

Bush's New World Order: What's Wrong with This Picture?

By Kim R. Holmes, Ph.D.

It is a pleasure to be here today to discuss a great question facing our time—what new American foreign policy will emerge in the post-Cold War era?

President Bush hopes that a New World Order will replace the old one of East-West confrontation. I commend the President for trying to put the new world situation into perspective, and for trying to develop some new guideposts to chart our way through the unknown waters of this new age.

The President and his Administration have made a great deal of this New World Order idea. Bush referred to it at least 43 times from the summer of 1990 to March 1991. Secretary of State James Baker and National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft have mentioned it in public. Reportedly the idea surfaced between the President and Scowcroft during a fishing trip. The National Security Advisor impressed Bush with his belief that a New World Order was at hand—an order of international cooperation based on respect for the principles of law and democracy.

Ironically, the idea that the world was poised to create a New International Order first appeared in a December 1988 speech by Mikhail Gorbachev to the United Nations General Assembly. Also, in a speech to The Heritage Foundation last year, then-Soviet Ambassador Aleksandr Bessmertnykh emphasized the notion that the United States and the Soviet Union together should be “guarantors” of a process producing “world stability in the framework of the United Nations’ structures.”

There is much in Bush’s concept of a New World Order that is right and good. It rightly reflects the American hope that the world will become more peaceful, democratic, and free. Yet these utopian impulses are tempered by an acceptance of the world as it is—that the Soviet threat is diminishing; that wars will nevertheless still be fought; and that America still needs to be engaged in the world, if not merely for the good of others, then certainly for the good of itself.

But to quote a cagey newspaperman, “Free-floating abstractions that make good commencement speeches often are bad foreign policy.”

Looking Wrong. Bush’s New World Order reminds me of those puzzles asking: “What’s wrong with this picture?” You know the ones: a seemingly normal cartoon picture of something is presented—say, a barnyard full of animals. At first glance everything looks normal. The cows are grazing in the meadow. The horses are in their stalls. Yet on closer examination, things start to look terribly wrong. One cow may be missing a leg. Or the horses may be wearing boots.

The problem with the New World Order is the closer I look at it, the more I see horses wearing boots. Bush’s New World Order may appear to be a reasonable attempt to make sense of our current world situation, but on closer examination we find misunderstanding of world developments and much confusion about American policy goals.

Kim R. Holmes, Ph.D., is Director of Defense and Foreign Policy Studies at The Heritage Foundation.

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Let us look at Bush's New World Order point by point. Only then can I show you what I mean.

1) The Assumption of a New Order.

First of all, I do not see a new order at all, but much disorder. The Bush Administration believes, in the words of Brent Scowcroft, that "we are creating the beginning a New World Order coming out of the collapse of the U.S.-Soviet antagonism."

But as the U.S.-Soviet confrontation wanes, new disorder is breaking out: the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia are disintegrating. Cordial relations between Moscow and Washington did not stop Saddam Hussein from invading Kuwait. Ethnic and separatist tensions are on the rise in Algeria, Bangladesh, Canada, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Liberia, Somalia, the Sudan, and Tibet. Moreover, despite Jim Baker's hopes for a new Middle East peace conference, the Arab-Israeli conflict continues. And we must not forget that old conflicts persist in Afghanistan, Cambodia, and elsewhere.

To be sure, improved U.S.-Soviet relations played a role in bringing a settlement to Angola and in the defeat of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. And they were important in the defeat of Saddam Hussein and in making it easier to tackle the Arab-Israeli conflict.

But this does not make a "new order." The end of the Cold War will make easier the resolution of some regional conflicts, while unleashing antagonisms and possibly new regional conflicts frozen by the Cold War and communist repression. This is not to say that the Cold War was preferable. But merely to suggest that as it passes, new kinds of disorder are emerging. And we are ill-equipped to deal with them if we assume that some new order is emerging merely because Moscow is more friendly and the United Nations more cooperative.

2) America, the Leader of International Solidarity.

Another assumption of Bush's New World Order involves America as a leader of international solidarity.

The President sees a new order where "brutality will go unrewarded and aggression will meet collective resistance." This, Bush says, will help form a new "partnership united by principle and the rule of law....a partnership whose goals are to increase democracy, increase prosperity, and reduce arms."

