Does Sovereignty Matter?

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Bill Clinton's threats to enter the Kosovo conflict are a direct attack on national sovereignty, our own as well as Yugoslavia's. The foreign policy gurus of the Clinton Administration don't believe in the concept of sovereignty and are trying to replace it, piece by piece, with their global utopian vision.

In trying to force the sovereign state of Yugoslavia to kowtow to a U.S.-dictated "peace" agreement, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright is demanding that Yugoslavia allow foreign troops to occupy a portion of its territory where they would exercise authority backed by force. It is, of course, a critical element of sovereignty that foreign troops must not be allowed jurisdiction over a nation's soil.

So Albright cut to the core of the argument with a demand that Yugoslavia surrender a piece of its sovereignty. She said: "Great nations who understand the importance of sovereignty at various times cede various portions of it in order to achieve some better good for their country. We are looking at how the nation-state functions in a totally different way than people did at the beginning of this century."

That ominous ultimatum sounds like a double entendre. Yugoslavia is not a "great nation," but the United States is. And it's becoming more and more evident that the Clintonites are pursuing an incremental plan to cede various portions of U.S. sovereignty in order to achieve what they believe is the "better good."

Clinton's chief foreign policy adviser, Strobe Talbott, was frighteningly forthright during his 22 years as a writer for Time Magazine. Talbott enthusiastically wrote that "national sovereignty wasn't such a great idea," predicted that "nationhood as we know it will be obsolete," and rejoiced in the coming "birth of the Global Nation."

It's a mistake to relax in the conventional wisdom that Clinton is just muddling along without a coherent foreign policy. Charles Krauthammer has accurately defined Clinton's foreign policy as implementing non-traditional elements: "internationalism" (rather than sticking with policies based on what's good for America), "legalism" (the folly that treaties can make nations get along peacefully and can even regulate

domestic law), and using "humanitarianism" as the excuse for interventionist escapades (rather than U.S. strategic, political or economic interests).

The Clinton Administration repeatedly cites international "obligations" as its authority for issuing overbearing executive orders and administrative regulations. Americans are expected to defer to global governance irrespective of whether the order comports with either our Constitution or national security interests, or whether the relevant treaty has even been ratified by the U.S. Senate.

Clinton is using this ploy of global "obligations" in his environmental regulations to implement the unratified Global Warming Treaty (the Kyoto Protocol), and in his "Bring Beijing Home" task force to implement the unratified UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Clinton used this ploy of global "obligations" in his Executive Order 13107 on Implementation of Human Rights Treaties (including the treaties to which the United States "may become a party in the future"), and in his Executive Order 13061 called the American Rivers Heritage Initiative (federalizing the land along 14 rivers).

We've already seen numerous encroachments on our national sovereignty from NAFTA and the World Trade Organization, under which rulings by committees of foreigners cannot be appealed to American courts and even purport to order changes in U.S. domestic law.

We should also be on guard against probable attempts to subject individual American citizens to regulations and penalties imposed by committees set up under treaties signed by other nations. Treaties that pose dangers to American citizens even though we never ratified them are the treaty creating an International Criminal Court and the new protocol adopted last week under the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

Alleged "international obligations" are increasingly cited to con America into all sorts of entanglements and costly handouts. The pressure is building to persuade Congress to pay alleged back dues to the United Nations.

The most dangerous attack on American sovereignty by the Clinton Administration comes from its pretense that we should abide by the now-obsolete 1972 ABM Treaty with now-defunct Soviet Union. Only those who don't believe in America as a sovereign nation could argue that a treaty with a government that went out of existence seven years ago can limit America's right to protect the lives of our citizens against nuclear attack.

Yet, the Clinton Administration is trying to breathe new life into that dead treaty with new protocols that it is urging the Senate to approve. A dead treaty with a non-existent government cannot protect us against offensive missiles from Communist China, North Korea, Iran, Iraq, or even from the new countries carved out of the old Soviet Union, which still possess an awesome number.

The Clinton-Albright attack on Yugoslavia's sovereignty is a costly, foolish and unconstitutional outrage. Their sneak attacks on American sovereignty are far more dangerous.

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