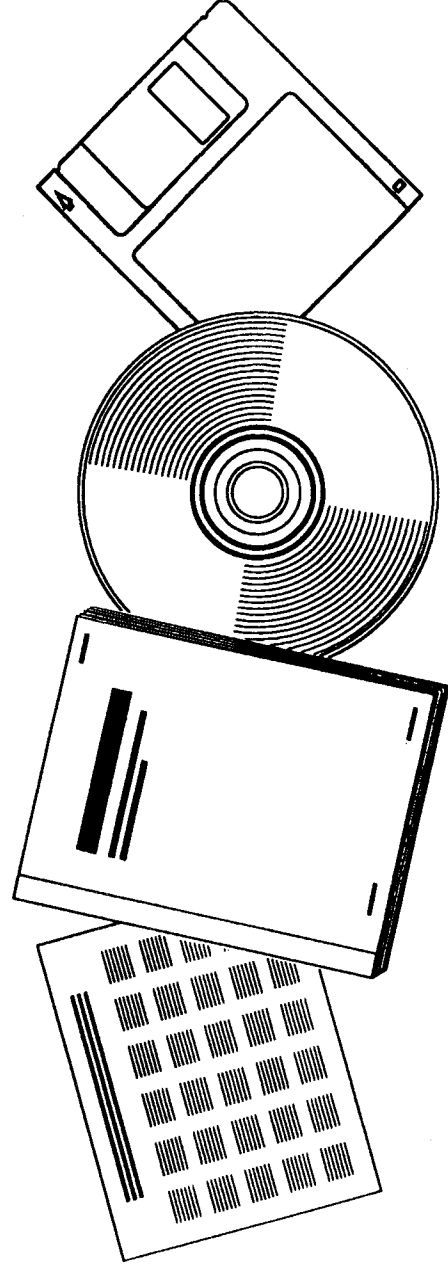


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**World Order in the Post-Post-Cold War Era:
Beyond the Rogue State Problem?**

Bradley H. Roberts

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of the task was to develop a think piece on the emerging international security agenda and the role of the United States in a changing world. It arose from the perception that defense policymakers and military planners tend to make a number of fundamental assumptions about the future that are neither well defined nor tested. In particular, the assumption that the United States must plan now for the future reemergence of cold-war-like bipolarity or for a multipolar world merit scrutiny.

The paper identifies six alternative futures in the timeframe 2000-2010: Cold War redux, multipolarity, a "new medievalism," order enlarged, stagnant order, and contested order. It evaluates the likelihood of these alternatives, arguing that the first three are less likely than the second three in this time frame. It emphasizes the substantial international order built up over the last few decades and explores the international security consequences of the failure to enlarge and extend that order. Whether that order enlarges, stagnates, or becomes contested in the timeframe 2000-2010 will determine to a significant degree how stable and secure the bipolar or multipolar world of future decades will be. The paper then evaluates likely U.S. preferences, arguing that the United States could cope with each, but would find an enlarging order the future best suited to national interests and competencies.

The paper then turns to the means to secure this preferred future, especially as they relate to defense policy choices and the use of force. The central arguments here are (1) the United States must be both restrained and purposeful in its use of force if its power and leadership are to be accepted as legitimate; (2) the United States must respond to challengers to the existing world order in ways that do not motivate other powers to emerge as balancers of U.S. power; and (3) its political defense of the existing world order must begin to address the fears of some potential balancers that this order is little more than a status quo created by the United States for its singular benefit and held by its brute force as the "world's only superpower."

WORLD ORDER IN THE *POST-POST-COLD WAR* ERA: BEYOND THE ROGUE STATE PROBLEM?

Rogue states have emerged as a central focus of post-Cold War U.S. foreign and security policy. To be sure, they are not the sole focus. The United States has been concerned with events in Russia, China, Central Europe, and East Asia, with wars in Bosnia and Somalia, and with a variety of other crises and challenges in other parts of the world. Moreover, their importance as a focal point of U.S. policy has been exaggerated by some observers.¹ But the presence of a handful of states whose domestic and international behavior violates broadly accepted norms has had an important impact on the thinking of the United States about the challenges of the new era.² This rogue state problem has helped to concentrate defense planning--on major regional contingencies against such states in the Middle East and East Asia. It also has helped to clarify the goal of U.S. foreign and security policy--enlargement of the community of states committed to political and economic liberalism.³ And it has helped to give purpose to U.S. policy at a time of uncertainty--by casting the world scene in starkly moral terms.

What happens if the problem is somehow "solved"? What if, in the coming few years, Korea is peacefully reunified and recalcitrant leaders of states like Iraq, Libya, and Cuba are replaced by more conciliatory regimes? This paper begins with the premise that some such constellation of events is possible over the next five to ten years. Indeed, it is at least sufficiently likely to require some investigation of these questions. It is not essential to this premise that the rogue states or leaders entirely disappear, only that their centrality as an organizing principle of U.S. foreign and security policy lapses or otherwise loses its significance.

¹ For the argument that the Pentagon concocted the rogue state problem in order to sustain public support for an assertive U.S. foreign and military policy, see Michael Klare, *Rogue States and Nuclear Outlaws: America's Search for a New Foreign Policy* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995).

² Anthony Lake, "Confronting Backlash States," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 2 (March/April 1994), pp. 45-55.

³ William Clinton, "National Security Strategy," The White House, February 1996.

What challenge or set of challenges might succeed the rogue state problem as a central organizing focus of U.S. policy? How will the United States conceive the goals of its foreign and security policies, and thus its defense priorities? In what ways might new challenges infuse U.S. policy with new purpose? The essential goal of this paper is to look beyond the post-cold war era to the *post-post-Cold War*, as defined in terms of U.S. national security interests. What will be the essential tasks of building and preserving a stable world order? What will be the likely role of U.S. military force in support of that order? How might U.S. choices and actions in the current era shape the future era, whether for better or worse?

This paper offers some speculative thinking about these questions. It begins with a description of six plausible alternative futures for 2000-2010. For each alternative, basic world order tasks (i.e., actions relevant to preserving and extending orderly political-military relations among states) and basic tasks of U.S. defense policy are described. The purpose of this review is to identify a reasonably comprehensive set of circumstances dictating when and how force might be used, and the political context of such use.

The paper then evaluates the relative likelihood of alternative futures, assesses U.S. preferences, and identifies implications for policy. Four arguments are offered. First, the most commonly debated alternatives--a resumption of the Cold War and the emergence of multipolarity--are relatively unlikely in this time period. Second, this misfocus has distracted attention from more likely alternatives--those associated with the future strength of the international order inherited from the prior half century. In particular, too little attention has been given to a potential clash between states aspiring to play a more prominent role in existing world order institutions and status quo powers that have grown insular, perhaps even complacent in their relative security and prosperity. Third, the United States must take care not to act in ways that motivate the emergence of states seeking to balance its power. Fourth, this care entails attending to the perceived justice of the order that the United States seeks to defend, and to the legitimacy of the United States as leader of that order. If the United States fails to establish its legitimacy as the leader of a just international order, challengers to its power will emerge and use their power to contest the status quo the United States seeks to defend.

