

American Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century

Anthony Harrigan

THE FUTURE OF American foreign policy depends not only on the future of many countries, but also on the future of American society.

The future of countries around the world is highly uncertain because of the political, economic, ideological, and religious currents affecting countries in all parts of the globe. Changes in ideology, the growth of Muslim fundamentalism, increases in population, and the impact of technology on employment—all are factors making the world scene of the twenty-first century exceptionally difficult to predict. Everywhere the acceleration of history promises vast change, crises, and a variety of disturbing developments. One thing we can safely say about the twenty-first century is that it will not be a placid scene. The processes of change will affect the United States as much as they will affect other major countries. The rise of Asian nations to positions of immense industrial and technological power—China is a case in point—will have direct impact on the American people. The ongoing role of computerized economic activity will also change virtually everything in the economic sphere, introducing the enormously disturbing prospect of a work-

less society and human dislocation.

Great questions arise: What will Americans do? How will they earn their living as an Asian economic explosion continues to displace Americans from their jobs? Serious students of the economic future believe that the “downsizing” of recent years has only begun.

In addition, internal cultural change and conflict suggest that there will be massive social transformation of the United States, with the danger that the future will be one of a disunited America. How, then, will this national entity respond to changes in and from the outside world? The roots of the disunity go back to the Vietnam War, which saw large-scale internal strife and America’s foreign and defense policies shaped by a war from within waged by radicalized population elements that detested the traditional life of the United States and its system of values. The culture wars of more recent years have revealed the internal divisions of contemporary America, with the entertainment industry, the major media, and much of the academic establishment pushing for a variety of agendas repugnant to millions of Americans.

The very concept of evil is furiously debated. As Dr. John Howard, of the Rockford Institute, said recently, the foes of traditional American society consider it

ANTHONY HARRIGAN is a retired journalist who appears regularly in *Modern Age*.

evil “to assert publicly that Christianity played a critically important role in the success of the American free society.” If that is the outlook of dominant forces in the United States in the twenty-first century, how will the nation rise to challenges from atheistic, totalitarian China? Not all Americans, perhaps not a majority, will accept this kind of America in the future. Already there are signs of a profound religious response to the control of American institutions by nihilist, neo-barbarian forces. Increasingly we hear of the “balkanization” of the United States, and the signs of social and cultural fragmentation and conflict are everywhere, with communities and areas split along ideological and cultural lines. The process is recognized by millions of Americans, as the foes of traditional moral and civilizational values become more militant and gain a greater hold on government, the media, and the institutions. Tragically the “old” United States is gone to a considerable extent—the America of the 1940s and 1950s that fueled opposition to “the evil empire.”

Aside from the changed official attitude towards totalitarianism, there is the evident fact that the old counter-culture has become the dominant culture in urban regions of the United States. In these regions the perverse has been established as the normal and deserving of the government’s protection and advancement. Moral citizens are called extremists. People who stand up for traditional values and principles are stigmatized and silenced. Massive efforts are made to put them out of political life and the life of educational institutions.

At the same time, happily, there is evidence that other Americans are determined to create redoubts where our civilizational values will endure and thrive. They seek to create their own morality-based counter-culture. They are turning to home schooling and to the reinvigoration of religion. They are seek-

ing to develop new media outlets such as talk radio. Clearly, they do not intend to surrender America without a fight. This struggle, this developing fight, will help determine the foreign relations of the United States in the twenty-first century.

The cultural clash within the United States calls to mind the attention scholars are devoting to cultural clashes on the global scene. One of these scholars, Dr. Samuel P. Huntington of Harvard University, is the author of *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. In that book he argues that “world politics is being refigured along cultural and civilizational lines.” There is much evidence to support his view. But he assumes that cultures are cohesive whereas in America today culture is fragmented. How can a shattered or partially shattered culture deal with the challenges from other, more unified cultures? This question causes one to think back to the crisis of Roman culture which, by the Imperial period, had undergone the kind of moral breakdown the United States is experiencing today. An easing of ancient Roman standards undermined Rome’s ability to deal with the barbarian hordes from the North and the despotic forces on Rome’s Eastern frontier. The Roman identity was undermined by the admission to citizenship of peoples on the fringes of the empire, a development which should give alarm to an America which is experiencing a silent invasion across its porous southern border.

