

American Visions of a Postimperial World

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The foreign policy of the contemporary United States is often portrayed as a continuation of its grand strategy during World War II and the Cold War. According to this account, following the Cold War, the United States and its first-world allies sought to universalize “the liberal world order” to both the former communist second world and the developing countries of the former third world. The goal of American foreign policy is, or should be, the “enlargement” of the community of “market democracies,” characterized by neoliberal economic systems, civil liberties and multiparty democracy. It is not enough, in this view, for countries to respect basic human rights and traditional international law and participate in traditional international institutions like the United Nations (UN) and international financial institutions. They must also restructure their societies until they resemble those of the Atlantic democracies. Historical progress, in the perspective of the “enlargement” school, consists of the gradual incorporation of all of humanity into the liberal world order, based on the political and social norms of the North Atlantic core.

This article will argue that this consensus version of American strategy—shared in different ways by the administrations of Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama, though not by the administration of George H. W. Bush—marks a radical departure from two centuries of American strategy and diplomatic practice. The world-order project of the United States from the eighteenth to the twentieth century was the replacement of a global “system of states” by a global “society of states,” to use the distinction made famous by international relations theorist Hedley Bull. Within this project, shared by the Western great powers,

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there was a subsidiary Anglo-American tradition of opposition to the economic closure of the world, represented by shared British and American support of the Open Door in Latin America and China. Within the Anglo-American tradition, the US's "revolution principles" made American statesmen more sympathetic to republicanism and anti-imperialism than the British.

In favoring the reorganization of global political space on the basis of norms disseminated from an original Euro-American core, this traditional approach resembles the contemporary enlargement school, but there is a profound difference. The universal adoption of mostly procedural Westphalian statehood and legal and diplomatic norms did not require the homogenization of all societies on the planet. The reorganization of domestic societies and cultures required by Westphalian enlargement was much more limited than that implied by the contemporary American doctrine of "the liberal world order," according to which, only "market democracies" are legitimate. To use the language of Bull and the English School of International Relations, the idea of market democracy enlargement, collapses the distinction between a society of states and a homogeneous cosmopolitan society.¹ To use terms from another member of the English School, Martin Wight, the project of market democracy enlargement replaces the limited "rationalist" project of traditional American internationalism with a much more radical "revolutionary" project of universalizing the social order found in contemporary North America and Western Europe.²

The revolutionary post-Cold War project of market democracy enlargement around the core of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) alliance has already run aground. It has provoked the resistance of China and Russia, great powers which are engaged in a *de facto* Cold War II with the United States and its legacy Cold War I allies. Developing countries like India, Brazil and others in the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) insist on greater autonomy in their own economic policy than are allowed by the "Washington Consensus." Hopes that the toppling of Arab autocrats—Saddam Hussein, Muammar Gaddafi, Hosni Mubarak, and Bashar al-Assad—would lead to the emergence of liberal multiparty democracies in the Arab world have been frustrated in a horrific way. In response, the United States and its allies should abandon the triumphalist revolutionary project of "enlargement" for an updated version of its historical goal of achieving a *modus vivendi* among different societies within a single Westphalian society of states.

The Globalization of the Westphalian System

When the United States won its independence, the Westphalian society of states was still limited to Europe and its colonies. Three premodern empires—the Chinese, Mughal, and Ottoman—dominated much of East Asia, South Asia, and the Muslim world. Long before the United States emerged as the dominant power in the system, American presidents, diplomats, traders, and soldiers benefited from and occasionally encouraged the incorporation of these rival regional civilizations into the expanding Westphalian order.

