

Historical Context for International Relations (Mingst)

History of I.R.

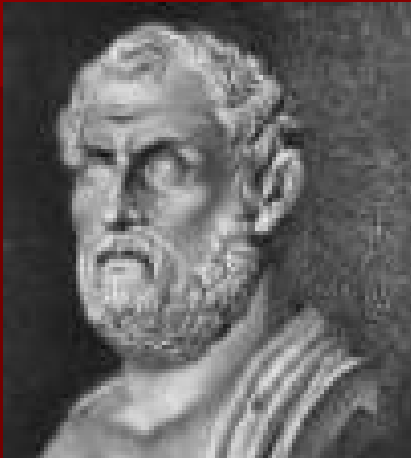
Concepts in IR are shaped by historical circumstances. The State, the nation, sovereignty, power, balance of power, are all ideas rooted in the European experience.

History of I.R.

**The Pre-
Westphalian
world and
the Greek city-
state system**

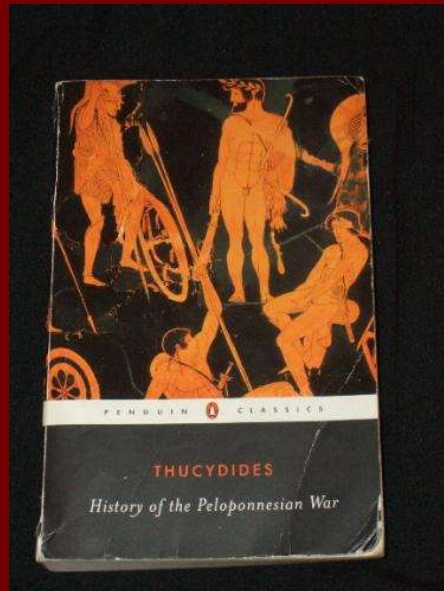


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1. Thucydides (460-401 bce)

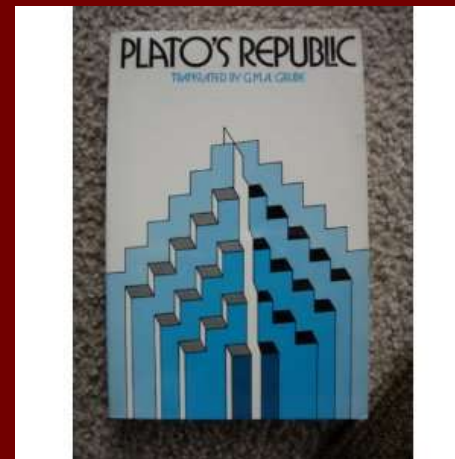
His *History of the Peloponnesian War* discusses the causes of the war between Athens and Sparta. Conclusion: changing distributions of power leads to war.



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2. Plato (427-347 bce)

His *Republic* describes the “perfect state” where people who govern are those who are superior in the ways of philosophy and war. He introduces two important ideas to IR: class analysis and dialectical reasoning.



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3. Aristotle (384-322 bce)

He is the first to use the comparative method to look at similarities and differences among states. He concludes that states rise and fall due to internal factors – a conclusion still debated in the 21st century.



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The Roman Empire (50 bce – 400 a.d.).

Originates the concept of imperialism, and develops the practice of expanding territorial reach. The empire itself is united through law and language, while allowing some local identity.