A. ALTERNATIVE FUTURES

What alternative futures are reasonably predictable in the decade or two ahead? This section identifies six such alternatives. Each specifies a distinct structure and configuration of power in the international system and related bases of power; each entails different tasks for building world order and for U.S. defense policy. Within each, specific types of challenges will be posed by whatever states seek to exploit military power for aggressive purposes.⁴

1. Cold War Redux

In this scenario, a peer competitor to the United States reemerges. Moreover, this competitor not only rivals the United States in terms of power but also contests U.S. influence both within the state's own region as well as globally. Accordingly, a bipolar standoff reemerges, as does strategic nuclear competition. The competitive pursuit of regional and strategic military advantage, and the necessity of preserving a stable competition, again become major preoccupations of the United States.⁵

How might such a scenario come into being? No states other than Russia or China appear as plausible peer competitors of the United States for the foreseeable future. Others might be capable from a strictly technical point of view--Germany or Japan, for instance--but do not seek such a competition and otherwise lack the global influence necessary to anchor one side of a bipolar military standoff. If political and economic reform fails in either Russia or China, leadership in either country might see benefit in pursuing assertive foreign policies, perhaps merely in the hope of building national cohesion and thus minimizing domestic instability. A decision to challenge the U.S. position as the most powerful state would obviously require a specific motivation vis-à-vis the United States. Such a motivation might emerge from the belief that the United States had sought to exploit the weakness of the aggrieved state in order to catapult itself into a position of uncontested strategic superiority. The resulting humiliation, combined with visions of grandeur, could provide the missing motive.

⁴ Charles Krauthammer has coined the term "weapon state" to describe "small outlaw states....with an obsessive drive to hightech military development as the only way to leapfrog history and to place themselves on a footing from which to challenge a Western-imposed order." Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 1 (Winter 1991), p. 31.

⁵ This is the worst-case scenario that each of the military Services seems to anticipate in the second decade of the next century.

What world order task would confront the United States in such a future? The Cold War provides an obvious analogue: containment of the challenger, consolidation and expansion of the U.S.-led community, and regional stabilization. Middle or small powers armed with weapons of mass destruction would likely seek to exploit such a bipolar confrontation by playing one side off against another. Regional wars involving nuclear, biological, or chemical (NBC) weapons might again become potential flashpoints of global confrontation. In such a circumstance, the United States would seek to build and maintain a static balance of power that aims at promoting abandonment of confrontation by the opposing power, while also maintaining if not expanding its regional security roles.

What would be the central tasks of U.S. defense policy in the light of such repolarization? The potential for strategic confrontation would again dominate U.S. policy, as would conventional preparedness to protect regional allies. Operations other than war and multilateral peace-keeping and peace-making exercises would fade in importance, although there might well be peace-keeping exercises analogous to those of the Cold War in areas where vital interests are not at stake. If the challenger were Russia, the United States would likely rebuild its NATO deployments while seeking new security partners along the Russian periphery. If the challenger were China, the United States would likely expand its security partnership with Japan while seeking more formal alliance with others in Asia, including, not least of all, India.

2. Multipolarity

In this scenario, the world order shifts from a global basis to a regional one. In each region, one power emerges as dominant (or two powers establish a bipolar balance). Each major power acquires a mix of power assets analogous to those of the other dominant powers, such that none dominates globally.

How might this come to pass? Europe would emerge as a power in its own right, as would India and perhaps Brazil. Russia and China would content themselves with largely regional roles. Japan would emerge as a power with military means befitting its economic status and would clearly demarcate with China lines of interest in the region. The United States would significantly draw down if not withdraw its military assets and guarantees from Europe and Asia, and content itself with a primarily hemispheric role.

Whether such trends are inevitable is hotly contested in the political science community.⁶ Michael May of Stanford University has argued that nuclear factors dictate just such a multipolar order, as they compel the major powers to accommodate the interests of others, and thus to define their interests regionally.⁷ This scenario would likely also require a restructuring of the global economy along regional lines and the creation of institutions within each region, where few now exist, to promote regional integration and to facilitate the hegemony of each dominant power.

The primary world order task in this scenario would be preservation of stable intraregional balances of power and a flexible global balance. This might be not be difficult, if the dominant actors are primarily focused on affairs within their region and do not contest the influence of other major powers within their respective spheres. It could be more challenging if the values and interests of the major power in each region are sharply contradictory or antithetical to those of the United States and Europe. Countering the influence of disgruntled weapon states would be the responsibility primarily of the regional institutions or dominant powers.

U.S. defense policy requirements could be fairly limited. Under the benign version of this scenario, the U.S. military might find itself called upon only to protect U.S. interests in the Western hemisphere and in neighboring seas. Under a less benign version, the United States could be called upon to protect the flexible balance of power, by occasionally lending its weight and power to the resolution of contests of power in other regions.

3. A New Medievalism

A third scenario involves the emergence of a different type of international system, one in which interstate relations of power are deeply submerged under overlapping supranational, transnational, subnational, and national processes and institutions, and in which individuals identify themselves not just or even primarily with

⁶ For the argument that multipolarity is inevitable, see, for example, Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Emerging Structure of International Politics," *International Security*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Fall 1993); Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise," *International Security*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Spring 1993); and John Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War," *International Security*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Summer 1990).

⁷ Michael May, *Rivalries Between Nuclear Power Projectors: Why the Lines Will Be Drawn Again* (Stanford, Calif.: Center for International Security and Arms Control, May 1996).

the state, but instead with groups or networks other than states. Writing in 1977, British scholar Hedley Bull characterized this future as "a new medievalism:"

"It might...seem fanciful to contemplate a return to the mediaeval model, but it is not fanciful to imagine that there might develop a modern and secular counterpart of it that embodies its central characteristic: a system of overlapping authority and multiple loyalty."⁸

In such a world, the sovereignty of states would be increasingly circumscribed, leaving even the most powerful ones, such as the United States, little freedom of maneuver. On the other hand, that sovereignty would not be at risk from the ambitions of well-armed revanchist states. The military power of states would be of declining relevance in determining the overall relations of power among spheres or units, as the locus of competition shifts from traditional power politics to corporate or group success in a complex 'system of systems.'

How might this come about? Bull noted five forces moving in this direction: the regional integration of states, the disintegration of some states, the restoration of private international violence, transnational organizations, and the technological unification of the world. The cumulative effect of such forces might be the weakening of the role of the state in political life and a weakening of other institutions in the military, trade, finance, information, health, and political domains.

In such a world, traditional balances of power among states would be highly static and thus seemingly an insignificant source of order. World order concerns would focus on limiting instability within specific parts of the 'system of systems.' At least two types of such instability are conceivable. In one, the instability is created by the non-state actor: this is an instability experienced largely domestically and susceptible to only limited international police responses. The second is the instability of the revolutionary--of a leader aimed at creating a new secular order, perhaps with claims to more transcendent values, and backed by weapons of significant strategic leverage. The United States might well find this future rich in opportunities to broker ad hoc coalitions against particular malefactors. In such a world, the emergence of a peer military competitor to the United States seems a remote possibility.

⁸ Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), pp. 254-255, 264-276.

Under this scenario, defense policy interests seem likely to shift away from major wars to problems of civil wars and prevention of terrorism. If the order among states seems unreliable, with the short-term potential of chaos and violence, the United States would seem likely to emphasize military measures that insulate it from instability, such as strategic deterrence and defense and the policing of a sphere of influence in the hemisphere.

4. Order Enlarged

Under this scenario, the community of states committed to democracy and free market principles would continue to expand, prosper, and integrate. The existing set of cooperative multilateral institutions (including those in the economic and political domains as well as the security one), and the rules of behavior they codify and enforce, would play an expanding role in the international system. They also would serve cumulatively to further marginalize the use of military power for aggressive purposes in pursuit of national ambitions. Relations of military power among states would increasingly be subsumed within a pattern of economic interaction and political fraternity sufficient to adjudicate or otherwise cope with any frictions or conflicts that emerge among states. The rule of law would expand, as would rule-governed economic and political activity among states. Interstate wars would be few or nonexistent. Power would inhere not just in military prowess but also in economic well-being, political appeal, and societal dynamism.⁹ The United States would be first-among-equals in an international order built on values consistent with those of its domestic life and managed through institutions led from Washington.

This scenario might come about with continued global democratization and economic liberalization, an intensification of cross-border contacts, a deepening of global civil society, and sustained U.S. leadership of and engagement in the institutions devoted to promote those processes. It would seem to require that the major powers find reasons to cooperate and to maintain a degree of accord sufficient to prevent divergent interests from threatening shared ones.