The incorporation of non-Western societies into the expanding Westphalian society of states took different forms, depending on their level of development, or what was known patronizingly as “the standard of civilization (SOC).”³ As international law professor David Fidler explained:

The SOC solved the philosophical problem by requiring that non-Western countries become “civilized” in order to join the international society of States. To be a member of Westphalian civilization, a non-Western country had to become a State that (1) guaranteed basic rights, as understood in the West, for foreign nationals; (2) had an organized political bureaucracy with the capacity to run governmental functions and organize the country for self-defense; (3) had a Western-style domestic system of law, with courts and written codes of law, that administered justice fairly within its territory; (4) had diplomatic resources and institutions to allow the State to engage in international relations; (5) abided by international law; and (6) conformed to the customs, norms, and mores accepted in Western societies.⁴

Using demands for trade or the protection of sailors, merchants or missionaries as an excuse, Western great powers coerced or pressured already literate, urban, agrarian societies like China, Japan and Siam (Thailand) into adapting Westphalian diplomatic and legal institutions and accepting a new status as one of a number of equal states in the enlarged Westphalian system. More primitive, stateless societies or societies based on chiefdoms or weak kingships, like those of American and Australian and African aborigines, were defined as “barbaric” by the standard of civilization and assigned to the tutelage of one or more great powers. In between was a third category of weak but relatively competent states like the Ottoman Empire and late imperial China and the newly independent republics of Latin America, which were subject to “capitulations” in the form of “unequal treaties” dictating trade concessions and the treatment of western nationals.

In the case of China, British and French intervention in the Opium Wars crippled the regime and produced a period of disorder that ended only with Mao Tse-Tung’s communist revolution in 1949—or perhaps only later, after the Great

Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. Following the “opening” of Japan by the US Commodore Matthew Perry in 1853–54, and the Meiji Restoration, Japan was much more successful at preemptive westernization, modernization, and conversion of itself into a strong state in the Westphalian order. Siam likewise maintained its formal independence, unlike the nations of French Indochina, which were incorporated into the French empire.

For all its differences with the imperial monarchies of Europe, the United States also tended to approve of the expansion of the “civilized” Westphalian society of states because it enabled the spread of commerce and Christianity. With Britain, the United States sought to avoid the closure of non-Western regions under the exclusive economic and political control of a single Western great power or Japan. Both the Monroe Doctrine of 1823 and the Open Door notes in China in 1899–1900 originated with suggestions for shared Anglo-American action by British governments. The United States protested ineffectually against the late nineteenth-century partition of Africa by the European empires, in which Britain took part reluctantly, preferring as it did the “empire of free trade.” The Open Door approach arguably represents a common Anglo-American or Dutch-Anglo-American tradition of preference for a “Grotian” world order based on commerce and international law, distinct from the *Machtpolitik* of continental European powers like France, Prussia/Germany, and Russia.

Republican Security Theory: Anti-Westphalian or Liberal Westphalian?

The philosophical underpinnings of mainstream American grand strategy in the twentieth century and earlier are best explained by what Daniel Deudney, an international relations and political science professor at Johns Hopkins University, has called “republican security theory.”⁵ Republican security theory takes seriously the claim of American statesmen that a favorable world order is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of “republican liberty” at home.

President Woodrow Wilson invoked the logic of republican security when he spoke of the need to “make the world safe for democracy.” By that, he did not mean that American democracy could never be safe until every country on the planet had a democratic government (a claim made by more recent presidents, as we will see below). Instead, he made a subtler argument, linking the threat of war and high levels of military preparedness to a degree of domestic regimentation and mobilization incompatible with civil liberty and with democracy, because of the need to shift power from slow-moving legislatures to decisive executives. According to Wilson, “if Germany won it would change the course of our civiliza-

tion and make the United States a military nation” because of the need for defensive militarization by the United States.⁶ As Robert J. Art, an international relations professor at Brandeis University, has observed, “The threat of a German victory in World War I provoked Woodrow Wilson’s fear that America’s democratic system would be subverted by the huge military buildup that the United States would require to protect itself from the German hegemon.”⁷

Similar arguments were made by American internationalists during World War II and the Cold War. Franklin D. Roosevelt’s budget director, Lewis I. Douglas, argued against isolationism: “To retreat to the cyclone cellar here means, ultimately, to establish a totalitarian state at home.”⁸ In his “military-industrial complex” speech in 1961, President Dwight D. Eisenhower also warned of defensive militarization—while blaming it chiefly, not on greedy defense contractors, but on the genuine Soviet threat: “This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. . . *We recognize the imperative need for this development* (emphasis added). Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications.”⁹ Like Wilson and Roosevelt, who had hoped for a great-power concert supervising a peaceful world, Eisenhower called on the Soviets to abandon their aggressive revisionist strategy and collaborate in an international system based on “a confederation. . . of equals” and “disarmament, with mutual honor and confidence.”

