

## **The Renovation of American Foreign Policy**

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Summary: "Fifty years of struggle against totalitarian powers have given American foreign policy an outlook and a set of maxims profoundly at odds with those that animated the founders of this nation. We have assumed traits against which they consciously rebelled; our distinctive 'raison d'état' has been lost". The task today is to restore American awareness of the danger to the republic from "war, debt and standing armies".

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Fifty years of struggle against totalitarian powers have given American foreign policy an outlook and set of maxims profoundly at odds with those that animated the founders of this nation. We have assumed traits against which they consciously rebelled; our distinctive *raison d'état* has been lost. To recover an appreciation of that original reason of state and to apply it creatively to the challenges of the present are the great tasks confronting contemporary American policymakers.

It is obvious that such a foreign policy renovation must take account of the nation's vastly changed circumstances; contemporary policy must address risks and opportunities unknown to the founders of the American state. But it is a great mistake to believe that their vision is irrelevant or that they failed to anticipate many of the dilemmas we face today. Even if ultimately rejected, their outlook reflected a certain belief about the significance of America in world history that became deeply embedded in the nation's consciousness for 150 years. It reflected an understanding of when and why the nation might make war that was highly sophisticated in the way in which it accommodated the sometimes conflicting claims of American security and national purpose. It was based on an appreciation of the factors governing the rise and fall of republics and empires that is, in fact, quite relevant today. If we are now to abandon that outlook, we ought at least understand that we are doing so, and that we thereby risk a betrayal of the distinction America once coveted among the nations.

The United States was established in conscious flight from European precedents. For the Founding Fathers, as well as for the generations that followed, the workings of the European state system gave rise to a predicament not unlike the anarchical Hobbesian state of nature. The founders recognized the sequence by which republics caught in the maelstrom of that system succumbed to war, debt and standing armies, and whose participation in the system thereby became the primordial cause of their corruption. With the breakdown of the Articles of Confederation and the impending division of the continent into rival regional confederacies, they feared that America would suffer that same fate.

Their remedy was twofold: the establishment of a republican empire in North America and that republic's political isolation from Europe. The one would contain the centrifugal forces that threatened to produce in America the system of interstate rivalry that had been the undoing of Europe (while also ensuring internal autonomy for the members of the union); the other would ensure that the republican empire thus created would be as far as possible immune to corruption and decay. The rule of law and the peaceful resolution of disputes were the main hallmarks of a *novus ordo seclorum* that would show the world the error of its ways and demonstrate the superiority of free institutions and free markets.

Underlying this outlook was a profound conviction that force had a logic ultimately inimical to liberty. Most Americans also came to understand that "the last logic of kings is also our last logic" and that force might sometimes be necessary "to preserve our honor in some unequivocal point, or to avoid the sacrifice of some right or interest of material and permanent importance." Yet primary emphasis was placed by Jeffersonians and Hamiltonians alike on the dangers that force would entail. Jeffersonians saw at work a historical dynamic by which force begot the expansion of executive or consolidated power inevitably hostile to liberty; Hamiltonians professed astonishment "with how much precipitance and levity nations still rush to arms against each other . . . after the experience of its having deluged the world with calamities for so many ages."

Both sides sought to devise institutional bulwarks, prudential maxims and moral barriers against the easy resort to war, believing that America should seek "by appeals to reason and by its liberal examples to infuse into the law which governs the civilized world a spirit which may diminish the frequency or circumscribe the calamities of war, and meliorate the social and beneficent relations of peace." Experience seemed to show only too clearly that nations and empires became corrupted at home and weakened abroad unless the easy resort to force were somehow tamed or suppressed.

One potent source of corruption was the relationship seen to exist between war and public debts. Jeffersonian Republicans, following Adam Smith, considered debt not

only ruinous to future generations but also a powerful temptation to go to war. Alexander Hamilton took a somewhat different view, holding "not that funding systems produce wars, expenses and debts, but that the ambition, avarice, revenge and injustice of man produce them." Even so, Hamilton did believe that the progressive accumulation of debt was "the natural disease of all governments." It reflected a propensity to "shift off the burden from the present to a future day—a propensity which may be expected to be strong in proportion as the form of a state is popular." He considered it difficult "to conceive any thing more likely than this to lead to great and convulsive revolutions of empire."

The observance of these cautionary rules was considered critical if America were to fulfill its distinctive purpose as a beacon for free institutions. The purpose the founders imparted was both inward and outward looking, an idea well understood by subsequent generations. If Americans believed they were part of a form of civilization higher than the polished societies of Europe, they also thought their purpose imposed an obligation to adhere to the highest standards of conduct in their own internal and external policy. The reputation of republican government was at stake.