These words were spoken partly to justify our war to liberate Kuwait. Of course, the Persian Gulf war was seen by Bush as a model of U.S. action in the New World Order—America leading the international community in a war against aggression, and hoping that other regional conflicts might be solved, if not by a U.S.-led war, then certainly by more vigorous American diplomacy buoyed by the enhanced prestige and influence brought on by the victory in the Gulf war.

But surely the war to liberate Kuwait is no model from which general principles of foreign policy can be derived. Aggressive wars are fought all over the globe, but the United States does not (nor should it) send troops to settle them.

Nor did U.S. action in the Gulf war have anything to do with the New World Order's lofty goals of promoting democracy or the rule of law. The President was correct to say: "the [Persian Gulf] war wasn't fought about democracy in Kuwait; the war was fought about aggression against Kuwait." Syria's motivation in joining the coalition—like that of Saudi Arabia and all others—was completely self-interested, and was not to uphold principles of international law and order. America acted, rightly in my opinion, not to further some agenda of democracy or the

rule of law, but to prevent Iraq from overturning the balance of power in a region vital to U.S. interests.

The war in the Gulf was unique. Iraq's aggression was so blatant and threatened so many national interests, that it was possible for America to forge an international response. But we should not expect this pattern to be repeated often. No one would expect America to lead the international community into war if Pakistan attacked India over Kashmir, or if China struck at Vietnam over the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea. Or even if Somalia invaded Ethiopia over the Ogaden. And no one expects the President to organize "collective resistance" against state-sponsored "brutality" in Yugoslavia or the Baltics.

3) The New Soviet Partner.

This leads me to question yet another assumption of the New World Order: that the Soviet Union will be America's "partner" in establishing an order "based on principle and the rule of law."

To be sure, the Soviet Union approved the U.N. resolutions effectively sanctioning the use of force against Saddam Hussein. But we should remember that Moscow tried to stop the use of force in the weeks before the war began. And they were not America's "partner" at all once the fighting started. All Moscow did was sit back and not interfere.

Furthermore, the Soviet Union continues to back regimes that oppose the principles of the President's New World Order. It still supports Castro's Cuba and Najibullah's Afghanistan—hardly forces for democracy and the rule of law. Nor should we forget that Soviet military capabilities continue to grow despite the loss of the Warsaw Pact and the easing of East-West tensions. Soviet nuclear missiles are still coming off the assembly lines in large numbers, while we debate how quickly to cut production of our missiles. And work on modernizing the Soviet submarine force continues apace.

The Soviet Union will never be a full-fledged partner of America until it transforms itself from within. We cannot expect Moscow to cooperate in establishing an international order based on democracy and the rule of law until it respects such values at home. Maybe it will someday, but then it would no longer be the Soviet Union as we know it.

4) The U.N. and the "New Partnership of Nations."

Yet another of Bush's premises—that the U.N. will help form a "New Partnership of Nations"—is based on this belief that U.S.-Soviet cooperation is the key to the New World Order.

The President says he wants the U.N. to be a "center for international collective security." And National Security Advisor Scowcroft, says that he hopes to use the U.N. to mobilize the international community "against the violation of certain principles."

It is true that the U.N. works more effectively when the Soviet Union and the United States are cooperating. And I am all for such cooperation in reforming the organization and bureaucracy of the U.N. to eliminate waste and inefficiencies. And perhaps Moscow and Washington can work together in the U.N. to bring better advice about economic reforms to the Third World.

But we should not expect the U.N. to be a center for international collective security, nor a body that forms a "new partnership of nations." It was the United States that forged the U.N. coalition against Saddam Hussein. The U.N. was merely a forum in which individual nations expressed their national interests. As such, the U.N. itself did not take the initiative, and it failed miserably after the war to deal with the crisis caused by Saddam's attack on the Kurds. The U.S., and not the U.N., had to intervene to save the Kurds.

Of course, in some cases the U.N. will be useful in resolving regional conflicts. And the United States should not hesitate to use it when the outcome looks good. But in other cases it will be useless, or as in the Middle East, a mere bystander.

We should not expect more from the U.N. than it can deliver. And we should avoid high-flying rhetoric about the U.N. becoming a "partnership of nations." It only raises expectations that cannot be fulfilled, and obscures the reality behind the U.N.'s actions.

