

A tentative¹ assessment of the Clinton years

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Is it due to the controversial personality of the 42nd chief executive, or to the upcoming 2000 presidential contest? When it comes to describing how the US fared² during Bill Clinton's two terms, nonpartisan sources are becoming harder to find. There are those who cannot get over³ Monicagate, and who have dubbed⁴ Clinton "the man in the Oral Office." Political magazines and webring⁵ are not helpful either, insofar as either they take sides, or

focus on the presidential hopefuls rather than on the incumbent⁶ president's record⁷. And if we turn to the official website of the executive branch – <www.whitehouse.gov> – we are in for outright propaganda⁸. However "inappropriate⁹" the President's behavior may have been, this *Nutshell* aims at being a reliable reference book and, as such, it must take the heat¹⁰ out of the debate that opposes FOBs¹¹ to Clinton-bashers¹², and give a fair account of the Clinton era.

1. A formidable¹³
candidate,
a disappointing
chief executive ■

Bill Clinton will probably go down in history¹⁴ as a sinner¹⁵ and an incorrigible liar, and as the second president ever to be impeached and tried by the Senate. Yet one should also remember that he is arguably¹⁶ the most gifted politician of his generation, a brilliant political counterpuncher, and the first Democratic chief executive to win two terms since Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Before his 1992 bid for the White House, William Jefferson Clinton, a former law professor, had been a state attorney general in his native Arkansas. He had then won five terms as governor, during which he had gained a reputation as a centrist "New Democrat."

Taking advantage of his party's preeminent leaders' reluctance to challenge George Bush in his 1992

- (1) tentative : provisoire.
- (2) how the US fared : comment cela s'est passé pour les États-Unis.
- (3) get over : surmonter, se remettre de.
- (4) dub, -bed : surnommer.
- (5) webring : association de sites Internet partageant les mêmes centres d'intérêt.
- (6) incumbent : sortant.
- (7) record : bilan.
- (8) we are in for outright propaganda : nous allons avoir droit à de la propagande pure et simple.
- (9) inappropriate : inopportun. C'est le terme choisi par Clinton lui-même pour décrire sa relation avec Monica Lewinsky.
- (10) take the heat out of : dépassionner (un débat).
- (11) FOBs : Friends of Bill, "Clintonolâtres".
- (12) Clinton-bashers : ceux qui dénigrent systématiquement le Président.
- (13) formidable : redoutable.
- (14) go down in history : entrer dans l'Histoire.
- (15) sinner : pécheur. De sin : le péché.
- (16) he is arguably : on peut soutenir qu'il est.

reelection bid, Clinton soon proved a past master in the art of using the media to make up for his being unknown to the general public. He played the saxophone on MTV, had interviews with top anchormen¹⁷, and exploited ad nauseam¹⁸ footage¹⁹ of his fortunate teenage handshake with JFK. After coming in a respectable second in the New Hampshire primary, Clinton went on to sweep²⁰ the contests in the South and major Eastern states.

Impervious to the conventional wisdom²¹ of a balanced ticket – in order to appeal to a maximum of voters, a candidate should choose a running mate whose background and origins are different from his, cf. JFK-Lyndon Johnson or Reagan-Bush – Clinton selected Tennessee senator Al Gore, a fellow baby-boomer and southern Baptist.

Another competitor in the 1992 campaign was Ross Perot, an Independent and populist Texas billionaire who, surfing on the anti-Washington feeling, promised to “throw the bums²² out”, to foster “hyperdemocracy” through “Town Hall meetings” and to make no difference between “high” (diplomacy, defense) and “low” (economy, trade and jobs) politics. Perot’s lead in the polls until the spring of 1992 prompted Clinton to trumpet in turn the “Need for Change”. Casting himself as an outsider, he pledged to dislodge “the high-priced lobbyists and Washington influence peddlers²³.”

