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THE CRISIS IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

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I. Varied Accounts of the Past

The United States is in a crisis of immense proportions in its relations to the rest of the world, which is to say in its foreign policy. In part, the crisis has been building for years; in part it has been thrust upon us; and in part it is the result of decisions made by the administration of George W. Bush. To comprehend the nature of the crisis, we must consider historical U.S. foreign policy.

The United States, it was once felt by many, could have a different foreign policy when isolated by two oceans in comparison to the later period when modern technology destroyed its isolation. Foreign policy is thus a function of geography modified by technology.

The United States had a further choice, commencing some time after the first third of the 19th century. It could live up to its self-image as a liberal constitutional democracy and follow a foreign policy of live and let live, in both respects serving as a role model for the rest of the world. Or, like the monarchical dynasties of the past and other regimes of more recent times, it could pursue an aggressive foreign policy in pursuit of what it considered its interests, engendering enmity in various quarters.

The United States has done both.

In the first category, it has preferred isolationism, reluctantly joining the two World Wars in defense of its autonomy and the idea of liberal social democracy.

In the second category, it increasingly either engaged in the practices of conventional imperialism, often at the behest of entrepreneurial interests, or flexed and deployed its muscle in pursuit of national interests either on its own initiative or in response to threats from and capabilities of other countries.

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The former is American exceptionalism; the latter is American conventionalism.

The U.S. has not altogether inappropriately been seen as a peace-loving, liberal constitutional democracy and, since the late eighteenth century, been a role model for human freedom. This image has been sufficiently powerful that, until relatively recently, it has swamped the numerous occasions in which it has deployed its military force for its own narrow interests. The image has also been aided by our more or less reluctant, and even also self-interested, participation in two World Wars.

Of course, the history is much more complex than the foregoing directly allows. Several other stories or models can be developed. The most recent is that by Walter Russell Mead (Mead 2001).

Mead identifies four courses taken by U.S. foreign policy; the net or actual policy is the more or less complex, more or less confused, result of the confluence of four schools or traditions of U.S. diplomacy, its rationale, its content, and its effective posture toward the rest of the world. He designates them using the names of four important, even great, U.S. statesmen, thus: Jeffersonian, Hamiltonian, Jacksonian and Wilsonian. One problem is that these systems are generalized abstractions, in a sense Weberian ideal types; no one person, perhaps, was purely only one of the four types. Nonetheless, they are useful in understanding different thrusts of U.S. foreign policy.

As, in part, summarized by James P. Rubin (Rubin 2002), Hamiltonian foreign policy was the complement to Hamilton's domestic policy. The aim of both was government-aided economic development. It stressed economic development through the promotion of manufacturing—and thus an industrial middle class; a system of relatively free international trade; access to world markets within that system; and so on. Among other benefits, this policy, if successful, would help avoid war. Such a policy, it is to be noticed, is not isolationist. Its activism could be and indeed was aggressive, as the U.S. deployed its power to protect what presidents determined were its interests. Successful or not, it did not avoid warfare, however comparatively limited in scope. Only incidentally colonialist, this policy was nonetheless imperialist. As benign as the program of economic development sounds, the making of selective determinations of interests and the eventual (c.1900) establishment of a global role for the U.S. meant the active projection of U.S. interests abroad. These interests were simultaneously economic and political; economic in seeking markets and political in politicians running for office on economic and nationalistic programs. Hamiltonism has had a mixed reputation.

Because of the attractiveness of the idea of nonintervention, the Hamiltonian domestic policy has been generally been denigrated; whereas nationalism has generally rendered the opposite judgment on Hamiltonian foreign policy.

Jeffersonian foreign policy was also the complement of its domestic policy. The Jeffersonian domestic program was to create an economy, polity and society in which many, if not most, if not all, men were landed property owners and in which issues would be decided at the local level. Economic development was part of this program but it encompassed primarily agriculture and small-scale industry. The problem with the Jeffersonian domestic program was that policies adopted on the local level had spillover effects, political externalities, on other local units. Also, local markets became national markets. Local problems tended to become national problems and national government was looked at to solve them. The same political-economic logic that seems to be generating world governance then produced a national system of governance—economic

and political—that rendered the Jeffersonian program, though not its ideals, nugatory.

