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A Policy for Global Security

Monday, October 19, 1998

The New World Order

Although the Soviet Union no longer exists and several years have passed since the crumbling of the Berlin Wall, the international community is still undergoing a transition from the old order to the new. Modern weapons-defense systems and alliances built around them were shaped primarily by the global circumstances of the Cold War, and the downfall of communism in Eastern Europe and the USSR has led to a shifting of alliances and goals for powerful nations, as well as the increased influence of the democratic system.

Other technological factors are also contributing to a change in global politics. The problems facing domestic leaders are now often impossible to control through national means alone. Pollution, global warming, economic troubles, and international terrorism are primarily solved through international cooperation today, as leaders recognize the difficulty of solving any of these issues without the participation of other nations. The United Nations' Commission on Global Governance argues that "In today's global neighborhood, our survival must involve cooperation on many fronts: to maintain peace and order; to expand economic activity and ward off recession; to share scarce resources; to tackle pollution on land, at sea and in the atmosphere; to combat terrorism and the drug trade; to curb the spread of weapons and to fight global epidemics."

This portion of Policy.com's Issue of the Week examines the rise of a new world order in global politics.

The World Order Must Be Reformed

November 7, 1997

Ingvar Carlsson of the Commission on Global Governance argues that developments in international economics, environmental activity and weapons technology have "reduced the relevance of the sovereignty of the state even to the state itself." He argues that voters in democratic countries have no "ballot box" where they can direct the outcome of these global developments, and this fact has led to an increasing interdependence between nations.

A Tour Through the New Atlantic Community

October 8, 1996

John C. Kornblum, assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian Affairs, says, "Democratization has been accepted, for the first time in European history, as the uniform guiding principle of this transformation. But rapid change has also unleashed the forces of conflict and violence at a level not seen in half a century." He says that the new Europe must transcend divisions while recognizing the reality that societies increasingly want to retain their identity and individualism, and argues that the American role is still essential for building stability in Europe. Kornblum further states that America's "real strength" lies in the ability "to generate ideas and actions and to resolve problems in unforeseen ways. ... By remaining the world's greatest laboratory for social change and the personification of its diversity, we inspire people to identify with us. We are, in a sense, the connecting tissue in a time of divisive trends among many societies in Europe."