The primary world order task would be to deepen patterns of cooperation among major and minor powers while deterring and defeating where necessary those challengers

⁹ Joseph S. Nye, Jr. and William A. Owens argue that these factors will be the primary source of American power and leadership in the information-dominated world of the future. See Nye and Owens, "America's Information Edge," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 2 (March/April 1996), pp. 20-36.

that appear at the margins. The military elements of power would be important, especially for insulating the existing order from the depredations of weapon state challengers to specific regional status quos, but would essentially be submerged in a larger politico-economic context.

The U.S. military might not find this a particularly taxing world. A substantially enlarged order would ease the demands on the U.S. military by scaling down the requirements of strategic nuclear preparedness and by limiting deployments of forces to peacekeeping purposes. But stable relations among the major powers in Europe and Asia, as well as the possible predations of particularly aggressive and well-armed regimes of middle or small powers, seem likely to require a continued overseas military presence by the United States. Moreover, as first-among-equals on the global scene, the United States would likely be the sine-qua-non of any major military action taken to defend world order, and thus would likely see it necessary to maintain flexible forces capable of undertaking a broad range of missions, with a presumption that such actions will be taken in partnership with other nations committed to the defense of the order.

5. Stagnant Order

Under this scenario, order does not enlarge. Instead, it stagnates as the world divides into two zones, one characterized by a high degree of security and prosperity, and the other by poverty and conflict.¹⁰ Relations among the major powers could remain quite positive while integration of the trilateral community (Western Europe, North America, and East Asia) proceeds. But in the rest of the world, states weaken or collapse and war recurs frequently. From the perspective of the secure world, the primary relevance of the remainder of the world would lie "essentially in its nuisance potential."¹¹

This scenario might come about if one or more regions fall into anarchy (e.g., Africa, Central Asia, or Central Europe) and if the post-authoritarian governments in many developing countries and the post-totalitarian ones in the formerly communist world fail to secure their political and economic futures. Its likelihood is increased if the

¹⁰ See Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky, *The Real World Order: Zones of Peace/Zones of Turmoil* (Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House Publishers, 1993).

¹¹ As one Third World scholar put it, the "the rest of the world, the South, is not entirely irrelevant [to the new world order]. But its relevance lies essentially in its nuisance potential." Claude Ake, "The New World Order: A View from Africa," in Hans-Henrik Holm and Georg Sorensen, eds., *Whose World Order? Uneven Globalization and the End of the Cold War* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995), p. 33.

developed world fails to extend its security to others and to more fully integrate the poorer countries of the world into the global economy.

The primary world order task would be to insulate the orderly from the disorderly element. A subsidiary task would be to ameliorate the sources of conflict in the disorderly element. These could prove particularly challenging if states (or substate actors) in zones of insecurity are able to employ NBC weapons, or the threat of such weapons, to engage the interests of the more peaceful zone. It is important to note that, even in the timeframe envisioned here (the first decade of the next century), those weapons capabilities could be substantial. Weapon states within zones of instability could be predicted to act as overarmed thugs, using force to take what they want from their neighbors (and perhaps from their domestic populations). A related world order task would be to prevent recrudescence of old forms of behavior within the orderly sphere, the renationalization of defense and security affairs, and the emergence of bloc-defined conflict.¹²

U.S. defense policy would have to serve two interests. The first would be protection of order in the peaceful sphere, presumably through preservation of U.S. alliance relations along the periphery of zones of instability (as in Europe and Asia). The second would be some capacity to act, whether unilaterally or multilaterally, to police the most egregious acts of aggression and genocide in those zones.

6. Contested Order

Under this scenario, the stagnation described above reaches a point that the unequal distribution of security and prosperity is actively opposed by a growing number of states, and with it, the order of the more orderly zone. The opposition takes the form not just of popular disgruntlement and rhetorical confrontation but also an increasingly ideological division between states desirous of change internationally and those complacent in the status quo, the former backed by a willingness to use force in the pursuit of greater international and global "justice." In this scenario, the weapon states

¹² John Weltman has described this possibility as follows: "An international economy governed by a committee dominated by the United States, Japan, and Germany has been the result [of the failure of any one state to ensure the smooth running of the international economic system]. The committee has cobbled together by consensus a series of ad hoc responses to major issues that have arisen in the international economic system. Sooner or later, however, committees deadlock, and there is thus a risk that the world economy might break down into mutually hostile protectionist trade blocs. Once such blocs are established, there is a further risk that hostility might spill over from economics into political and security affairs." Weltman, *World Politics and the Evolution of War* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), p. 216.

could play a catalytic role within regions as revolutionary champions of renewal of order. A particularly troubling variant of this scenario would arise if a major power were to seek a leadership role of a globalizing movement aimed at overturning the U.S.-led status quo.

For this scenario to come about, the following conditions would have to be met. One is a breakdown in existing patterns of economic exchange and institutions of political cooperation. Another is disillusionment, born of unmet aspirations to prosper, to account for something, to be in control of national destiny. A third condition is grievance, born of the belief that the existing order is unjust because it serves only the interests of the rich and secure (and that the leaders of that order are motivated only by self interest). A breakdown in public health induced by environmental changes and/or emerging infectious diseases could magnify this sense of grievance. The final condition is a capacity to challenge the existing order, born of the ability to build or otherwise acquire high leverage weapons.

What consequences might follow from the emergence of a contested order? Laurence Martin of the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London has identified the following possibilities:

“Dissensus could take a number of forms. The simplest would be the refusal of the many who make up the United Nations to follow American preferences. That could lead to the United States abdicating the role of leader, probably not so much to take up isolation as to become more unilaterally assertive. A more complex and dangerous model would be the emergence of lesser but potentially plausible challengers for the lead role, probably first on a regional basis. Given the many inhibitions about actual inter-great-power warfare in today and tomorrow’s economic and military-technological world, the dangers in such a pattern are probably less those of direct confrontation than of inefficiency in dealing with problems and failure to reap the benefits of a coordinated approval to conflict. Nevertheless, the price of such disarray could be quite high.”¹³

At the very least, disputes over world order could lead to a severe weakening of existing international institutions, such as the major arms control and non-proliferation treaties, the mechanisms governing world trade, and the multilateral security

¹³ Laurence Martin, “Systemic Issues Characterizing Tomorrow’s International Order,” in Theodore H. Winkler and Peter Ziegler, eds., *The World of Tomorrow* (Bern, Switzerland: Paul Haupt Publishers, 1994), pp. 30-31.

organizations. Such a weakening would have serious negative consequences for a United States that exercises its influence and acts through these organizations.¹⁴

The world order task would depend upon the severity of the challenge being posed. At its most severe order would require insulating the secure from the threats of the challengers, which might, of course, satisfy the requirement for order but would do nothing to satisfy the call for justice. A more benign variant would require buttressing the existing bases of international cooperation and rejuvenating the legitimacy of U.S. leadership of the existing order.

In this scenario, the U.S. military would be called upon primarily to insulate the United States and its allies from the predations of challengers armed with NBC weapons.

B. EVALUATING PROBABILITIES

These six alternative futures encompass a spectrum of possibilities that are defined as reasonably possible. More extreme possibilities, such as the collapse of the international system into anarchy or its complete pacification, are excluded from this list as not likely in the timeframe identified here (the first decade of the next century). But if they are all plausible, which ones are more likely, and which ones less so?

The rebirth of international division such as that experienced during the Cold War cannot be dismissed. Russia and China both aspire to world leadership and both explain their current travails as necessary to gain the status appropriate to them. The bilateral relations of each with the United States certainly suggest continued tension and conflict in the years ahead. Moreover, there are signs in both capitals of resentment harbored toward the United States, a sentiment born of the weakness of both Russia and China and fueled by U.S. actions that might have been contested by stronger powers. In Moscow, for example, even pro-Western Russians fear that U.S. missile defenses are aimed at gaining the strategic superiority that the United States could not achieve when the Soviet Union was ready to compete at the strategic level.¹⁵ In Beijing, for example, the United

¹⁴ For more on this line of argument, see Brad Roberts, "1995 and the End of the Post-Cold War Era," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Winter 1996).