In foreign affairs, the complement to the Jeffersonian domestic policy is clear. As Rubin summarizes Mead, "Jefferson's school … was … concerned mainly with protecting American democracy against the dangers of executive power and limiting the costs and risks of whatever foreign policies were necessary to protect our independence. Idealism at home, realism abroad; this was the Jeffersonian motto" (Rubin 2002, p. 30). Two points neatly elaborate this position.

First, Jeffersonians did think of their model in ideal terms, "But they did not believe that America should promote freedom and prosperity by exporting our way of doing things. Instead the United States was to teach its values and its successes by example" (Rubin 2002, p. 30; this was a, if not the, basis of the U.S. self-image, and success, noted above).

Secondly, "This did not mean that the Jeffersonians were classical isolationists, though. They were minimalists with a realist streak" (Rubin 2002, p. 30). The Hamiltonians were more inclined than the Jeffersonians to get involved abroad; both would fight if they felt they had to, both would keep their powder dry, but the goals differed. (Both supported the Monroe Doctrine—on balance-of-power terms with the U.S. projecting to itself the image of a good neighbor of sorts, but an image not always appreciated by others in the Western Hemisphere.)

If "the Hamiltonians sought to make the world safe for the American economy," the Jeffersonians would have preferred for local farming and local problem solving to remain clear of the world.

Jeffersonian domestic policy is quintessentially American; it is the default position, as it were, as to what the U.S. stands for, typically while lamenting our departures from it.

The Wilsonian approach to foreign policy promoted the spread of democracy, making the world safe for both democracy in general and actual democracies in particular. The Wilsonians preferred to think that democracies do not make war against each other. This emphasis on democratization coupled with the projected self-image of the Jeffersonians meant that "American global dominance in the last hundred years cannot be attributed solely to its military supremacy or its economic power" (Rubin 2002, p. 30). The vision of the United States as a nation believing in "live and let live" is a product of the congruent elements of Jeffersonian and Wilsonian approaches.

The Wilsonian approach to domestic policy was, because of World War One, not so well worked out. I would presumptuously generalize that policy as comprising efforts undertaken (in its own way) by an activist liberal democratic state to respond in a more or less incremental manner to the extension of the franchise by enlarging the interests of groups hitherto excluded from having their interests count. Democracy at home and abroad.

The Wilsonian domestic program runs afoul of the secular religion of laissez faire. The Wilsonian foreign policy is lauded for promoting democracy abroad but conflicts with the pragmatic appeal in favor of alliances even with nondemocratic governments in support of American interests.

The Jacksonian approach, or model, is more aggressive than either of the other three. As Rubin summarizes it, "The Jacksonians are the warriors of American society. While they prefer to avoid conflict with the rest of the world and often rail at the complications of economic engagement, they believe that if war comes we should deploy all of our power in ruthless pursuit of total victory" (Rubin 2002, p. 31). If other folks keep their powder dry, these folks do so

likewise; but where the others keep their weapons in storage, these folks keep them, probably loaded, or else the powder near by, near the front door. Rubin notes that Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., faults Mead's depiction of the Jacksonians as believing in simple solutions, trigger-happy, nativist, warlike, and so on. My own reading and experience leads me to think that Mead is not far off the mark, if he misses it at all. One has only to read Michael Beschloss's publication (1997, 2001) of Lyndon Johnson's presidential tapes to appreciate the role of not being the first U.S. president to lose a war, saving face, sending more reinforcements to protect assets already on the ground, and so on, to appreciate the attitude Mead seems to have in mind: "If them and we differ, and we don't like what they're doing, well, let's show them who's boss." Among other things, this attitude—found, says Rubin correctly, in the Deep South, Southwest and parts of the Midwest—has supported military spending, provided dedicated military men and women, and people quick to anger. That this position, like the others, is laden with complexity, subtlety and critical skills, is suggested by Senator Richard Russell's private views on the Vietnam War, expressed to his friend and President, Lyndon Johnson—though one must quickly add that his public views, like those of LBJ, were very different.

