
The Continental Congress received aid from various European nations during the American Revolution from 1776 to 1783. France became allied with the Americans in 1778 with the signing of the Franco-American Alliance that provided Americans with financial aid and military equipment. The United States also benefited from British troubles on the European continent; Britain had to maintain sufficient strength on the continent to conduct campaigns against France and Spain while sending contingents to fight American colonists. The British contingents sent to fight in America varied from 1,700 soldiers at the Battle of Lexington in 1776, to 8,000 at the Battle of Saratoga in 1777, to about 1,000 in Virginia and 2,000 in New York during the Battle of Yorktown in 1781. French aid to Americans included the services of French General Marquis Marie Joseph Lafayette and the French navy’s blockade of British General Charles Cornwallis’ escape by sea while Lafayette’s contingents assisted George Washington’s army in forcing the British to surrender on October 19, 1781. During the Paris Peace negotiations from April 12, 1782, to January 20, 1783, British negotiators granted the United States territory from the Appalachian Mountains to the Mississippi River in order to prevent Spain from gaining territory along the Mississippi River north of New Orleans.

When the French Revolutionaries imprisoned King Louis XIV and Queen Marie Antoinette of Austria, they provoked war with Austria and Prussia between 1789 and 1792. On February 21, 1793, Great Britain, Holland, and Spain joined in an alliance against the French. During the 1790s, the United States remained neutral but participated in an undeclared war with France (see entries for May 24 and 28, 1798). After Britain joined the war, French conquests continued in Europe, and American neutrality was challenged by the British navy’s attempt to blockade American products from reaching France. To maintain its right to trade with any nation and to stop British impressment of U.S. seamen, President James Madison obtained from Congress a declaration of war against Britain on June 18, 1812. During the War of 1812, the U.S. army proved incompetent, allowing British forces to march through Virginia before capturing Washington and burning the White House on August 24–25, 1814. However, with their failure to capture Fort McHenry, Maryland, the British abandoned their offensive operations, and on October 14, 1814, their ships left for Jamaica while peace negotiations with Americans were underway in Ghent, Belgium. On December 24, 1814, American and British delegates signed the Peace Treaty of Ghent, but before news of the peace treaty reached the contending armies a final battle took place at New Orleans in which General Andrew Jackson’s army defeated a British invasion on January 8, 1815.

The Treaty of Ghent's terms maintained the status quo ante bellum, but Americans regarded the war as a second revolution to liberate themselves from economic dependence on England. In addition, the British learned to treat their former colonies with more respect in both political and economic terms. The
Monroe Doctrine of December 2, 1923, validated American independence from the British. Drafted by Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, the Monroe Doctrine warned that the independence of any Central and South American nation should not be challenged by Spain or any European power. In addition, no European nation should attempt to colonize territory in the Western Hemisphere.

The War of 1812 and the Monroe Doctrine launched an era of American westward expansion. By 1896, the United States occupied all territory between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, north to the 49th parallel and south to the Rio Grande River. Although some Americans attributed this expansion to “God’s providence” or “manifest destiny,” they actually fought aggressive wars against Mexico and Indian tribes who resisted or refused to be held on reservations. Even four years of Civil War between 1861 and 1865 did not divert American expansion westward.

The U.S. conquest of western lands attracted new agricultural cultivation and the acquisition of mineral resources that promoted the nation’s economic growth. By 1896, America’s commercial and manufacturing capacities made the United States one of the world’s economic leaders; by 1920 the United States had become the world’s leader in gross national production.

This industrial growth inspired U.S. manufacturers to seek overseas markets for their goods and to import essential raw materials such as cooper, rubber, and oil. Advocates of overseas ventures drew attention to Spain’s repressive measures in Cuba. Aided by reports of Spanish cruelty to Cuban women and the allegation that Spain was involved in the sinking of the USS Maine in Cuba’s Havana harbor, president William McKinley asked Congress for authority to use armed forces against Spain. Congress responded by passing a Joint Resolution that permitted the president to use armed forces to evict Spain from Cuba (see entry for April 19, 1898). The Spanish American War lasted until December 1898, when Spanish and American delegates signed the Treaty of Paris. Under the treaty’s terms, Cuba became a protectorate of the United States and Spain ceded Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippine Islands to the United States (see entry for December 10, 1898). During 1898, Congress passed a Joint Resolution to annex Hawaii as part of American territory (see July 6, 1898). In 1899, a treaty between the United States, Britain, and Germany awarded the Samoan islands east of 171 degrees longitude to the United States (see entry for December 2, 1899).