The concern of some Americans for the integrity of the United States and its culture is paralleled in Asia. Dr. Grace Goodell of Johns Hopkins University, an authority on the leadership of the so-called Little Tigers—Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore—asserts that leaders in those communities are petrified that their people are suffering from a contemporary “Americanization” which undermines traditional standards of behavior.

If American society continues in the pattern established and maintained over two centuries, the foreign relations of the United States in the twenty-first century will have much the same orientation as in the past. But if American society is transformed and recast in the mode of the counter-culture, the thrust of American policy will be very different. Surely it will lose its basis in a moral order. It will favor nations that likewise have cast aside the fundamental teachings and principles of Western civilization.

The great rule of conduct for the United States in regard to foreign nations was set forth by George Washington in his Farewell Address, delivered on September 17, 1796. He urged his fellow citizens to:

Observe good faith and justice toward all nations. Cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct. And can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and at no distant period a great nation to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence.

Though the Republic was in its infancy in Washington's day, and the federal framework was very new, there was an underlying civilizational unity which has been fragmented, if not shattered, in the last three decades. The Republic was still profoundly influenced by the mother country and its values and institutions. Today a vast effort is underway to sidetrack the country's Anglo-Saxon and Eurocentric heritage. Multiculturalism is the dogma of controlling forces in education and cultural institutions. America's links with Britain and Europe, which caused the United States to participate in world wars twice in this century, are constantly downplayed. Americans are told that the national interest is at stake in Somalia, Rwanda, and other Third

World lands. The intellectual world of the United States and Europe is shot through with anti-Western notions; Westerners are taught to feel guilty about their history. The Western countries are told that they have a moral obligation to accept the tides of immigration from the Third World, whether Mexico or Morocco. Efforts in America and in Europe to safeguard national identities are condemned and presented as oppression. Many Westerners have been persuaded to turn their backs on their heritage, identity, and history. Meanwhile, a resurgent Islam is pushing forward through a silent invasion of Europe and through politico-military activity in Bosnia where the United States actually encouraged the Iranians to ship arms to the government of Bosnia, thereby helping establish an Islamic enclave in Southern Europe—a process resisted by Europeans over many centuries.

This development surely will produce great political upheaval in the twenty-first century, as West Europeans seek to contain the Islamic invasion and regain their territories. For the moment, Europe is caught up in a debate over economic cooperation and coordination, with the various nations being urged to surrender a large measure of sovereignty to a central bureaucracy; but the forces of sovereignty are likely to regain the upper hand as working people realize that the centralized money managers are willing to sacrifice the needs of the average citizen to a globalism that drives wages down everywhere in the West, including the United States.

One of the great unknowns for American foreign relations in the twenty-first century is the new, post-communist Russia. At least, it is in a post-communist phase for now. It already has suffered a secessionist crisis. The United States fought a valiant cold war against Soviet totalitarianism, and may be said to have won the cold war. Yet American policy

towards the new Russia has been uncertain and questionable. The United States has exported to the new Russia a variety of economic ideologies which have promoted schemes of dubious value to the Russian people and which are likely to produce a backlash against the United States. Handling the Russian question will be a difficult task. It is not in our interest to see Russia weakened to the point it is imperiled by the Chinese. On the other hand, it is not in America's interest for Russia to regain anything like its former military capability, though one can be certain that it will remain a primary nuclear power as far into the future as we can see. The complexity of the Russian situation is underlined by the fact that the United States may well need a Russian naval presence in the north Pacific as a counterweight to emerging Chinese sea power. Whether that will be achievable is questionable in view of the alarming new military ties between the new Russia and China.

How can the United States suggest the proper path for the new Russia if we are internally sick and disordered? How can we be a model for any country, given our moral disorder? John Paul II has said that the hope of our Christian civilization lies in the East, and there is reason to believe that the hope, if any, lies outside the United States and many of the other disturbed Western countries. It was not so a half century ago, but the economic and military collapse of Soviet Russia has been paralleled by the moral collapse of the United States, at least of the dominant liberal intellectual element which pushes the agenda of a new paganism.

