CARNEGIE FOREIGN POLICY CONFERENCE
MANAGING U.S. DOMINANCE
JUNE 20, 2006

Breakout Sessions

The Future of Conflict
Morning Session


Short Description:

The ultimate consequence of Iraq might be that war gets a bad name. The invasion itself was justified on erroneous claims and the Iraqi transition to a stable government continues to struggle today. The experience in Iraq has the chance to make the world hesitant to ever use force absent an overt act of aggression or attack.

The UN charter gives countries the right to self-defense when attacked, but beyond that, there are other justifications for military intervention that have been advanced. First is intervention to prevent genocide or other kinds of major human rights violations. This principle, which could be dubbed the Clinton-Blair doctrine, was invoked to justify NATO intervention in Kosovo. Second is intervention to prevent a hostile power or movement from acquiring nuclear weapons – the Bush doctrine of pre-emptive war. This principle was invoked to justify the American invasion of Iraq and is now being trotted out to justify military action against Iran.

Does either the Clinton-Blair doctrine or the Bush doctrine provide valid grounds for military intervention? If so, under what circumstances?

This breakout will address general principles through a discussion of specifics. In Iran, what is the red line that once crossed makes that country a clear and present danger? Is it commercial-scale uranium enrichment or is it an actual bomb? In Darfur, if the situation is officially classified as a genocide, can it be acceptable to act? In both cases, how long should diplomacy continue until action is justified?
Suggested Readings:


Additional Readings:

Market Authoritarianism in China and Russia
Morning Session

Moderator: Michael McFaul, Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Peter and Helen Bing Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution and associate professor of political science at Stanford University.

Short Description:

The United States has always experienced tension in its relationships with non-democratic states. In the future its relationships with increasingly powerful China and Russia will present an acute case of this problem. These states have quasi-market economies too large to ignore, but their political systems depend on repression. U.S. economic, security, and moral interests may push relations with Russia and China in different directions. Participants will discuss the stakes for the U.S. in these relationships and the posture it should adopt with respect to democracy, security, and economic relations. They will also consider the possibility of continued economic success under authoritarian political systems and how the U.S. might respond.

Suggested Readings:


Islamist Movements and U.S. Democracy Promotion in the Middle East
Morning Session

Moderator: Nathan Brown, Democracy and Rule of Law Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He is on leave from his position as professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University.

Short Description:

The recent electoral victories of Islamist movements in the Middle East raise important questions about the future of the U.S. democracy promotion agenda in the region. This discussion will explore whether such gains will influence the way in which the United States conceives of democracy promotion as enhancing U.S. national security, and whether they will or should invoke a policy change. Drawing on Kramer and Hamzawy, the discussion will also explore whether or not U.S. policy makers should regard the rise of Islamist movements as a hindrance to democracy promotion in the Middle East.

Suggested Readings:


Additional Readings:

Does China’s rise imply inevitable strategic confrontation with the United States?

Morning Session

Moderator: Michael Swaine, China Program Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Short Description:

Some analysts, like Albert Keidel, argue that as the balance of economic power shifts to China, the balance of power in the international system will also shift. In the new multilateral equilibrium that emerges, China will be the single most powerful country. Given such a possibility, what are the specific opportunities and challenges the United States faces, both as a country and as a member of the international system, due to China’s rise? Topics to consider include trade, naval dominance in the Asia-Pacific (and consequently diplomatic power), Taiwan, the U.S.-Japan security alliance, roles in international organizations, Central Asian energy, neutralizing and controlling terrorism, and resolving emerging conflicts (in places like Korea, the Middle East, and South Asia). Does the United States need to accelerate efforts to contain China, or should it attempt to create a rules-based international system now that will preserve U.S. interests once it is no longer the dominant power?

Yet, other scholars such as Minxin Pei reject the inevitability of China’s rise and argue that it may actually collapse. To what extent can and should the United States anticipate this possibility and hedge against it?

Suggested Readings:


Additional Readings:

These two readings provide good overviews of the current state of Sino-U.S. relations.

Stopping atrocities by whatever means necessary: intergovernmental organizations, regional organizations, or coalitions of the willing?
Afternoon Session


Short Description:

Participants will discuss options for an improved response to mass atrocities including genocide, taking as a basis of discussion the assumption that the U.S. accepts and must implement its “responsibility to protect” populations threatened by these human crises. The discussion will elaborate several alternative institutional frameworks for diplomatic and military intervention, including strengthening of intergovernmental organizations, building the capacity of regional organizations, or more consistent coalitions of willing participant governments through frameworks such as NATO. Participants will evaluate these options on the basis of their potential effectiveness as well as their interplay with the broad range of U.S. interests. The group will explore international and domestic challenges to these approaches, and lay out potential strategies to overcome these challenges through domestic coalition building.

Suggested Readings:


Additional Readings:

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Renewing U.S. Energy Policy
Afternoon Session

Moderator: Steven Mufson is the energy correspondent for the Washington Post. In 17 years at the Post, he has also covered economic policy (1990-93), been the paper's Beijing correspondent (1994-98), covered diplomatic affairs (1999-2001) and served as deputy editor of the Outlook section (2002-06).