As for George Bush, the least one can say is that he was slow to fight back. In spite of the belated attacks his campaign consultants devised against his challengers – Clinton had smoked pot, he had dodged the draft²⁴, he was a womanizer ; Perot was “long on rhetoric, but short on solutions” – the incumbent president ended up looking like a chal-

lenger, unable to offer the country the change it asked for.

On Nov. 3rd, 1992, Clinton emerged the victor – 370 electoral votes and 43% of the popular vote to Bush’s 168 and 38% – an outcome that was surprising in more than one respect. First, the new President’s popular vote score was the second-lowest for a winning candidate this century, between Wilson’s 41.8% (1912) and Nixon’s 43.4% (1968). Second, Clinton managed to recapture 44% of the votes of 18-29-year-olds, as well as those of a part of the “Reagan Democrats”, those blue-collar Catholic voters who, shocked by the Democrats’ liberalism²⁵, had joined the Republican camp in the early 1980s. Last but not least, Perot’s 19% of the popular vote made him the most successful third-party candidate since Teddy Roosevelt in 1912.

The Clinton era began under most favorable auspices²⁶. A young, energetic, hard-working President-elect²⁷ was taking over, and could rely on an approval rating²⁸ well over 60%. A host of reform-minded

newcomers were taking their seats in Congress, breaking the long-standing gridlock²⁹. It was time to “Reinvent Government”. The problem is that, once in the Oval Office, the self-styled centrist outsider mistook his 43% victory for a mandate for more government³⁰ and that, tilting leftward, he soon lapsed into Old Democratic Big Government solutions, epitomized³¹ by his unsuccessful healthcare program reform. Worse, he reneged on³² his main campaign promises, which had been to give the middle class a tax cut and to “put the people first.”

True, the administration reduced the deficit from \$290 million to \$220 million, it cut 70,000 government jobs and improved the economy, while passing a \$33 million anticrime bill and boosting trade with Mexico and Canada through passage of NAFTA³³. True, Clinton, successfully working with Congress, achieved legislation making it easier to vote, enabling workers with babies or sick family members to take 12 weeks of unpaid leave³⁴, providing child immunization³⁵, and cutting taxes on the working

- (17) *anchorman* : **présentateur vedette.**
- (18) *ad nauseam* : **à satiété.**
- (19) *footage* : **séquence filmée.**
- (20) *sweep, swept, an election* : **remporter une élection haut la main.**
- (21) *the conventional wisdom* : **la règle établie, la tradition.**
- (22) *bum* : **bon à rien.**
- (23) *influence peddler* : **agent d'influence.**
- (24) *dodge the draft* : **refuser de faire son service militaire. A draft dodger : un insoumis.**
- (25) *liberalism* : **progressisme.**
- (26) *auspices.*
- (27) *President-elect* : **le candidat élu en novembre reste President-electant qu'il n'a pas prêté serment, fin janvier.**
- (28) *approval rating* : **cote de popularité.**
- (29) *gridlock* : **situation bloquée.**
- (30) *more government* : **plus de dirigisme.**
- (31) *epitomize* : **résumer, symboliser.**
- (32) *renege on a promise* : **manquer à sa promesse.**
- (33) *NAFTA* : **North American Free Trade Agreement ; ALENA (Accord de Libre Échange Nord-Américain).**
- (34) *unpaid leave* : **congé sans solde.**
- (35) *immunization* : **vaccination.**

poor and raising them on the wealthy. True, Clinton departed from his predecessor's purely diplomatic pursuits, phoning his counterparts³⁶ personally to cut commercial deals that would boost US exports. True, Clinton won passage of the deficit-reduction package, setting in motion the decline in the budget deficit that would eventually (1998) produce a surplus. But that move was perceived at the time as putting the budget first and "people" second, and Clinton's popularity took another nose-dive³⁷.