Jacksonian domestic policy can vary enormously, from pro-manufacturer positions to pro-farmer positions to positions equated with religious fundamentalism to pro-American positions.

Still another model of U.S. foreign policy is that of good old American pragmatism. Americans preach laissez faire and noninterventionism but whenever a felt problem arises, recourse is made to government for corrective action. This is true of both domestic and foreign policy. The problem with this approach is that while descriptively true at a certain level of abstraction or

generalization, it fails to help point to which formulation of a problem, even which general problem, gets to control government corrective action and, thereby, whose interest is to count. This approach does, however, point to the need to study the process by which those matters are worked out. The same is true of Mead's four approaches.

II. Balance-of-Power Theory and Imperialism

These two theories can be substitutes for one another; indeed, because of the role of power in each, what can be said in terms of one of them can usually be translated into and stated in the terms of the other.

A. Balance-of-Power Theory

The foregoing has to be seen in terms of four facts: that a nation-state's foreign policy is typically an amalgam of the policies of those approaches which have influence, that individual nation-states operate within the nation-state system, that statesmen tend to apprehend their situations or predicaments in terms of the theory of the balance of power, and that balance-of-power theory, like the theories of economics, do not yield conclusions immediately directly applicable to policy. Such theories require and in part give effect to supplementary antecedent normative premises, entire cultural value systems, and *inter alia* different definitions of reality.

The balance of power theory of international relations, considered as a *positive* theory, centers on the following critical proposition: That when issues, policy proposals, and conflicts arise, they tend to be analyzed and evaluated on the basis of their likely implications for the distribution of power among nation states. In this context, power may be defined in various ways but, inasmuch as the theory is a positive theory, in a non-

pejorative way. The theory affirms that nation states can act on the basis of either stated or implicit intentions, or capabilities. This makes it difficult for other nations to predict the course of action by any given nation state. Nation states will, therefore, given the opportunity costs involved, seek to optimize their power in order to defend against what they perceive to be aggression or threat of aggression or capability for aggression.

The nature of the nation-state system, therefore, compels states, even those who would like to practice live and let live, or to live in perpetual peace, to be concerned with their power relative to the power of other nation states. Nation states can, within that system, adopt various interests and objectives and pursue different strategies. Some of those objectives and strategies are strongly conditioned by the particular geopolitical position of individual nation states. But individual nation states do have more or less considerable discretion as to interests, objectives and strategies. Individual nation states also can seek to maximize, or optimize, their power in different ways, given those adopted or imposed interests, objectives and strategies. A nation state exists in a parallelogram or matrix of power vis-à-vis other states. Accordingly, it is not always, if ever, perfectly clear what choices it will make, insofar as it has discretion, not only as to interests, objectives and strategies, but together with what other nation states.

History, especially political history, is the record of actions and results in such matters.

The theory of the balance of power is one way to understand what transpires in such matters. It is also a normative theory, available for use by decision makers seeking to achieve, say, optimum power or security.

A nation state may seek, therefore, to fill a power vacuum, lest some rival or potential rival do so. Or a nation state may align with another weak nation state in

an effort to forestall or counter a more powerful rival. Or, in the event of two more or less equally powerful rivals, a third nation state may seek to align itself with one or the other. The theory is not only about power structure—though that is central—it is also about the use of power. Thus a nation state may act to impose its interests on others; surely that is the distinct possibility of a country without rival, a so-called superpower. And so on.

Balance-of-power politics and power play can mean, therefore, different things to different persons and to different nation states and also be pursued in different ways. The analytically awkward result arises when the theory *qua* theory—normative or positive—is identified with particular choices. Such is often the case with the rhetoric of policy but it can also occur with positive, including historical, analysis.