Short Description:

This break out will debate whether the problem of U.S. energy lies in the cost of energy or in America’s high foreign dependence. If high price is the problem and energy is a market commodity, than shouldn’t price send signals to markets to correct affairs and find substitute commodities? And if high price causes painful economic dislocations, won’t it for others too? And if economic strength is relative – U.S. versus others – is price difference unfavorable? So why should U.S. government have an energy strategy? Why not leave it to markets? However, if we leave it to markets then who deals with negative externalities such as environmental/climactic effects of current energy consumption? Who deals with market failures? What is the cost of these market failures to the U.S.?

If the problem lies in America’s high foreign dependence to meet its energy needs then is physical availability the issue or is it that revenues from energy go to people/ regimes we do not like? If it is the former, that is someone could prevent us physically from getting the resources we need, then what about price? Who could physically deny us resources, and at what cost to themselves? Would the U.S. resort to military options and regime change to overthrow energy deniers? If high foreign dependence empowers regimes we would rather not support then would these societies/states be more or less threatening if they had less revenue? Why/how? Would lower revenue force them to reform? And would reform result in pro-American states? However, if it is a physical problem, does that not add incentive for the U.S. to find alternatives that are not physically constrained?

In the end, participants will discuss of the following goals what should be the objective of U.S. energy policy, which one of these options is realistic, and which is desirable:
Lower price regardless of foreign dependence; lower foreign dependence regardless of price; lower price and lower foreign dependence.

Suggested Readings:


Armory B. Lovins et. al., “Executive Summary,” in Armory B. Lovins et. al., Winning the Oil Endgame (Snowmass, CO: Rocky Mountain Institute), can be accessed at <http://www.rmi.org/images/other/WtOE/WtOEg_72dpi.pdf>.

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Additional Readings:


Non-State Actors: Re-Ordering the International System?
Afternoon Session

Moderator: David Bosco is Senior Editor of Foreign Policy Magazine. Between 1996 and 1998, he served as a political analyst and journalist in Bosnia and Herzegovina and as deputy director of a joint United Nations-NATO project on refugee repatriation in Sarajevo.

Short Description:

The mid-nineties saw a rash of predictions that the state was ceding power to emerging non-state actors (NSAs). These predictions took on different theoretical formulations according to different political and ideological outlooks. Some saw states as increasingly becoming pawns of powerful corporations, while others saw non-governmental elites in human rights groups and the media as increasingly setting policy agendas despite the best efforts of states. Analysis also produced more nuanced theories, addressing the disaggregation of the state and the formation of networks of national officials, NGOs, and supranational bodies. Into this atmosphere came 9/11 – what many saw as the revenge of the state and a powerful reminder of its central role in providing security. With the notable exception of terrorist groups, this produced a de-emphasis on the power of non-state actors yet it is arguable that non-state actors are emerging from the 9/11 era as powerful as they have ever been. Human rights groups and the media have significantly altered the conduct of the war on terror, and there is some evidence that the power of non-state actors is increasing even in areas such as the Middle East and China where the state has traditionally been dominant.

Yet questions must still be addressed about non-state actors and their legitimacy. To whom are leading non-state actors accountable? By what standards can their goals and conduct be assessed? What bearing do universal principles of international law have on this assessment? Is the potential effectiveness of a non-state actor itself a source of legitimacy? Examining the role of NGOs in the reconstruction of Afghanistan brings these and other issues into focus. In Afghanistan, a sharp divide exists between European and U.S. aid strategies. The United States, fearful of official corruption, has focused on working through NGOs while European aid agencies are more inclined to fund the Afghan government directly. Which is the more effective reconstruction strategy, and does using NSAs for aid projects in reality hinder state-building? Furthermore, Western powers, particularly the United States, have used small military teams for reconstruction projects. NGOs argue that this unconstructively blurs the line between politics and humanitarian action. What are the tradeoffs involved in this debate? Finally, a host of democracy monitoring and development groups observed the Afghan elections. While there were numerous loud complaints regarding irregularities, the U.S. government and the West more generally was determined to reinforce the government of Hamid Karzai and many feel that NGOs capitulated to that desire, sacrificing their independence and neutrality. How much do the interests of powerful governments affect the judgments of NGOs? And, do they have agendas of their own?

Suggested Readings:


**The Decline of U.S. Power?**

Afternoon Session

Moderator: Michael E. O’Hanlon is a Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution.

*Short Description:*

Today the United States enjoys a strong military and vigorous economic growth. Nonetheless overall U.S. power will likely decline, relative to the rest of the world, over the coming decades. Different types of U.S. power may follow different trends, from precipitous decline to gradual increase. Participants will examine these trends in U.S. power (military, economic, cultural, and ideological), how the U.S. can affect them, and the role of the U.S. in a changing world system.

*Suggested Readings:*