Yet what estranged the President most from the US electorate was the time and prestige he devoted to the controversial issue of gays in the military and to the appointment of women and African Americans to federal posts, thus giving the impression he did not put the needs of the larger national interest at the top of his agenda. Another nail in the President's coffin³⁸ was the steady spate³⁹ of small and big scandals that marred⁴⁰ his first two years in office – the Clintons' investment in the Whitewater real estate deal ; charges of influence-peddling⁴¹ by

members of his cabinet ; the President's alleged sexual promiscuity as governor ; a \$200 haircut aboard Air Force One⁴². If one adds Clinton's frequent about-faces⁴³ on crucial policies, which prompted even members of his own party to poor-mouth⁴⁴ him as a turncoat⁴⁵, no wonder the 37.4% of the electorate who bothered to participate in the 1994 midterms⁴⁶ seized the opportunity to get back at⁴⁷ Clinton by embracing Newt Gingrich's Contract With America. The conservative program promised tax cuts, limited terms for congressmen, a balanced-budget amendment, the revival of some defense programs as well as the slashing of some welfare ones.

In 1994, the Republicans gained control of Capitol Hill for the first time since 1953, winning 52 House seats and 9 Senate ones, as well as a majority of the governorships, among which those in eight of the nine most populated states. To complete the Republican tsunami⁴⁸, the GOP⁴⁹ secured at least parity in the state legislatures for the first time since the beginning of the Great

Depression. That historic drubbing⁵⁰ gave Clinton the status of a lame duck⁵¹ – and probable one-term – president.

A dispirited Chief Executive let for some time his opponents (Senate majority leader Bob Dole and House Speaker Newt Gingrich) marginalize him. He then decided to fight back and, positioning himself as a bulwark⁵² protecting the undefended, he opposed the most extreme measures passed by the Republican Congress. When deadlock over the budget resulted in a shutdown of government offices (1995), Clinton called the Speaker's bluff⁵³ and managed to put the blame on the GOP. Shifting back to the center, he proposed more moderate measures to reform welfare, reduce taxes and gradually eliminate the deficit, while co-opting popular Republican causes – crime, sex and violence in the media, smoking and teen pregnancy.

By January 1996, the President's addressing (at last) middle-class anxieties without raising the fear of new deficits enabled his approval rating to top 50% for the first time since he had been sworn in. In spite of his unconvincing record and an expected growth rate of 2% – Carter and Bush had failed with similar figures, whereas Reagan's 1984 bid was supported by a booming 6.8% – Clinton decided to seek a second term.

Except for some FOBs who, while admitting Clinton had been a second-rate president, claimed that he remained a formidable candidate, nobody would have bet a sou⁵⁴ on his chances in the 1996 presidential contest. FOBs were right though, and the "Comeback Kid" masterfully exploited his Republican opponent's – former Senate majority leader Bob Dole – various gaffes and fumbles⁵⁵, while taking

- (36) *counterpart* : **homologue.**
 (37) *nose-dive* : **descente en piqué.**
 (38) *another nail in s.o.'s coffin* : **littéralement un nouveau clou dans le cercueil ; circonstance aggravante.**
 (39) *spate* : **série.**
 (40) *mar, -red* : **gâcher.**
 (41) *influence-peddling* : **trafic d'influence.**
 (42) *Air Force One* : **le Boeing 747 du Président.**
 (43) *about-face* : **volte-face.**
 (44) *poor-mouth s.o.* : **parler de qqun en termes désobligeants.**
 (45) *turncoat* : **girouette, renégat.**
 (46) *midterms* : **abréviation de midterm elections.**
 (47) *get back at* : **se venger de.**
 (48) *tsunami* : **lame de fond.**
 (49) *GOP* : **Grand Old Party : le parti républicain.**
 (50) *drubbing* : **raclée, déculottée.**
 (51) *Lame duck* : **littéralement, canard boiteux. S'applique aux élus qui, battus aux élections de novembre, siègent jusqu'à la fin de leur mandat.**
 (52) *bulwark* : **rempart.**
 (53) *call s.o.'s bluff* : **mettre qqun au pied du mur.**
 (54) *bet, bet, a sou on* : **parier un kopeck sur.**
 (55) *fumble* : **maladresse.**

full credit for the improving economic situation. Clinton also consistently bashed the GOP, depicting it as the heartless champion of the rich who wanted to eliminate Medicare and school loans.