5) Aiming for Stability.

Yet another assumption behind the New World Order idea is the belief that a chief aim of U.S. policy should be to promote stability around the world. This comes up in Bush Administration statements about the need to shore up Mikhail Gorbachev, to prevent the disintegration of the Soviet Union. We saw it again in the initial statements of support by the Bush Administration for the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. Recalling this watchword of the Bush Administration, Brent Scowcroft has said: "By and large, we and I think our NATO friends and allies are opposed to the disintegration of states or the breakup of states."

But there are two flaws in this approach:

- ◆ The pursuit of stability (and order for that matter) flies in the face of the idea of a New World Order based on democracy and the principles of law and justice. Clearly the hunger for democracy is creating instability in the Baltics and Russia, as it is in Slovenia and Croatia. Around the world secessionist movements are taking up the banner of democracy against dictatorships, yet the Bush Administration finds it very difficult to support them because of its fear of instability.
- ◆ Real stability is not achieved by dictatorships suppressing the wills of people, but by allowing peoples to form nations and governments peacefully and democratically. The best hope for stability and peace in the Soviet Union is for the Republics freely and peacefully to form any union or federation they wish, without fear of repression from the Soviet army or the KGB. The same goes for Yugoslavia. The real threat of instability comes from the Yugoslavian army, which is threatening Croatia's and Slovenia's independence by force of arms.

By saying over and over again—as the Bush Administration does—that the United States wants to promote stability in the world, we become confused about the purposes of U.S. foreign policy. Stability is a meaningless term. To Gorbachev it means the territorial integrity of the Soviet Union. To the President of Lithuania it means the independence of his country. I recommend we ban its use from official discussions of U.S. foreign policy.

6) Reducing Arms.

Finally, the President believes that arms control is another key to the New World Order. With this in mind, he has called for the ban of nuclear, chemical, and biological arms production and an end to missile deliveries to the Middle East and a curb on sales of conventional weapons there. And, of course, he is signing a START agreement with the Soviet Union this week.

But once again the President falls prey to a contradiction. Peace around the world depends more on a balance of power than on arms control. That is why, in spite of Bush's desire to cut back on arms to the Middle East, the U.S. still is approving new sales of aircraft and weapons to Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.

And it should do so. Senator John McCain describes very well what is wrong with too much emphasis on arms control in resolving regional conflicts. He says:

We can only take effective action... if we recognize that a relatively few states have catalyzed the current pattern of world arms transfers. The solution to the problem does not lie in futile efforts to disarm the world, halt every aspect of the traffic in arms, or control every aspect of proliferation. There is no point in trying to deny peaceful countries the basic tools necessary to preserve their security, or in embarking on arms control efforts that are more likely to weaken friendly states than the states whose arms purchases drive regional arms races and which are the primary threat of aggression.

There is no harm in restricting weapons of mass destruction, to the Middle East, or anywhere else for that matter. But we should not delude ourselves into thinking that arms control will replace the balance of power as the best guarantor of peace.

Once again, I am afraid, the President's rhetoric is not matched by reality.

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This is not an easy time to be developing broad principles for U.S. foreign policy. So I don't wish to diminish the difficulty of the task facing the President. It may be that no single idea can capture what we must do now that the Cold War is over.

Confusing and Contradictory. But if that is so, then Bush and his Administration should say so. It does no good to fabricate notions that contradict one another, confuse our friends and adversaries, and provide no guidance whatsoever for U.S. policy.

A State Department official supposedly involved in strategic planning has been quoted saying: "We never use the New World Order at the State Department. It is a buzzword for nothing. I don't feel a necessity to explain it. I don't know what it is."

Well, neither do I.

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The New World Order: Sense or Nonsense?

By Burton Yale Pines

This is a great time to be talking about foreign policy. Even the title of the topic assigned to me reveals how exciting it is. To talk about a New World Order is to recognize that the post-World War II world is over, that the Cold War is over. And if it is over, it is because we won it.

This should make us pause for a moment. We are entitled to savor victory. Entitled to swell with pride a bit. Even to boast a bit. And you here in this room, and your colleagues elsewhere, you most of all are entitled to boast—to swell broadest with pride. For if America is the victor in the Cold War, as America is, then you here involved in national security matters are the heroes of that war.¹

We at The Heritage Foundation thank you for what you did for us.

