

1998 TEAM DEBATE TOPIC

FOREIGN POLICY FOR DUMMIES

EIGHT MAJOR TYPES OF FOREIGN POLICY IDEOLOGY

by Marty Ludlum

WILSONIANISM

Wilsonianism, the most traditional of American approaches to foreign policy, was favored by Presidents Wilson and Reagan. The focus of Wilsonianism is that all policies (military and economic) should encourage other nations to be democratic.

There are three key elements of Wilsonianism:

1. Promotes democratic governance and civil society;
2. Authority is distributed among different institutions in society; and
3. Individual liberty is protected.

Potential affirmative cases on the Russia topic using Wilsonianism:

1. Election monitoring assistance for future Russian state and local elections, to prevent fraud and to add credibility to the election results.

2. Subsidies to encourage development of independent media within Russia. Presently, there is little "free press" by our standards, since the government controls most of them. Encouraging the development of a free press would be a large step towards a democratic society.

ECONOMISM

Economism emphasizes the centrality of economics and U.S. economic interest. Economism assumes that other traditional interests (especially those from strategic concerns) have receded and assumes that military threats to domestic United States are non-existent. The purpose of foreign policy must therefore be to serve domestic economic considerations.

Potential affirmative cases on the Russia topic using Economism:

1. **NAFTA with Russia (RAFTA??).** By encouraging a free trade union, American companies could expand their markets into Russia. This would benefit American consumers, since they would be able to purchase Russian imports at lower costs.
2. **Joint industry projects.** Here the possibilities are endless. Could be high-tech research shared and funded jointly by America and Russia. There

could be specific industries which would benefit from ties between America and Russia (such as aerospace and nuclear waste containment).

3. The topic does not assume that America and Russia are friends, we could be enemies, and our foreign policy would have to reflect that. In that regard, we could prohibit imports from and exports to Russia.

4. **Investor safety net.** Presently, America has an AID program, which provides insurance for Americans who invest in other countries. Since Russia has not yet stabilized, there are many investors who would be cautious and avoid investing in Russia. Perhaps a federal program to insure investments in Russia would encourage economic growth and investment.

REALISM

Realism focuses on order among rather than within states. It was the policy most favored by Presidents Nixon and Ford. Realism emphasizes balance-of-power and matters of national interest.

Alliances (when available) are a favored vehicle for promoting interests. Realism is sensitive to sovereignty, fearing that its weakening will only increase the threat or use of military force.

Realism is mindful of the continuing threats posed by regional military powers, however, it is not concerned with the internal character of foreign societies. It is the traditional "looking out for number one" ideology, with little regard for the state of affairs in other nations.

Potential affirmative cases on the Russia topic using Realism:

1. Plan for Russian military re-emergence by re-building military strength, and re-negotiating START build down treaties and NPT and test ban treaties.
2. Encourage NATO expansion or other Russia-excluding alliances (topicality?).
3. Increase weapons inspections in post-Soviet states.

HUMANITARIANISM

Humanitarianism comes closest to being post-ideological type of foreign policy, as alliances and spheres of influence are meaningless. Humanitarianism sees the world less in terms of nation-states *per se* than as peoples; views threats less in terms of aggression than chaos.

Humanitarians focus on concerns of the individual -- the alleviation of poverty, disease, hunger, overcrowding, environmental degradation -- because they are important in their own right. Humanitarians also focus on concerns of the individual because they can lead to military conflicts.

Potential affirmative cases on the Russia topic using Humanitarianism:

1. Food transfers to Russia.
2. Medical supplies transfer to Russia.
3. Assistance in setting up independent judiciary for settling disputes.
4. Independent examination of individual abuses (such as Amnesty International's inspections of prisons, or review of court cases involving alleged political prisoners).

MINIMALISM

Minimalism is the refusal to embrace any set of foreign policy goals. Minimalists see only modest U.S. interests in the world, and only weak threats to the United States.

Minimalists take a narrow view of U.S. responsibility and obligation to meet other's challenges. They are highly critical of foreign aid, especially to non-allies. Since we have no outside interest, all foreign aid is a waste of money.

The only real foreign policy we should seek, argue minimalists, is a strong national defense. The only reason we should involve another foreign country is during a military invasion.

Minimalists see the United States in decline in part because of the costs of decades of international activism. They favor shifting resources to domestic needs. A minimalist can be either conservative or liberal -- the real difference is what those domestic priorities are.

Potential affirmative cases on the Russia topic using Minimalism:

1. Could justify reducing or eliminating ANY program which we have with Russia. Regardless of the program or its intended benefits, minimalists would argue that we should have less.

2. This ideology could also be used to justify a counterplan to ANY affirmative which would increase involvement with the new Russia.

ISOLATIONISM

Isolationism is the extreme manifestation of minimalism. Isolationists argue that we should withdraw our participation of all international groups, United Nations, NATO, World Bank, Council of Foreign Relations, International Monetary Fund, etc. Advocates of isolationism favor expelling "disagreeable" diplomats from our country and closing the door on the United Nations at the first available option.

Isolationists are highly suspicious of any foreign involvement in domestic politics. Most favor ethnic and political controls on immigration.

Isolationism is highly favored by Republican commentator Pat Buchanan, and highly promoted by conservative groups, such as the John Birch Society.

Potential affirmative cases on the Russia topic using Isolationism:

1. As an affirmative, an isolationist would have to argue to eliminate all foreign contact with Russia.

2. As a negative, an isolationist would be against any and all positive action towards Russia.

UNILATERALISM

A proponent of Unilateralism minimizes and when possible excludes the participation of other governments and organizations. Unilateralists are uncomfortable with alliances. They are strictly opposed to any transfer of sovereign authority to international organizations. In this way, unilateralists share the views of isolationists in being critical of the United Nations, and similar organizations.

Unilateralism maximizes freedom of decision-making and implementation since one would not consult with any other country prior to acting. This allows for rapid decisions and secrecy.

Unilateralism is a unique ideology, since it is facially neutral. It does not imply what should or should not be done with

our relations with Russia. Russia may be our best friend or our worst enemy. It only argues that any actions should be done by America alone, and not by the permission or consent of our allies.

Unilateralism eliminates problems of guessing the intentions of others, which are irrelevant. It is the best option when narrow interests at stake and the involvement of others is not necessary.

Potential affirmative cases on the Russia topic using Unilateralism:

1. All affirmative cases must use this rationale, since the topic mandates that the United States as the sole agent of change/actor, and as such, we must be acting unilaterally.

2. This ideology assumes that it is better to act alone than with allies, hence opening itself up to all types of counterplans based on alliances.

NEOINTERNATIONALISM

Neo-Internationalism is also known as "assertive multilateralism." This is the foreign policy ideology supported and favored by Presidents Clinton and Bush. It has been highly promoted by Madeleine Albright, the Clinton Administration's Secretary of State and former U.S. representative to the United Nations.

Neo-Internationalism seeks to build institutions that are more than the sum of their constituent parts. It argues that the United States should remain involved but at a substantially reduced cost.

One assumption of this ideology is the potential for international cooperation. We should work with formal alliances and international organizations in almost all instances. Clearly, this ideology would favor a strong United Nations.

Potential affirmative cases on the Russia topic using Neo-Internationalism: None, for two reasons.

First, neo-internationalism is the status quo, the one favored by Clinton.

Second, this ideology would support a counterplan, since it would have the world community as the agent of change (via the United Nations or NATO, etc) rather than the United States acting alone.

Best of luck on the Russia topic for 1998-1999!

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