However, Clinton's 1996 victory should not be mistaken for a plebiscite. First, because only 49% of the voting age population participated. Second, because despite a whopping 379-159 electoral vote, Clinton won just 49% of the popular vote. Third, the Republicans retained control of both the House and Senate, which meant at least another two years of divided government⁵⁶.

The electoral situation prompted both Clinton and the Republican Congress to begin the new term with chastened⁵⁷ vows. And indeed moderation prevailed throughout 1997, as well as cooperation: taxes were cut for the middle class and the wealthy, the welfare system was modified, the budget deficit was further reduced. Even though both parties were dogged by new allegations of illegal campaign contributions, and in spite of Clinton's persistent charges of sexual and financial wrongdoings, it was business as usual⁵⁸ in DC.

In his January 1998 State of the Union address, Clinton announced that the federal budget would be balanced for the first time in years, and proposed reasonably activist "third way" plans for strengthening Social Security⁵⁹, aiding education and raising the minimum wage. The nation was prosperous and at peace, and to most Americans little else seemed to matter much.

Yet the President's various sexual improprieties⁶⁰ remained an issue, and although in April a federal judge dismissed Paula Jones's long-standing sexual harassment suit, the names of Whitewater special pros-

ecutor Kenneth Starr and of former White House intern⁶¹ Monica Lewinsky began to dominate the headlines, leaving Clinton politically crippled⁶².

So as to thwart⁶³ Starr's investigation on the President's relationship with Ms Lewinsky, the White House issued claims of executive privilege⁶⁴, but the courts were unimpressed, and in late July, Clinton was subpoenaed to appear⁶⁵ before a grand jury headed by Starr himself. Understanding there was no other way out, Clinton negotiated withdrawal of the subpoena and eventually agreed to testify through a closed circuit television from the White House, which he did on August 17th. In a televised address on the evening of the same day, he acknowledged in a husky⁶⁶ voice what he had so far consistently denied: his having had an affair with Monica Lewinsky. In early September, Congress received Kenneth Starr's report, which, while focusing on the Lewinsky case, found evidence of obstruction of justice and perjury. Soon afterwards, the American public was given access to the evidence⁶⁷ collected by the independent counsel⁶⁸: TV channels, web sites and the media in general could show Clinton's

videotaped grand-jury testimony or the uncensored text of the report itself.

In October 1998, the House of Representatives initiated an impeachment inquiry. The November mid-term elections came as a disappointment to many in the political and media spheres. Conservatives had hoped, despite polls that told them the contrary, that the public would punish Clinton's party for the President's deplorable behavior. Liberals on the contrary thought the outcome would show US voters were fed up with puritanism and bigotry. Neither forecast came true since, although it lost 5 seats, the GOP kept control of the House, while maintaining its 5-seat margin in the Senate. Out of the 36 governorships that were up for election, 23 were won by Republicans, which means the latter⁶⁹ went on ruling nine out of the ten most populated States.

The impeachment process went on and, in December, the GOP-controlled House Judiciary Committee voted to impeach Clinton, and the full House later confirmed that vote. The next step was the trial by the Senate of the President, which began in early January 1999, and ended on February 12th. On that day, Clinton was acquitted on both