Understood in this sense, the idea of a national purpose lent itself not only to displays of self-righteousness but also to sober introspection. It directed a reproach not only against the characteristic delusions of despotic governments but also the potential betrayal of national ideals by Americans themselves. African slavery and Indian removal were attacked on those grounds; so, too, were the wars with Mexico in 1846 and Spain in 1898. In each of these instances the national purpose served as a standard by which the aberrant ways of American democracy might be judged or held in check. It provided a light, at once piercing and redemptive, into the dark side of the American experience.

For all America's confidence that it had discovered principles of government that would allow every nation to improve its own condition and to enjoy the blessings of civil liberty, it nevertheless disclaimed any intention of interfering in the internal affairs of other states. "Our true mission," as Daniel Webster observed, was "not to propagate our opinions or impose upon other countries our form of government by artifice or force, but to teach by example and show by our success, moderation and justice, the blessings of self-government and the advantages of free institutions." This was settled doctrine throughout the nineteenth century.

There were spirited debates over exactly how to apply this doctrine in particular circumstances, but even the most ardent propagandists of republican institutions disclaimed any intention to overthrow existing governments through American arms; even the most caustic skeptics of the ability of other peoples to transplant successfully republican institutions acknowledged a duty to teach by example. America was "the

well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all," but "the champion and vindicator only of her own."

Americans appealed often to universal principles to justify the nation's rights and interests, whether in politics or commerce; in doing so, however, there was no intimation that the nation would surrender its freedom of action in foreign policy. Insofar as there was a multilateralist tradition, one founded on belief in the necessity of cooperation among like-minded republican regimes, it found expression in the union and the belief that "forbearance, liberality, practical good sense and mutual accommodation" were necessary virtues if the union were to survive. With regard to all states that were not a part of the "empire of liberty," however, the nation reserved its freedom of action. If we went to war, it would be for our own reasons and our own security. We would neither expect nor rely on the cooperation of other states.

In the original understanding, foreign policy was thus to play a modest role in the nation's life. Order and liberty were the ideals around which the nation's domestic life was to revolve, but they were to be objectives of foreign policy only in an indirect and limited sense. This outlook reflected the conviction that an ambitious foreign policy carried the risk of war; war in turn was seen as the means by which the constitutional order at home might be deranged and America's peaceful purposes corrupted. Though conscious that there would be occasions in which war would constitute the only acceptable response to an external assault on American rights and interests, the decision for war was seen as momentous, to be reached only on grounds of manifest necessity. The real purpose of America lay elsewhere, in the perfection of its own civil society and the hope that the sphere of ordered liberty thus established would constitute a benign example for other peoples who wished to imitate it.

### III

With few exceptions the principles of nonentanglement in Europe's political affairs, neutrality in Europe's wars and nonintervention in the internal affairs of other states characterized the outlook of American diplomatists from the nation's founding until the close of the nineteenth century. The duty to teach by example was continually reiterated, as was the American commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The epoch that followed—which may be dated roughly from the Spanish-American War of 1898 to Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941—was by contrast a period of uncertainty. Under force of circumstance and conscious of vastly enlarged power, intimations began to appear of a seismic shift in the permanent bases of American foreign policy. The old doctrine and old faith were increasingly questioned, though it was not until World War II and the onset of the Cold War that they were overturned.

The great transformation of American foreign policy from the late 1930s to the late 1940s arose, in the first place, because of a threat to physical security—and in this respect it was by no means inconsistent with the original understanding. It was the fear that the world balance of power might shift decisively against the United States, thereby posing a direct threat to its core security, that above all prompted the historic departure from a policy of isolation. At the same time American security was closely tied to more general considerations.

Both before and after World War II a pressing security need was linked with a justification for repelling aggression that invoked international law (order) and a certain diagnosis of the conditions in which peace might be secured (the spread of free institutions). Neither of these ideas would have been foreign to the outlook of the Founding Fathers, who made the law of nations part of America's own supreme law and who generally believed that free institutions contributed to international peace. What was novel was the degree to which the United States was now thought obligated to assume responsibility for ensuring compliance by aggressor states with international law and for establishing a protective umbrella over selected areas of the world under which free institutions could prosper.