¹⁵ *Proliferation, Counterproliferation, and Missile Defense: U.S.-Russian Views on Cooperation*, report prepared by the Russian Science Foundation, Moscow, and the National Institute for Public Policy, Fairfax, Va., July 1996.

States is derided as the leader of an "emerging international oligopoly," as a hegemon that acts to exclude others from the new world order.¹⁶

On the other hand, neither country as yet has the capacity to challenge U.S. interests on a global scale or the combination of political standing and military reach sufficient to compel the formation of a cadre of international supporters in an anti-American campaign. In both countries, economic interests dictate the fullest possible participation in the international economy, thus limiting the capacity of each to challenge militarily or politically dominant powers within that economy. In Russia, the reform process continues to overcome the obstacles put in its way, though whether or how long this will continue cannot be known. In China, the assertiveness of an aging political class seems to have as much to do with maintaining the political position at home and the nation's autonomy in the international system as it does with contesting U.S. power and influence.

There also are many signs that a more multipolar world is in the offing. Regional identities, processes, and institutions have certainly gained prominence after the Cold War. As John Weltman has observed,

"Instead of seeing a generally peaceful world, we see numerous different ways of trying to achieve security in the face of several types of risks. Some of these attempts are global, but the major ones appear to be regional. Thus security is becoming increasingly regionalized, and the variations among regions change the global security debate."¹⁷

Moreover, the relative economic and political position of the United States continues to decline.

But functional multipolarity appears a long way off. Neither Europe nor Japan is ready to assume the mantle of regional leadership or preliminary global roles. India, Brazil, and Nigeria sometimes assert global roles but are mired in economic and political paralysis. China and Japan are emerging as major powers simultaneously for the first time in history, and neither seems likely to accommodate dominance by the other. Moreover, the emerging international system is "more regionally fragmented and multifaceted, more plural and varied"¹⁸ than a purely multipolar system--or than the

¹⁶ Li Peng, then prime minister, speaking on the occasion of a visit to India at the end of 1991. Cited in Shahram Chubin, "The South and the New World Order," in Brad Roberts, ed., *Order and Disorder after the Cold War* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1995), p. 435.

¹⁷ Weltman, p. 15.

¹⁸ Chubin, "The South and the New World Order," p. 429.

bipolar system of the past. Power is diffuse, but it comes in many different kinds--hard and soft,¹⁹ and the diffusion patterns of these different types of power are by no means identical. Only the United States is likely in the timeframe postulated here to bring the full range of power capabilities, hard and soft, to a leadership role. The prospective leaders of alternative poles each possess a limited selection of power attributes, each in unique mixes.

A new medievalism also may be in the offing. The capacity of the advanced industrialized states to govern is increasingly doubted today, whether because political and economic processes have grown increasingly transnational, or because of emerging social barriers to the mobilization of consensus for public policy. Non-state actors, including ones willing to use violence, appear on the increase.²⁰ As William Pfaff has argued, "the international prospect today is not so much a world dominated by a single super power as it is one lacking even great powers that meet the traditional definition of invulnerability."²¹

On the other hand, states continue to command a good deal of loyalty, especially when their sovereignty is at stake. Moreover, a U.S. retreat from the world stage as the result of social pressures and weak state allegiances is hardly consistent with the leadership it has shown over the last five decades. To be sure, such a retreat might conceivably be compelled by a failure to solve the federal budget crisis or by a resurgence of isolationism within one or both major political parties. But the impact of autarchy on the United States would be severe. As Dean Acheson observed more than half a century ago:

"If you wish to control the entire trade and income of the United States, which means the life of the people, you could probably fix it so that everything produced here would be consumed here, but that would completely change our Constitution, our relations to property, human liberty, our very conception of law."²²

¹⁹ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1990).

²⁰ Phil Williams, "Transnational Criminal Organizations: Strategic Alliances," and Peter J. Spiro, "New Global Communities: Nongovernmental Organizations in International Decision-Making Institutions," in Roberts, *Order and Disorder after the Cold War*, pp. 235-250, and 251-262, respectively.

²¹ William Pfaff, "Redefining World Power," *Foreign Affairs* 70, No. 1 (Winter 1991), pp. 44-45.

²² Statement of U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Dean Acheson, U.S. House of Representatives, Special Committee on Post-War Economic Policy and Planning, Hearings (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1945), p. 1082. Cited in Robert O. Keohane, "Hobbes's Dilemma and Institutional Change in World Politics: Sovereignty in International Society," in Holm and Sorensen, *Whose World Order?*, p.166.

The United States continues to seek an international leadership role and seems likely to continue to do so.

In sum, a good case can be made that the first three scenarios are not particularly likely in the time frame postulated here. Neither Cold War redux, multipolarity, nor a new medievalism seem likely to dominate the strategic landscape in the post-post-cold war era.

The prospects for an enlarged order appear promising. The order prevailing in the current international system is in fact a good deal more substantial than the pundits of the 'new world disorder' make out. A wide variety of international institutions created over the last half century have continued to function in the first post-Cold War decade and even to adapt to new circumstances through changing membership and expanding their purview. The community of Western nations continues to function as a community despite the passage of the Soviet threat, and the institutions for economic, political, and even security cooperation that it created have an expanding scope.²³ Interstate wars of conquest have virtually disappeared in recent years.²⁴ The movement toward democracy over the last two decades in many parts of the world, and the general embrace of free market economic principles, suggests that most regions of the world will see growing political stability and prosperity in coming years. The changing nature of the international economy has fueled this expectation, as it has shifted from being a trading system among states to a virtually global system in which materials, products, technology, capital, ideas, and people are transmitted globally by private firms acting autonomously. This transformation has made virtually all countries stakeholders in the existing economic order. Furthermore, the concert of interests among the major powers appears likely for the foreseeable future to prevent a falling out among them sufficient to upset the existing order.²⁵ The virtual impossibility of major war among any of the core states of the international system constitutes a highly significant and unprecedented foundation for future international stability.²⁶

²³ For elaboration of this argument, see G. John Ikenberry, "The Myth of Post-Cold War Chaos," *Foreign Affairs* 75 (May/June 1996), pp. 79-91 and Paul W. Schroeder, "The New World Order: A Historical Perspective," in Roberts, *Order and Disorder after the Cold War*, pp. 367-386.

²⁴ For more on this, see Peter Wallensteen and Karin Axell, "Conflict Resolution and the End of the Cold War, 1989-93," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (August 1994), pp. 333-349.

²⁵ Richard Rosecrance, "A New Concert of Powers," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 2 (Spring 1992).

²⁶ The permanence of this is a matter of great debate among political scientists. Some, such as Kenneth Waltz, attribute it to the emergence of nuclear weapons and thus predict that old forms of behavior will

But a stagnating world order is also in evidence. As the leading Egyptian strategist Ali Dessouki has argued,

"Two zones of international relations and two spheres of international security are emerging, each having its own values and norms as well as its own way of handling interstate conflicts. The two spheres of security and international policies are divided not along the traditional lines of ideology and strategy (East versus West), but rather along developmental lines. The first sphere of security exists in the advanced industrial states and is characterized by peace, prosperity, and stability. The second sphere of security, or rather, as it may more accurately be phrased, insecurity, prevails in most underdeveloped and developing countries and is characterized by war, poverty, and instability or anarchy. Increasingly, the aims of the states and societies belonging to the two spheres are no longer the same."²⁷

In the "South," the success of a number of developing countries masks the fact that many poor countries are growing poorer, not wealthy.²⁸ Although the restoration of democratic rule and free market economies in Latin America has served that region well, in Africa recent transitions to democracy have so far made little contribution to halting decline. The abandonment of communism has freed the Central Europeans to join their West European neighbors, but has done little to build a secure and prosperous central Asia. Even an enlarged order may leave significant portions of the human community, including potentially powerful states such as India and South Africa, in prolonged crisis.

