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**Sinopsis**

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Talbott, deputy secretary of state in the Clinton administration, makes an eloquent but predictable appeal for progress toward global governance under the auspices of the United Nations, which he sees as humanity's destined path since tribes began forming states, and since states have sought an alternative to international anarchy. The major obstacle to the new order, according to Talbott (*Engaging India*), is the United States, whose massive power and individualist principles encourage its citizens to regard limiting national authority as unnatural. In the face of cultural resistance, however, presidents from Franklin Roosevelt to Bill Clinton regarded some form of world authority as both a natural development in a nuclear era and a useful element of U.S. foreign policy. The villain of the piece, not surprisingly, is George W. Bush, who Talbott claims asserted America's right to make and enforce rules for other nations, rejected facts that did not support his preconceptions and ignored advice from more experienced foreign-policy hands. The resulting havoc wrought by triumphalism and evangelism, according to the author, will require the careful attention of wiser, more temperate people, presumably in a Democratic administration. While the roots of Talbott's argument run deep, it echoes so much conventional wisdom on the subject that its impact is likely to be minimal. (Jan.)

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