These departures from traditional policy were accompanied by a reversal of the nation's long-standing attitude toward "entangling alliances." Having previously abjured commitments in peacetime to the security of any other state, the United States entered into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1949 for the purpose of containing the expansion of a communist movement led and supported by the Soviet Union. The nation entered that compact with a conviction that its own fate was intimately tied to Europe's and a belief in close cooperation among democratic states. Both that conviction in a common fate and belief in cooperative action harked back to the motives that led to the establishment of the American union in 1787. Both dates—1787 and 1949—signified the creation of an empire of liberty.

America's new world role would have provoked far greater domestic dissension—and in all probability would not have been taken up at all—were the threat posed by the Soviet Union to free institutions and international order not simultaneously a threat to American security. For different reasons Americans arrived at a common conclusion: the Soviet Union had to be contained. During the Cold War Americans debated whether containment should be particularist or universalist—whether the primary danger stemmed from the great power threat emanating from the Soviet Union or communism as such. Nevertheless a rough equation was readily established between ensuring order and protecting freedom on the one hand, and providing for security on the other. The equation was capable of uniting otherwise disparate outlooks, of holding under its capacious roof both Republicans and Democrats, realists and idealists, and all varieties of the tough-minded and woolly-headed. It formed the solid

foundation of the Cold War consensus, which the party squabbles and partisan divisions of the day barely disturbed.

It was the strength of the Cold War consensus that explains why Americans readily consented to the establishment of institutions and governing practices previously identified with despotic governments. The establishment, in peacetime, of standing military forces more powerful than those of any nation on earth; the creation of intelligence agencies charged not only with assessing threats but also conducting covert operations; the claim of authority by the presidency to employ American military forces on short notice and without congressional consent—all this would have been looked upon by the Founding Fathers as incompatible with the maintenance at home of free institutions.

Yet enemies learn one another's weapons, as indeed they must. For a state with the political traditions of the United States, such institutions and doctrines might be justified only on the grounds of manifest necessity, as a regrettable yet inescapable departure from norms and practices we wished to maintain but could not. It attests to the strength of the Cold War consensus that not only were such institutions and practices accepted during the classic period of the Cold War, but that they even came to be seen as part of the natural order of things.

#### IV

The end of the Cold War in 1989 brought dramatic changes in America's position in the international system, forcing a rethinking of the assumptions that guided foreign policy for nearly half a century. The collapse of the Soviet empire in eastern Europe, together with the symptoms of internal disorganization and breakdown the Soviet system manifested, led to a dramatic improvement in the American security position. It also vindicated the American purpose, which had always been to show the peoples of the world through peaceful example that free institutions and free markets constituted the key by which their political oppression and economic misery might be lifted.

The implications of these epochal changes for American foreign policy were highly paradoxical. The novel situation that came to exist in relations between the superpowers made the connection drawn during the Cold War between world order and American security more tenuous than ever. Without a great power base behind it, the threat posed to American security by remaining minor despots was sharply diminished. At the same time enhanced cooperation between the superpowers made it possible for the United States to entertain objectives in the world—and particularly on the periphery—that were previously stymied by antagonism at the center. The favorable circumstances in international relations that allowed the United States to

entertain a renewed vision of world order thus also made it less necessary for purposes of security to do so.

It was under these circumstances that the Bush administration confronted Iraq's aggression against Kuwait. The most striking feature of its response to that aggression was the administration's insistence that the equation among order, freedom and security still held. It attempted to restore the Cold War consensus absent the Cold War and the threat of communism. It did so through its insistence that aggression anywhere in the world, if not quickly repelled through military force, constituted a threat that would ultimately endanger not only world order and free institutions but also American security—thus closely identifying disorder in the world with threats to the nation itself. It did so through its insistence that the president has the authority to go to war, even on a massive scale, without seeking congressional authorization—a claim made for the first time in American history in the aftermath of World War II. And the administration did so, more generally, in its claim that the world remained a dangerous place, which required the United States to maintain powerful interventionary forces to contend with would-be aggressors. This vision, to be sure, was pursued under the banner of "collective security," but no one doubted—least of all its architects—that what would give efficacy to the promissory notes of a new world order was the pledge that a single hegemonic power would stand ready to redeem them.

This role of America in the new world order represents a marrying of two opposing traditions in American foreign policy, though without the limitations characteristic of either. The tradition represented by Thomas Jefferson and Woodrow Wilson entertained grand ambitions in the world but was equally insistent on achieving these ambitions through measures short of war. The tradition represented by Alexander Hamilton and Henry Cabot Lodge eschewed grand ambitions and insisted that foreign policy be tied to the pursuit of limited national interests; at the same time it saw the need for military preparedness and believed that military force would remain the great arbiter of conflicts among nations.