Moreover, there are signs of a sharpening dispute about the order led by the United States. Institutions such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and the major arms control agreements are dismissed by many as tools of the rich and secure.²⁹ The leaders of this world order are seen as self-serving and as unwilling or

not return. Others, such as John Mueller and John Weltman, attribute it to the disutility of war for societies that have grown stable and rich and thus offer the same prediction. See Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Be Better* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981), Adelphi Papers #171; Mueller, "The Essential Irrelevance of Nuclear Weapons: Stability in the Postwar World," *International Security*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Fall 1988), pp. 55-79; and Weltman, *World Politics and the Evolution of War*.

²⁷ Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, "Globalization and the Two Spheres of Security," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (Autumn 1993), p. 112.

²⁸ In 1971, the least developed countries numbered 24 (in terms of UN-defined criteria combining GNP, literacy rates, and industrial development). In 1991, all 24 remained in that category, while 17 more have been added. More than half of the 41 are retrogressing. United Nations, Institute for Disarmament Research, *Disarmament, Environment, and Development and Their Relevance to the Least Developed Countries* (UNIDIR Research Paper No. 10, UNIDIR/91/93, Geneva, 1991).

²⁹ Chubin, "The South and the New World Order."

unable to use power for shared purposes.³⁰ In particular, the United States is seen by some as an imperious meddler, willing to exploit its technological superiority to intervene willy-nilly in the affairs of others in defense of values that it improperly imputes to others.³¹

One African commentator has summarized the issues starkly. The new world order, he writes,

"will leave us with a collective security arrangement for the rich and powerful against the poor and weak...[because coercion will be] applicable only to weaker countries, who are by virtue of their weakness in no position to influence the determination of where, when, and how sanctions may be applied in the name of collective security....The North would do well to resist the temptation that it can appropriate at will and pay no heed to even development and the rule of law in global governance. The ghetto is too large and the haven it inhabits is small and shrinking. A policy of policing the status quo is feasible, but only in circumstances that effectively repudiate civilization."³²

To be sure, many of the rhetorical barbs aimed at the United States rely on hyperbole to make any impact on American sensibilities. Critics use sharp words in order to be heard, in much the same way that the United States uses terms such as "backlash" or "rogue" to induce others to understand its way of thinking.

This rhetoric is often misread by Americans as a harbinger of a looming confrontation between Washington and the radical states with the ambition to lead the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)--Iran and Algeria, among others. Their ambition is not broadly welcomed by the NAM, whose members appear as a group to be more moderate than this particularly vocal minority with particular ambitions. This implies that the emerging fault line is not between status quo powers and those who would upset the

³⁰ Ted Galen Carpenter has cogently summarized this theme as it relates to the UN debate about proliferation. "If the Security Council arrogates to itself the right to judge these matters, the fact that the five permanent members are also the five openly declared nuclear weapons states is not going to be lost on nations seeking to acquire such weapons. From their perspective it will be the verdict of a kangaroo court, however much the Council might invoke noble sounding principles, and the United States, as the leader of an international program of coercive non-proliferation, would be the principal target of their wrath." See Carpenter, "A New Proliferation Policy," *National Interest*, No. 28 (Summer 1992), p. 68.

³¹ Patrick J. Garrity, *Does the Gulf War Still Matter? Foreign Perspectives on the War and the Future of International Security*, CNSS Report no. 16 (Los Alamos, N.M.: Center for National Security Studies, Los Alamos National Laboratory, May 1993) and "Implications of the Persian Gulf War for Regional Powers," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (Summer 1993), pp. 153-170.

³² Ake, pp. 34, 42.

status quo by trying to create a new distribution of power while casting out existing institutions and norms of international order, but between status quo powers and those who aspire to join that order more fully and to benefit from greater political and economic integration in it. There are fundamental differences among rogues, challengers, and aspirants, and the focus here is on the third category: those wishing to play a more prominent role but who feel stymied in doing so by the complacent, inward focus of the Western industrialized countries at this time and especially by the disengagement of the United States from the multilateral institutions that are the modes of engagement for these aspiring powers.

In sum, then, a good case can be made that the second triad of future contingencies has a higher degree of likelihood than the first set. Whether the existing world order enlarges, stagnates, or falls into disrepute is a more likely determinant of the nature of the global security problem of the next decade than is the reemergence of great power conflict, multipolarity, or a new medievalism.

These conclusions are predicated on the timeframe adopted here. Looking ahead two or three decades, the arguments about the relative unlikelihood of a restored bipolarity, a true multipolarity, or the near-passing of the interstate system all fade. In that longer timeframe, peer competitors to the United States are a more realistic possibility, regions may organize themselves around local dominant powers, and the interstate domain may be subsumed by something quite different. The list of six alternatives includes then two basic types--those of primary concern in the medium term and those that loom as possibilities only in the longer term.

Moreover, it seems reasonable to assume that the successor orders of a few decades hence will be shaped by what transpires in the interim period. Whether the existing order enlarges, stagnates, or becomes contested may determine whether the successor order is more bipolar than multipolar, or more 'medieval' in character. It seems more likely, however, to determine whether the successor order is a degenerative one with high propensity to violence among its constituent parts or is more benign.

An enlarging order may produce numerous states capable of balancing U.S. power but which opt not to compete with it in political-military terms. It may facilitate the emergence of a stable and pacific multipolarity, in which major powers do not probe and test each other's strategic boundaries with military means. And it may facilitate the emergence of a stable transnationalism that is efficient at meeting the needs of individuals and groups in ways that minimize their tendency toward violence.

Alternatively, a contested order could have decisively negative implications for the succeeding era. If the existing order is sharply contested, major powers such as China and Russia may seek leadership of an international coalition against the United States precisely as a way to gain power and status, resulting in the restoration of a high risk, confrontational bipolarity. A multipolar order born of such a contest would probably be intolerant of U.S. actions to maintain balances of power within or among regions. A new medievalism born of such a contest would have a higher propensity to chaos and violence than would one born of enlarged order.

C. EVALUATING U.S. PREFERENCES

Which alternative best suits U.S. interests? The simple answer is number four: order enlarged. The preservation of the existing patterns of international cooperation, of existing international institutions, and of an international system consistent with American values and generally amenable to U.S. leadership has an obvious appeal to the United States.³³ None of the alternatives postulated here serves the political and economic needs of the United States as well.

The United States might find some of the other alternatives tolerable, at least insofar as the world order challenges and defense policy requirements they impose. A number of the postulated futures entail world orders that are relatively benign from the viewpoint of the United States. A multipolar system dominated by a handful of states with clearly demarcated interests and sharing the basic values and interests of the United States could be quite felicitous from viewpoint of the world order tasks required of it. Even a new medievalism or a stagnant order might put only limited demands on the United States to protect order through alliance structures and limited interventions, all in the absence of a peer competitor.

On the other hand, each benign variant could turn substantially more demanding of the United States. A multipolar order dominated by highly competitive powers that contest the influence and authority of each other could be very fractious and require of the United States that it develop new skills as a the central actor in a globally fluid balance of power, a role analogous to that of Britain in the nineteenth century. A stagnant order that became a broadly contested order, in which NBC-backed threats are

³³ Samuel Huntington, "Why International Primacy Matters," *International Security*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Spring 1993).

made to challenge U.S. interests and to roll back U.S. presence, could cast the United States in the role of defender of a corrupt status quo. If its use of power is seen to be strictly self-serving, if its influence is seen to be corrupt, and if the order it leads comes to be seen as unjust, there would be powerful repercussions, both abroad and at home. Abroad, critics of American imperialism might gain even greater prominence than during the height of the Cold War, leading to weakened cooperation with traditional allies and American retreat from areas not deemed vital. At home, the military could again find itself alienated from society, with every effort to defend and protect the corrupt status quo opposed by large segments of the American public.

