

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

The Clinton Doctrine

“Democratic Enlargement: The Clinton Doctrine” by Douglas Brinkley, in *Foreign Policy* (Spring 1997), 2400 N St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037–1153.

When President Bill Clinton unveiled his grand strategy of “democratic enlargement” in a 1993 speech at the United Nations, Americans yawned. Even Secretary of State Warren Christopher shunned it, reportedly regarding enlargement as a trade policy masquerading as a foreign policy. Yet, argues Brinkley, a historian at the University of New Orleans, the concept guides Clinton’s day-to-day foreign policy decisions.

Clinton entered office as a foreign affairs novice, Brinkley notes, and in his presidency’s early months, U.S. foreign policy was “the product of crisis management rather than strategic doctrine.” As a candidate, Brinkley says, Clinton had outlined three foreign policy priorities: “updating and restructuring American military and security capabilities, elevating the role of economics in international affairs, and promoting democracy abroad.” In August

1993, Clinton directed national security adviser Anthony Lake to come up with a single word or slogan that would do for him what “containment” had done for the Cold War presidents.

According to Lake, Clinton “embraced the enlargement concept almost immediately,” understanding, Brinkley says, “that it signified the notion that as free states grew in number and strength the international order would become both more prosperous and more secure.”

But this did not imply that the United States was obliged to promote constitutional democracy and human rights everywhere. For the concept to be “politically viable,” Brinkley says, its focus had to be on “primary U.S. strategic and economic interests.” In some cases, that might mean *not* pushing hard for more democracy right away. “For example,” he writes, “Asians in general took a vastly different

Ike Speaks

What would former president Dwight D. Eisenhower think if he were alive today? Historian Louis Galambos, co-editor of Eisenhower’s papers, says in *Johns Hopkins Magazine* (Feb. 1997) that Ike would be shocked at how suddenly the Soviet Union and its empire collapsed.

Eisenhower thought we would win the Cold War, eventually. He thought it would take a long, long time.

He was right. We did win. And it brought to a conclusion the most stunningly successful foreign policy of the 20th century. By any country. It achieved complete victory without a war. I challenge you to come up with a more successful national foreign policy.

Think of it in the context of the interwar years and World War II. How successful was the British foreign policy of the interwar period? Not that successful. How successful was the German policy of expansion? We know the results. The Soviet policy of rapprochement with fascist Germany? We know the results of that. Japan? Italy? France? Who has done anything more successful than this in the present century?

It has long been popular in academic circles, especially in diplomatic history, to say that the United States lacks the patience and elite leadership it needs to be effective in framing and implementing foreign policy. But the success of containment indicates that this is not the case. We were patient. We did have effective bipartisan leadership. We won!

view of what constituted democracy, preferring to emphasize social order over individual rights. Under enlargement, America's chief concern in Asia would therefore be free market access—the rest, for the most part, would be left to sort itself out.”

“We have put our economic competitiveness at the heart of our foreign policy,” Clinton said in 1994. In the Clinton formula, economic advantage and national political interest do not conflict but go hand in hand. Emerging democracies with a growing middle class eager to consume American products, in this view, serve both America's need for markets and its desire for a world of peaceful and prosperous liberal-minded nations. “Relations with countries with bright economic futures such as Mexico and South Korea,” Brinkley writes,

“would thus be placed on the front burner in his administration; poor, blighted nations, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and Central America,” would ordinarily be given little attention.

Some critics favor “a more militarily activist” foreign policy, Brinkley notes. Others complain that enlargement is mostly empty rhetoric that avoids unpleasant realities and hard choices. But the president, Brinkley writes, sees more promise “in helping Toys ‘R’ Us and Nike to flourish in Central Europe and Asia than in dispatching Marines to quell unrest in economically inconsequential nations.”

With his strategy of enlargement, Brinkley says, Clinton is hoping to go down in history “as the free trade president and the leading architect of a new world economic order.”

A Man Called Jane

“How *Fighting Ships* Became Jane's” by Richard Brooks, in *Proceedings* (Dec. 1996), U.S. Naval Institute, 2062 Generals Hwy., Annapolis, Md. 21401.

Civilian “strategic analysts” are accepted figures in public life, populating think tanks, holding forth on op-ed pages, and even landing jobs on network TV news shows. Their analyses are looked to as a counterweight to military views. It wasn't always so. One of the pioneers was Fred T. Jane, says Brooks, author of a forthcoming biography. In turn-of-the-century Britain, his *All The World's Fighting Ships* helped break the British Royal Navy's monopoly on naval affairs.

Born the son of an Anglican curate in 1865 in a London suburb, Jane had forebears on his mother's side who had served in the Royal Navy and Marines. When poor health prevented him from shipping out, he used his talent for drawing to make a career in journalism, sketching naval maneuvers for the *Illustrated London News* and other periodicals in the 1890s. He not only built up his collection of warship sketches but picked the brains of naval officers and enlisted men to get information about the ships' strengths and weaknesses. By 1897 he was

ready to launch the visual warship atlas that came to be known as *Jane's Fighting Ships*, complete with pungent comments about ships' performance from engineering officers he had cultivated.

Jane systematically categorized ships by their appearance, and even provided a visu-



Fred Jane didn't just play with toy ships.

al index of ship silhouettes. Lookouts or officers of the watch could thus quickly identify unknown vessels and their pertinent characteristics, such as speed and weaponry.

With the success of *Jane's Fighting Ships*