But as we say in Washington: What have you done for us lately? Yes, the Cold War is won, but regrettably this does not seem to prevent new problems and new threats from erupting. Nor does it seem to give us much guidance for handling these problems. Indeed, we are groping for guidance.

In many ways, we are today, conceptually, where we were in 1947. From 1945 to 1947, we gradually came to realize that the wartime coalition would not continue. We came to realize that the Soviet Union had gone from being our ally to being our enemy—a bitter, determined enemy. And then it took us two more years, from 1947 to 1949, to figure out how to counter Soviet expansion and how to defend ourselves from the Soviet threat. Today, therefore, we may be where we were in 1947. We already know that the post-Cold War world has begun. But we have not yet figured out how to operate in it.

Crumbling Certainties. Our time thus is marked by crumbling foreign affairs certainties, by flux. I was told in 1989 that we were headed from high tensions/high stability to low tensions/low stability. There is some truth in this. It is especially true that the lodestars that we were using for four decades to navigate geopolitically no longer give us guidance. It is understandable that in these days of flux and of a search for new bearings, we will make mistakes. We, thus, should not be too critical of those who are trying to draft for America new geopolitical navigation charts.

At the same time, we cannot pretend that we know where we are going when in fact we do not. The President and his Secretary of State talk about leading us into a New World Order. Yet they have not told us what this is. In fact, often they act as if we are deep in the old world order.

1 The Interagency Operations Security Support Staff includes representatives of the Central Intelligence Agency, Department of Defense, Department of Energy, Federal Bureau of Investigation, General Services Administration, National Security Agency, U.S. Secret Service, and Defense Investigative Service.

Burton Yale Pines is Senior Vice President and Director of Research at The Heritage Foundation.

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Just look at our response to the disintegrating Yugoslavia. Bush and Baker first dealt with it not as an event of the new world of 1991. They seemed to think that it was 1914 (when huge European powers pounced on the disintegrating Balkans) or 1965 (when Moscow was ready to exploit any weakness in Yugoslavia). In fact, it is neither 1914 nor 1965. It is 1991. Yet Bush and Baker, for all their talk about a new world, have yet to address the Yugoslav situation in new world terms.

Just as dismaying is what we say about self-determination. The Bush Administration talks about commitment to self-determination, but then moves to block most attempts at self-determination in Eastern and Southern Europe.

Yogi Berra's Principle. What we seem to have is neither a New World Order foreign policy—nor an old world order foreign policy—nor, most important of all, a coherent foreign policy. What we have is merely a Yogi Berra foreign policy.

I apologize if this sounds like I'm trying to be cute. It is simply that Yogi Berra best formulated what seems to be the operating principle of the Bush-Baker foreign policy. Yogi advised: "When you get to a fork in the road—take it."

In the past year or so, we have come to a number of forks, and we took them.

We rush to the Persian Gulf to protect Saudi Arabia. We scramble Air Force jets in the Philippines to save Cory Aquino. But we sit on our hands during a coup in Liberia, long described as our oldest and best friend in Africa. We side initially with Belgrade's hardline communist rulers against independence movements in Slovenia and Croatia. And we wrap ourselves tighter around Mikhail Gorbachev and slight the democratically-elected independence leaders who want to dismantle the Soviet empire. Then just last week, we declared that it now is our responsibility to resolve the Cyprus dispute.

This is Yogi Berra foreign policy.

It is *ad hoc* foreign policy.

And the problem with *ad hoc* foreign policy is not that it guarantees that every action is unwise. The trouble with *ad hoc* foreign policy is that it is a lottery. Sometimes you win; sometimes you lose. In the Persian Gulf we won (I think); in the Philippines we lost. And in Russia we are losing. As for Cyprus—there winning is impossible.

Let me talk for a moment about the Persian Gulf war. America's intervention there is something that I and Heritage supported immediately—almost reflexively. I am glad that we went in. We won a great military victory. It was a great success. What is not a success is what we did before the fighting and what we have done after the fighting.