President Bush's vision of foreign policy embraces both universal aspirations and military force. It is an authentic offspring of both traditions, but one from which each parent would have recoiled. It offends the Hamilton-Lodge tradition by virtue of its universalism; it offends the Jefferson-Wilson tradition by virtue of its reliance on force. A product of the past half century, it combines the outlook and institutions that a global challenge to the nation's security and purpose necessitated with circumstances that are altogether different from those that justified the initial response.

Although the vision of a new world order has been set forth as novel, it is in fact the latest manifestation of an outlook that found periodic expression during the contest with the Soviet Union. Then, it took the form of global containment. That policy proclaimed the need to resist the expansion of communist power and influence, if necessary by force, wherever and however it occurred. Indeed in some respects the vision articulated by President Bush goes well beyond containment. In the determination to make the acquisition (as opposed to use) of weapons of mass destruction by states deemed expansionist the occasion for the use of U.S. force against them, we see the reemergence of a doctrine that during the Cold War went by the name "containment plus." Like the prevailing outlook today, that doctrine condemned as futile and dangerous the reliance on nuclear deterrence and a defensive military posture. That doctrine provides a basis for the continuing use of American military power throughout the world.

Given the favorable power circumstances in which the Bush administration would today pursue its vision of a new world order, a policy that is the functional equivalent for the post-Cold War world of global containment, or even global containment plus, has evident attractions. The nation has succumbed to these attractions before, at times to its bitter regret.

Whereas our relations with the nations that formed the core of American postwar policy—in Europe and Japan—often brought out what was very nearly the best in us, our relations with the nations of the Third World often evoked what was close to our worst. Nor is there reason to believe that this experience will now change for the better. If anything the likelihood is that it will grow still worse, now that a principal incentive for restrained behavior on our part has been removed. When the opportunity provided by the end of the Cold War is joined together with the ostensible lesson of the Gulf War, the result may well be a greater disposition to intervene in the developing world. That disposition, if acted upon, would prove as corrupting to the nation in the future as it has in the past.

This is especially so if one considers the manner in which future interventions may be conducted. We have fastened upon a formula for going to war—in which American casualties are minimized and protracted engagements avoided—that requires the massive use of American firepower and a speedy withdrawal from the scenes of destruction. The formula is very popular at home, but is not to be approved for that reason. Its peculiar vice is that it enables the United States to go to war more quickly than it otherwise might, while simultaneously allowing Americans to walk away from the ruin created without feeling a commensurate sense of responsibility. The idea that victorious powers have responsibilities of pacification, and that the nation has used force most wisely when it has assumed those responsibilities, is alien to this outlook.

While assuming an imperial role, there is no intention of assuming the responsibilities of imperial rule.

## V

These strictures against intervention in the periphery would be worth observing even if the United States still enjoyed the kind of economic surpluses it once did. But those surpluses are a thing of the past. It is true that military spending is not the sole cause of the nation's inability to live within its means; it is equally apparent, however, that this inability reflects profound structural causes that pose a serious long-term threat to the well-being of Americans and the stability of the world financial system.

The continuing budget deficits reflect a profound disorder within the American body politic, a fundamental disequilibrium between the wants of the people and their willingness to sustain the sacrifices necessary to secure them. As a consequence of this imbalance, since the 1980s interest payments on the debt have been the most explosive expenditure of government. Taxes for which there exist compelling financial, environmental and security reasons—such as those on gasoline consumption—are politically untouchable. Although there is no reason to suppose that the needs of future generations will be any less exigent than our own, we persist in a policy of financial profligacy that can be defended only on that ground.

Next to the existence of a formidable national security establishment itself, there is no feature of our current position that would have so astonished and mortified the statesmen of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as this propensity, in a period of peace, to run ceaselessly into debt. Unless reversed, that propensity will lead, as Hamilton warned, to "great and convulsive revolutions of empire"—revolutions that will adversely affect the core, as opposed to the peripheral, interests of the nation. Despite the current popularity of proposals that would widen the structural deficit, a plan to escape it remains of indispensable long-range importance.

Under the circumstances it seems evident that military expenditures should meet the test of necessity. If, as James Madison once suggested, both war and the preparation for war were paid out of current revenues, so that avarice might calculate the expenses of ambition, the American people would be in a far better position to judge the weight of these necessities and the value of these ambitions.

