

nificant numbers.” Because of their party registration and presidential voting patterns, they still look like anchors of the Democratic Party’s liberal wing. In fact, though, he maintains, “they are stranded together in a fiscally conservative, culturally cosmopolitan politi-

cal no-man’s land. And they are a large part of the reason that growing numbers of candidates who are themselves ideologically stranded between the two parties—Whitman, Riordan, Edgar—have in recent years been elected.”

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

In Search of Interests

“The Erosion of American National Interests” by Samuel P. Huntington, in *Foreign Affairs* (Sept.–Oct. 1997), 58 E. 68th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

Defining America’s national interest has become almost impossible in the 1990s, argues Huntington, a political scientist at Harvard University and author of *The Clash of Civilizations* (1996). Foreign affairs pundits and other specialists have searched frantically “for new purposes that would justify a continuing U.S. role in world affairs comparable to that in the Cold War,” but their quest has come to naught. The real problem, he argues, is that, deprived of an enemy by the demise of the Soviet Union, and increasingly subjected to multiculturalism’s centrifugal forces, Americans are no longer sure of who they are.

“Given the domestic forces pushing toward heterogeneity, diversity, multiculturalism, and ethnic and racial division . . . the United States, perhaps more than most countries, may need an opposing other to maintain its unity,” Huntington writes. But no significant enemy is now in sight. “New threats will undoubtedly arise, but given the scarcity of current ones, campaigns to arouse interest in foreign affairs and support for major foreign policy initiatives now fall on deaf ears,” he points out. “The administration’s call for the ‘enlargement’ of democracy does not resonate with the public and is belied by the

administration’s own actions,” letting the commercial interests of particular firms and the sentimental ties of particular ethnic groups determine U.S. foreign policy.

Polls show that most Americans “are unwilling to support the commitment of significant resources to the defense of American allies, the protection of small nations against aggression, the promotion of human rights and democracy, or economic and social development in the Third World,” Huntington notes. Consequently, he says, the alternative to a foreign policy in pursuit of commercial and ethnic interests cannot be one based on some “grand design,” but rather must be “a policy of restraint and reconstitution aimed at limiting the diversion of American resources to the service of particularistic . . . interests.”

At some time in the future, a serious external threat may compel Americans to clearly define their national interests and commit major resources to their defense. Until then, Huntington concludes, the United States should conserve its resources by scaling back its involvement in the world. Today, he writes, America’s “national interest is national restraint.”

No Substitute for Victory

“The Myth of Rescue” by William Rubinstein, in *Prospect* (July 1997), 4 Bedford Sq., London WC1B 3RA; “The Bombing of Auschwitz Revisited: A Critical Analysis” by Richard H. Levy, in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* (Winter 1996), Oxford Univ. Press, 2001 Evans Rd., Cary, N.C. 27513.

Historians such as David Wyman, author of *The Abandonment of the Jews* (1984), have argued that, out of indifference and anti-Semitism, the United States and Britain failed to do much to rescue Europe’s Jews from the Holocaust. This view has gained wide currency, but it com-

pletely misconstrues the situation that the Jews of Nazi-occupied Europe faced, contends Rubinstein, a professor of history at the University of Wales, at Aberystwyth.

Before World War II, Nazi policy was to expel as many Jews as possible, not to kill them. The claim by Wyman and other crit-

ics that the West erected “almost insuperable barriers” to their emigration while “there was still time,” Rubinstein says, is belied by the facts: 72 percent of Germany’s Jews, and an even higher percentage of Jewish children, “managed to flee before this became impossible [in late 1940], one of the greatest rescues of any beleaguered group in history.” After *Kristallnacht* in November 1938 made it obvious that Jews had no future in Adolf Hitler’s Germany, no new Western barriers to Jewish immigration were raised, he notes. “On the contrary, more Jews left Germany in 1939 than in any other year.” Britain radically liberalized its immigration policies for their benefit.

The Jewish refugees who escaped Hitler before the war came exclusively from Germany and its satellites, Rubinstein points out. While continental Europe then had a Jewish population of about 10 million, Germany in 1933, when Hitler came to power, was home to only about 500,000 Jews and Austria, 190,000. The Jewish population of the Sudetenland and other parts of Czechoslovakia that Hitler annexed during 1938–39 after the Munich accords was 115,000. The vast majority of the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust lived elsewhere—in eastern Europe, particularly Poland, the Soviet Union, and Hungary—and, before the war, were not under Nazi domination and were not refugees.

The situation changed drastically, Rubinstein notes, with Hitler’s rapid conquest of most of continental Europe

between 1939 and 1941. “From late 1940, Jews were specifically forbidden to emigrate from Nazi-occupied territory.” Now, the Jews became prisoners, the barriers to their emigration “raised by the Nazis themselves, not by the western allies.” And now, “only the military liberation of Nazi-occupied Europe could rescue any significant number of Jews.”

Wyman and others have indicted the Allies for failing to bomb the gas chambers and crematoriums at Auschwitz. That possibility was widely discussed by Jewish leaders and British and American officials in the summer of 1944, notes Levy, a retired aeronautical engineer, in an extensive analysis of the controversy. Only the heavy bombers of the U.S. 15th Air Force, based in Italy, were capable of striking at Auschwitz, and the targets, including underground gas chambers, would have required very heavy bombing. The raids could well have failed to destroy all the gas chambers, would have impinged on the war effort, and probably would have killed or wounded thousands of the Jewish inmates. That would have given the Germans a pretext for blaming the deaths at Auschwitz on Allied bombing. For these reasons, Leon Kubowitzki of the World Jewish Congress in New York and David Ben-Gurion of the Israeli “government-in-embryo” in Palestine opposed the idea at the time. Writes Rubinstein: “Only by winning the war as quickly as possible, and destroying the Nazi scourge, could the surviving Jews of Europe be liberated.”

The New Diplomacy

“Globalization and Diplomacy: A Practitioner’s Perspective” by Strobe Talbott, in *Foreign Policy* (Fall 1997), 2400 N St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037–1153.

Growing global interdependence is making “the very word *foreign* . . . obsolete” in some realms of diplomacy, writes Deputy Secretary of State Talbott. “From the floor of the stock exchange in Singapore to the roof of the world over Patagonia where there is a hole in the ozone layer, what happens there matters here—and vice versa.”

With trade and international investment now more economically important to the United States, the State Department has been collaborating more closely with the Commerce Department and other govern-

ment agencies, not only to help “write the rules and build the institutions that govern the global economy” but to help American firms win contracts overseas, Talbott notes.

The new cooperative diplomacy—which also involves joint efforts with U.S. law enforcement and intelligence agencies to fight international organized crime and drug trafficking—has changed the look of the 249 American embassies and consulates overseas. “In fact, 63 percent of those now under the authority of U.S. ambassadors and other chiefs of mission are not State Department