President McKinley was assassinated on September 6, 1901, and Vice President Theodore Roosevelt become president. Roosevelt pursued aggressive foreign policies, obtaining the right to build the Panama Canal on November 3, 1903, and continuing the expansion of the United States navy to protect American trade throughout the world (see entry for December 12, 1907).

When World War I broke out in Europe on July 28, 1914, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed neutrality. From August 1914 until April 1917, Wilson had to deal with controversies about neutral rights, wartime contraband, private loans from American banks to Europeans, and Germany’s unrestricted submarine warfare. Because he believed Germany’s unrestricted submarine warfare was immoral, President Wilson asked Congress to declare war against Germany. On April 2, 1917, Congress approved a declaration of war against Germany. On April 2, 1917, Congress approved a declaration of war against Germany but delayed a declaration of war against Austria-Hungary until December (see entries for April 2 and December 7, 1917). Because America joined the war against Germany in 1917,
Wilson played a prominent role in the 1919 Paris peace talks by promoting the League of Nations as a collective security mechanism to reduce future worldwide conflict. Senate Republicans opposed U.S. membership in the league, however, because they preferred to enact unilateral U.S. policies to expand American trade without being burdened by the political restrictions of collective security.

Republican presidents pursued isolationist policies from 1920 to 1933. Russia's czarist regime had collapsed in March 1917 and on November 7, 1917, Bolsheviks led by Vladimir Lenin took over the government, vowing to end Russia's participation in the war at whatever cost. After Lenin made peace with Germany on March 3, 1918, leaders of France, Britain, and the United States dispatched troops to Russia in allied interventions that failed to dislodge the Bolsheviks and even helped solidify their power.

Germany established a republic under the Weimar constitution on July 31, 1919, but it experienced problems from the start. Weimar delegates had been required to sign the Treaty of Versailles, which blamed Germany for starting World War I. The "war guilt" clause of the treaty justified the Allies in seeking to collect $33 billion in reparations from a defeated Germany. Together with Germany's economic collapse, this stimulated right-wing opposition to the Weimar government. Faced with massive economic problems, the National Socialist (Nazi) Party, led by Adolf Hitler, gained many middle-class adherents. On January 30, 1933, President Paul von Hindenburg appointed Hitler as German chancellor, and within a year the Reichstag (parliament) had given him dictatorial power.

In East Asia, Japan was also reeling from massive economic dislocations. It became a fascist state when, following the assassination of Premier Yuko Hamaguchi on November 14, 1930, and the assassination of Premier Ki Inukai on May 15, 1932, Japan's military, led by Premier Viscount Makoto Saito, filled all Japanese cabinet ministries with military officers. The military was supported by Emperor Hirohito, who ignored Japan's elected political leaders in parliament (see entry for May 15, 1932). Subsequently, Japanese military generals such as Hideki Tojo led Japan to war against China despite protests from the United States in 1932 and 1937 (See entries for January 7, 1932 and October 5, 1937).

During the 1930s, President Franklin D. Roosevelt contended with an isolationist Congress, which adopted neutrality legislation designed to keep the United States out of war in Europe and Asia. As Japanese and German aggression threatened U.S. interests, President Roosevelt sought to negate the neutrality laws. After winning a third term in 1940, Roosevelt undertook measures to provide lend-lease aid for England and, later, the Soviet Union, which were both at war with the Axis powers of Germany, Japan, and Italy.

Although isolationists opposed U.S. aid to Europe, Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, united the country against fascism in Europe and the Far East. Roosevelt led the nation until his death in April 1945, shortly before the United Nations Organization was chartered. Following Roosevelt's death, President Harry S. Truman and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, in an agreement with Soviet General Secretary Joseph Stalin, accepted Germany's unconditional surrender (see entry for May 7, 1945). The United States and Britain continued the war against Japan in East Asia until Truman decided to use America's newly invented atomic bomb against Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 (see entries for August 6 and 9, 1945). Following the bombing of Nagasaki, Japan surrendered on August 15 and signed the official surrender terms
in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945 (see entry for August 15, 1945). On August 8, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan just before Soviet armies invaded Manchuria. Although the Soviet Union joined the United Nations, this intended collective security arrangement did not end the hostility between capitalist and socialist nations. The socialist-capitalist clash that had begun in 1917 was soon revived following the “strange alliance” of the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union during World War II.