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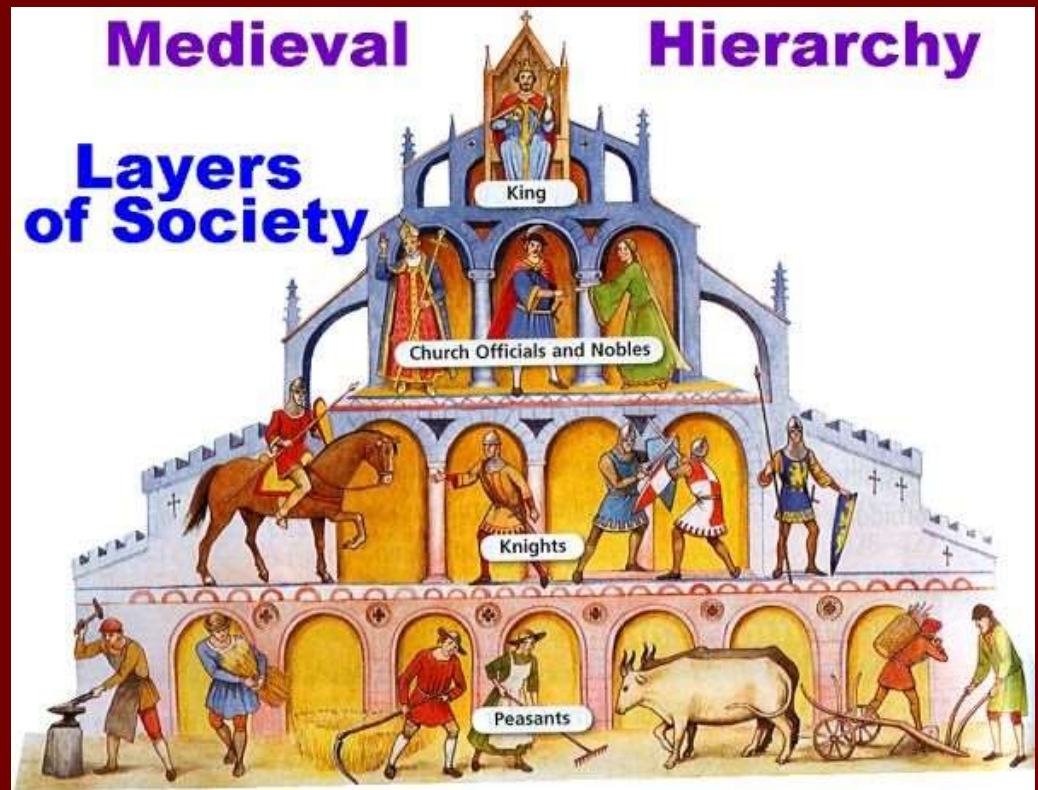
The Middle Ages: Centralization and decentralization (400 a.d. – 1000)

WESTERN EUROPE TIMELINE

476 - 800 Dark Age	800 - 1204 Middle Age	1204 - 1450 High Middle Age
Fall of Rome	Feudalism Emerges	"Rebirth of Europe"
De Urbanization	RCC Source of Unity and Stability	Crusades increase interaction and diffusion
Learning Declines	Holy Roman Empire - Charlemagne	New Learning/Tech
Language is Lost	No Trade - Economic Self Sufficiency	Trade Re Emerges
Constant Invasion + War		Urbanization
Trade Ceases		

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During this period, three civilizations emerge from Rome – Arabic, Byzantine, and European. Since European civilization was in a state of disorder, some scholars believe that feudalism arose as a response to this disorder...



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...The preeminent institution during this period was the church. Thus, a centralization of religious authority and a decentralization in political and economic life characterizes the era.



Medieval

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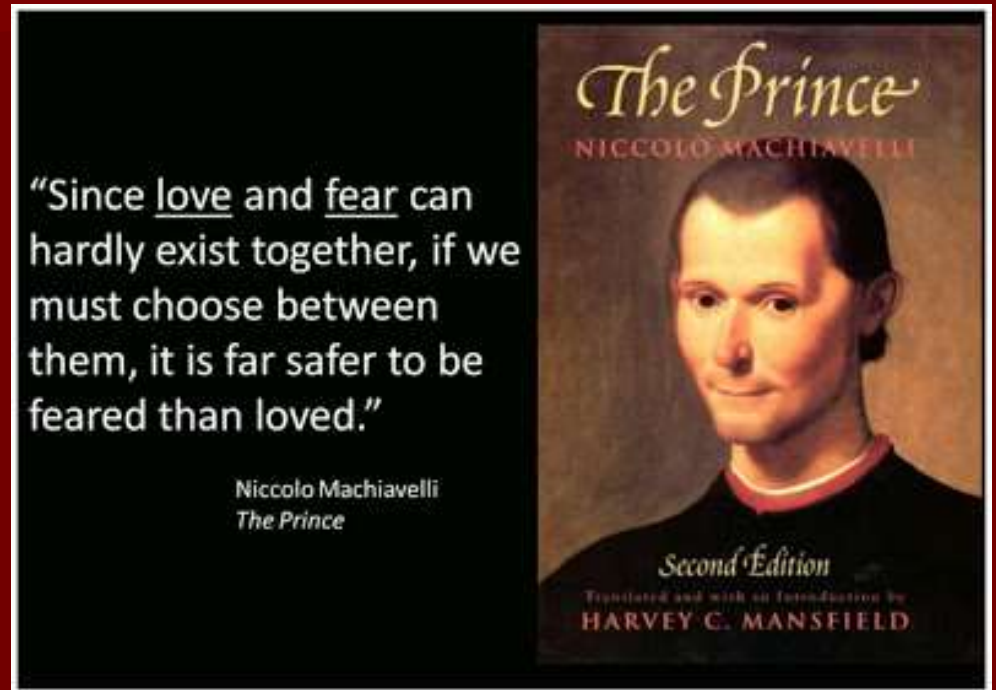
**The Late Middle Ages:
Developing
Transnational
Networks (1000 –
1500)**



A period of rapid economic expansion and exploration. A new group emerges – the business community, whose interests extend beyond their immediate locales and who conflict with the church.