The world order requirements of a renewed Cold War might also prove manageable from the viewpoint of the United States. After all, it managed to sustain nearly five decades of containment of the Soviet Union--and to prevail in the end.

On the other hand, resurrecting and sustaining popular American support for containment of Chinese or even Russian influence may not prove easy, at least in the absence of a clear military threat to the United States and a clear ideological challenge to its interests and values. Americans would not relish standing again at the nuclear brink, absent fundamentally compelling motives.

Many of the alternative futures emphasize coalition formation as a primary tool of order. In the context of a new medievalism or an enlarged or stagnant order, coalitions would become even more important political-military tools of the United States. This requirement to act within such coalitions plays to a demonstrated strength of the United States, and a demonstrated preference as well. The United States has a well demonstrated historical proclivity to form coalitions when going to war--a proclivity that is likely to be even more pronounced as such wars threaten the possibility of confrontations with NBC weapons.³⁴

But the challenges of coalition warfare are likely to differ substantially, depending on the specific alternative future. Under an enlarged order, for example, the United States would find itself in the position of mobilizing coalitions to defend broadly shared interests and agreed norms of state behavior. Under a contested order, it would find itself marshaling traditional allies in defense of more narrowly held interests in basic disputes

³⁴ Brad Roberts and Victor Utgoff, "Coalitions Against NBC-Armed Regional Aggressors: How Are They Formed, Maintained, and Led?" draft report, Institute for Defense Analyses, June 1996.

of order and justice. Whether the American public, or the publics of prospective U.S. partners, would long support this latter strategy is uncertain.

In sum, the alternative future that poses world order challenges best suited to the United States is the enlarged world order. It holds the promise of political requirements for which the United States has a demonstrated affinity, a security role neither too burdensome nor too unilateral, and a foundation of some measure of sustained domestic political support.

Much the same line of argument applies to the implications of alternative futures for U.S. defense policy. From a strictly technical point of view, the United States possesses or can marshal the military competence to secure its interests in any of the alternative futures. Strategic containment and interventionary confrontation of major powers in Europe or Asia are neither too expensive nor too demanding, from a strictly technical point of view. Nor is the preservation of large interventionary forces of the kind that might be required for the various coalition strategies too expensive or too demanding--again, in the abstract.

On the other hand, it seems unlikely that the United States would choose to live in a world where these would be necessary. Strategic confrontation may be technically sustainable, but it is also fraught with risk. Interventions may promise military success for the United States, but the nation has a real distaste for prolonged service as the world's policeman (although it may welcome the role of world's soccer referee). Moreover, although it is the wealthiest nation on earth, its prolonged budgetary crisis could well further restrict and impair the military forces of the United States.

The world orders best suited to U.S. defense competence and interests are those that place minimal requirements on the United States to act alone militarily or to risk national suicide in strategic nuclear confrontations. This implies that the defense tasks best suited to the United States are those in an enlarged order, which emphasize the exercise of military force as a reinforcement to political and economic instruments of order, in the context of coalitions formed to defend commonly agreed rules and a commonly beneficial order.

Thus the primary U.S. interest is in building a future of enlarged order. To do so, it must ward against an order grown stagnant. If it fails to do so, it may find itself under assault by critics abroad and at home who see its use of power as unjust and in service of a corrupt status quo. The result could be the future emergence of some of the least

attractive possibilities, involving world orders that are highly conflictual and defense policy requirements that are particularly demanding.

Seen in historical terms, such an enlargement is also consistent with the basic purposes and ambitions that have motivated U.S. engagement in the world. An enlarging order based on liberal political and economic principles is in some sense the historic mission of the United States. Achievement of such an order has generally been seen as the only appropriate use of national power by the American body politic. Having been thrust center stage in world politics more than five decades ago, the United States has labored ever since to create and stabilize the order that exists today. It ought not be interested in a 'new world order'--its interest is in the durability and continued enlargement of the order that now exists.

D. SECURING THE PREFERRED FUTURE

How can the United States best secure its interests in an enlarged order? What steps are necessary to forestall the evolution of less preferable futures? How will its use of force and defense policy choices shape alternative outcomes? This analysis points to the following five priorities.

First, the United States must sustain bilateral relations with Russia and China in a way that makes cold war with either unlikely. It is, of course, not solely within the purview of the United States to determine whether a cold war develops with either country. Indeed, in some important ways, its interests are hostage to developments within each country. But sins of both omission and commission on the part of the United States could make cold war-like confrontations more likely. The basic risks are (1) that the United States will be seen in Moscow to be capitalizing on Russian decline, and (2) that it will be seen in Beijing as blocking Chinese ascendance, both with the assumed purpose of sustaining American global dominance. The goal of U.S. policy must be to build partnership with both nations in shared leadership of an international order in which all perceive a stake and all perceive as just.

Second, the United States must orient itself increasingly to the interests of states other than the major powers. In the emerging international system, medium powers and even small states have a significance relatively unknown in the past. That significance derives from their partnership with the United States in regional and global organizations as well as their possession of technology offering military leverage which combine, at the very least, to give them the power to act as spoilers of American strategies, plans, and

interests. These are not the rogue states of current notoriety, but regional powers generally. Moreover, these are states with particular international interests, given their limited weight in the international system. Those interests are (1) the effective function of agreed norms and of collective institutions, and (2) the engagement of, and leadership by the United States, so long as it is not unduly interfering in their affairs. Virtually no state has an interest in the global autarchy that would result with the collapse of the system of multilateral political, economic, and security institutions of which the United States is primary steward.

This is a priority that the United States finds difficult to address. As noted above, it is inclined to equate the interests and attitudes of the "South" with the vocal opinions of a few states seeking to assert leadership of the now directionless Non-Aligned Movement. Isolating those radical states by deepening dialogue and cooperation with the rest of the South should be a goal of U.S. policymakers, especially on questions of international security. But the difficulty has deeper sources. Brookings specialist Janne Nolan argues that the problem is rooted in a way of thinking about problems of international security that is both excessively technical and stubbornly self-centered:

"The failure to recognize and to adapt successfully to new international imperatives may result from a stubborn reluctance to consider the interests of regional powers as a compelling determinant of U.S. policy and a new international order. Credible international norms cannot be designed by those who are not persuaded that other countries are worthy of equality or that their amity is important in crafting new rules for the international system. In the United States, in particular, this intellectual impediment is especially difficult to dislodge. It is the product of years of studied indifference to all but a narrow set of technical security issues and a proud embrace of ignorance and rejection of politics, culture, and regional dynamics as legitimate influences on national policy."³⁵

Middle East scholar Shahram Chubin echoes this view, but emphasizes the 'uncharacteristic hubris and querulousness' of America in its historical moment as the 'world's only superpower:'

"Partnership between North and South remains a possibility, although arguably an improbable one. Antipathy and confrontation are also possible, and made more likely by Northern complacency....The United States will be a principal determinant of the character of North-South relations on these issues in the new international system. This fact alone has generated concern in the South. Especially after the Iraqi crisis, the

³⁵ Janne Nolan, "Cooperative Security in the United States," in Nolan, ed., *Global Engagement: Cooperation and Security in the 21st Century* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1994), p. 537.

