

Revamp foreign policy

COMMUNITY VIEW:

Include clear guidelines regarding groups' demands for autonomy

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In a column published on Aug. 15, 1997, "Follow moral imperative in U.S. foreign policy," I made some suggestions that are particularly apt today.

I suggested it was important for the United States to create a post-Cold War framework for foreign policy to replace our prior model involving containment of communism. Publicizing and following this model is essential so



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that our enemies will know what actions will lead to a U.S. response. This predictability will forestall their actions and thus prevent wars.

I suggested four cornerstones of U.S. foreign policy: zero tolerance for genocide, a general commitment to human rights, a careful selection of allies, and an integration of morality in our foreign and national interests.

Sadly, current events seem to be working against full adoption of these elements.

Cornerstone No. 1: Serbia commits genocide against Albanian civilians, and the international community debates over ground forces. With the credibility of NATO on the line and despite the need to return refugees before the harsh Balkan winter, we continue to insist that carpet-bombing from the air will succeed in Yugoslavia even though it was a dismal failure in Vietnam.

The ugliness, the rapes, the intimidation, the torture and death of defenseless civilians are absolutely horrendous. We must do all we can to stop them.

Cornerstone No. 2: Our human rights policy, moved to the forefront by President Jimmy Carter, now lies in shambles. China is treated with kid gloves even while it uses our technology, stolen by spies, to build nuclear delivery systems that can target the west-

ern United States.

China encourages demonstrations against the United States regarding the inadvertent attack on its embassy in Belgrade and doesn't report our apologies for two days. Most important, it punishes us by suspending negotiations on human rights while continuing them on world trade.

Cornerstone No. 3: Our continuing endorsement of Mexico as an ally despite strong evidence of unmitigated involvement in the drug trade at the highest levels of government is unconscionable. Mexico, the trading partner, is made to supercede Mexico, the drug supplier.

Cornerstone No. 4: The land mine treaty promoted by the late Princess Diana provides a clear-cut example of the hopelessness of the do-as-I-say, not-as-I-do approach to foreign policy. All our posturing is made futile by our unwillingness to make sacrifices ourselves.

While we ask other countries such as India and Pakistan to turn over nuclear weapons that they both believe are essential for their national security, we were unwilling to participate in a land mine treaty signed by more than 100 nations because we would have to remove mines in Korea.

The post-communism era has been dominated by the desire of different groups for self-determination: A foreign policy model should include clearly delineated guidelines that can be used to predict how we will respond to these demands for autonomy.

Groups as disparate as Scots, Palestinians, Kosovars, Kurds and Basque separatists need to be included. Their goals and aspirations should not be dismissed even if their methods may be unsupportable. Human rights, dignity and respect are applicable to groups as well as individuals.

As I noted in August 1997, America's greatness lies in her goodness. Without that, we are just once more in a series of world empires doomed to eventual decay.

We must always remember that people around the globe see this country as an oasis of hope. We have a duty not to disappoint them.

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