B. Imperialism

Closely related to balance-of-power politics and power play is imperialism. Imperialism is the projection of a nation-state's interests and power beyond its territorial borders. The conduct of imperialism, especially colonial imperialism, can be driven by economic or by political forces, though, in my view, the evidence for the two and for the fact of imperialism is much the same; in practice each emanates from the legal-economic nexus and identification is a matter of selective perception and attribution.

Imperialism involves the projection of a country's will upon that of another. The means of projection may be military; it may be economic; it may be both. The pressure, or push, may emanate from within the imperial power; or it may, as pull, originate from the objects of imperial power (though no imperial power is driven willy nilly to act as such by a power vacuum; the will to imperial power must be at least latent); or both,

simultaneously. The nature and sources of imperialism have been interpreted variously by different authors, each with a different vision. In one view, that of John Hobson, V. I. Lenin, and Rosa Luxemburg, for example, imperialism is of economic origin. Economic elites are able to use the power of their state to facilitate acquisition of raw materials from victimized countries and/or support exploitative investment therein. Political psychology is mobilized in the interest of their economic maneuvering. In the view of Joseph Schumpeter, among others, imperialism is of political origin. Political elites deploy the power of their state abroad as the means of advancing their domestic agendas, at the least their continuance in office. Political psychology is mobilized in the interest of their political maneuvering. In the view of Thorstein Veblen, and Schumpeter as well, modern imperialism is a vestige of past barbarism, a continuation of pre-modern (pre-capitalist) imperial systems of governance, and a mode of virulent, if popular, nationalism. The evidence for these different hypotheses is much the same; the historic events are common to all, only the interpretive account differs. Hermeneutically, the theories of imperialism provide a good example of theory-laden "fact." It is very difficult to choose between the theories; and, indeed, it is more than likely that the source of any imperialist venture is simultaneously economic, political, and social psychological.

In the past, states were formed through imperial ventures and states acted as imperialists against other states. In the first type of case, one group of nobility, or one group of tribal chieftains or warlords, was able to exercise its power successfully against other groups. Out of this warfare emerged a new state, one formed on the basis of the first group's victories over their rivals. The state became a product of successful violence. In the second type of case, states conducted economic,

political and/or military aggression against each other. Out of this aggression emerged either a new, composite state or an empire with other states in colonial or other subservient positions.

In 1914, that momentous date in the twentieth century, retrospectively, the nation-state system was rampant with empires. As difficult as it is to believe almost a century later, the colonial empires of 1914 were, in alphabetical order, those of Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Spain and the United States. Not all these empires were equal. Some were expanding, some dreamed of and sought expansion, and some were declining or existing passively. Only large areas of South and Central America, the Middle East, the Balkans, and China were not manifestly within the political, or economic-political, orbit of those empires. Balance of power and imperialism meant a great deal and were conspicuous. After two world wars—whatever one's theory of them—the colonial empires of 1914 largely no longer existed. Eventually balance of power and imperialism took new forms. In the new context one would eventually find first two so-called superpowers; an emergent united Europe; an emergent as-yet un-united Islamic Middle East, South Asia and, in part, Pacifica; China; then a dissolved and emaciated former Soviet Union, now Russia; and rivals to the nation-state system itself in the forms of the transnational corporate system and the system of governance known as globalization (see Samuels 2001). What was a power-sensitive nation state to do?

Moreover what is a power-sensitive historian to do? For any American, especially one alive on December 7, 1941 and old enough to know what transpired, Pearl Harbor was subject to an unprovoked, sneak attack by Japan. It was gratuitous enough but it did not happen in a vacuum. For some time the United States and Japan,

along with a number of other countries, primarily European but also China, were jockeying for power in Asia and the Pacific. That included Japanese engagements in land wars on the continent of Asia. A.J.P. Taylor wrote a book that scandalized many people, *Origins of the Second World War* (1961), which concentrated on Germany and the European war; a comparable book could have concentrated on Japan and the Asian-Pacific war. In each case, horrific events, obnoxious beliefs and terrible people were overshadowed by events, beliefs and people that, in the light of history could appear to be commonplace, even banal. Nationalism and imperialism were not created in 1939.

