

The Case for “Integration”

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IN 2005 we saw the 101st anniversary of the birth, and the death, of George Kennan, widely acknowledged as the principal architect of containment, the doctrine that guided U.S. foreign policy for roughly forty years of the Cold War. Containment—in Kennan’s formulation, “a commitment to countering the Soviet Union wherever it encroached upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world”—implicitly and correctly rejected two dangerous alternatives: appeasement of the Soviet and communist threat on the one hand (that would have led to a global diminution of security, freedom and prosperity) and direct confrontation on the other (all too dangerous in a nuclear era). Containment not only largely frustrated Soviet and communist expansion, it contributed to creating a context in which communism ceased to constitute either a geopolitical or ideological challenge to America. The Berlin Wall came down in 1989; the Soviet Union itself imploded two years later.

Containment could not, however, survive its own success. What is needed now is a foreign policy doctrine for the post-11/9 (November 9, 1989, when the Berlin Wall came down) and the post-9/11 world.

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A guiding principle—an intellectual framework—furnishes policymakers with a compass to define strategies and determine priorities, which in turn helps shape decisions affecting long-term investments in military forces, assistance programs and intelligence and diplomatic assets. A doctrine also helps prepare the public for what commitments and sacrifices may be required—and sends signals to other governments, groups and individuals (friend and foe alike) about what the country is striving to seek or prevent in the world.

Promulgating a viable doctrine is easier said than done, however. None of the three post-Cold War presidencies has successfully articulated a comprehensive foreign policy or national security doctrine. The first attempt came from President George H. W. Bush in the aftermath of the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. “Out of these troubled times . . . a new world order can emerge: a new era—freer from the threat of terror, stronger in the pursuit of justice, and more secure in the quest for peace. . . . A world where the rule of law supplants the rule of the jungle. A world in which nations recognize the shared responsibility for freedom and justice.” Largely left unsaid was how such an order would materialize and be sustained.

The Clinton Administration flirted with various themes, most notably diplomatic engagement and democratic en-

largement. These did not, however, constitute a doctrine. Engagement is one of those words that provide little in the way of meaningful policy guidance. Democratic enlargement was one element of the Clinton foreign policy, most notably in the case of NATO. But democracy promotion was not a central or consistent priority of the administration that in any event saw a considerable portion of its energies devoted to a series of largely humanitarian crises (Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo) as well as to the Middle East peace process.

The current administration has gone through two principal phases. The first began with 9/11 and took up most of Bush's first term. Attempts to ascribe a "Bush Doctrine" to the initial four years of George W. Bush's presidency come up short, however, as there was less a coherent policy than a mix of counter-terrorism, pre-emption, unilateralism and democracy promotion.¹ But counter-terrorism does not constitute an adequate foreign policy ambition for the United States. It is too narrow in scope and provides no guidance for dealing with a majority of the opportunities and challenges posed by globalization and international relations. Pre-emption (or prevention, to be more precise) is relevant to an even narrower set of circumstances and in any event is unlikely to be a regular feature of policy, given the uncertainty, risks and controversy surrounding it. Unilateralism is not viable in that most of today's pressing problems cannot be met by the United States alone, given the nature of the problems themselves and the realistic limits to American power. No single country, no matter how powerful, can contend successfully on its own with these transnational challenges. Democracy promotion is a more serious proposition, but it received at best intermittent emphasis in the initial four years of the Bush Administration.

THE SECOND term began with a more consistent foreign policy approach, one informed by intensified support for democracy. "America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one", the president proclaimed in his second Inaugural Address. He continued,

So it is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world. . . . We will encourage reform in other governments by making clear that success in our relations will require the decent treatment of their own people. America's belief in human dignity will guide our policies.

The case for democracy promotion begins with the principle that individual freedom is inherently desirable, but quickly goes beyond it. There is the notion of democratic peace, the argument that democracies are unlikely to go to war with one another and so make for better international citizens more generally. And there is the proposition that it is the absence of democracy in selected societies (notably throughout the Arab world and parts of the Muslim world) that is largely responsible for the alienation of so many young men and women who then turn to radicalism and terrorism.