## VI

Concern over the fate of free institutions and the conditions of world order will continue to inform the American approach to foreign policy. Given the role that order and liberty have always played in reflections on the American purpose, such concern

is both inevitable and appropriate. In pursuit of this concern, however, military power has assumed an excessive role, if seen in the light of traditional conceptions of the national purpose. In making it the primary basis of our power and influence in the world, we risk betraying the distinctive purpose of America. The progressive expansion of the ends on behalf of which force is threatened or employed—whether for world order or the extension of freedom—is a corruption of the original understanding.

This disproportionate emphasis on military power is nowhere more apparent than in the disparity between the amount the nation spends on "defense" and the good works it performs to assist other nations struggling to make the transition to representative democracy and market systems. Even with the planned reduction in U.S. military forces, the Bush administration's defense budget request for the next five years still exceeds \$1.3 trillion. The economic aid that might make the most significant contribution to the establishment and growth of free institutions, however, has very little political support. The public consents to these large military expenditures because it has been instructed by the president that they remain necessary to America's security. In fact most of these expenditures are necessary only if it is thought the nation should undertake a vast philanthropic enterprise to order the world through its military power.

At bottom the great issue we face is not between isolationism and internationalism, but the way in which we conceive our international responsibilities and the methods to carry them out. Skepticism about military intervention may coexist with a stance that is internationalist in other respects—one that recognizes the necessity for cooperative action among the great representative democracies, to preserve an open trading system and to contend with a host of functional problems. At the same time, however, and more disturbingly, an increasingly nationalistic public—one resolutely opposed to foreign aid and increasingly attracted to protectionism—may not be opposed to the use of American military power. So long as interventions, on the model of the Gulf War, promise to be relatively painless in American blood and treasure, they may well enjoy support from a public that is otherwise increasingly "isolationist."

However inconsistent with the current public mood, the contemporary task most in keeping with our historical purpose is to assist the development of civil institutions among peoples who have shown a willingness to make such a transition. The waves of democratization that have swept across eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and Latin America offer a chance, which may prove fleeting, to solidify and stabilize free institutions through peaceful measures. Such a program is particularly urgent in the case of the former Soviet Union; the response of the Bush administration since the August 1991 coup stands in stark contrast to the acts of creative imagination—preeminently the Marshall Plan—that animated American diplomacy after World War

II. Led by public opinion, instead of leading it, both the president and Congress appear unwilling to offer the resources necessary to assist the reconstruction of these economies and thus undergird their experiments in freedom.

Given the scale of America's own domestic problems, such an attitude is surely understandable, even if deeply regrettable. Less understandable and harder to justify is the belief that America's new calling under the novel circumstances created by the end of the Cold War is to create a universal alliance against aggression, enforced by American military power. To refuse both tasks, under the exigent pressures of domestic crisis, would at least give consistency to the rejection of internationalism. But refusing the one while embracing the other can only be deplored.

## VII

The rejection of an open-ended commitment to the security of other states does not imply a withdrawal from all such commitments. In particular it ought not to reach core American alliances with Western Europe and Japan. This is so even if we accept the proposition that the renovation of American foreign policy should conform as much as possible to the nation's traditional diplomatic principles. Given the deep-seated character of American relations with Western Europe and Japan, the more relevant precedent is not the rule against entanglement but the belief, which found expression in the American union, in the necessity for cooperation among free governments.

With the collapse of the Soviet military threat, the retention of the security community with Western Europe and Japan is perfectly compatible with U.S. defense expenditures of \$170 billion a year, a level that might be reached over the next five years. The United States should aim for a devolution of responsibility in some areas, while also retaining certain roles—preeminently with regard to nuclear weapons—that would be destabilizing to renounce. The expectation of American policy would be that the states with which we have security commitments are not thereby relieved of the obligation to assume primary responsibility for their own conventional defense. Such an aim would make possible a far more substantial reduction in U.S. military expenditures than that currently contemplated by the Bush administration, but would not gratuitously introduce elements of instability where stability now prevails.

Though the Bush administration has not repudiated the principle of devolution in theory, its attitude in practice has been far more ambivalent. During the Iraqi crisis it made little effort to find even a partial substitute for American power in the capabilities of regional states. It has looked with skepticism and thinly veiled disapproval on the formation of a joint Franco-German force within the confines of the Western European Union, seeing such a force as a threat to American

predominance in NATO. In its plans for rapidly deployable forces, there is little hint of the desirability of introducing policies, on the model of the Nixon Doctrine, that have as their aim either a division of labor or devolution of responsibility. A Pax Universalis, after all, could hardly be sustained on the basis of such modest aspirations.