- (56) *divided government* : **cohabitation.**
- (57) *chastened* : **assagi.** *Chastened vows* : **promesse de s'assagir.**
- (58) *business as usual* : **les affaires continuent (comme si de rien n'était).**
- (59) *Social Security* : **le système des retraites.**
- (60) *impropriety* : **inconvenance.**
- (61) *intern* : **stagiaire. Un stage** : *an internship.*
- (62) *crippled* : **handicapé, paralysé.**
- (63) *thwart* : **contrecarrer.**
- (64) *executive privilege* : **droit qu'a le Président de ne pas remettre à des enquêteurs des informations internes s'il juge que cela peut nuire au bon fonctionnement de l'exécutif.**
- (65) *subpoenaed to appear* : **cité à comparaître.**
- (66) *husky* : **rauque.**
- (67) *evidence* : **l'ensemble des preuves. Nom indénumbrable.**
- (68) *independent counsel* : **autre appellation du special prosecutor, procureur spécial.**
- (69) *the latter* : **ces derniers.**

counts⁷⁰ of perjury (55-45) and obstruction of justice (50-50), since a two-thirds guilty vote is necessary for conviction⁷¹.

Eight years into Clinton's time in office, our readers may wonder why the American public has forgiven him almost any misbehavior. The answer might be, in the words of a famous slogan on the wall of his 1992 campaign headquarters⁷², "the economy, stupid !" As long as the good times keep rolling, the Chief Executive may well be a waffler⁷³, or indulge in extramarital oral sex.

And that has been the case since 1992, with GNP growing by a yearly 3% (3.9% in 1997 and 1998), nearly 20 million jobs created and a current 4.3% unemployment rate. Better still, the budget surplus (a predicted \$69 billion for 1999) will enable the administration to increase military spending and to finance pensions, without raising new taxes. Although some economists have called those 8 years of prosperity the Clinton boom, most of them say it has many causes that are unrelated to Clinton's tenure in office, such as the information revolution, the policies of the Federal

Reserve or the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Asked shortly after the end of Monicagate what Clinton's legacy would be, Sean Wilentz, a professor of history at Princeton, declared that Clinton had above all restored American political centrism, even if his presidency "has come down to⁷⁴ doing what's best for Bill Clinton. Much good has come of that, more than the liberal journals⁷⁵ have wanted to concede. It has ended up forging his legacy as a moderating force during the nation's second Gilded⁷⁶ Age, an age of glitz⁷⁷, celebrity and calloused⁷⁸ conscience. The pity is that Clinton promised so much more, to himself and to the nation."

2. US foreign policies 1992-1999 ■

Due to the nation's safe geopolitical situation, US Presidents have always found it hard to persuade voters to make sacrifices for anti-communist

containment⁷⁹ in far-off regions of the globe. Things got worse after 1989, when the Cold War could no longer justify the amounts of precious national wealth that went to defending rich economic rivals against threats that no longer existed. Bill Clinton was elected President on a platform of domestic renovation, and partly owed his 1992 success to the electorate's having gotten bored with great victories abroad : Desert Storm was basically OK, but it was jobs America needed.

Clinton, however, like many of his predecessors, believed that creating a more perfect US was not an ambitious enough goal for a truly great people, and that the country would be deficient unless it continued to be the globe-girdling⁸⁰ power it had been since 1945. Hence his campaign promises to liberal Democrats to pursue a host of morally praiseworthy⁸¹ objectives : once in office, he would force Beijing to embrace dissidents, bring freedom to Haiti, punish North Korea for building a bomb, protect the Bosnians, and more generally speaking spread democracy all over the world.

That sweeping⁸² – almost Wilsonian – internationalist agenda was put on the back burner⁸³ when the new Chief Executive realized how little support he would get for sanctions against China if that implied fewer orders for US exporters. Similarly, he had to content himself with shaking his fist at⁸⁴ the Serbs, which was all right as long as it did not involve US casualties. And if the public supported his sending the boys to Haiti, it was only because something had to be done to staunch⁸⁵ the wave of asylees⁸⁶ over Florida. Having at last understood that donning⁸⁷ the striped pants⁸⁸ of a foreign-policy chief executive has no political mileage⁸⁹ at home, Clinton adopted

