necessary?

The public firmly believes that the United States spends a significant portion of the national budget on foreign aid. They also believe the United States spends far more than other industrialized countries. While the PIPA survey suggests that confronting people in a survey with a “just 1%” message reduces opposition to foreign aid, the John Doble research suggests that as people debate the issue, they hold fast to their belief system. The public’s definition of foreign aid, which includes dollars identified as defense, reinforces their belief that the United States is shouldering the burden of the world. In the real world, outside a research “laboratory” setting, is it possible to convince people that the United States is not doing its fair share? Is it more effective

instead to use issues that compel them to act in spite of this fundamental belief?

Secondly, some public opinion research suggests that government ineffectiveness is a key barrier to support for foreign aid. If true, is it more effective to engage and publicize actors other than the U.S. government (such as the UN or religious organizations), or is it more effective to convey success stories?

Do certain issues build a global consciousness while other issues reinforce isolationism?

Much of the public opinion research has attempted to engage Americans through a direct reference to self-interest, i.e. U.S. security interests, impact of other countries' economies on ours, etc. Are there some issues, by the very nature of the issue itself, that set up a "we versus them" response? For example, is foreign trade so entangled with an American's desire to protect jobs that he or she automatically thinks in we/they terms? Even arguments designed to build the belief that foreign trade creates jobs here may be ineffective against this overwhelming core concern.

Perhaps a global consciousness can best be created through issues that Americans share with other countries, where there are no winners and losers, and where a country struggling with that issue is blameless (cannot be seen as being at fault for creating the problem). For example, catastrophes, disease, environmental threats, and even terrorism may be the kinds of issues that Americans can identify with, thereby reinforcing a sense of a global humanity.

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- ¹ Rasmussen Research, 1000 adults nationwide, May 27, 1999.
- ² “American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999” sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, conducted by the Gallup Organization, 1507 adults nationwide, October 15 through November 10, 1998.
- ³ Sponsored by Newsweek, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, 405 adults nationwide, May 13-14, 1999.
- ⁴ Sponsored by Shell Oil, conducted by Hart Research, 1264 adults nationwide, November 5-8, 1998.
- ⁵ The Gallup Organization, 1003 adults nationwide, June 5-7, 1998.
- ⁶ NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll conducted by Hart and Teeter research organizations, 2025 adults nationwide, September 9-12, 1999.
- ⁷ “A Lot to be Thankful For Survey” conducted by the Public Agenda Foundation, 801 parents of public school children nationally, September 3-16, 1998.
- ⁸ “A Lot to be Thankful For Survey” conducted by the Public Agenda Foundation, 801 parents of public school children nationally, September 3-16, 1998.
- ⁹ “A Lot to be Thankful For Survey” conducted by the Public Agenda Foundation, 801 parents of public school children nationally, September 3-16, 1998.
- ¹⁰ “American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999” sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, conducted by the Gallup Organization, 1507 adults nationwide, October 15 through November 10, 1998.
- ¹¹ Sponsored by Shell Oil, conducted by Hart Research, 1264 adults nationwide, November 5-8, 1998.
- ¹² NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll conducted by Hart and Teeter research organizations, 2025 adults nationwide, September 9-12, 1999.
- ¹³ The Gallup Organization, 1025 adults nationwide, May 7-9, 1999.
- ¹⁴ “American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999” sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, conducted by the Gallup Organization, 1507 adults nationwide, October 15th through November 10th, 1998.
- ¹⁵ NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll conducted by Hart and Teeter research organizations, 2025 adults nationwide, September 9-12, 1999.
- ¹⁶ Sponsored by Shell Oil, conducted by Hart Research, 1264 adults nationwide, November 5-8, 1998.
- ¹⁷ NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll conducted by Hart and Teeter research organizations, 2025 adults nationwide, September 9-12, 1999.
- ¹⁸ “Americans and Foreign Aid” by the Program on International Policy Attitudes, University of Maryland, 801 adults nationwide, January 12-15, 1995.
- ¹⁹ Sponsored by the Pew Research Center, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, 2000 adults nationwide, September 4-11, 1997.
- ²⁰ “American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999” sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, conducted by the Gallup Organization, 1507 adults nationwide, October 15 through November 10, 1998.
- ²¹ Sponsored by the Pew Research Center, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1008 adults nationwide, March 24-28, 1999.
- ²² LA Times, 544 adults nationwide, March 25, 1999.
- ²³ CBS News, 793 adults nationwide, March 28, 1999.