One of the most subtle defenses of capitalism is that people engaged in making a living, improving their standard of living, and accumulating wealth, will not be interested, or be much less interested, in being aggressive toward their neighbors. As Frank William Taussig put the point, it is better to live under the Napoleons of industry than under the blood-thirsty Napoleons of history. The problem is that a country ruled by the Napoleons of industry may well be likely to act toward other countries like the Napoleons who went to war. On whether political democracy of some sophisticated form is sufficient inoculation against imperialism and a foreign policy of aggression, either the jury is still deliberating or the verdict is negative.

In his recent book asserting the United States' need for a foreign policy in the 21st century, Henry Kissinger, historically conscious political scientist and occupant of the two highest governmental positions in foreign policy, proposes a policy of the aggressive type—such as he has before both proposed and practiced. He argues that countries in the nation-state system are engaged willy nilly in a struggle for power and survival; that countries in general and the United States in particular have interests

as a result of their cultural, social and political history and their geography; that our government must prevent any consolidation of foreign powers from threatening our autonomy and way of life; that we cannot take for granted our pre-eminence as the only superpower; and that we can combine concern for human rights with pursuit and defense of our interests and power (Kissinger 2001). Kissinger is a foreign policy realist. He is, especially, a devotee of the theory of the balance of power as both a description and normative instrument of high state policy. Kissinger is not alone in his aggressive foreign policy (see, for example, Kaplan 2002). It is not easy to distinguish an aggressive policy stance whose purpose is to forestall if not to entirely prevent adverse actions by other nations from one which attempts to impose United States interests and policies on others. In practice, policy is often a mixture of the two. One difficult example to interpret is the set of policies and actions adopted by the Administration of George W. Bush in early 2002 in the name of the "war on terrorism."

III. The Policies and Dangers of the Present

The administration of George W. Bush came into office having criticized the foreign policy of the Clinton Administration on at least two grounds: that its military engagements or involvements abroad, as in areas of the former Yugoslavia, lacked any stipulation as to when, or the conditions when, the military action would be over; and that these activities, typically saccharine peace keeping and even state making in nature, were stretching U.S. capability and resources unduly thin. The former administration was accused of a willingness to use its military abroad whenever and wherever such was deemed to lead to "good results." The impression was given that in a Bush administration, although the

U.S. would be prepared to defend itself, its foreign policy would take a clear isolationist turn. This was not to be.

One long-lasting phenomenon was the selective specification of "terrorist" and "freedom fighter." The difference, rhetoric apart, was a function of U.S. agreement with one side or the other. Those who we supported were freedom fighters; those who we condemned were terrorists.

This was true even if one could not distinguish the different groups on the basis of their techniques and tactics. Both tended to use identical methods. They were the methods of guerilla warfare, typically against conventional capital-intensive military force. Consciously or not, their leaders generalized the doctrines of General Vo Nguyen Giap, the Defense Minister of North Vietnam, and before him, the practices of the colonial revolutionary army under George Washington, of partisans fighting Nazi regimes in Europe during World War II, and of Jewish opponents of Great Britain and of Palestinian opponents of Israel, among others.

The infamous events of September 11, 2001 introduced a new phenomenon: the United States homeland as a target of a dedicated, well trained, group of essentially modern urban guerillas. This new development had a dual context: the overt conflict between Israelis and Palestinians and the more recondite conflict between the Judeo-Christian West and Islam in various parts of the world, especially in the Middle East, Southwestern Asia, and parts of Oceana. I discuss this development in a companion paper (Samuels forthcoming).