- (70) *count* : **chef d'accusation.**
 (71) *conviction* : **condamnation.**
 (72) *headquarters* : **quartier général.**
 (73) *waffler* : **personne qui parle pour ne rien dire.**
 (74) *come down to* : **se réduire, se limiter à.**
 (75) *journal* : **revue spécialisée.**
 (76) *gilded* : **doré.**
 (77) *glitz* : **tape à l'oeil.**
 (78) *calloused* : **endurci, cynique.**
 (79) *containment* : **endiguement.**
 (80) *girdle* : **entourer, ceinturer.**
 (81) *praiseworthy* : **louable.**
 (82) *sweeping* : **ample, ambitieux.**
 (83) *put sth on the back burner* : **remettre qqch à plus tard, mettre un projet en veilleuse.**
 (84) *shake, shook, shaken, one's fist at s.o.* : **menacer qqun du poing.**
 (85) *staunch* : **arrêter, endiguer.**
 (86) *asylee* : **demandeur d'asile. On dit aussi asylum-seeker.**
 (87) *don, -ned* : **revêtir, arborer.**
 (88) *striped pants* : **le pantalon à rayures de l'Oncle Sam.**
 (89) *has no political mileage* : **ne fait pas gagner de points.**

a basically don't-bother-me attitude toward foreign affairs, which somewhat squandered America's status abroad as sole superpower and victor in the Gulf.

The President was further forced to stick his head in the sand⁹⁰ by the qualified success⁹¹ of Restore Hope⁹² and by a nearly unbroken string of blunderings⁹³ that fueled the rampant Clintonophobia some of his domestic initiatives had aroused.

Lacking the public support and confidence his initial agenda required, Clinton has concentrated instead on trade policy and innovative economic approaches. His diplomatic portfolio may be slim, but NAFTA and the WTO⁹⁴ owe him a lot. Except for a few exceptions – the Balkan peace talks in Dayton, the sabre-rattling with China in the Taiwan Strait, the expansion of NATO against Yeltsin's will – Clinton has carefully avoided any issue that would have entailed expenditure of his already depleted⁹⁵ political capital. He has declined to confront the Pentagon's objections to a worldwide ban on landmines, refused the leadership in the fight against global warming and environmental degradation, and comfortably assumed that global anarchy and domestic inequity could be staved off⁹⁶ by the relentless drive to maximize profits.

At the end of the day⁹⁷, the would-be new Kennedy's legacy will be that of a technocrat and coordinator who, relying on the export-driven economic boom, has left problems to fester⁹⁸. Should the boom slacken, the global economic and political system on which us prosperity and authority rest will be seriously jeopardized.

Whichever candidate is chosen in November 2000 to become 43rd president of the United States, he

will inherit America's current ambivalence about future us foreign policies. Although the post-cold war world that has developed since the early 90s is based in many respects on American ideas, values and products, Americans, who are loath to⁹⁹ recognize today's world as their brainchild¹⁰⁰, sometimes behave like deadbeat fathers¹⁰¹. Political scientists ascribe¹⁰² this attitude to the fact that, while being decisive, America's victory in the cold war was not complete. Having rubbed out¹⁰³ any alternative to free-market capitalism and any superpower alternative to Pax Americana, the US could not occupy the vanquished of the cold war the way it had occupied Japan and Germany after WWII. Hence its inability to reform China or Russia, and Moscow's and Beijing's power to thwart US plans, whether by their strength or by their weakness.

The situation has caused the emergence of three cliques¹⁰⁴ in the DC foreign-policy establishment. First comes an alliance of hard-boiled cold war hawks¹⁰⁵, staunch isolationists and unilateralists – most of

them conservative Republicans – who contend that America's current overwhelming power enables it to maintain peace either by standing off from the world or by intervening unilaterally on it. Unsurprisingly, they despise the UN and question its usefulness. Moderate Republicans form the second coterie, which, while agreeing on the spreading of free markets or confrontation with rogue¹⁰⁶ states like Iraq or Serbia, criticize Clinton's multilateral approaches and treaties (they'd rather the US had played it alone¹⁰⁷) and the administration's focusing on lesser issues – Haiti, Ireland or the Balkans – while messing up key ones – arms control, Russia and China. The third school – mostly Democrats in the executive branch, intellectuals and FOBs – believes in sustainable¹⁰⁸ globalization, arguing that it is a blessing for the nation since what is being globalized most is American ideas and products. Accordingly, the US – helped by other nations – should devote its power to supporting the process, while spreading democracy and prosper-