I would argue that the logic of republican security led American policymakers like Presidents Wilson, Roosevelt, and Eisenhower not to reject the Westphalian society of states, but rather to favor a modified version of Westphalian compatible with republican liberal values. All envisioned a global community that would continue to be based on sovereign states, not a cosmopolitan society of individuals. Far from undermining the state-centered Westphalian system, the American emphasis on human rights represented a modified version of it. Under the older rules of the Westphalian order, legitimate states were required to treat foreign ambassadors, merchants, and missionaries according to certain minimal standards. Requiring states to respect the basic rights of their own citizens was a natural extension of this approach.

Attempts to establish respect for basic human rights as a basis for state legitimacy did not require all states to conform to a single model in other respects. Significantly, FDR’s “Four Freedoms” did not include the freedom to elect a government of one’s choice. Nondemocratic regimes, as well as democracies, could allow freedom of speech, freedom from fear and freedom of worship, and achieve minimal freedom from want among their citizens, without necessarily transitioning to multiparty democracy. America’s vision of world order in the twentieth

century, then, was less a departure from state-centered Westphalianism than a modification of it informed by versions of republican security theory.¹⁰

Degrees of Sovereignty

As the most powerful state in the system in the twentieth century, the United States had a growing ability to influence the norms of world order. Guided by both republican liberal idealism and opposition to imperial blocs closed to American trade and investment, the United States promoted visions of a postimperial world. In Europe, the United States supported independent statehood or autonomy within multiethnic states for nationalities which presumptively met the standard of civilization. President Wilson viewed national self-determination as the logical corollary of democracy, insisting that “no peace can last, or ought to last, which does not recognize and accept the principle that governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that no right anywhere exists to hand peoples about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were property.” Later, in defending the League of Nations, the president emphasized that “every land belonged to the native stock that lived in it, and that nobody had the right to dictate either the form of government or the control of territory to those people who were born and bred and had their lives and happiness to make there.”

On 8 January 1918, following the US entry into World War I, President Wilson set out American war aims. His “Fourteen Points” included “a readjustment of the frontiers of Italy. . . along clearly recognizable lines of nationality” (IX); “the freest opportunity to autonomous development” for “[t]he peoples of Austria-Hungary” (X); “the relations of the several Balkan States to one another determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality. . .” (XI); “autonomous development” for “the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule,” combined with the “secure sovereignty” of Turkey (XII). In addition, “An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations. . .” (XIII).¹¹

President Wilson and like-minded Americans opposed the direct annexation of former Ottoman and German colonial territories into the British and French empires. Instead, these areas were to be governed as “mandates” under a single mandatory power subject to League of Nations oversight. In practice, however, they became *de facto* British and French colonial possessions. President Roosevelt and his aides wanted to avoid a repetition of the failure of the mandate system after World War II. At the same time, Americans understood the Atlantic Charter of 1941 to have committed the UN alliance to the goal of eventual self-

determination for all nations, including those ruled by the allied British and French empires. The UN Trusteeship Council system was intended to be an improvement over the League of Nations mandate system. In practice, only a small number of colonial nations, including New Guinea, Ruanda-Urundi, and Tanganyika (united with Zanzibar to form Tanzania), achieved gradual independence in this way. In the event, the dissolution of the European colonial empires occurred in a rapid and disorganized way during the Cold War, as a result of nationalist rebellions, the exhaustion of European colonial powers and Soviet-American rivalry for legitimacy in the postcolonial Third World.

