

RELEASE IN PART
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The FP Top 100 Global Thinkers

Foreign Policy presents a unique portrait of 2010's global marketplace of ideas and the thinkers who make them.

DECEMBER 2010



13. Bill and Hillary Rodham Clinton

for proving that you don't need to be president to act presidential.

*FORMER PRESIDENT | NEW YORK**SECRETARY OF STATE | WASHINGTON*

Speaking to the Council on Foreign Relations in September, Hillary Rodham Clinton sounded a **confident note**: "After years of war and uncertainty, people are wondering what the future holds, at home and abroad. So let me say it clearly: The United States can, must, and will lead in this new century."

Ironically, two of the people most crucial to the new global century are the Clintons themselves: the ex-president and the ex-would-be-president, the power couple now defined by their position just outside the highest reaches of power. Except that, these days, both Clintons are more influential, and more beloved, than ever. Bill's Clinton Global Initiative is starting to feel like a sexier, more effective competitor not just to Davos but to the United Nations itself, bringing world leaders together to commit their resources to fighting poverty with market-based, technocratic solutions. As of this summer, his foundation had contributed \$23 million and countless man-hours to the effort to rebuild Haiti. Polls have shown he's a better advocate for Democratic candidates than the actual president, and he spent most of the fall stumping for woebegone Dems from Orlando to Seattle.

Meanwhile, Hillary showed up in one recent poll as the most popular political figure in the United States, an accolade she has earned through a no-drama approach to an array of thankless tasks: brushing off Vladimir Putin's temper tantrum to reach agreement on nuclear disarmament and Iran sanctions, promoting women's rights over the objections of entrenched traditionalists, and launching an innovative effort to bring clean cookstoves to the world's poorest. But what she has mainly stood for is American competence, with her Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review a major, if unglamorous step toward making U.S. statesmanship a more agile beast. If this is what Clinton nostalgia looks like, bring it on.

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