United States appears to feel not only that its capabilities have been tested but also that its judgment has been validated. From a distance at least a whiff of uncharacteristic hubris and querulousness is discernible. This translates into a "no apologies" take-it-or-leave-it attitude, especially evident in relations toward the South....Unless North and South are able to arrive jointly at ordering concepts for the new international system, the possibility of conflict between them grows more likely. This is a shame, because it is avoidable and unnecessary."³⁶

Third, multilateral approaches should be the first preference of U.S. diplomacy and security whenever they offer some promise of success. There has been much debate in recent years about how much the United States can and should rely on multilateral approaches--a debate that has been conducted largely in black and white terms between the adherents of fairly extreme positions. Multilateralism is a key principle in the existing world order and multilateral approaches appear critical to the enlargement of that order, especially given the value that the United States now attaches to acting through coalitions and to maintaining military power largely for purposes of reassurance rather than deterrence. But unilateralism is also important, given that multilateral institutions are sometimes paralyzed by their members' anomie if not actual opposition to U.S. initiatives. The fundamental question is not which extreme to prefer but how to bring the two into balance. The argument here is that in the interest of deepening the institutions and norms of the existing international order, the United States should seek first recourse to multilateral approaches. But it should also retain a capacity for independent action where multilateral institutions prove incapable of acting or ineffectual in doing so.

Such recourse offers a number of important benefits to the existing international order. A strong U.S. commitment to regional and global institutions demonstrates that its power is harnessed to shared interests. This helps to reinforce the reliable use of American power by providing a legitimizing framework, one that builds and sustains consensus both in the United States and internationally in support of U.S. military action. The reliability of the use of American power is likely to be an important--indeed critical--determinant of the alternative futures postulated above, especially the latter three (order enlarged, stagnant order, contested order).

This too is a priority that the United States finds it difficult to address. American diplomacy is not well known for its multilateral sophistication. Although the history of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization demonstrates the capacity of the United States to

³⁶ Chubin, "The South and the New World Order," pp. 429, 434.

act multilaterally with others in the security domain, it also stands out as something of an anomaly in U.S. history. Especially in multilateral institutions, where interested constituencies scrutinize every U.S. action for what it conveys about American reliability and resolve, the United States confronts the difficult political challenge of harmonizing its view of itself as the world's only superpower with its political status as first-among-equals.

Given the strong rejection of multilateralism in many quarters of the American body politic, it is necessary to underscore that a preference for multilateralism is not proffered for the purpose of limiting the use of American power. On the contrary, multilateralism is useful for what it says to others about when and how that power will be used. To those who depend on American guarantees, multilateralism bolsters the expectation of U.S. action in time of need. To those who might exploit U.S. indifference in order to act aggressively, it signals that such aggression would challenge American interests and provides the mechanism of a U.S. reply that would enjoy the support of others. To those fearful of an America unfettered by a rival peer military power, it attests to the nation's willingness to use its power not to cement a hegemonic role but in defense of common interests in cooperation with others, and by agreed rules and mechanisms that reflect an agreed allocations of rights, responsibilities, and authority. The United States need not rely on the partnership of other states to prevail in a direct conflict with an armed challenger, given its preponderant military power, but given the importance of coalitions and chronic doubts about U.S. reliability, it finds large advantages in multilateral approaches. The domestic political value of such approaches should not be overlooked--by helping to legitimize the use of U.S. military force abroad, multilateral approaches helps to ensure that the political support will exist when such actions become necessary.

What does this imply for how the United States tailors its military forces today? Tailoring them only for territorial defense and so that interventions can be undertaken only in concert with others, as proposed by an influential group of analysts subsequently affiliated with the Clinton administration,³⁷ seems unwise. But nor is it necessary for the United States to tailor its forces now for the most intractable and undesirable alternative futures. Hedging against those futures is of course necessary, but a renewed Cold War does not appear in the offing soon. Maintaining a capability to fight multiple high-

³⁷ Nolan, *Global Engagement*. See especially the chapter by William J. Perry, "Military Action: When to Use It and How to Ensure its Effectiveness," pp. 235-242.

intensity regional wars may be less successful in securing long-term U.S. interests than preparing to reconstitute the larger strategic and conventional forces needed for global containment by capitalizing on a sustained and substantial research and development program. In the short term, top priority should go to fielding those counterproliferation capabilities that deny NBC-armed rogues the expectation that they can use those weapons, or threaten to do so, in ways that drive the costs to the United States of military confrontation beyond what its society will bear. Toward that end, the United States must maintain military force large enough to act--and win--independently, but not so large as to reinforce fears that it will exploit that power to intervene in the internal affairs of smaller power or use military means to contest the interests of other major powers.

Fourth, the United States must begin to address the concerns among both major and minor powers about the very justice of the existing international order. Is it merely an order in the service of U.S. interests--a status quo created by the United States for the benefit of the United States and held by the brute force of the United States in its moment as the 'world's only superpower'? Or is it an order that can accommodate the aspirations of other powers, including not just those for power and influence, but for the peace necessary for 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness' of the human community generally?³⁸ This is a question first and foremost for the nation's political leadership and its foreign policy community. But military actions, and statements by military leaders about America's world role, will be widely scrutinized for what they imply about America's answer to these questions. If the United States fails to address these questions, it may have failed to address the one priority most relevant to preventing an enlarging order from becoming a contested order.

Claude Ake puts this issue succinctly: "an order in which the majority of members have no stake and see no justice is ultimately unviable."³⁹ Hedley Bull defines the issue in more traditional realpolitik terms:

"The international order sustained by the great powers enjoys a wide measure of support throughout international society. The great powers do, however, have a permanent problem of securing and preserving the consent of other states to the special

³⁸ This view of peace goes beyond the traditional 'absence of war.' It conceives of conflict as an inevitable part of politics, and which identifies "rightly ordered political communities" as the "means by which conflict could be resolved without resort to...war." George Weigel, *Tranquillitas Ordinis: The Present Failure and Future Promise of American Catholic Thought on War and Peace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 357.

³⁹ Ake, p. 35.

role they play in the system....It is worth considering what some of the conditions are under which the superpowers may seek to legitimize their special role. First, the great powers cannot formalise and make explicit the full extent of their special position. International society is based on a rejection of a hierarchical order of states in favour of equality....Second, the great powers have to try to avoid being responsible for conspicuously disorderly acts themselves....Third, the great powers have to seek to satisfy some of the demands for just change being expressed in the world....where the demands cannot be met, at least the motions have to be gone through of seeking to meet them, so as to avoid alienating important segments of international society. A great power hoping to be accepted as a legitimate managerial power cannot ignore these demands or adopt a contrary position, in a way that lesser powers can do; its freedom of manoeuvre is circumscribed by 'responsibility'....The military power of the 'have-not' countries, their capacity to combine effectively with one another, and their readiness to adopt tactics of confrontation with the great powers, may grow. But even if it does not, an international regime that cannot respond to their demands will be lacking in moral authority even within the 'have' countries and will be incapable of achieving the kind of consensus that world order will require."⁴⁰

But how does the United States address this priority? How does it establish that the order it has created and leads is also a just order?

There is, of course, a prior question: is it in fact just? Political philosophy offers a number of criteria for evaluating world order: Is it volitional, in the sense that participation in it by the nations of the world is not coerced by the United States? Does it protect the interests of more than just its most powerful members? Does it permit change in the distribution of power without compromising its basic values? Is the existing order successful in making possible the achievement of the aspirations noted above? By these criteria, the existing world order would appear to be just. No state has been coerced by force of arms into membership of the institutions of the existing international order; where coercion is practiced against states, it is focused on those who violate norms against interstate violence to press their claims. The order secures the interests of the broad community of nations, and not just a privileged few. It has survived five decades of power redistributions and has helped many nations to develop. But it is not perfect in some important respects. Its capacity to protect the interests of more than merely its most

⁴⁰ Bull, pp. 228-229, 301.

powerful members is not well established, and thus is seen by many as suspect. Its efficiency at enabling all peoples to achieve aspirations for prosperity and well-being is cast in doubt by the patterns of de-development described above. Its flexibility as major powers rise and fall in the decades ahead is also uncertain.