Modernization and Development in the Postcolonial World

Rapid decolonization after 1945 produced numerous postcolonial states, many of them weak and with borders that did not correspond to actual ethnic or linguistic divisions. Although the term *standard of civilization* fell out of practice, something like the concept remained. Influential midcentury American and European academics and other experts devoted considerable thought to helping to equip postcolonial countries with the criteria of Westphalian statehood—“modernization”—and to assist in the transition from agrarianism or pastoralism to an urban-industrial economy—“development.”

Unlike later advocates of shock therapy to produce rapid transitions to “market democracy,” theorists of modernization and development did not believe that merely holding multiparty elections, privatizing public property or reducing trade barriers would be successful, if the cultural and institutional preconditions for liberal democracy and a modern mixed economy were lacking. The United States tolerated modernizing autocracies like that of the Shah in Iran and military juntas in Latin America. The focus of US Cold War development aid programs like the Truman administration’s “Point Four” program was on basic infrastructure development and industrialization, with American state-capitalist infrastructure projects like the Tennessee Valley Authority as a model.

By the 1970s, the modernization and development paradigms had lost support among American policymakers and academics.¹² American economist Paul Krugman has attributed the demise of midcentury development economics to the fact that, although it was largely correct, it could not easily be modelled by the kind of mathematical economics that became predominant in the United States in the late twentieth century. According to Krugman, “[H]igh development theory rested critically on the assumption of economies of scale, but nobody knew how to put these scale economies into formal models.”¹³ As a result, more easily-modeled assumptions about competitive markets with many producers and no

economies of scale came to inform the Washington Consensus that replaced classic development theory in the last quarter of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first. Under the reign of the Washington Consensus, a set of ten economic policy prescriptions that was considered the standard reform package for crisis-wracked developing countries, the emphasis in development economics shifted from infrastructure and industrialization to deregulation, privatization, and good governance.¹⁴

Still, more was involved in the demise of mid-twentieth century development theory than the rise of mathematical economics in US economics departments. In the 1950s and 1960s, American development theory was part of the New Deal liberal consensus, and along with that, consensus was attacked from left and right. On the left, a reaction against the identification of progressive modernity with large-scale industry and urbanization, associated with thinkers like E. F. Schumacher and Jane Jacobs, produced a corollary defense of peasants and small producers in developing countries whose traditional livelihoods and ways of life were threatened by state-sponsored megaprojects.¹⁵ On the right, revisionist accounts attributed economic backwardness in postcolonial countries to misguided statism and prescribed free markets as the solution.¹⁶ The increasingly popular environmentalist movement also helped to delegitimize classic development theory, by opposing icons of modernity like hydropower dams and nuclear power plants in favor of solar and wind power and substituting the ideal of “sustainability” for “modernization” or “development.”¹⁷ The discrediting of theories of gradual political and economic modernization set the stage for a radical departure from traditional American thinking about how to build a postcolonial and liberal version of the Westphalian society of states following the end of the Cold War.

“From Containment to Enlargement”

On 21 September 1993, Anthony Lake, assistant to the president for national security affairs, gave an address at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, DC, entitled “From Containment to Enlargement,” identifying US foreign policy with the goal of multiplying the number of “market democracies.”

According to Lake, the defining characteristic of the post-Cold War era was the triumph of the model of the “market democracy.” Throughout the speech, Lake linked democratization with marketization: “Both processes strengthen each other: democracy alone can produce justice, but not the material goods necessary for individuals to thrive; markets alone can expand wealth, but not that sense of justice without which civilized societies perish.”¹⁸ The radical implication

was that opposing not only nondemocratic capitalist societies like Singapore but also any version of democratic socialism should be a central goal of US foreign policy.