Within five years of Japan’s surrender in August 1945, the Cold War had begun between the Western capitalist nations and the communist Soviets and Chinese. As early as March 5, 1946, Winston Churchill delineated the chasm between Western “free states” and the “police states” behind the Soviet iron curtain. A year later, the Truman Doctrine proposed to use American financial and military aid to protect Greece and Turkey from communist threats. The Marshall Plan, which provided economic aid, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which offered military protection from a possible Soviet military threat, involved the United States in Western Europe. In June 1950, the Korean War began when North Korean armies attacked South Korea and President Truman ordered U.S. forces to support South Korean forces (see entry for June 25, 1950). The Korean War lasted until 1953, when representatives of the United States, North Korea, and South Korea signed an armistice and ceasefire (see entry for June 25, 1953). Although Chinese troops assisted North Korea from November 1950 to 1953, China claimed its troops were “volunteers,” a claim meaning China could not participate in signing the 1953 armistice, which created a demilitarized zone at the 38th parallel between North and South Korea. As of 2001, a final peace agreement had not been signed and American troops remained in South Korea. By 1960, the U.S. Asian containment strategy extended from the borders of South Korea through Japan’s islands and to the Nationalist Chinese on Taiwan. The Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Australian-New Zealand ANZUS alliance completed the U.S. Pacific alliances, while in the Middle East the Central Treaty Organization of Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan linked with NATO members Greece and Turkey.

Between 1950 and 1980, American foreign policy experienced periods of lesser and greater Cold War confrontations with most conflicts occurring in the developing world (Third World) rather than in Europe. Nationalism was a dominate force in Third World countries as they tried to shed their colonial past. By 1960, the U.N. General Assembly had grown to ninety-eight member nations, of which forty-four were from the Asian-African bloc that had recently gained independence.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower tried to relieve tensions with the Soviet Union from 1953 to 1960, yet Eisenhower’s “new look” policy emphasized the need for American to maintain sufficient nuclear strike forces to hit the Soviet Union if it became necessary (see entry for October 30, 1953). Moreover, he committed the United States to assisting South Vietnam against North Vietnamese aggression after the French were defeated in Indochina in 1954. Eisenhower’s decision escalated the war in Vietnam during the 1960s. In 1961, President John F. Kennedy added American combat support troops to assist South Vietnam and again increased U.S. forces after South Vietnam’s leader, Ngo Dinh Diem, was overthrown in 1963 (see entry for November 1, 1963). Following Kennedy’s assassination on November 22, 1963, President Lyndon B. Johnson enlarged the number of American forces in South Vietnam and also ordered
United States Air Forces to begin bombing targets in North Vietnam (see entry for March 19, 1965). Neither Kennedy’s nor Johnson’s policies forced North Vietnam to surrender. In 1969, President Richard Nixon decided to gradually withdraw American forces from South Vietnam while training South Vietnamese troops to defend their nation. Nixon also began secret bombing raids on Cambodia (see entries for March 18 and June 8, 1969). In January 1973, Nixon accepted a compromise agreement with leaders of North Vietnam (see entry for January 27, 1973). The ink was hardly dry on the January agreement before North Vietnamese troops violated the ceasefire in February (see entry for February 9, 1973), but neither Nixon nor his successor, President Gerald Ford, was willing to send more troops to South Vietnam. In April 1975, North Vietnamese forces conquered South Vietnam while American helicopters evacuated the United States Embassy staff from Saigon to a U.S. aircraft carrier off the coast of Vietnam (see entry for April 29, 1975).

During the 1960s, the United States tried but failed to end Fidel Castro’s communist regime in Cuba. In 1961, Kennedy’s decision to overthrow Castro’s forces at the Bay of Pigs incursion by Cuban exiles was unsuccessful. In October 1962, Kennedy thwarted the Soviet Union’s deployment of nuclear missiles in Cuba (see entry for October 28, 1962) but did not overthrow Castro.