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...It is the era of **Machiavelli** (1469-1527). In *The Prince*, he points out the necessary qualities of a leader required to maintain the strength and security of the state.



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The Emergence of the Westphalian System (and its meaning for international relations)

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...Begins upon the completion of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), one of the worst wars (religious in character) in human history with battles which ravaged the civilian population.

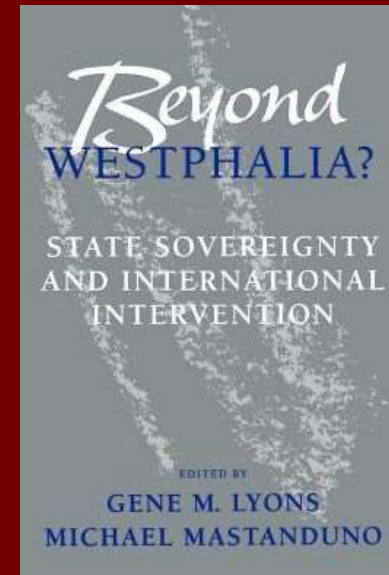
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...The treaty that followed (Treaty of Westphalia), had a profound impact on IR in 3 ways:



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1. It created the concept of *sovereignty*, or the “authority of the state, based on recognition by other states and nonstate actors, to govern matters within its own borders that affect its people, economy, security, and form of government.”



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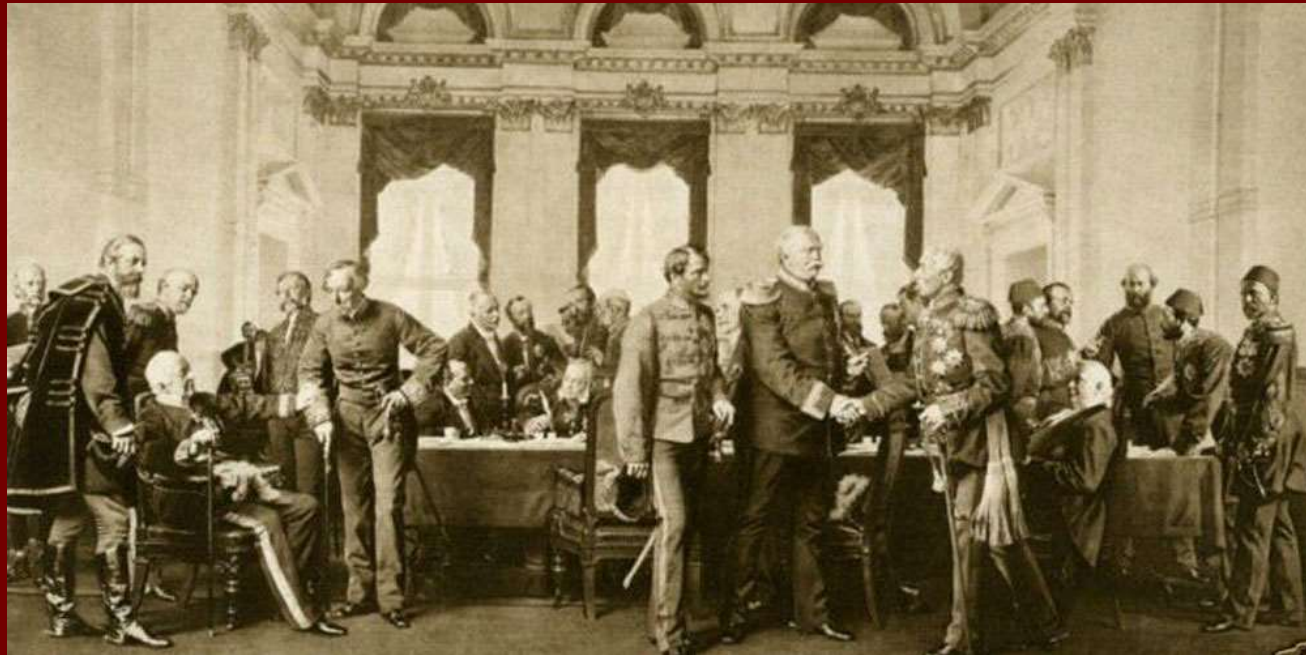
2. It also saw the formation of national armies which further centralized control...