Lake considered the following sentence so important that he italicized it:

*The successor to a doctrine of containment must be a strategy of enlargement—enlargement of the world's free community of market democracies.*¹⁹

Despite Lake's use of the word "must," the enlargement doctrine was merely one of several strategies the United States might have adopted following the Cold War. The Cold War ended with the Soviet agreement to end its control over eastern Europe and to abandon its strategy of global revisionism. The dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the democratization of Russia followed great-power peace, but were not its preconditions. President George H. W. Bush had even warned against the disintegration of the USSR in his "Chicken Kiev" speech opposing Ukrainian independence from Moscow. Between the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the fragmenting of the Soviet Union in 1991, American policymakers had been willing to work with a Soviet Union that behaved as a status quo power in international relations, whether it was a "market democracy" in its internal organization or not. The same was true in the case of China, to say nothing of illiberal, autocratic allies of the United States like Saudi Arabia.

An even more radical version of the enlargement doctrine was set forth in the Second Inaugural Address of President George W. Bush:

We are led, by events and common sense, to one conclusion: The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world.

America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one. From the day of our Founding, we have proclaimed that every man and woman on this earth has rights, and dignity, and matchless value, because they bear the image of the Maker of Heaven and earth. Across the generations we have proclaimed the imperative of self-government, because no one is fit to be a master, and no one deserves to be a slave. Advancing these ideals is the mission that created our Nation. It is the honorable achievement of our fathers. Now it is the urgent requirement of our nation's security, and the calling of our time.

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.²⁰

These themes have continued under the Obama administration. Although President Obama has been much more cautious in deploying force than his im-

mediate predecessor, the Arab spring inspired a policy based on a version of what I am calling enlargement. According to the Obama administration, three Arab autocrats—Mubarak in Egypt, Gaddafi in Libya, and Assad in Syria—had to “go” in favor of democratization and marketization. In Libya, the United States waged an undeclared war with its NATO allies Britain and France, and in Syria the United States armed and supported opponents of the Assad regime. In Egypt, after elections brought the Muslim Brotherhood to power, the United States acquiesced in the coup that restored military rule under Gen Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in 2013. Meanwhile, in Eastern Europe, the simultaneous enlargement of the European Union and NATO provoked a backlash by Russia and low-level proxy war in Ukraine.

Shock Therapies

In different ways, Presidents Obama and Bush have continued the post-Cold War enlargement strategy announced by the Clinton administration. Gone was the more modest vision of Wilson and FDR of a liberal Westphalian system, which by reducing security costs, would enable the evolution of democratic regimes in different countries, without imposing or requiring democracy, and permitting the coexistence of democratic and nondemocratic regimes. Gone, too, was the idea that some societies needed generations of political modernization and economic development before they could become effectively functioning democracies or capitalist economies. The old standard of civilization allowed some societies to become Westphalian without becoming wholly Western, and had distinguished “civilized” from “barbaric” or “backward” communities. In its place, the Clinton and Bush administrations promoted a vision of the world in which the distinction between developed and developing countries had been erased, and the most important dividing line was between “market democracies” and all other countries.

Shock therapy was the term given to the rapid transition of the post-Soviet economy in Russia from communism to capitalism under President Boris Yeltsin in the 1980s. But the post-Cold War American consensus required shock therapies or overnight transitions to democracy, as well as to market economics. The former dictatorships in South Korea and Taiwan, along with former military regimes in Latin America, were modern societies able to shift relatively smoothly from autocracy to electoral democracy. But it is far from clear that multiparty democracy in any meaningful sense exists in largely illiterate, agrarian societies like Afghanistan with strong ethnic and family associations and weak legal and political institutions, notwithstanding elections with international election ob-

servers. In Iraq, a multinational state, electoral hegemony by the Shia majority provoked conflict with the Kurdish and Sunni minorities.

If it was unrealistic to expect the post-Soviet economy to make a successful rapid transition to a western-style mixed economy, it was delusional to expect that result in many developing countries. Midcentury American and European theorists of modernization and development had their blind spots, but the abandonment of any working theory of stages of economic development created a vacuum which was filled by naïve ideas and fads in the 1990s and 2000s.