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- ²⁴ “America’s Role in the World II” by the Project on Foreign Policy and the Public, 2441 respondents nationwide, interviewed in two waves, June 21-27, 1996 and September 14-20, 1996.
- ²⁵ Sponsored by Women in International Trade, conducted by Epic-Mra, 850 adults nationally, April 27 – May 1, 1998.
- ²⁶ Sponsored by the Pew Research Center, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1938 registered voters nationwide, October 14-20, 1996.
- ²⁷ “American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999” sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, conducted by the Gallup Organization, 1507 adults nationwide, October 15th through November 10th, 1998.
- ²⁸ Sponsored by the Pew Research Center, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1008 adults nationwide, March 24-28, 1999.
- ²⁹ Sponsored by Shell Oil, conducted by Hart Research, 1264 adults nationwide, November 5-8, 1998.
- ³⁰ CBS News Poll, 930 adults nationwide (first interviewed January 10-13, 1999, and asked to complete an 800 number poll the night of the State of the Union Address), January 19, 1999.
- ³¹ ABC News/Washington Post Poll, 1526 adults nationwide, August 30-September 2, 1999.
- ³² “American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999” sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, conducted by the Gallup Organization, 1507 adults nationwide, October 15th through November 10th, 1998.
- ³³ “American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999” sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, conducted by the Gallup Organization, 1507 adults nationwide, October 15th through November 10th, 1998.
- ³⁴ CBS News Poll, 1080 adults nationally, May 19-21, 1998.
- ³⁵ “The News Interest Index Poll” sponsored by the Pew Research Center, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1200 adults nationally (each question asked of half the sample), July 13-18, 1999.
- ³⁶ “America Unplugged: Citizens and Their Government Survey” sponsored by The Council for Excellence in Government, conducted by Hart and Teeter research companies, 1214 adults nationally (each question asked of half the sample), May 21 through June 1, 1999.
- ³⁷ The NPR/Kaiser/Harvard Social Security Survey, conducted by I.C.R. Survey Research Group, 1203 adults nationally, March 4-24, 1999.
- ³⁸ The NPR/Kaiser/Harvard Social Security Survey, conducted by I.C.R. Survey Research Group, 1203 adults nationally, March 4-24, 1999.
- ³⁹ Sponsored by the Pew Charitable Trusts Global Stewardship Initiative, by Belden and Russonello, 2080 1992 presidential election voters, February 3-15, 1994.
- ⁴⁰ “The News Interest Index Poll” sponsored by the Pew Research Center, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1488 adults nationally (each question asked of two-thirds of the sample), March 24-28, 1999.
- ⁴¹ “The News Interest Index Poll” sponsored by Pew Research Center, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1488 adults nationally (all but two questions asked of half the sample), March 24-28, 1999.
- ⁴² “Giving and Volunteering in the United States” sponsored by Independent Sector, conducted by the Gallup Organization, 2719 adults nationwide, in-home interviews from May 4 through June 16, 1996.

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- ⁴³ UNICEF Opinion Poll, by Louis Harris Organization, 2001 adults, December, 1992.
- ⁴⁴ “A New Climate for Foreign Aid?” sponsored by USAID, conducted by Gerald Hursh-Cesar, Intercultural Communication, Inc., 1201 adults nationally, March 9-21, 1993.
- ⁴⁵ Sponsored by the Global Health Council, conducted by Lake Snell Perry and Associates, 1201 adults nationwide, May 8-25, 1999.
- ⁴⁶ “The General Social Survey” by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC).
- ⁴⁷ “Americans and Foreign Aid” by the Program on International Policy Attitudes, University of Maryland, 801 adults nationwide, January 12-15, 1995.
- ⁴⁸ “America’s Role in the World II” by the Project on Foreign Policy and the Public, 2441 respondents nationwide, interviewed in two waves, June 21-27, 1996 and September 14-20, 1996.
- ⁴⁹ “Americans and Foreign Aid” by the Program on International Policy Attitudes, University of Maryland, 801 adults nationwide, January 12-15, 1995.
- ⁵⁰ Sponsored by the Mott Foundation, the Haas Fund, and the Hewlett Foundation, conducted by John Doble Research Associates in conjunction with the National Issues Forum Institute, six focus groups, six National Issues Forums, and 12 in-depth interviews, August-December, 1995.
- ⁵¹ Sponsored by the Pew Charitable Trusts Global Stewardship Initiative, by Belden and Russonello, 2080 1992 presidential election voters, February 3-15, 1994.
- ⁵² “Americans and Foreign Aid” by the Program on International Policy Attitudes, University of Maryland, 801 adults nationwide, January 12-15, 1995.
- ⁵³ Belden and Russonello trend, 1986 and 1992.
- ⁵⁴ “The News Interest Index Poll” sponsored by the Pew Research Center, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1200 adults nationally, July 13-18, 1999.
- ⁵⁵ Sponsored by the Pew Research Center, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1008 adults nationwide, March 24-28, 1999.
- ⁵⁶ Pew Research Center Poll, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1786 adults nationwide, March 24-30, 1999.
- ⁵⁷ NBC/Wall Street Journal Poll, by the Hart and Teeter research organizations, 500 adults nationwide, April 17-19, 1999.
- ⁵⁸ “American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999” sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, conducted by the Gallup Organization, 1507 adults nationwide, October 15 through November 10, 1998.
- ⁵⁹ “American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999” sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, conducted by the Gallup Organization, 1507 adults nationwide, October 15 through November 10, 1998.
- ⁶⁰ Gallup, 500 adults nationwide, June 11-13, 1999.
- ⁶¹ “The News Interest Index Poll” sponsored by the Pew Research Center, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1488 adults nationally, March 24-28, 1999.
- ⁶² “American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999” sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, conducted by the Gallup Organization, 1507 adults nationwide, October 15th through November 10th, 1998.
- ⁶³ Sponsored by Shell Oil, conducted by Hart Research, 1123 adults nationwide, July 17-20, 1998.
- ⁶⁴ Sponsored by Shell Oil, conducted by Hart Research, 1123 adults nationwide, July 17-20, 1998.
- ⁶⁵ Sponsored by Women in International Trade, conducted by Epic-Mra, 850 adults nationally, April 27 – May 1, 1998.