The Bush Administration responded to the attacks of September 11, 2001 with its self-declared war on terrorism. The language of the Bush Administration often resembled what Mead calls Jeffersonian and Wilsonian foreign policy. But at bottom it was essentially

a combination of what Mead called Hamiltonian and Jacksonian foreign policy. Alternatively, one can interpret the actions and policies of the Bush Administration in terms of pragmatism or the foreign policy of aggression, called above "American conventionalism" and advocated by Henry Kissinger (supra), Richard Pipes, and others, notably Paul Wolfowitz and his group in the Bush Administration. Some of these policies continue and/or revise the foreign policies of the Clinton Administration, some represent one or more traditional/conventional strands of foreign policy, some break new ground, all together constitute a form of aggressiveness, with the means to execute it, never before operative in U.S. history, not excluding our major wars. The elements of this aggressive foreign policy can readily be identified:

1. The claim and enforcement of extraterritoriality: The U.S. claims the right and, under statute, deploys the power to make actions undertaken in foreign countries crimes under U.S. law. This is a major exercise of aggression, whatever one thinks of the actions or of the people performing them.

This is prospectively also a major step in the creation of what may develop into a new body of international law. As the lone putative superpower the U.S. is claiming the right to make law for the entire population of the planet—or at least that part of world population with respect to which the U.S. feels able—safe—to do so.

2. A similar, parallel development is the claim by the U.S. to hold foreign governments—or those with respect to which the U.S. feels able (safe) to do so —responsible for certain actions of certain of their citizens to which we take offence, and make offenses under U.S. law.

3. A further similar development is the prospect of using nuclear weapons against certain foreign governments—those with respect to which the U.S. feels able (safe) to do so—whose own military programs, say,

involving weapons of mass destruction, the U.S. finds threatening or offensive.

All of these steps are tantamount to imposing U.S. law on U.S. terms throughout the world, or in those areas with respect to which the U.S. feels able (safe) to do so. It is as if the U.S. has appointed itself world sheriff.

4. Another development along the same line and with comparable effect is the U.S.'s manifest playing fast and loose with the provisions of the Geneva Convention. This is not done without provocation but we have had provocation in earlier wars and have not succumbed to facile redefinitions of terms amounting to redrawing the terms of the Convention to suit our perceived interests.

5. The U.S. is active economically as well as militarily in constructing a new body of world law and a new system of world governance (see Samuels 2001).

Certain institutions were adopted after World War Two at Bretton Woods. These subsequently evolved and now operate as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Their official historic roles have been to provide capital and liquidity to member states. The practical function of these institutions has been to control the undeveloped nations in the interest of the developed, industrial nations. They are instruments of governance and of domination, replacing the hegemony hitherto practiced by the former colonial powers.

To this list another international institution, the World Trade Organization (WTO), has been added, supplementing and increasingly dominating still other institutions, such as GATT, the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs, and even the United Nations. The role of WTO has been to finesse if not negate existing national legislation promoting the rights of labor and environmental protection. From the perspective of the affected businesses, these statutes raise costs, compelling the creators of costs (negative externalities) to bear costs otherwise visited upon third parties. The

Bush Administration pretty much constitutes the instrument of business and has sought in such matters, through the WTO, to reverse or otherwise finesse the effects of statutes in matters of labor rights and environmental protection. In this, it has both continued and extended policies of the Clinton Administration and in some cases, e.g., policies dealing with global warming, to reverse them.

One way to view this development is, once again, as the creation of a new body of international or transnational law overriding relevant national statutes. International business, working with like-minded or compliant administrations in various countries, has used WTO to advance their interests. What was once taken to be a generic threat to national sovereignty emanating from an amorphous world government has become the negation of national legislation through the actions of international or transnational organizations—organizations doing the bidding of a certain segment of the population in the countries whose statutes are being overridden. It is on the level of the world economy and polity what once took place locally when some lord of the land conquered the other lords and substituted his law for theirs, i.e., substituted the interests he chose to protect for the interests they had been protecting. It is an aggressive foreign economic policy in the interests of the international corporate system, promoting one developmental path rather than another(s).

Another but not incompatible way to look at these developments is as a course of unilateralism, obfuscated by the presence of fellow-traveling or client governments, the most faithful of which seems to have been the United Kingdom and, it has to be not admitted but exclaimed, the evident claims of justice in the U.S. case.