One fad was the idea that trade liberalization would somehow produce development in poor countries, but most global trade is among already developed societies with similar industries and similar consumers. Before they can participate in the modern global economy, people in the poorest postcolonial countries need the basics of modernity: infrastructure, reliable and cheap energy, safe and sanitary water, basic health care, not to mention the rule of law, enabled by the professionalization of civil servants and soldiers paid out of tax revenues rather than bribes and other forms of corruption.

Absent these underpinnings of a modern economy, it was naïve for many champions of globalization to hope that peasant farmers in Africa or South America could sell their products to consumers in the global North. Equally naïve was the idea that microfinance and the conversion of shanty-town dwellers into owners of their shanty-town homes could create a middle class in an economy that did not participate in lucrative global supply chains for goods, resources or services.

The New Sovereignism and the BRICS Alternative

The post-Cold War American strategy of enlargement has produced a backlash by Security Council members China and Russia and by the governments of many developing nations. Neither contemporary China or Russia is a “market democracy” that passes muster by the exacting standards of Washington. China has been called a “Market Leninist” state—a one-party regime with an economy dominated by state-owned enterprises with a neomercantilist trade policy of export promotion in the service of its manufacturing industries. Under President Vladimir Putin, Russia is what *CNN*’s Fareed Zakaria called an “illiberal democracy” with a mixed economy.²¹

While tensions between the United States and Russia over Ukraine and Syria, and between the United States and China over the South China Sea, have escalated to near-Cold War levels, the geopolitical rivalry has not been accompanied by a single counterrevolutionary ideology opposing America’s own “revolu-

tionary” ideology of market democracy enlargement. Instead of agreeing on a single ideal social system, China, Russia, and major non-Western countries like India promote what has been called “sovereignism”—a reassertion of the right of sovereign states to noninterference in their internal affairs in reaction to post-Cold War American and Western ideas like “the responsibility to protect” and the use of Western-funded nongovernmental organizations to promote “democratic revolutions” or “orange revolutions.”²²

In politics, the new sovereignism involves the rejection of the idea that non-democratic or partly democratic regimes are inherently illegitimate. In economics, the new sovereignism rejects American and European pressure to create a single rule-governed global economy, and defends the right of countries to deviate from free market norms if they judge such deviations to be in their interest. These ideas inform a number of new international institutions which are being created by non-Western countries as an alternative to traditional global institutions dominated by the United States, Western Europe and Japan. In the military realm, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a *de facto* anti-Western military alliance whose members include China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, with Iran, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Mongolia as observer states and Turkey, Belarus, and Sri Lanka as dialogue partners.²³

Then, there are new international economic institutions set up to parallel or circumvent those controlled by the United States and its European allies. One is the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), created in 2015 as an initiative of China. Although the United States pressured its major allies not to join the AIIB, only Tokyo deferred to Washington; Britain, France, Germany, Italy, South Korea and Israel, among others, chose to take part.

The new sovereignism is widely portrayed in US elite circles as an aggressive attack against the “liberal world order,” what the neoconservative thinker Robert Kagan calls “the world America made.”²⁴ It is more accurate to view the new sovereignism as being a defense of an older American liberal internationalist view of world order, which did not insist on global political and economic homogeneity and conformity, against the radically different ideology of enlargement that the United States under presidents of both parties has promoted in different ways since the election of Clinton in 1992.

Beyond Market Democracy: Reforming the Global Society of States

The post-Cold War adoption of the enlargement of market democracies by the United States as a successor strategy to containment was not inevitable. Indeed, the administration of George H. W. Bush, which presided over the end of

the Cold War, demonstrated that an alternative approach to post-Cold War global order was possible.

The Bush 41 administration's approach to foreign policy is often described as realist, but it is more accurately described as traditional liberal internationalist. The "new world order" that Bush called for in his 6 March 1991 speech to Congress was, in fact, the system of international law under a great-power concert envisioned by the architects of the League of Nations and the United Nations. The goal was peace, which would be achieved by great-power cooperation, international organization and international law, not by the revolutionary method of universalizing a single system of politics or political economy.

... Twice before in this century, an entire world was convulsed by war. Twice this century, out of the horrors of war hope emerged for enduring peace. Twice before, those hopes proved to be a distant dream, beyond the grasp of man.