(90) *stick, stuck, one's head in the sand* : **adopter la politique de l'autruche.**

(91) *qualified success* : **succès mitigé.**

(92) *Restore Hope* : **nom de l'opération américaine en Somalie.**

(93) *blundering* : **bévue, tâtonnement.**

(94) *WTO* : **World Trade Organization, l'OMC.**

(95) *depleted* : **amoindri, dégarni.**

(96) *stave off* : **écarter, conjurer.**

(97) *at the end of the day* : **à l'heure des bilans.**

(98) *fester* : **couver.**

(99) *be loath to do sth* : **répugner à faire qqch.**

(100) *their brainchild* : **le fruit de leur invention.**

(101) *deadbeat father* : **père divorcé qui "oublie" de payer la pension alimentaire.**

(102) *ascribe to* : **imputer à.**

(103) *rub out* : **liquider, éliminer.**

(104) *clique* : **chapelle, école de pensée.**

(105) *hawk* : **faucon, va-t-en-guerre.**

(106) *rogue* : **hors-la-loi, repris de justice.**

(107) *play it alone* : **faire cavalier seul.**

(108) *sustainable* : **"durable", prenant en compte l'environnement et les ressources naturelles.**

ity to widen the circle of people who benefit from globalization.

Meanwhile on Capitol Hill, the 90s have seen the passing of a generation of politicians who were willing to be the 911¹⁰⁹ for the rest of the world. That internationalist elite of centrist Democrats and Republicans has given way¹¹⁰ to a new generation of congressmen who are much more skeptical of international involvement. The Democratic newcomers' close ties with organized labor¹¹¹ prompt them to cast a skeptical eye on free trade, while their Republican counterparts consider international issues as a way to gain leverage¹¹² on domestic ones. An uncanny¹¹³ alliance of anti-freetraders and America-firsters has emerged, which accounts for¹¹⁴ the incumbent administration's various foreign-policy setbacks¹¹⁵, whether on fast track¹¹⁶, UN dues¹¹⁷ or, more recently, on CTBT¹¹⁸.

Ultimately, America's ability to forge a lasting post-cold-war peace will hinge¹¹⁹ on Clinton's successor's desire to reject some of the nation's foreign-policy shibboleths¹²⁰, and on his capacity to muster¹²¹ national consensus as well as a new bipartisan coalition of serious and responsible members of Congress.

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- (109) 911 : **le numéro d'appel des services de police.**
(110) give way to : **céder la place à.**
(111) organized labor : **les syndicats.**
(112) leverage : **influence, prise.**
(113) uncanny : **étrange, inquiétant.**
(114) account for : **expliquer.**
(115) setback : **revers, échec.**
(116) fast track : **capacité accordée (ou non) au Président de négocier des accords commerciaux que le Congrès, tout en conservant un droit de veto, ne peut ensuite amender.**
(117) due : **cotisation. Le Congrès refuse avec persistance de payer les millions de dollars de cotisations en retard que les États-Unis doivent à l'ONU.**
(118) CTBT : **Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Accord international d'interdiction des tests nucléaires, rejeté par la majorité républicaine au Sénat en octobre 1999.**
(119) hinge on : **dépendre de, reposer sur.**
(120) shibboleth : **doctrine, principe arbitraire.**
(121) muster : **réunir, former.**

Nota : Alain Guët tient une page de liens américains (dictionnaires en ligne, institutions, médias...) : "The American Corner" à l'adresse suivante : <http://www.iut-orsay.fr/~guet>