## VIII

It is not only the traditional attitude toward world order and American security that might be rehabilitated in current circumstances, but the nation's traditional outlook toward the spread of free institutions. Such renovation of American policy would represent a difficult undertaking: there is today widespread consensus that it is America's duty to demand of foreign states far-reaching reforms in their domestic policy on behalf of human rights. The main difference arises over the means by which this end may be pursued. A coup in Haiti, repression in China, apartheid in South Africa, communism in Vietnam—all call forth the impulse to punish, whether that punishment takes the form of economic sanctions, the withholding (or withdrawal) of diplomatic recognition or, in some circumstances, even the use of force.

This impulse is not the exclusive possession of either the right or left. On several occasions Democrats have outbid Republicans in their denunciations of wrongdoing by foreign states, though they have shied away from military measures. But just as proponents of a new world order have appropriated the Hamiltonian tradition of military preparedness and corrupted it through the lavish expansion (or universalization) of the American security frontier, proponents of nonforcible sanctions on behalf of human rights also risk corrupting the Jeffersonian tradition of peaceable coercion. Although Jefferson did look forward to the subversive effects the example of free institutions would have on other peoples, he never linked economic sanctions and nonrecognition of governments to changes in the internal character of foreign states. That link was first made by Woodrow Wilson.

A policy of economic sanctions on behalf of human rights carries four main dangers. First, inflicting severe economic privation on other states may give rise to widespread suffering, objectionable on humanitarian grounds, particularly when resorted to with such readiness by the rich against the poor. Second, although sanctions operate as a form of pressure on despotic governments, they also inhibit formation of institutions critical to establishing a civil society once the old regime falls or feels impelled to moderate its repressive conduct. Third, such policy may lead to consequences the United States is unwilling to address, as it did in 1991 when the destruction of the Haitian economy produced refugees the Bush administration had no intention of receiving. Finally, the demand that foreign states conform to liberal or democratic standards may ultimately lead to war if nonforcible methods fail.

These four considerations may not justify, in all cases, a return to the rules governing recognition and intervention in the internal affairs of other states characteristic of nineteenth-century American diplomacy; the United States may properly attach political conditions to disbursements of aid or to membership in Western institutions. These considerations, however, do justify a far more skeptical attitude toward the now well-known irresistible call for trade embargoes on behalf of liberty.

The traditional outlook was admittedly austere. It accorded recognition to foreign governments if they met the test of effectiveness and adhered to their international obligations. It refrained from intervention in the internal affairs of other states. It assumed an obligation to teach by example, thus directing primary attention to reforming the ills of American society while yet aiming for the "high, plain, yet dizzy ground that separates influence from intervention." It was universalist in the sense that it assumed that the philosophical assumptions underlying the institutions of civil freedom were in principle open to all humanity, if humanity would have the wit to see them. But it went not abroad in search of monsters to destroy. It understood that to do so would entail an insensible change in the fundamental maxims of American policy "from liberty to force."

The old method, however, no longer has the appeal it once did, and this despite its evident success in ensuring the doom of communism. The irony of the present moment is that, while our own maxims are in danger of changing from liberty to force, free institutions have captured the imagination of peoples throughout the world.

We may indeed deceive ourselves in thinking that this development augurs the "end of history," understood as the permanent ascendancy of liberal institutions and as the end-point of mankind's ideological evolution. But there is little doubt that the ideas of representative democracy and the system of natural liberty do have an extraordinary appeal and power in the world today. Seen from the perspective of the traditional conception of the American purpose, such a development is profoundly gratifying. Yet we are willing to offer very little to solidify that auspicious development, nor have we seen it as an opportunity to rid the nation of the real and imagined necessities acted upon during fifty years of struggle with totalitarian powers. Instead the end of the Cold War, which both vindicated the traditional American purpose and sharply diminished the threats to American security, is seen as an opportunity to create a putative universal alliance against aggression, enforced by American military power.

That enterprise, justified as a vindication of the American purpose, in fact represents its betrayal. It arose from a deracinated political leadership, no longer receiving sustenance from, and indeed hardly conscious of, the best traditions of the nation it governs. Its collective memory is the experience of world war and cold war, and it has no sense that its real duty lies in fidelity to a tradition of far longer duration and much

greater value. In that tradition of thought and web of principle may be found the basis for the renovation of American foreign policy in the coming generation.

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