Nixon succeeded in obtaining détente with the Soviet Union and recognizing the People’s Republic of China as the legitimate government of China. Nixon’s negotiations with Moscow obtained the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT I) and an Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) in 1972, but détente venture floundered with the onset of his Watergate scandal, as well as the public’s inability to perceive détente as a measure to conciliate the Soviet Union. After Nixon resigned as president, President Gerald Ford found that right-wing Republicans, such as California Governor Ronald Reagan, and Democrats, such as Washington Senator Henry Jackson, believed détente was a Soviet design to weaken American resolve to oppose communist governments and to promote Moscow’s status in international affairs. Although President Jimmy Carter signed a second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II) with the Soviets in 1979, Carter withdrew the treaty from Senate consideration when Soviet forces intervened in Afghanistan on December 24, 1979, to support the Communist regime against Afghanistan’s Islamic mujahedin rebels seeking to overthrow the communist regime in Kabul, Afghanistan. Carter adopted confrontational policies toward Moscow that essentially ended détente before Ronald Reagan’s election in 1980.

Reagan revived a “feel-good” optimism about the nation’s future. At the same time that Reagan cut taxes (especially for the wealthy), he launched a $2.2 trillion military buildup and a costly strategic defense initiative (SDI, or “Star Wars”) that left the United States with a $5 trillion national debt when President George H. W. Bush took office in 1989. Reagan began his presidency with a strong ideological prejudice against the “evil empire” of the Soviet Union, but became more flexible in dealing with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev after 1985 because the two leaders had a personal rapport. Reagan’s personal link plus Gorbachev’s desire to end the nuclear arms race led to the 1987 Intermediate Range Nuclear Missile Treaty (INF), which eliminated most INF missiles with strict verification clauses. The repercussions of improved U.S.-Soviet relations relieved Europeans from fear of a superpower war on their continent and enabled the Helsinki Accords of 1975 to promote the growth of democracy in Eastern Europe. The Helsinki Accords and Gorbachev’s domestic reform program (perestroika) and openness (glasnost) pre-
cipated protest movements against the Communist regimes in the Eastern European states, leading to democratic reforms during 1989.

In other areas of foreign policy, Reagan initiated no broad, visionary program but often applied U.S. military power in Third World countries. Reagan condoned Israel’s invasion of Lebanon (see entry for June 6, 1982) but sent U.S. marines, without a clear mission, to Beirut, where 241 marines were killed when a terrorist bomb blew up the marines’ barracks (see entry for October 23, 1983). Reagan immediately ordered military operations against an alleged Communist takeover of Grenada, a small island in the Caribbean. Finally, his alignment with Iraq against Iran during the 1980s backfired when Iraqi President Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

Beginning in 1989, Communist nations in Eastern Europe were transformed from Soviet satellites into more democratic governments. The fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, was a prelude to the collapse of communist regimes in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania, as the Warsaw pact alliance disbanded. Gorbachev resigned on December 24, 1991, after most former Soviet republics had seceded from the Soviet Union. In early 1992, Russia’s government, led by Boris Yeltsin, became the successor to the Soviet Union, obtaining the Soviets’ permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council.

From 1991 to 2001, Presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton faced the daunting task of dealing with a series of civil uprisings by nationalists during the post-Cold War era. Through 1991, Bush watched approvingly but passively as bloodless revolutions demolished the Soviet empire and new governments emerged in Eastern Europe. His administration failed to offer sufficient economic aid to assist countries liberated from Communism, especially Russia, in changing their economic institutions from communist, state-owned industries to private, free-market industries.

Bush appeared to make foreign policy decisions on a case-by-case basis rather than according to a larger vision or plan. He backed Chancellor Helmut Kohl’s move to reunite Germany and waged war against Panama to remove the corrupt Manuel Noriega in December 1989. In 1990–1991, he formed a U.N. coalition to prevent Iraq from controlling the oil resources of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, but he failed to remove Saddam Hussein as president of Iraq, leaving a serious Middle East problem that continued into the next century.

Both Bush and Clinton negotiated formulas for the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties (START I, II, III), but the fulfillment of these treaties was still pending in 2001. They both pursued Reagan’s costly search for a missile defense system, albeit on a less enthusiastic schedule and under new formulas such as the Brilliant Pebbles global positioning system (GPALS) and Theater High Altitude Area Defense System (THAAD). Russian, Chinese, and NATO leaders opposed these missile defense systems as endangering the nuclear arms stability afforded by the 1972 ABM treaty.