Until now, the world we've known has been a world divided—a world of barbed wire and concrete block, conflict and cold war.

Now, we can see a new world coming into view. A world in which there is the very real prospect of a new world order. In the words of Winston Churchill, a "world order" in which "the principles of justice and fair place. . . protect the weak against the strong. . ." A world where the United Nations, freed from cold war stalemate, is poised to fulfill the historic vision of its founders. A world in which freedom and respect for human rights finds a home among all nations.

The Gulf War put this new world order to its first test, and, my fellow Americans, we passed that test.²⁵

Significantly, President Bush emphasized "respect for human rights," not democracy. "For the sake of our principles, for the sake of the Kuwaiti people, we stood our ground. . . Tonight, Kuwait is free."²⁶ Kuwait was free in the sense of being independent and liberated from foreign conquest. But democratizing Kuwait had not been one of the Gulf War's aims and democratizing the world was not the goal of Bush's "new world order." The first President Bush's state-centered vision of a new world order under the auspices of the great powers of the Security Council, democratic and nondemocratic alike, could hardly be more different than the second President Bush's call for ending tyranny in the world. As in traditional American liberal internationalism, in the vision of George H. W. Bush, a peaceful world organized as a global Westphalian society of states would make democracies easier to establish and maintain, but would not necessarily make democracy the only form of government in the world. For Bush 41, as for FDR, to participate in the society of states, countries had to respect basic human rights, which did not include the right to free elections or free trade.

In the aftermath of the debacles caused by wars of regime change in the Middle East and the failure of rapid democratization and marketization in many countries in which the conditions for successful market democracy were partly or wholly absent, the United States should abandon enlargement for something like Bush 41's vision of a "new world order." Instead of denouncing "sovereignists" in Moscow, Beijing, New Delhi and elsewhere as opponents of "the liberal world order," the United States should work with other established and emerging great powers with the goal of maintaining great power peace and promoting economic development in a multipolar world.

The British writer C. S. Lewis observed: "We all want progress, but if you're on the wrong road, progress means doing an about-turn and walking back to the right road; and in that case, the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive man."²⁷ At this point in history, for American foreign policy to go forward, it must first go back.

Notes

1. Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 4th ed. (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012).
2. Martin Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1992).
3. See Gerrit W. Gong, *The Standard of "Civilization" and International Society* (Leicester, England: Clarendon, 1984).
4. David P. Fidler, "The Return of the Standard of Civilization," *Chicago Journal of International Law* 2, no. 1, article 9 (2001), <http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cjil/vol2/iss1/9/>.
5. Daniel Deudney, *Bounding Power: Republican Security Theory from the Polis to the Global Village* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008). A similar interpretation can be found in Michael Lind, *The American Way of Strategy: U.S. Foreign Policy and the American Way of Life* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2006).
6. Quoted in Lind, *The American Way*, 79.
7. Robert J. Art, *A Grand Strategy for America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 182.
8. Quoted in Lind, *The American Way*, 105.
9. Stuart Nagel ed., *Encyclopedia of Policy Studies*, 2nd ed., (Urbana-Champaign, Illinois: CRC Press, 1994), 828.
10. From this, it follows that recent proposals of global recognition of a "responsibility to protect" are also compatible with the state-centered Westphalian society of states. Indeed, it can be argued that "R2P" is merely a restatement of human rights obligations already binding on states under the United Nations Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Recognizing the legitimacy of this approach does not require supporting particular foreign wars or interventions carried out by countries that invoke the responsibility to protect, like the United States, Britain and France in the recent war in Libya.
11. The Avalon Project, Yale Law School, "President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points," 2008, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/wilson14.asp.
12. Michael E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); and Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).
13. Paul Krugman, "The Fall and Rise of Development Economics," in Donald A. Schon and Lloyd Rodwin's *Rethinking the Development Experience* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1994), <https://www.scribd.com/document/271289444/The-Fall-and-Rise-of-Development-Economics>.

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