3. ...and it established a core group of states that dominated the world until the beginning of the 19th century (Austria, Russia, Prussia, England, France, and the United Provinces.)

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Europe in the 19th Century



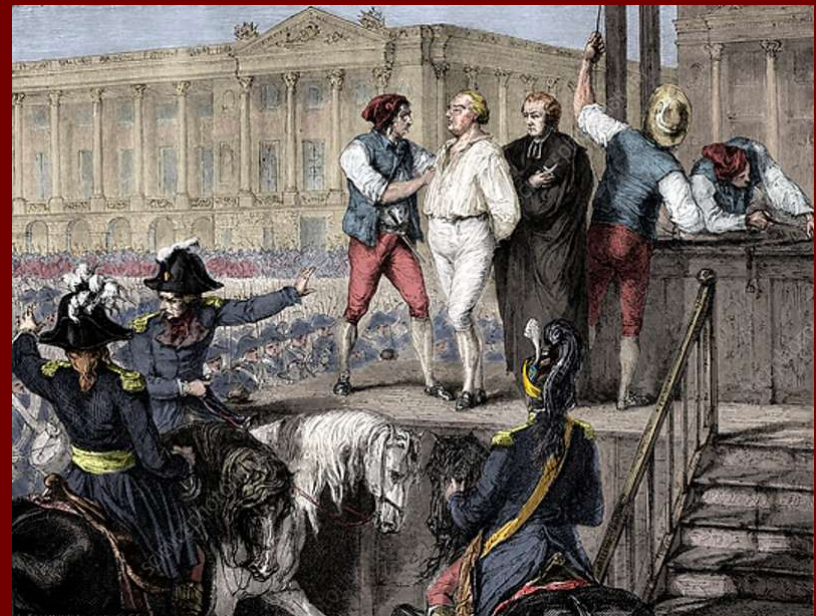
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Dominated by 2 revolutions, the American (1776) and the French(1789)



18th-century french revolution reference is too subtle here!



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...and the French (1789, against absolutist rule), from which 2 core principles emerged...



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- 1. Legitimacy** – absolutist rule subject to limits imposed by man.
- 2. Nationalism** – the masses identify with their common past, language, customs, and practices as a natural outgrowth of the state.

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Concert of Europe (1815-1854) was a period of relative peace in the international system (Austria, Britain, France, Prussia, and Russia) even though great political changes were occurring.

Why??

The Concert of Europe and the Conservative Order

- *(The Great Powers) desire nothing but to maintain peace, to free Europe from the scourge of their revolution and to prevent, or to lessen, as far as in their power, the evil which arises from the violation of all the principles of order and morality. On these conditions they think themselves entitled, as the reward of their cares and exertions, to the unanimous approbation of the world.*

- Protocol addressed to the chancelleries of Europe by Austria, Russia, Prussia, 1820 .



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- 1. Solidarity due to their shared European, Christian, "civilized" and "white" background which differentiated between "them" from the "other."**
- 2. European elites united in their fear of revolution from the masses.**
- 3. Industrialization and focus on colonialism.**
- 4. Balance of power concept – with each relatively equal in power, they feared the emergence of any predominant state (hegemon) among them.**

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The Breakdown of the Balance of Power System – World War I

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The end of WWI denotes critical changes in international relations...



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3 European empires die – Russia, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman...



Germany emerges as an even more dissatisfied power...

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Enforcement of Treaty of Versailles given to the League of Nations. It fails (no power, no legal instruments, no legitimacy). U.S. refuses to join, begins unilateralist foreign policy.



No one:

The treaty of Versailles:



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...The combination of a world economic decline, with fascism, liberalism, and communism clashing leads to World War II.



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**World War II
and
The Cold War
(3 Outcomes)**

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- 1.** The most important outcome of WWII was the emergence of two *superpowers* – the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and the decline of Europe as the center of international politics.