American policy towards Russia also has been marred by a mercenary spirit, by the transnational companies which in many cases have sought to take advantage of Russia's economic disarray. This has caused profound resentment among the Russians, even as they resent the economic ideologies who advanced a

new design for Russia, a design that is not rooted in Russia's national experience and in the values derived from Orthodox Christianity. Peace and good relations with Russia depend on respect for the best in Russian civilization. It is in the interest of the West to bring Russia fully into the fold. Indeed it is important to remember that American resistance to Soviet power was rooted in principled, moral views. These were articulated by American statesmen such as John Foster Dulles.

Dr. Jonathan Sunley, writing in *The National Interest* (Summer 1996), has said that many of our misjudgments of the Russian situation are being made from "purely mercenary motives"—in the trade and investment operations, precisely as American policy with respect to China is being driven by greed. The trade and investment in China's case is propping up and financing a brutal totalitarian regime which hates and despises the United States. In the case of Russia the grab for investment profits through acquiring a share in Russian enterprises is made without a moral compass and without any comprehension of America's long-term strategic interest.

Another major danger area is made up of the Middle East and South and Southwest Asia; there is great volatility in this vast region. Our reliance in this country on "easy" solutions surely will be frustrated by the enduring enmities which cannot be eradicated by shuttle diplomacy or superficial agreements. National ambitions in the area are grounded in ancient struggles over land and are wrapped up in religious disputes and rivalries that are age-old. The so-called peace process may provide a useful forum for discussions, but it is unlikely to produce any permanent solutions to conflicts that will extend beyond the twenty-first century. And it is an illusion on the part of American statesmen if they imagine that they can untangle all the knots

tied over centuries. One can only hope that the political, ideological, and religious struggles will not break into large-scale warfare. The danger is acute in respect to Pakistan and India, both of which have a serious nuclear capacity. No one can comprehend what the parameters of a nuclear war would be if one broke out between Pakistan and India in the early years of the twenty-first century.

On a somewhat lesser scale of danger, we have to recognize that we have not heard the last of Iraq as a war-making state. As for Iran, the potential for danger from that quarter is much more serious because of the size of the country and its self-chosen role as the enemy of what it terms "the Great Satan," namely, the United States. Together with Syria, it is certain to sponsor terrorist operations against the West. And if it is successful in building up its conventional war machine, it is likely to engage in fresh aggression. In addition, Iran is a driving force behind Islamic designs on Western Europe.

A special peril for the West in the years ahead is the future of Saudi Arabia, a country ruled by a single family. After years of quiet, Saudi Arabia is beginning to experience internal resistance plus pressure from Iran and other fundamentalist elements in the region. The West has an unhealthy reliance on Saudi oil. The United States, for its part, has foolishly neglected energy independence through full development of its own and Canadian oil reserves. Interruption of the delivery of Saudi oil would have a crippling effect on American industry and life. The United States should have invested heavily in the development of Canada's huge oil reserves in the Arctic, but instead preferred the cheaper route of buying oil from Arabia.

In general, American and Canadian relations should receive a much higher priority in the years ahead. Canada has a problem with internal division, cultural

strife, and resulting internal splits, chiefly between Quebec and the rest of the Confederation. But the Western provinces also have problems with the federal government, and the maritime provinces are suffering from increasingly difficult economic problems. A strong, unified Canadian Confederation has been a supremely good neighbor for the United States, but American statesmen should keep careful watch for a breakup that could cause problems. For its part, the United States should be careful to avoid an oppressive cultural invasion of Canada. The same material which offends millions of Americans also gives offense to Canadians who are exposed to American television, films, and publications.

These are not the only areas where the United States will have critical concerns in the years ahead. Latin America is a region with enormous economic and political problems, and it is a region which no administration in decades has been able to deal with successfully. The situation with Mexico is especially vexatious. It is a country experiencing conflict and frequent assassination of government officials. Drug organizations have become deeply entrenched there, including parts of the government. Bad government has damaged the interests of the Mexican middle class and created widespread instability.