Coalition's Failure. Let's be frank about it. Our much-vaunted coalition diplomacy failed. The whole point of assembling a coalition, after all, was to impress Iraq's Saddam Hussein so much that he would back down and get out of Kuwait without a fight. The start of the fighting demonstrated that the coalition had failed.

What is worse, we continued to talk about the coalition during the war. The truth is that we did almost all of the fighting ourselves. Except for the two countries most threatened by Iraq—Kuwait (obviously) and Saudi Arabia—and except for Britain, we took all the risks and suffered the casualties. Other nations sent only token forces whose real contribution on the battlefield was almost meaningless.

The coalition, therefore, is a silly hoax.

What is not silly is our failure to fight the war to a real end. We did not topple Saddam Hussein. We did not destroy him as a danger to Mideast and Persian Gulf peace. Don't you find it infuriating, humiliating, that after what we did to his forces, that we are reduced to whining that Saddam is not living up to United Nations agreements when he refuses to let us inspect his nuclear facilities?

What was the point?

Disturbing Precedents. And it gets worse. Because even though coalition diplomacy failed, we have been—we are—and we will be—paying the price of that diplomacy. How many and what kind of chits did we have to give out at the United Nations to get the votes to create the illusion of a coalition? What kind of chits did we give Mikhail Gorbachev to get his U.N. vote? What kind of chits to Syria? To other Arab countries? How much has our action in the war and since been determined by promises we made to get votes at the U.N.? Did we promise not to push our troops too close to Baghdad? Did we signal or promise not to encourage or help the Baltic nations in their quest for independence?

And then there are the precedents set by all of this. Haven't Bush and Baker now set a precedent that America must have United Nations approval for American actions abroad? Haven't they set a precedent that we need an OK from Moscow and Beijing?

Surely, if this is the Brave New World Order, then America should want no part of it. We should be demanding: Stop the New World Order. We want to get off.

I say "IF" this is the New World Order because I am not sure what the New World Order is. We have no definition of it. If we look for guidance at what has been said about the New World Order, then we find ourselves checking one of those boxes in surveys that says "All of the Above."

Sometimes New World Order seems to mean that we will not let one country take over another by force. Bush has said: "Aggression will not stand. You don't bully your neighbor."

Many Meanings. But then Bush gives it other meanings, such as a world guided by a United Nations. On March 6, speaking to Congress, Bush described the New World Order as "a world in which the United Nations is poised to fulfill the historic vision of its founders." And several months earlier, Bush told the U.N. General Assembly: "We must show that the United Nations is the place to build international support and consensus for meeting the other challenges we face."

Last September there was yet another definition of New World Order. Bush told Congress: "There is no substitute for American leadership.... We will stand by our friends."

Adding to the confusion is yet another passage from Bush's March 6 speech to Congress. There he says that "we went halfway around the world to do what is moral and just and right." Is this then the core of the New World Order—Americans fighting around the globe for morality and justice?

Let me repeat. We must not be too critical. Today, if you are not confused, you are just not thinking clearly. We are in a fog like that of the 1947 to 1949 period. The trouble is that we are not going to get out of the fog with silly talk about a New World Order. Talk and the efforts to achieve and accommodate a New World Order will not serve our interests.

What then will?

Let me offer a conservative contribution to this debate about America's appropriate role in the world. It is a conservative contribution because I am a conservative—and assume that has something to do with why I was invited here.

What does it mean to have been—and be—a conservative on national security matters? I was asked this in Moscow last fall at a speech I gave at the Foreign Ministry's Diplomatic Academy. This is how I answered. I told them:

"I long have been strongly anti-communist and anti-Soviet.

"I long have strongly felt that it is appropriate for America to pursue its interests in the world.

"I long have felt that the goal of American foreign policy is what John Foster Dulles in 1958 said it was: 'There is nothing mysterious about the goals of United States foreign policy. They seek to defend and advance the interests of the United States.'"

Defining American Interests. This means that a serious discussion of foreign policy must attempt to define, in our post-Cold War world, what American interests are. In Moscow I then stressed, as I would here, that being a conservative does not mean that I think that nothing has changed. Far from it. I recognize that we have won a great conservative victory. We won the Cold War.