Both of these notions open themselves to at least some dispute. Democratic peace may be borne out by mature democracies, but it decidedly is not by immature or modernizing democracies, which are easily captured by nationalist and populist passions. Second, the tie between democracy and terrorism is not quite as direct as tends to be asserted. A

¹See, for example, Norman Podhoretz, "World War IV: How It Started, What It Means, and Why We Have to Win", *Commentary* (September 2004).

democratic Middle East would not be terrorism free. The sort of messianic, “right the wrongs of history” agenda that motivates Al-Qaeda will not be satisfied by democratic participation.

But whatever the promise of democracy, it is neither desirable nor practical to make its promotion the foreign policy doctrine of the United States. Too many pressing threats in which the lives of millions hang in the balance—from dealing with today’s terrorists and managing Iranian and North Korean nuclear capabilities to coping with trade protectionism and genocide—will not be solved by the emergence of democracy. Promoting democracy is and should be one American foreign policy goal, but it cannot be the only or dominant objective. When it comes to relations with Russia or China, Saudi Arabia or Egypt, other national security interests must normally take precedence over (or at least coexist with) concerns about how they choose to govern themselves. The fact that promoting democracy can be difficult and expensive also reduces its attraction as a foreign policy compass.

WHAT, THEN, is the appropriate doctrine for the United States at this moment in history? I would argue strongly for “integration.”

An American foreign policy based upon a doctrine of integration would have three dimensions. First, it would aim to create a cooperative relationship among the world’s major powers, built on a common commitment to promoting certain principles and outcomes. Second, it would seek to translate this commitment into effective arrangements and actions. Third, it would work to bring in other countries, organizations and peoples so that they come to enjoy the benefits of physical security, economic opportunity and political freedom. The goal would be to create a more integrated world, both

in the sense of integrating (involving) as many governments and organizations and societies as possible and in the sense of bringing about a more integrated (cooperative) international community so that the challenges central to the modern era could better be met.

Integration is thus the natural successor to containment, which was the necessary and correct policy construct for the Cold War. A doctrine relevant to this era, however, must find a way to bring others in, not keep them out. In addition, integration offers the most coherent response to globalization and to the transnational threats that constitute the defining challenges of our time. It reflects the reality that the principal threat to U.S. security and prosperity today comes not from a great power rival—the gap in capabilities is too large, the chance of conflict too remote—but from what can best be described as the dark dimension of globalization: terrorism, nuclear proliferation, infectious disease, trade protectionism and global climate change. The choice of integration reflects the reality that the United States requires partners to meet these threats. As a result, integration, in stark contrast to the alternatives, meets the necessary criteria of a foreign policy doctrine. It reflects existing international realities, addresses the principal national security challenges confronting the United States, sets forth ambitious but achievable objectives, provides “first order” guidance to policymakers that can be applied on a consistent basis, and is supportable at home.

In the process, integration incorporates elements of several of the alternatives put forward. The surest way to address the threat of terrorism is through integration. Only by integrating other countries into the struggle against existing terrorists (through intelligence sharing, law enforcement cooperation, homeland security coordination and so on) can the United States succeed. Integrating

have-nots, be they individuals or societies, can deny terrorists fertile ground for recruiting or staging operations. Integration also subsumes democracy promotion, in that one dimension of integration is to extend democratic ideas to individuals and societies who have experienced little in the way of freedom.

Integration also has consequences for U.S. efforts to stem the spread of nuclear weapons. A doctrine of integration would attempt to integrate both North Korea and Iran into the non-proliferation system. Sanctions, isolation and efforts aimed at regime change would give way in the first instance to political and economic incentives; China, Europe and others would be integrated fully into the diplomatic effort. Integration has the potential to be a bold, transforming strategy by which the United States can shape the next era of history. It is an optimistic prospect, but, after all, no more ambitious than that of, say, someone writing amid World War II of a Europe in which Franco-German friendship is the cornerstone, or of someone writing half a century ago of a post-Cold War, post-Soviet world in which markets and democracies are more the world's rule than an exception. An integrated world can, with American guidance, become an achievable reality.

