



In the Stream of History: Shaping Foreign Policy for a New Era

Warren Christopher

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Giving the reader a unique window into the inner workings of U.S. diplomacy in President Bill Clinton's first term, this book highlights the major foreign policy challenges faced and decisions made in a turbulent era. The book is organized around thirty seven key speeches by the Secretary of State, each introduced by an extensive essay that describes its policy context and purpose, and includes anecdotes, local color, and brief sketches of some of the leading figures on the world stage. These introductions, which constitute more than half the book, not only give the who, what, when, and where behind the speeches, but most important, explain the why and how.

For example, the group of speeches on Bosnia is preceded by an incisive account of the twists and turns of U.S. policy leading up to the Dayton Conference and the intense negotiations, involving several volatile personalities, that led to the historic Dayton agreement. Among the other subjects covered by the essays are our relations with China, Russia, Japan, Vietnam, Korea, Haiti, the Middle East, Africa, and South America; international organizations such as NATO and the United Nations; and the global issues of human rights, terrorism, nuclear threat, and the environment.

The book begins with a Prologue that emphasizes Secretary Christopher's long-standing interest in speeches as an instrument of public policy and the decision making behind this often overlooked aspect of statecraft. It also describes how the Secretary was offered the position by President-elect Clinton, the state of affairs as he found them when he took office, and his strategy and plans for U.S. foreign policy in the post-Cold War period. An epilogue recounts the Secretary's decision to return to private life, offers his insights on the challenges facing the United States in the international arena in the years ahead, and sets forth some suggestions for future policy makers.

Above all, this book provides ample evidence that the author took seriously the advice that United States Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas gave him when he served as the justice's law clerk in the 1949 term: "Get out in the stream of history, and swim as fast as you can."



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