How the United States should address the continent of Africa in the twenty-first century deserves equally close attention. Since the end of the cold war, Africa has received minimal attention, except in the case of Somalia. In the 1960s and 1970s Africa had a higher profile because the United States was engaged in a contest of wills on the continent, as Russia, China, and Cuba vied for influence. At one point, Somalia was of considerable military importance to Russia. China funded the Tan-Zam Railway. Cuba sent a large military force into Angola. Revolutionary regimes were everywhere. The United

States poured billions into Tanzania—all to no avail. The contest is now over. Russia has no money to continue operations in Africa—even if it wanted to do so.

The problems of Africa linger, however, and in many nations have become worse. There is increasing danger of a fundamentalist sweep in Egypt. In Algeria the fundamentalists are waging a bloody terrorist war against the regime. Ghana, once a comparative model among African states, is in desperate plight. South Africa, hailed for a peaceful transition, may be a bomb waiting to explode. The unemployment situation is appalling. Foreign investment is minimal. The danger of a Zulu-ANC war is barely contained. It is impossible to view South Africa with optimism. Europeans continue to leave as they find countries where they can relocate and to which they are able to transfer financial assets.

International agencies such as the World Bank and its subsidiaries continue to pump money into Africa. But the loans—gifts, in reality—come with strings. The recipients are forced to accept economic restructuring by economists who have no concept of the history and ways of Africa. Hence the restructuring creates problems. The social nets designed by international agencies simply serve as a relief measure for people whose lives have been disrupted by forced economic restructuring. This process of disintegration continues. The carnage in Rwanda cannot be removed from the consciousness of Hutu and Tutsi alike, no matter how much international aid is provided.

The United States would do well in the years ahead to further limit aid to the African countries and also to withdraw aid to international lending agencies. Benign neglect, while so often scorned by national and international activists, is likely to be the best policy. The only way Africa can emerge from a sea of problems is for the countries and peoples

involved to solve their own problems and conflicts. Africa cannot be healed from the outside.

The world of the early twenty-first century will be full of change, challenge, and threats, and one can only speculate regarding the methods that will be used to deal with them. It is not at all clear that the United Nations organization will survive, at least in its present form, and even whether it will operate as it has since 1945. The reluctance of Congress to put more money into the United Nations is symptomatic of a loss of faith in the organization as an effective means of securing peace and order in the world. The domestic constituency for the United Nations has steadily declined in influence. Of course, if a more thoroughly radicalized America comes into being, it may be that the organization will regain American support and embark on such enterprises as the creation of an army. The future internal make up of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, also is unclear. The powers that established the United Nations—the United States, Russia, Britain, and France—have undergone profound change and some diminishment of power, though they remain nuclear-armed nations.

Both Germany and Japan now have tremendous economic power in the world scene and would like seats on the Security Council. But the existing Council powers are not about to surrender their seats, and it is an open question as to whether they will dilute their power by adding Germany and Japan. One complication is that neither of these recently empowered nations has proved willing to make military commitments overseas, though that could change. The General Assembly seems likely to remain as a mere forum for the spokesmen of Third World nations and various minor powers. Unless there is a newly radicalized America, the rhetoric of these states is not likely to be translated into policy and

power.

The threat of China to the United States in economic and military terms is a major threat facing us. This threat also has to do with American values. In the Bush and in the Clinton years, China has been assiduously courted or favored in one way or another, gaining unprecedented access to the American market. American corporations have fallen over themselves in haste to establish business operations in this totalitarian country. This approach means that the American government has closed its eyes to horrors as great as those committed by Hitler and Stalin.

Unfortunately, too, the American government has failed to enlist Japan in a cooperative effort to build an ABM system. This means that Japan is vulnerable to China's nuclear blackmail.

The overall situation in the Pacific-Asian world represents a reversal of American and Chinese roles in the Pacific-Asian world. The most disturbing aspect of China's growing military power is that it is combined with a high degree of instability. As a former Ambassador to the United Nations, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, said in 1995, "China is intrinsically unstable." This instability is frightening when one considers the question of what China wants. And it is clear that it wants to displace the United States as the principal Pacific power. It is determined to drive the United States out of Asia and the western Pacific, precisely as the Japanese did before World War II.