On various occasions, the U.S. Secretary of Defense has announced that the U.S. welcomes allies in its war

against terrorism. But, he has added, the U.S. is prepared to go it alone and to do so with a free hand, including unilateral pre-emptive actions. Included in the package of means with which to do so, is an array of newly developed high-tech weaponry and non-conventional warfare measures, e.g., counter guerilla warfare with political, economic, intelligence, and special-operations tactics.

Still another perception of these developments is that they are the actions of a bully. No longer can we plead lack of intention and the inadvertence of a giant among pygmies.

A final perception is not wide of the mark. It is that the U.S. is pursuing a foreign policy of the balance-of-power type. There are several vacuums of power—and attendant opportunities for the one superpower—in the world: to control the making of world policy with regard to certain important matters, such as labor rights and environmental protection, governing the distribution of costs and thereby of net income; to control the making and revision of international law; to police the world, to be the sheriff in pursuit of those deemed to be evil-doers; and so on.

The perception of these developments with probably the longest intellectual pedigree is plutocracy. Aristotle's survey of types of constitutions posited democracy as the benevolent form of rule by the many. It posited plutocracy as democracy's degenerative form. A legal framework of economic activity and its continuous revision is a necessity. A plutocracy exists when that framework and the changes therein are largely if not overwhelmingly controlled by business, the language of which is money—or, to change the metaphor, whose mother's milk is money in politics.

The plutocratic state of affairs is not new; however, the business-oriented policies of the Bush Administration are

both more transparent and more overwhelming than has been usual since, say, the 1920s.

The motive force behind the new, aggressive foreign policies of the Bush Administration is not solely pecuniary business calculations of advantage. The events of September 11, 2001 presented the Bush Administration with a saleable argument in support of the aggressive policies advocated by what in earlier times was called the War Party and more recently, Hawks. More than the presence of Osama bin Laden and his guerilla-trained forces, is involved. The Bush Administration now acts upon the premise that it can ride the horse of the war against terrorism to reelection in 2004 and further Republican victories beyond that date, not to neglect the 2002 elections. Many historians conclude that for a president to be reckoned "great" he or she needs the greatness-generating circumstance of a major, popular war. This was Osama bin Laden's and al-Qaeda's priceless gift to Bush. To the economic basis of an aggressive foreign policy is now added the political basis thereof.

Moreover, the adoption of newly aggressive policies is not confined to foreign relations and to promoting business interests at home an abroad. In the name of combating and preventing terrorism, the Bush administration, led by Attorney General John Ashcroft, has pursued an historic conservative agenda to limit domestic dissent. Among the developments are the adoption of preventive detention, increased secrecy, the use of military tribunals, and expanded search authority, including the monitoring of hitherto privileged conversations between clients and attorneys.

A subplot amid all this jockeying for position is the promotion of the position of the U.S. oil industry within the domain of business as a whole and vis-à-vis OPEC.

We face, therefore an extension and deepening of business control of government and of U.S. hegemony

relative to the rest of the world. It may be a new form of imperialism, one as much by a class as by a nation. It is a form much more dramatic if not virulent than past forms because it is dedicated to both the transformation of international law for the whole world and the expanded role of the U.S. as world sheriff—policing the work on its own terms and for its ruling class's business interests.

A further, or more inclusive, subplot involves the occasional, perhaps even frequent conflict between groups of U.S. business interests and/or between U.S. and foreign business interests. This is all within the transformation of law and other changes noted above, as partners in action against other groups now conflict among themselves over issues of structure of power and of distribution of largesse.