THERE IS a precedent for trying to bring about a world in which the leading states of the day do often act as partners. In the early 19th century, the major powers of the era met in Vienna and subsequently in other cities to develop understandings—rules of the road, in today's parlance—about the conduct of international relations. The goal was to devise “international agreement about the nature of workable arrangements and about the permissible aims and methods of foreign policy.”² While more modest than that, the resulting “Concert of Europe” helped to keep relative peace for several decades

among the great powers—Austria, Britain, France, Prussia and Russia—then at the heart of the European state system. The arrangements were never institutionalized, much less codified as some form of world government; rather, what emerged were a set of understandings and a commitment to consult in order to avoid the sort of major power conflict Europe had just experienced.

This period following the Congress of Vienna is not the only example of coordination among the major powers of the day. More recently, the Cold War was kept “cold” by a series of implicit or informal understandings between the United States and the Soviet Union. Each avoided any direct armed intervention against the other on the grounds that escalation to nuclear war was all too possible. In addition, it was acceptable to provide military assistance to an ally or client, but not to the point of overwhelming the ally or client of the other. The most dangerous moments of the Cold War came when such “rules” were violated or came close to being violated.

Rules of the road are just as necessary today. What is needed, though, are not simply “negative” understandings among the major powers that constrain competition, but “positive” commitments about how to work together to meet pressing challenges. The challenge is not simply to erect an international society with commonly accepted restraints but to fashion coalitions and institutions that promote certain objectives sought by the United States and embraced by others.

Efforts to bring about such arrangements would not have to start from scratch. A considerable degree of integration already exists. There is, for example, near universal support for the right of self-defense, the concept that a state can

²Henry Kissinger, *A World Restored: The Politics of Conservatism in a Revolutionary Age* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1964).

respond militarily if attacked. This principle also provides an opening for those who would come to the aid of a state that has been attacked. The principle even extends to the right of pre-emptive (not to be confused with preventive) attacks, the acceptability of acting against a would-be aggressor on receipt of intelligence or a warning that indicates with extremely high certainty that a hostile attack is imminent. There are as well laws of war that specify what governments are obligated to do to safeguard the rights of combatants and noncombatants alike.

There are elements of consensus in the political realm, including a number of international conventions supporting human rights and democracy and opposing slavery, torture and genocide. Technical arrangements abound, from aviation safety and communications standards to rules affecting agricultural and health policies. Environmental agreements ban persistent organic pollutants and protect the ozone layer. And integration is arguably most advanced in the realm of trade and international economic arrangements more generally, where rules and institutions are common, most notably the World Trade Organization.

THE CHALLENGE is to expand cooperation where it exists and to extend it to new areas. What, then, would a more integrated world look like? At a minimum, it would be one in which governments would not be free to commit genocide (or allow it to take place) and in which the international community could intervene in one form or another to protect the population and, if need be, remove the government from power. All or most governments would sign on to the norm that force could not be used in an intentional manner against civilians for political purposes and that they would take action against any entity that carried out terrorism or in any way supported

those who did. The major powers (China, Russia, Japan, India and the EU, in addition to the United States) would agree that countries would be provided access to enriched uranium and plutonium for peaceful purposes—but denied possession of either, lest it be diverted for military purposes. The WTO would be extended to cover virtually all aspects of manufacturing and services; tariffs, quotas and subsidies would be eliminated.