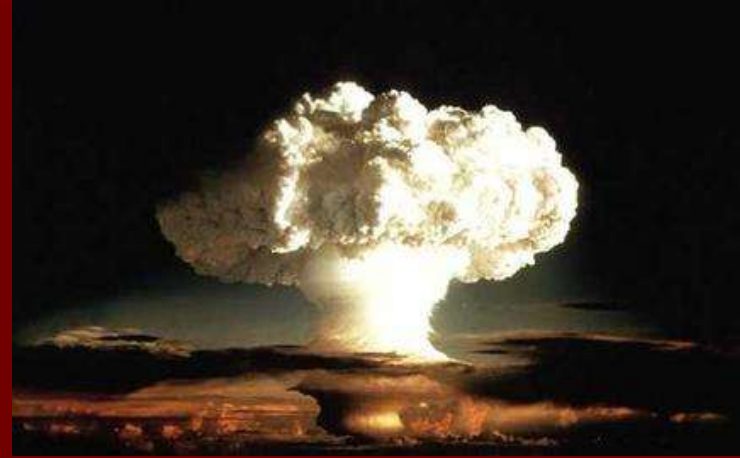


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Related to the first outcome was the recognition of the fundamental incompatibilities between these two superpowers in national interest and ideology, particularly the ideologies of capitalism and socialism.



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The third outcome was the realization that because of nuclear power, the differences between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. would be played out indirectly, on third-party stages, rather than direct confrontation. It was through this “globalized” conflict that international relations became truly international.

History of I.R. The Cold War As The “Long Peace” (Gaddis)



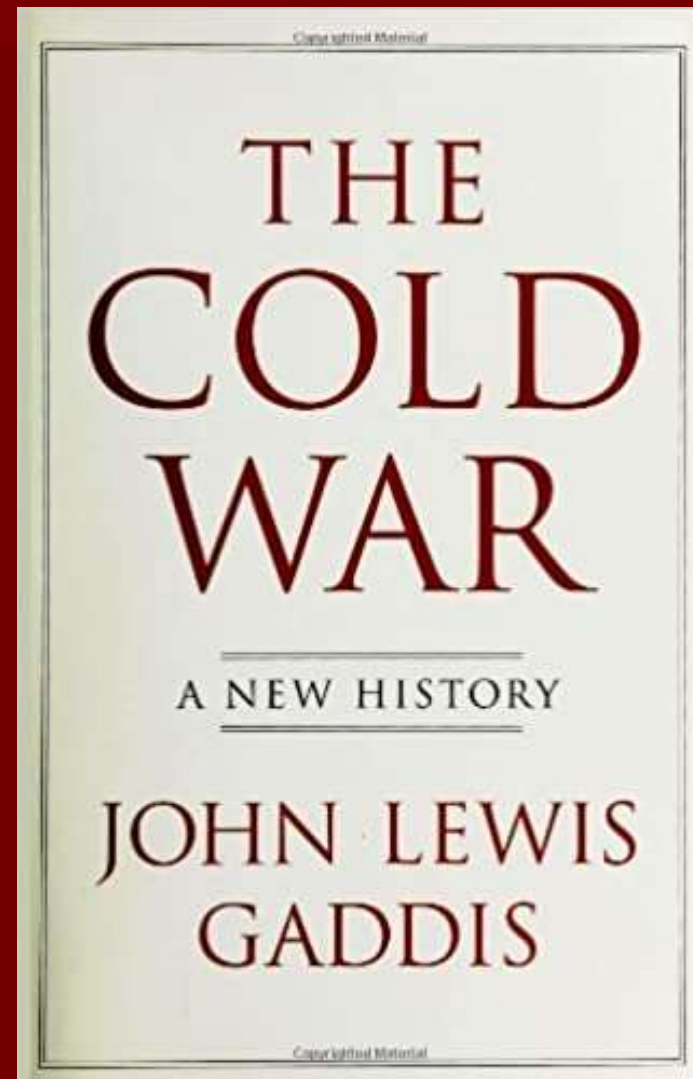
Stalin's postwar goals were security for himself, his regime, his country, and his ideology, in precisely that order.

— *John Lewis Gaddis* —

AZ QUOTES

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Just as general war was avoided in 19th century Europe, it has also been avoided since WWII. Why? Gaddis suggests 5 factors:



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- 1. Nuclear “deterrence”**
- 2. Bipolarity (equality of power)**
- 3. Hegemonic economic power of the U.S.**
- 4. Pluralism / Liberalism / Transnationalism**
- 5. Historical cycles (global wars every 100-150 years)**

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Key Developments in the Post-Cold War Era

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1. Changes in Russian foreign policy



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2. Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and multilateral response unites former Cold War adversaries.

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3. Disintegration of the former Yugoslavia into independent states; civil wars in Bosnia; NATO action in Serbia

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4. September 11, 2001 and the global "war on terror"