If one examines the world country by country, one will discover special situations that require some measure of American response. This is because the United States has been involved with the world on an intensive basis for a century and, in the case of some countries, much longer. Despite George Washington's advice about the dangers of foreign entanglements, America has been steadily and increasingly entangled, especially in the years since the beginning of World War

II. In many cases, this has been by political choice, as in the case of American involvement with politics on the African continent. The situation with respect to Israel is similar. The United States, in the first Clinton administration, even became directly involved with the internal affairs of the United Kingdom by putting itself into the middle of negotiations over the future of Northern Ireland. Then there are situations such as the one involving Turkey where both the internal political and cultural composition of a military ally may change in an undesirable and dangerous way—as that nation faces almost daily danger of an armed collision with another American ally, Greece. These problems and crises will call for the most skilled statecraft on the part of the United States.

Then, too, there are problems which the United States has been reluctant to address in a strong way in the late twentieth century. Japan is such a problem, because of that nation's economic offensives against the United States over fifteen or more years. This has been manifested in the dumping of goods below market prices, targeting of specific industries and companies, and the introduction of transplant companies which rely heavily on the importation of Japanese parts. American negotiations to end the various hurtful practices and to reduce the massive trade deficit with Japan, which always has and today continues to rely on protection of its market, has been weak and ineffectual. Neither the Executive nor the Legislative branch has shown any determination to effect the necessary measures, partly, one can be sure, because Japan has funded a colossal influence-cultivating and public relations operation.

If the American government is to safeguard the interests of the American people, if it is to ensure their military, political, and economic security, not only will it require wisdom and historical un-

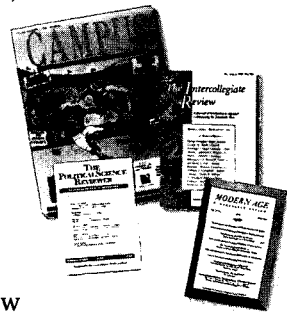
derstanding on the part of its political leaders and foreign policy executives, but also it will need a stable society in which sound ideas prevail and in which

adherence to traditional American values is the order of the day. At this point, unfortunately, one cannot be sure that the required social stability will exist.



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The Americanization of Conservatism

Barry Alan Shain

IN THE NEXT CENTURY, because of both need and opportunity, American conservative scholars and intellectuals must work to develop the coherence of conservative moral and political thought. Indeed, a generation of mid-career scholars is ready to accept this challenge.¹ But before such an opportunity can be fully realized, conservative scholars must be prepared to answer three vexing challenges.

First, they must be able to respond to the charge that America, with its revolutionary background and liberal political institutions and norms, is singularly ill-suited to embrace ideas associated with a supposedly alien political doctrine like conservatism. Remarkably, such a charge is leveled against conservatives not only by self-described liberals, but also by intellectual allies who themselves are taken to be conservative by the liberal intelligentsia.² In their defense of a conservative American past, conservative scholars must be prepared to confront liberal and neoconservative

detractors who question their very legitimacy as Americans.

This difficulty draws attention to a second issue that conservative scholars must confront if, in the next century, they are to move conservative political and moral thought to a new level of coherence. That is, without becoming unduly sectarian, conservatives must identify a core set of principles as constituting the essential ground of American conservative moral and political thought. After much debate and careful scrutiny, those whose commitments place them outside the borders of this consensus—for example, thinkers who effectively are disgruntled liberals who seek to shore up liberalism's tottering foundations or misguided public policies—must not be permitted to take an active role in shaping an American conservative political vision.

The world of politics is, however, another matter and there a more relaxed standard of inclusion must be expected. But still, conservative scholars need to describe more fully how and where the world of conservative ideas and that of political action are to intersect. Conflicts are surely unavoidable; they must be better anticipated. This issue area forms the third set of concerns which conservative scholars must negotiate if they are to meet the opportunity that awaits them

BARRY ALAN SHAIN is Associate Professor of Political Science at Colgate University and author of *Myth of American Individualism: The Protestant Origins of American Political Thought*. His monograph entitled *Catholic Mother, Protestant Father, Bastard Child: Rethinking the Origins of Modern Individualism* is forthcoming from University of London Press.