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- ⁶⁶ NBC/Wall Street Journal Poll, by the Hart and Teeter research organizations, 2106 adults nationwide, December 3-6, 1998.
- ⁶⁷ NBC/Wall Street Journal Poll, by the Hart and Teeter research organizations, 2106 adults nationwide, December 3-6, 1998.
- ⁶⁸ Sponsored by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, conducted by Louis Harris and Associates, 1000 adults nationally, September 9-13, 1998.
- ⁶⁹ Sponsored by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, conducted by Louis Harris and Associates, 1000 adults nationally, September 9-13, 1998.
- ⁷⁰ Sponsored by Women in International Trade, conducted by Epic-Mra, 850 adults nationally, April 27 through May 1, 1998.
- ⁷¹ Sponsored by Women in International Trade, conducted by Epic-Mra, 850 adults nationally, April 27 through May 1, 1998.
- ⁷² NBC/Wall Street Journal Poll, by the Hart and Teeter research organizations, 500 adults nationwide, January 16-18, 1999.
- ⁷³ NBC/Wall Street Journal Poll by the Hart and Teeter research organizations, 2106 adults nationwide, December 3-6, 1998.
- ⁷⁴ Sponsored by Women in International Trade, conducted by Epic-Mra, 850 adults nationally, April 27 through May 1, 1998.
- ⁷⁵ “American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999” sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, conducted by the Gallup Organization, 1507 adults nationwide, October 15 through November 10, 1998.
- ⁷⁶ “The News Interest Index Poll” sponsored by the Pew Research Center, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1488 adults nationally, March 24-28, 1999.
- ⁷⁷ Sponsored by the Global Health Council, conducted by Lake Snell Perry and Associates, 1201 adults nationwide, May 8-25, 1999.
- ⁷⁸ Sponsored by the Global Health Council, conducted by Lake Snell Perry and Associates, 1201 adults nationwide, May 8-25, 1999.
- ⁷⁹ Sponsored by the Global Health Council, conducted by Lake Snell Perry and Associates, 1201 adults nationwide, May 8-25, 1999.
- ⁸⁰ Sponsored by the Global Health Council, conducted by Lake Snell Perry and Associates, 1201 adults nationwide, May 8-25, 1999.
- ⁸¹ Wirthlin Worldwide, 1010 adults nationwide, September 11-14, 1998.
- ⁸² CNN/USA Today, conducted by the Gallup Organization, 1069 adults nationwide, April 13-14, 1999.
- ⁸³ Louis Harris and Associates, 1010 adults nationally, May 14-19, 1999.
- ⁸⁴ CNN/Time Poll, conducted by Yankelovich, 1024 adults nationwide, January 20-21, 1999.
- ⁸⁵ CNN/USA Today, conducted by the Gallup Organization, May 1989, March 1999.
- ⁸⁶ Wirthlin Worldwide, 1040 adults nationally, August 21-23, 1997.
- ⁸⁷ CNN/USA Today, conducted by the Gallup Organization, 1003 adults nationwide, November 6-9, 1997.

About the Author

Meg Bostrom, Executive Vice President at Trahan Burden and Charles Advertising and Communications in Baltimore, Maryland, has over a decade of survey and market research experience working for national and international firms. She utilizes her social scientist training to provide a broad understanding of the public attitudes that underpin trends. Prior to joining Trahan in April 1995, Bostrom was Vice President at Mellman Lazarus Lake and Senior Analyst at Greenberg Lake. In both of these capacities, Bostrom consulted for a variety of nonprofit groups, political candidates, foundations, national associations, and corporations. Bostrom's work for the Coalition for America's Children was instrumental in putting children's issues on the map in the 1992 presidential campaign. Her work for the Ms. Foundation was the first of its kind that systematically looked at how women's roles, priorities, and work lives have changed as they come upon the 21st Century. Her work for the Department of Labor was the first to note the central monetary role that working women play in their families. Bostrom currently sits on the Board of Advisors for the FrameWorks Institute.