Cooperation could be extended to other domains, including new arrangements for dealing with disease or poverty or global climate change. What will be required is a process for agreeing on the basic rules or objectives that would define order in this era and for determining what is to be done in those specific situations where the rules are violated. Nothing will be more important than regular consultations among the major powers. But no amount of advance consultation can ensure agreement in particular circumstances. There needs to be a commitment by the United States and others to seek the broadest possible international agreement before acting, particularly before using military force. The United Nations Security Council, its many limitations notwithstanding, is one place to try to gain multilateral backing. But it is not the only forum that offers international legitimacy and support, and if there is no chance of gaining consensus there, the United States should turn to NATO, other regional organizations, the G-8 (or, better yet, an expanded G-10 that includes India and China), or more narrowly constructed contact groups and coalitions of the willing.

The need for a pragmatic case-by-case approach is unavoidable. It is important to give the diplomatic process a fair chance and allow ample time for consensus to emerge at the UN. Consultations must be genuine and not simply an effort to insist on an already determined policy. A decision to opt out of formal multilat-

eralism should only be made when there is an urgent need to act; the case must also be of sufficient weight or seriousness to justify acting. This is especially true when the intervention is military in nature. Preventive (as opposed to pre-emptive) uses of military force should remain a rare exception. Whenever the United States elects to go its own way, it should go to great lengths to explain itself, in private as well as in public, with as many other governments in tow as possible. It is important that there be no unique benefit, such as special access to oil, contracts for firms or military bases, that accrues to the United States or the country in question lest the intervention be seen as something other than one born of principle or necessity. And any time the United States decides to act without UN blessing it should then return as soon as possible to the formal diplomatic fold, undertaking subsequent actions with the greatest possible global or regional involvement. It is important to keep in mind that while the United States does not need the world's permission to act, it does need the world's support to succeed.

Gaining international support (or avoiding significant opposition) will also require that the United States take the concerns of the other major powers into account. In the case of China, for example, this translates into resisting Taiwan's movement toward independence, or working to see that other states in northeast Asia do not develop nuclear weapons so long as China does all it can to see that North Korea gives up its program. It requires accepting India's nuclear weapons program, recognizing Japan's re-emergence as not only an economic but also a political and military power, and supporting the desire of both India and Japan to gain a seat on the UN Security Council. It calls for welcoming a stronger European Union. It can mean not making a priority of the democratic shortcomings of either China or Russia. The reward to

the United States for such adjustments to its policies would be that another power would be more inclined to participate in a more integrated world or, on those occasions it disagrees, at least not work actively against what the United States seeks to accomplish.

History and realist theory suggest that such talk of sustained international cooperation is unrealistic and that it is only a matter of time before one or more of these major actors (most likely China or an increasingly united and alienated Europe) challenges American primacy. But this is by no means inevitable. Countries tend to challenge the status quo when they see it as being inconsistent with their national aspirations and vulnerable to challenge. The objective for U.S. foreign policy should be to persuade others to work with the United States—and to persuade them that it is neither wise to work against the United States, given its strength, nor necessary to work against it, given its intentions.

The current administration has it half right on this point. The president's 2002 *National Security Strategy* stressed the importance of maintaining a U.S. power advantage that would discourage challengers, to prevent "an enemy—whether a state or non-state actor—to impose its will on the United States, our allies, or our friends. . . . Our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States."

There are limits to this approach, however. The United States is not in a position to prevent the rise of other powers. The rise and decline of states has a great deal to do with demographics, culture, natural resources, educational systems, economic policy, political stability, individual opportunity and legal frameworks—all matters largely beyond the control of outsiders. Put another way, there is not a lot the United States could

do to prevent the rise of either China or Russia or India or Europe—any more than Europe was able to prevent the rise of the United States in the 19th and 20th centuries. Any effort on the part of the United States to frustrate the rise of another country would guarantee that government's animosity and all but ensure its working against U.S. efforts around the world.

Nor should the United States want to discourage the emergence of strong countries; to the contrary, the United States needs other countries to be strong if it is to have the partners it requires to meet the challenges posed by globalization. The issue for American foreign policy should not be whether China becomes strong, but rather *how* China uses its growing strength. The same point applies to Russia, India, Japan, Europe, Brazil, South Korea and South Africa.