I recognize too that the world has changed. To the Diplomatic Academy I said:

A couple of years ago, I would not have come to speak with you. I would have said that you and I had nothing to talk about. And you probably would not have wanted to meet with me. As a conservative, I have been anti-Communist and anti-Soviet. I felt strongly that the Soviet Union was the most dangerous enemy of America; the most threatening enemy. I saw the Soviet Union as the Great Satan. This now has changed.

So things have changed enormously. But does this mean that we can talk recklessly about a New World Order? I think not. The term itself wafts of old slogans in bad odor. It smells too much like Brave New World and much too much like the U.N.'s grand New International Economic Order. It smells too much like something out of those musty academic seminars that made excuses for Soviet economic failings and apologies for Soviet military expansion.

These were the seminars—the endless, repetitive seminars—that I and many of you attended over and over in the past decades. Seminars that told us that the Soviets were catching up to us, that told us why Brezhnev was not so bad, and that told us why America inexorably is headed for decline.

It is from these seminars, I suppose, that Jimmy Carter's Secretary of State Cyrus Vance learned to say with a straight face: "President Carter and President Brezhnev share similar dreams and aspirations on all the important issues."

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If it is not to be a New World Order, then what will it be? Let me suggest a set of principles—a matrix, a check-list—that could enable policy makers, when confronted by developments in the world, to calculate how America should act and respond. It is a navigation chart.

Of course, this is only a first effort. And the chart can be dismissed and rejected. But those who do so, must submit a chart of their own. We need a chart. We cannot keep using Yogi Berra as our foreign policy pilot.

I offer Ten Principles to guide American foreign policy.

Principle #1: Foreign policy is domestic policy.

The sole reason for expending American lives and other resources in dealing with nations is to secure and improve the lives of the American people.

Foreign policy is not an end in itself. It is not a crusade. It is not the fulfillment of a process.

Foreign policy is to advance and protect American interests. PERIOD.

These interests are advanced by measures that create a global environment in which Americans gain the greatest possible degree of liberty, freedom, and opportunity.

Policies failing to serve these purposes are not in the national interest.

Principle #2: Morality is not the main goal of foreign policy.

Advancing human rights or advancing democracy are not, by and of themselves, appropriate foreign policy goals. Advancing human rights and democracy is appropriate only if doing so directly protects Americans from threats or directly advances American interests. If it does not, it is unjust for Washington to tax Americans or put American lives at risk in pursuit of such policies. Americans should not be forced to pay for—in money and at times lives—the feel-good moral crusades of one group or another.

Of course, typically we do advance democracy and human rights. We do so because typically it does help us if other nations are free and democratic. It does help us if they grow economically and expand their trade. It does help us if underdeveloped nations develop. Generally, all of this is in our interests.

And, other things being equal, we would prefer to advance morality—and almost always we do. And almost always we do it when we advance our own interests. But we must not confuse the two. It is our interests that must be the goal and core and driving force and center of our foreign policy.

The times when morality was the driving-force of policy were disastrous. Jimmy Carter's disregard for American interests in Iran and his obsession with human rights, for instance, undercut the Shah and opened the door for the repressive ayatollahs. Similar policies allowed the Sandinistas to take over Nicaragua. By contrast, a wise appreciation of our national interests has allowed Washington—under Democrat and Republican—warmly to support Chile, Indonesia, South Korea, and Taiwan despite their authoritarian and at times even harsh regimes.

Principle #3: Ambitious foreign policy poses domestic dangers.

The government required to conduct an ambitious foreign policy is a bigger government than conservatives trust. A government this size always has threatened individual liberty. Thus only when national interests directly are at risk should foreign policy be permitted to expand government.

Principle #4: Deal with world reality.

This should seem self-evident. Yet real world conditions are ignored by those who imply that we can withdraw into a Fortress America. We cannot. And real world conditions are ignored by those who say that today military power counts for far less than economic might. It should not have taken our lightning response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait to prove the obvious: the ability to flex military muscle is still the measure of a great nation.

Principle #5: Specific policies for specific problems replace global foreign policy.

With Moscow no longer threatening just about every patch of the globe, America no longer needs a global foreign policy—one that takes into account just about every patch of the globe. This is our real Cold War peace dividend. No longer must we concern ourselves with just about every nation just about everywhere.