Bush’s and Clinton’s most perplexing problems involved intervention during conflicts in countries where genocide and ethnic cleansing were perpetuated. Bush refused to intervene in the Balkan wars that marked the end of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia but did everything possible to prevent Haitian refugees from reaching the United States. Nor did Bush help Haiti’s democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was overthrown by a military junta in September 1991 (see entry for September 30, 1991).
Clinton inherited Bush’s policies toward the Balkans, Somalia, and Haiti and experienced difficulties himself in solving these problems. U.S. intervention in Somalia became a fiasco in October 1993 after eighteen U.S. soldiers were killed in a hunt for the Somali warlord Mohammad Farah Aideed. Regarding Haiti, Clinton continued Bush’s policy of preventing Haitian refugees from entering the United States, but in October 1994 established a coalition of forces under United Nations auspices whose threat to invade Haiti persuaded Haiti’s military junta to go into exile while President Aristide returned to Haiti (see entry for October 15, 1994).

During the Clinton presidency, situations in the Congo and the Balkans were most problematic. In the Congo, the United States provided some humanitarian aid, but France agreed to provide most of the United Nation’s peacekeeping troops who attempted to end the war in the Congo, a war that involved armed forces from Angola, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and Zambia (see entry for May 18, 1997). In Yugoslavia, Bush and Clinton avoided intervention for five years except for a few American aircraft that joined NATO in 1993 to protect U.N. “safe havens” where Bosnian Muslims or Croats were surrounded by militant Serbs and the Yugoslav National Army (see entry for April 16, 1993). In July 1995, Serb massacres of thousands of Muslims at the safe-haven of Srebrenica finally led Clinton to join NATO in forcing Yugoslav President Slobodan Milošević to negotiate peace arrangements with Croat and Muslim leaders at a meeting in Dayton, Ohio. The Dayton Accords introduced NATO forces in Bosnia to monitor peace, but Milošević’s Yugoslav National Army (YNA) and Serb paramilitary units attacked Kosovo’s Muslims (Kosovars) who were the dominant ethnic group in the province (see entry for March 5, 1998). Failing to get Milošević to accept peace arrangements for Kosovo, NATO aircraft bombed Serbia and Kosovo for seventy-eight days until Milošević accepted NATO’s cease fire and peace terms, including the withdrawal of all YNA and Serb paramilitary units from Kosovo (see entry for June 10, 1999). These NATO attacks precipitated Milošević’s loss in the Yugoslav elections of September 2000. The next year Milošević was extradited to The Hague for trial as a war criminal.

Two events vital to U.S. foreign relations occurred in the Middle East and Europe during the 1990s. Peace between Israel and the Palestinians was nearly achieved after the Oslo Accords were signed on September 13, 1993 by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization Yasser Arafat (see entry for September 13, 1993). The Oslo Accords provided for a series of steps leading to a final settlement, with Palestinian Arabs having autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Each step in the process caused additional disputes, especially because Israel wanted clearly defined security arrangements before it would relinquish control of all territory it had occupied in the Six-Day War of 1967. Although the Palestine National Authority obtained control of the Gaza Strip and Jericho on May 4, 1994, fulfilling the Oslo Accords became more difficult following the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on November 4, 1995. Negotiations on a final settlement failed on July 25, 2000, and a second Palestinian intifada began on September 28. Conflict between Israeli forces and the intifada continued into the new century.

In Europe, Bush and Clinton succeeded in expanding NATO’s membership. In March 1999, former Warsaw Pact members Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic were admitted to NATO. Beginning on December 10, 1991, the
European Union agreed to integrate its economy, in part by adopting a unified currency, the Euro, which was put into circulation by all members except Great Britain. EU members also sought ways to unify their military and political decisions, but at the same time were reluctant to give up their national sovereignty. During the 1990s Bush and Clinton negotiated with Canada and Mexico to form the North American Trade Association (NAFTA), a treaty Congress ratified in 1993 (see entry for November 20, 1993) and the United States sponsorship of the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1947 (see October 23, 1947) was modernized into the World Trade Organization after the Uruguay round of GATT negotiations agreed to create the World Trade Organization (see December 14, 1993 and December 1, 1994).

***

The third volume of the *Chronological History of U.S. Foreign Relations* was being edited when terrorists struck the World Trade Center towers in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001. Information about the antecedents of the September 11 tragedy may be found in entries for terrorism and Afghanistan in volumes two and three. The entry for September 6, 1970, explains how terrorists hijacked three commercial airlines: Trans-World Airlines (TWA), British Overseas Airlines (BOC), and Swiss Airlines. Similar hijackings followed during the 1970s, before a climax of four separate hijackings took place in 1985. Another attack important to Americans took place on December 21, 1988, when a terrorist bomb planted on a Pan American airliner exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 259 passengers and crew and 11 Scottish citizens on the ground.