It is not enough, though, to discourage major power competition or conflict. U.S. foreign policy needs to encourage cooperation. Even if other countries choose not to challenge the United States directly, they could elect to sit on their hands; for the immediate future, non-cooperation is likely to be a more frequent and bigger problem for U.S. foreign policy than direct opposition. The costly and damaging consequences of non-cooperation are visible in postwar Iraq: For more than two years, few governments proved willing to commit troops or resources to assist that country's new leaders and its people to recover from decades of tyranny and the more recent war and subsequent disorder. Over time, this kind of passive resistance to U.S. policies abroad, on the part of other major powers, will drain the resources of the United States or lead to less effective international action against contemporary challenges, or both. Everyone will be worse off.

As a result, the goal of U.S. foreign policy should not simply be to maintain a world defined by U.S. military superiority.

Rather, the priority for American foreign policy should be to integrate other states into American-sponsored or American-supported efforts to deal with the challenges of globalization. This can only be achieved through consent, not coercion.

THIS WILL not always be easy, particularly given the level of anti-Americanism that currently exists. It would be wrong, however, to view today's sentiments as representing what might be described as a strategic choice by governments to counter the efforts of the United States throughout the world. Although some anti-Americanism can be attributed to natural resentment of a stronger country, the bulk of anti-American sentiment stems from disagreement over particular U.S. policies, especially the war against Iraq, the Palestinian issue and the perception in many quarters of uncritical U.S. support for Israel, and U.S. rejection of multiple international arrangements. The style and tone of American foreign policy during the first term of George W. Bush's presidency has also had an impact. But much of today's anti-Americanism need not be either structural or permanent; the good news is that there are signs that it is abating in some places. Anti-Americanism should be taken seriously, though: It makes it more difficult for the United States to find useful and at times necessary partners. Even worse, over time the perception that Americans do not have a decent respect for the opinions of mankind could bring to power individuals and governments who view the United States as a threat that needs to be countered.

Some will see a risk that integration might prove too successful: Following an extended period of international calm, a much stronger China or Europe might then turn on the United States. There are analysts who take such a risk seriously; John Mearsheimer predicts, in *The*

Tragedy of Great Power Politics, “A wealthy China would not be a status quo power but an aggressive state determined to achieve regional hegemony.” Here again, though, the strategy of integration offers reassurance. At its core is the ambition to give other powers a substantial stake in the maintenance of order—in effect, to co-opt them and make them pillars of international society—so that they will come to see it is in their self-interest to continue working with the United States and damaging to their interests to fall out with the United States. We are far more likely to face a disruptive major power down the road if we do not pursue the idea of integration.

The more serious questions relate to the United States itself. The first is whether one can anticipate sufficient domestic support for integration. The short answer is “yes.” In particular, the burden-sharing that is at the core of integration should be well received, especially if the United States embarks on other wars of choice that prove costly. The American people have shown no signs of resisting the price tag for homeland security or the struggle with terrorism. This is unlikely to change; history suggests support will be there for any future wars of necessity. One area where integration is being resisted (at least by some) is in the

economic realm. Here, various forms of transitional economic adjustment assistance, along with education and training, will be required to assist workers who have lost jobs because of foreign competition or technological change in order to prepare them for new ones.

The second question is whether there will be sufficient capacity to carry out a foreign policy premised on integration. Integration requires U.S. leadership, which in turn requires U.S. strength. The United States will need considerable economic and military resources to meet the significant challenges of this era and to discourage a renewed great power challenge. The United States enjoys considerable primacy, but how long this primacy will continue is in doubt given the emergence of enormous fiscal and current account deficits, a strained military that may well be too small, an energy policy that leaves the United States overly dependent on costly imported oil and an educational system that over time seems likely to diminish U.S. competitiveness. Doctrines and foreign policy more generally do not operate in a vacuum; integration or any other American approach to the world will only succeed if carried out by a country that is both able and willing to devote the requisite resources to the many tasks at hand. □