

## ***American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview***

### **Article: “Why Are There Still Any Foreign Interventionists?” (20–25 Minutes)**

#### **TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY**

##### **Goal**

In this article, students see the interventionist policies of the U.S. government over the last 100+ years, which stand in direct opposition to what nearly all of America’s “founding fathers” and colonial-era Americans supported.

##### **Instructions**

1. Instruct students to read the article and answer the review questions. (Give them 10–12 minutes.)
2. Have students discuss their answers in pairs/groups. (Give them 3–5 minutes.)
3. Ask for volunteers to share their answers as a class.

##### **Key**

1. Define “interventionism.” How does it compare to America’s founding principle?  
***It’s defined as America’s government’s involving the nation in foreign wars and alliances. America’s founding principle is that of non-interventionism.***
2. Name some negative consequences of the U.S. government’s interventionism around the globe the last 100 years or so.

***Taking Guantanamo Bay and establishing a torture and prison system; taking the Philippines (which allowed U.S. soldiers to be captured in World War II; setting up the rise of Hitler by intervening in World War I; 60,000 Americans dead in Vietnam; setting up decades of conflict with Iran by overthrowing a democratically elected leader in that nation; civil war and 1 million+ dead in Guatemala; violence and murder in Chile; instability, violence, and death (including hundreds of thousands of children) in Iraq, etc.***

3. How would you answer *on principle* when someone who favors interventionism says something like, “We *have* to do something about [Nation X]; there’s a bad guy ruling them we’ve got to get rid of!”?  
***AWV, but which “bad guys” are “we” supposed to get rid of or overthrow? Some of them? All of them? Which ones? What’s your PRINCIPLE on which “bad guys” to overthrow?***
4. What is troublesome and questionable about the U.S. government’s going after/assassinating/overthrowing *some* dictators, but not all? What might be behind this picking and choosing of which “bad guys” to kill or overthrow?  
***AWV, but it strongly suggests that the reasons behind getting rid of some dictators and not others is that some dictators who are left alone are obeying orders from those U.S. government officials who do NOT hold to the American principles of non-interventionism. It’s also likely that those connected to those pro-interventionist U.S. government officials are becoming wealthy or gaining power in those regions that the U.S. government is interfering in.***
5. What’s the difference between protesters who hate America and violently protest, “America is awful and racist and driven by slavery and hate!” and those who point out that it’s unconstitutional (illegal) and “anti-American” for U.S. government officials to intervene in foreign nations?  
***AWV, but the first group of protesters opposes principles of liberty, property, and individual freedoms that align closely with Biblical limitations on government—to protect life, liberty, and property, and to punish and threaten those who violate those rights. The second group of protesters is fighting for the principles of America as championed by nearly all of America’s “founding fathers” and Americans who support limited government.***

# Why Are There Still Any Foreign Interventionists?

The Future of Freedom Foundation

Jacob G. Hornberger • December 13, 2017

For the first hundred years of American history, the United States was founded on the concept of a limited-government republic, one whose government did not intervene in the affairs of other nations, specifically in Europe and Asia. America's non-interventionist philosophy was summed up by John Quincy Adams's Fourth of July address to Congress in 1821, the title of which is "In Search of Monsters to Destroy."

Later generations of Americans abandoned that founding foreign-policy principle and adopted the opposite philosophy—interventionism. The big turn came in 1898 with the Spanish-American War, continued with World War I and World War II, followed by the Korean War and Vietnam War, culminating in today's forever wars in the Middle East and Afghanistan, with coups, invasions, assassinations, kidnappings, and partnerships with and support of foreign dictators thrown into the mix.

Americans today have a choice: Restore America's founding principle of non-interventionism or continue embracing foreign interventionism.

The good news is that according to an excellent op-ed in the Los Angeles Times by Texas A&M professor Elizabeth Cobbs, a Pew organization poll conducted in 2016 found that 57 percent of Americans said that the United States should "mind its own business" and allow other countries to get along on their own." That was up from 52 percent in 2013.

That means that we might well be very close to a critical mass that brings one of those gigantic societal shifts that have periodically occurred in history in the direction of freedom.

It certainly shouldn't surprise anyone that so many American are becoming anti-interventionists. Just look at the consequences of America's many interventions since 1898. It is not possible to find very many positive consequences of America's history of interventionism. They are almost all bad.