No longer must we embrace and aid Third World dictators simply because they talk and act anti-Soviet. No longer must we automatically worry when a country adopts a communist economic and totalitarian political system. If Egypt or Angola or Poland or the Philippines or Zaire or Peru or other nations choose to cripple themselves, it now is their problem. It becomes our problem only if it threatens America.

This liberates us. This is our dividend. It allows us to construct a calculus for dealing with nations. Such a calculus would take account of a nation's traditional friendship with us, its economic value to us and, of course, its potential for endangering our interests. Where a nation ranks in this calculus would determine, by and large, the kind of attention it receives from us.

Principle #6: Rank the threats to America.

Not all dangers warrant our response. But there are at least seven that do:

1) Soviet missiles.

These threaten us more than anything else. Thus the most pressing task of our foreign policy is to eliminate this threat. At the same time, the most pressing task of our military policy is to deter missile attack and, more important, to protect us with a strategic defense system should deterrence fail. This is what the Strategic Defense Initiative will accomplish.

2) Third World missiles.

Because our ability to counter-attack may not deter an irrational Third World leader, or the now-legendary Soviet rogue general, we need an anti-missile defense system.

3) Threats to freedom of the seas.

Thus we need a Navy large and modern enough to project power on all the seas.

4) Domination of Europe by a hostile power.

This means that we must remain involved in European security arrangements.

5) Domination of East Asia by a hostile power.

Only American diplomatic and military forces can preserve the equilibrium that allows East Asia to prosper. This, of course, benefits us enormously.

6) Terrorist attacks on Americans at home and abroad.

Government's most fundamental responsibility, of course, is to protect its citizens.

7) Economic blackmail.

Principle #7: Some countries are so important to us that they merit special treatment.

These countries are Mexico, Russia, Israel, Japan, and China.

Principle #8: Expand opportunities for Americans.

Agreements with other countries can raise our living standards when these agreements give us greater access to foreign goods and greater access to foreign markets. Meanwhile, agreements on patents, copyrights, and other intellectual property protect American inventors, writers, and artists.

We benefit, too, by giving foreign aid—but only if this aid requires recipient nations to enact free market policies. This would spur the economic growth which then would create new Third World markets for American exports and new Third World sources for American imports.

Principle #9: Give no nation or organization a veto over American actions.

We thus must repudiate the precedent set during the Persian Gulf war by which we sought United Nations approval for our actions.

Principle #10: Stability is not the goal of foreign policy.

Stability has no inherent virtue. Instability in Cuba may be good for us. Instability in Mexico may be bad for us. Instability in the Baltics may be good. Instability in Egypt may be bad.

We thus need not be a global policeman rushing to calm unrest, aggression, and other forms of instability everywhere. We need not, for example, adopt Cyprus as an American project. Sure, we should respond when instability threatens the world's energy supply, or threatens Mexico or the Panama Canal, or invites Germany or Russia to dominate Europe, or allows Japan or China to dominate East Asia. In each case it is not the instability itself that is to be countered, but the specific results of the instability.

These are Ten Principles I offer, if for no other purpose, to nudge the discussion of American foreign policy in a direction that may yield coherent policy.

What may be required are more than the ten principles—or less. And maybe the ten aren't the right principles. At least, however, these principles take account of today's world. It is a world that relieves us of the responsibility of conducting a global foreign policy. Instead of our readiness for near-universal intervention, we can intervene selectively.

World Realities. We should find nothing wrong in declaring that some areas of the world are much more important to us than most others. We should find nothing wrong in saying that while it is unacceptable for a foreign power to control the Panama Canal or Cuba, we are not much affected by who controls Angola or Cambodia, or even South Africa, or if a South American country embraces socialism.

With the threats from fascist and Marxist totalitarian regimes now repelled, we no longer need to conduct a foreign policy that automatically imposes on us great costs, great risks, and great distortions in the power relationship between us and our government. Now we can conduct a foreign policy in which costs and risks are weighed by their potential payback to America. It is a selective foreign policy, a limited foreign policy.

Now, at last, let's declare the crusades over.

Let's mothball our reflexive selflessness.

Let's measure our generosity.

Let's take control of our checkbook.

And surely let's stop talking about a New World Order, the content of which and definition of which elude and confuse.

Let's simply get down to the business, as we did between 1947 and 1949, of defining America's role in the world and defining the means by which we play this role successfully.

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