IV. Conclusion

The foregoing may seem far-fetched and radical. It is not the former and may or may not be the latter, given one's take on the history of U.S. foreign policy. Emily Eakin (2002) writes, "Today, America is no mere superpower or hegemon but a full-blown empire in the Roman and British sense." She quotes conservative columnist Charles Krauthammer: "The fact is that no country has been as dominant culturally, economically, technologically and militarily in the history of the world since the Roman Empire." The terms empire and imperialism, she says, are increasingly being used both descriptively and approvingly; she quotes Max Boot of The Weekly Standard that we are in fact an empire and should be "more expansive in our goals and more assertive in their implementation." She cites or quotes Charles H. Fairbanks, Robert H. Kaplan (whose work is discussed above), and Paul Kennedy affirming the benignity of U.S. imperialism that "tends to operate not through brute force but through economic, cultural and political means." Eakin's argument is taken up by the Presidential historian, Richard Reeves (2002), not to negate it but to explain how Americans have not known this before. The problem is a press—print, television, and radio—that since the end of the Soviet Union has not paid attention to foreign affairs. Reeves agrees with the foregoing description; that is the main point: "The United States is, in fact, now the greatest empire, militarily, economically, technologically and culturally, that the world had has ever seen. We have the power, and are using it, to force other countries to adopt [sic] (or pay lip service) to our ideas of market capitalism and political democracy. That, after all, is what words like 'globalization' really mean." Reeves remarks, "That is pretty pompous stuff, Victorian really. But that does not mean it is untrue." The evidence includes the increased reliance by much of the developed world on "presumed American protection" and the declarations by President Bush of our "right to send American troops and drop American bombs anywhere we damn please. We are doing this, he says, for the good of self-defined civilized truths and values."

Anyone who thinks that the fully panoply of rationalizations is not being brought to bear on the legitimization of U.S. policy, should read the address by Pope Urban II, before the Council of Clermont in 1095, which resulted in the First Crusade. The present-day version of that world-historic episode remains, in the words of Thomas L. Friedman (2002), the "clash of civilizations" that has commenced in the Mideast—the topic of my companion paper.

The United States has embarked, it would seem, on a course that, in the light of history, is not altogether or by any means new. The course is one of aggressive foreign policy driven by interwoven economic and political interests and heightened by the country's

seemingly implacable guerilla enemies. It is consistent with one or more of this country's approaches to foreign policy, the terminology dependent on the overall interpretive model adopted. But it augurs a massive reorientation of U.S. political and economic culture and structure coupled with extensions thereof to the world as a whole.

It involves, ironically, the adoption by the Bush Administration of policies with characteristics for which it lambasted its predecessor, namely, that its military engagements or involvements abroad lacked any stipulation as to when, or the conditions when, the military action would be over; and that these activities, typically saccharine peace keeping and even state making in nature, were stretching U.S. capability and resources unduly thin. The former administration was accused of a willingness to use its military abroad whenever and wherever such was deemed to lead to "good results." The Bush foreign (and domestic) agenda, however, is much more ambitious because it is much more aggressive.

The new policies are explicated and defended in language with which it is almost impossible to argue: fighting a war against terrorism, protecting innocent people from terrorist acts, making the world safe for democracy, and so on. But the actions pursued under the aegis of such language also amounts to the pursuit of the aggressive nationalist agenda of one or two schools of U.S. foreign policy and to the creeping if not wholesale adoption of the conservative domestic economic and natural security (so-called) agenda in the name of fighting terrorism.

Fighting terrorism we are, but we as a people need to consider what else is the target. Do we want to be the sheriff of the world? Does support for a market economy necessarily constitute pursuit of the class interests of business throughout the world? Does combating

terrorism warrant wholesale adoption of the conservative domestic agenda?

The final irony is that the policies of the Bush Administration emerge from a political party who in the past had preached nonintervention, laissez faire, and getting the government off of our backs. That was never an accurate description of that party's agenda. It was more a set of sentiments and a body of rhetoric directed to the manipulation of political psychology. The members of this party had their own agenda of policies to be promoted once they gained control of government. Many supporters of its rhetorical flourishes, however, have sought to further legitimize them by appealing to a particular interpretation of Adam Smith's vision of a market economy. The irony is that this same Smith wrote of proposals from businessmen that they come

> from an order of men, whose interest is never exactly the same with that of the public, who have generally an interest to deceive and even to oppress the public, and who accordingly have, upon many occasions, both deceived and oppressed it. (Smith 1976, p. 267, I.xi.p)

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