The terrorism of the 1970s and 1980s grew in terms of suicide bombing attacks. Islamic schools (madressas) in Pakistan and Afghanistan had teachers of the Koran who advocated holy war (jihad) against the ideas of freedom and prosperity in Western Europe and the United States. Beginning in 1979, a military coup led by Nur Muhammad Taraki overthrew the Afghan government of Muhammad Daoud. Aided by advisors from the Soviet Union, Taraki’s rebels abducted and killed U.S. Ambassador Adolf Dubs, who became the first victim of violence in Afghanistan. After U.S. President Jimmy Carter claimed Soviet advisors were involved in Dub’s assassination, the Carter administration sent small amounts of aid to the mujaheddin rebels who opposed Taraki’s regime (see entries for February 14 and December 28, 1979).

During the 1980’s, President Ronald Reagan became more aggressive in fighting communism in the developing world (Third World) by increasing U.S. financial and military aid to the mujahideen. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) sent billions of dollars’ worth of financial and military aid through Pakistan to the Afghan mujahideen. This aid included the U.S. army’s most modern defense against low-flying aircraft and helicopters—Stinger anti-aircraft missiles, which enabled the rebels to shoot down aircraft sent to Afghanistan by the Soviet Union. The mujahideen also sold many Stingers for up to $300,000 each, which then ended up in other Middle Eastern and African countries (see entries for June 5, 1986, and May 27, 1988).

After the final Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan on January 15, 1989, fighting continued between Communists in Kabul and Islamist rebels outside the city. On April 28, 1992, a U.N. mediator supervised the transfer of power from the Communists to a six-member commission of Afghan representatives led
by Ahmed Shah Massoud. Expecting the commission to bring peace to Afghanistan, the United States and Saudi Arabia gradually ended their financial aid, beginning in 1992. As this aid ended, the mujahideen financed their actions by forcing local farmers to grow poppies for opium. The opium trade became a prime source of income for rebels, including the Taliban, who were initially just one of several competing groups in Afghanistan.

In 1992, neighboring Pakistan supported the Taliban, hoping to end the rivalry among Afghan warlords and bring stability to Afghanistan. On September 27, 1996, the Taliban captured Kabul, gaining control of Afghanistan except for twelve northern provinces where Massoud’s Northern Alliance opposed Taliban rule. As a result of the U.S. bombing campaign after the terrorist attacks of September 11, the Northern Alliance regained Kabul on November 14, 2001.

In 1996, the Clinton administration, uncertain how to deal with the Taliban, refused to recognize their government. There was evidence that Afghanistan harbored terrorists such as Osama bin Laden, who was linked to the bombing of New York’s World Trade Center on February 27, 1993. Bin Laden was also linked to the November 14, 1995, bombing at the U.S. Military Training Center in Saudi Arabia that killed five Americans and to the June 25, 1996, bombing that destroyed an apartment building in Dharan and killed nineteen U.S. Air Force officers living there. Two Islamic groups claimed responsibility for these bombings and warned Saudi King Faud to remove all Western influences from Saudi Arabia. The bombings in 1995 and 1996 appeared to be the beginning of terrorist attacks led by Osama bin Laden, who had declared war on Americans because they aided Israel and Saudi Arabia’s secular government.

On August 7, 1998, bombs exploded at U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, killing 213 people, including 12 Americans. On August 15, Pakistan arrested a suspect who confessed that Osama bin Laden led the African operations and intended to bomb American targets around the world. Convinced that evidence indicated bin Laden had masterminded the attacks, President Bill Clinton ordered U.S. navy ships in the Arabian and Red Seas to fire Tomahawk missiles at bin Laden’s training camps and other facilities in Afghanistan and the Sudan on August 20, 1998. On October 12, 2000 when two suicide terrorists drove a small boat filled with bombs into the side of the destroyer USS Cole while it refueled in Yemen’s harbor, killing 17 American sailors. The Clinton administration sent Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents to Yemen where on November 17, 2000, the FBI cooperated with Yemeni police in arresting two men suspected of planning the Cole’s bombing.

Lester H. Brune