**The Spanish-American War.** In 1898, the U.S. government used fraud, power, and deceit to acquire a perpetual lease of Cuban property, namely Guantanamo Bay. That, of course, is where the Pentagon and the CIA have established their modern-day torture and indefinite detention prison and kangaroo judicial system, both of which have brought so much anti-American animosity around the world. It also resulted in U.S. soldiers torturing (i.e., waterboarding), killing, and injuring tens of thousands of Filipinos who were simply fighting for their independence against Spain and the United States. The U.S. conquest of the Philippines is why the U.S. troops, 40 years later, were able to be taken captive when Japan initiated an attack on the United States in World War II.

**World War I.** A total waste of tens of thousands of American lives. Its goal of being the war to end all wars and making the world safe for democracy were not achieved, to say the least. In fact, it was U.S. interventionism in WWI that was a major factor that gave rise to Hitler and World War II....

**Vietnam War.** It tore the United States apart. Almost 60,000 American men died....Vietnam was united under communist rule, and the United States didn't end up falling to the international communist conspiracy, as U.S. officials said it would.

**Iran.** In 1953, the CIA secretly orchestrated a coup that destroyed Iran's experiment with democracy and installed, trained, and supported one of the most brutal tyrannies in the world. That is the root of America's crisis with Iran today.

**Guatemala.** In 1954, the CIA secretly orchestrated a coup that destroyed Guatemala's democratic system and installed a brutal, unelected, pro-U.S. military regime. The coup brought about a THREE-decade long civil war that killed and injured more than a million people.

**Chile.** In 1970-1973, the CIA secretly orchestrated a coup that destroyed Chile's democratic system and installed a brutal, unelected, pro-U.S. military regime, whose forces proceeded to round up, kidnap, incarcerate, torture, rape, or execute tens of thousands of innocent people. U.S. officials...violently [kidnapped] the commanding general of Chile's armed forces, which resulted in his murder, and also conspired in the murder of two innocent Americans, Charles Horman and Frank Teruggi. No U.S. official was ever held accountable for any of this. The director of the CIA, Richard Helms, was later convicted of falsely denying to Congress under oath the CIA's role in bringing about the coup. After sentencing, Helms was treated as a hero by the CIA....

**Iraq.** In the 1980s, the U.S. government partnered with Saddam Hussein in his war against Iran because the U.S. was upset that the Iranian people had violently ousted the tyrannical regime that the CIA had installed in 1953. Then in 1990, the U.S. government turned on Saddam in the Gulf War, massacring thousands of Iraqis, destroying their water and sewage treatment plants, and imposing a brutal embargo that intentionally killed hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children. All this and other interventions later brought terrorist blowback in the

form of anti-American terrorism, including the 9/11 attacks, which then brought a second invasion of Iraq, which ended up destroying Iraq, torturing, bombing, and killing hundreds of thousands of more Iraqis, and producing ISIS and a perpetual “war on terrorism....”

That’s just some of the interventions. There is also Libya, Syria, Panama, Grenada, Congo, Indonesia, and many more. The consequences were bad in those interventions also.

The fact that 57 percent of the American people are now leaning toward our nation’s founding principle of non-interventionism is an incredibly positive sign. My question is this: How can 43 percent of Americans still support interventionism, given its horrific consequences?

*This article may be found here: [fff.org/2017/12/13/still-foreign-interventionists](http://fff.org/2017/12/13/still-foreign-interventionists)*

### **Questions for Review:**

1. Define “interventionism.” How does it compare to America’s founding principle?
2. Name some negative consequences of the U.S. government’s interventionism around the globe the last 100 years or so.
3. How would you answer *on principle* when someone who favors interventionism says something like, “We *have* to do something about [Nation X]; there’s a bad guy ruling them we’ve got to get rid of!”?
4. What is troublesome and questionable about the U.S. government’s going after/assassinating/overthrowing *some* dictators, but not all? What might be behind this picking and choosing of which “bad guys” to kill or overthrow?
5. What’s the difference between protesters who hate America and violently protest, “America is awful and racist and driven by slavery and hate!” and those who point out that it’s unconstitutional (illegal) and “anti-American” for U.S. government officials to intervene in foreign nations?