A different criterion is often offered by pundits from some developing countries: that justice requires an equal distribution of power among sovereign entities. This is a refrain particularly common from governing elites in India, Iran, and China, among others. What does an equal distribution of power actually entail? On what basis can power be equally distributed in a system of so many very different states? Among unequal sovereigns, such equality would not promote justice.⁴¹ Minor and medium powers are not ready to carry the responsibilities of major powers. Not even the major powers are equally prepared to carry broad international responsibilities. But if power is not justly distributed, order can be expected to pay the price. A more equal (as opposed to a perfectly equal) distribution of power may be conceivable, one that would help to promote justice by increasing the stake of up-and-coming powers in the effective functioning of world order institutions and the defense of common interests and norms.

Those who seek to defend status quos sometimes argue that order is necessary for the achievement of justice. This is of course true. But the United States must be careful to avoid a confrontation between those states that are concerned primarily with preserving order and those that are concerned primarily with achieving just change, even where such change conflicts with order. Bull defines these two categories of states as orthodox (those preferring order over justice) and revolutionary (justice over order). The traditional U.S. world role has been to steer a middle course between these two poles: as a progressive power, it has sought the righting of injustices as the best means of strengthening international order. To avoid a stagnant or contested order, it should not abandon this traditional role in favor of the more orthodox one simply because it has emerged as the world's dominant power.⁴²

Meeting this challenge also will not come easily to the United States. The British scholar Laurance Martin has again commented insightfully:

⁴¹ As Aristotle wrote, "injustice arises when equals are treated unequally and also when unequals are treated equally." Cited in Bull, p. 81.

⁴² For more on the connection between justice and world order, see chapter 4, "Order versus Justice in World Politics," in Bull, pp. 77-98.

"The United States sees a great coincidence between its interests and universal principles and expects both its purposes, and often even more controversial, its chosen means to win ready endorsement. This style not infrequently deepens the objections of others to the substance of what is proposed and undertaken. Given the spontaneous turbulence that many areas of the world in which the developed nations have vital interests are likely to experience, the stage is therefore set for a series of crises in which both immediate issues and underlying principles will interact in complex ways."⁴³

Alberto Coll of the U.S. Naval War College has defined the challenge in different terms.

"The prospects for a cooperative world order will depend to no small extent on the degree to which the United States has a sober appreciation for the role of both power and principles in international politics....U.S. principles need U.S. power every bit as much as U.S. power needs U.S. principles. Without power to back them up, those principles wither in the harsh environment of international politics. Yet, without principles to energize and impart a guiding vision to it, U.S. power either lies dormant or drifts purposelessly or misdirected. Moreover, the principles are in themselves a source of power."⁴⁴

If the prevailing order comes to be seen as unjust and U.S. power as corrupt, the United States seems likely to find itself confronted by opposing states willing to use military power to form a more just order and to deter or defeat individual U.S. military actions. If the United States acts in ways that motivate the emergence of states seeking to balance its power, it will certainly have squandered its historic opportunity to deepen the existing order. In the short term, its military power may not be contestable. But in the long term, its power is certainly contestable--regionally, by well-armed NBC-equipped powers, and globally, by peer competitors.

It is of course extremely unlikely that U.S. political and diplomatic leaders could ever persuade the entire global community of the justice of the order within which its position is so dominant. Indeed, this position ensures that some will argue that the justice the United States perceives is merely the latest variant of the 'justice' meted out by the victor throughout human history. A more realistic U.S. goal is achievement of a broad consensus that the existing world order is defensible in moral terms. If such a

⁴³ Martin, "Systemic Issues," pp. 30-31.

⁴⁴ Alberto Coll, "Power, Principles, and Prospects for a Cooperative International Order," in Roberts, *Order and Disorder after the Cold War*, p. 387.

commonality of views can be sustained, the fact that the existing order is consensual will help to win arguments about its legitimacy even if not its transcendent justice.

For many observers, the key measure of the legitimacy of the United States and of its use of power is how it replies to those who challenge the existing order. This brings us to the fifth and final priority.

The United States must respond to challengers to the existing world order in ways that reinforce that order and underline its legitimacy in the eyes of those who are uncertain of that legitimacy. The crux of this issue is its handling of rogue states. The United States sees these states as challengers to world order and thus to shared international interests, and depicts them accordingly. It has seen its efforts to contain the ambitions of these states as a part of its obligations as an international security guarantor.

But it has found few allies in this task. There is no international agreement on who the rogue states are or the nature of challenge they present--not even among traditional allies of the United States.⁴⁵ To many observers, including many close U.S. allies, the case that rogue nations violate agreed norms of domestic and international behavior is not as compelling as a past history and, in the view of some, virtual obsession of a few senior U.S. policymakers with past troublemakers, such as Iran and Libya.

If the United States is seen to be belligerent in dealing with rogue challengers, unconstrained by the norms governing the use of force it purports to uphold, unreceptive to the perceptions of other major states or groups of states, and preoccupied with rogue challengers to the point of distraction from other ordering tasks within the region or globally, then its claims to be defending shared interests and a common order by confronting such states will fall on deaf ears. Its power will be seen as corrupt.

But if the United States is seen as concerned with larger community interests in constraining rogues, tolerant of the attitudes of its allies and prospective coalition

⁴⁵ Richard Cupitt has described one aspect of the difficulty of building international agreement about the cast of rogue states: "According to a recent study of the laws of the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, and Germany, of the 72 countries that these four governments designate as "sensitive" and subject to special procedures or the total embargo of certain items, only 38 countries appear on the lists of more than two of the four governments. This confusion only reinforces the widely held perception that the Western powers maintain a double standard regarding proliferation. Indeed...of 36 violations or presumed violations of multilateral nonproliferation norms and rules committed by members of the "liberal security community" (i.e., the West), only four resulted in sanctions, whereas 38 of 42 similar incidences by states not members of the same Western community attracted sanctions." Richard T. Cupitt, "Target Rogue Behavior, Not Rogue States," *The Nonproliferation Review*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (Winter 1996), p. 46.

partners, beholden to the normative context, and oriented to larger questions of order than the predations of a few corrupt regimes, then its claims are likely to be met more receptively. Its power will be seen as restrained. But it will also be seen as purposeful, which is to say a constructive asset that can be applied to the resolution of problems of international security.

This latter point is key. To establish the legitimacy of the U.S. world role in this particular historical moment, when it is cast as 'the world's only superpower' in a 'unipolar moment,'⁴⁶ the United States must use its power in ways that are both restrained and purposeful. Restraint is required because of the preponderance of power available to the United States and its capacity to annihilate virtually any battlefield enemy at little cost to itself. Purposefulness is required because the value that others attach to U.S. power will be determined by the utility of that power in solving problems.

The legitimacy of U.S. leadership of the existing order then requires that the United States act to protect that order, sometimes with the use of military force. But when it uses such force, the United States must be prepared to lead and win an international debate about the justice of that action. Such a debate seems certain to focus on both ends and means. Will they have reinforced the value of nonviolent change, or merely served the interest of stability? Will U.S. actions be discriminate and proportionate, and will they be seen as such? Will it have honored the full requirements of the just war tradition in undertaking such military actions, and will it be prepared to make the necessary moral case?⁴⁷

This line of argument implies that the trends to alternative futures will be influenced by catalytic events that cause perceptions of the United States, its world role, and the existing order to coalesce in new ways. An act that delegitimizes U.S. power could unleash a large, accumulated political forces and produce transformations in the international system inimical to long-term U.S. interests. Such events could, for example, lead to a rapid proliferation of NBC capabilities to nations that determine that

⁴⁶ Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment."

⁴⁷ For an analysis of the just war tradition as it relates to preemptive attack on NBC-armed rogue states, see Brad Roberts, "Military Strikes Against Rogue States: Is There a Moral Case for Preemption?", paper prepared for the Ethics and Public Policy Center, Washington, D.C., August 1996.

they must prepare for their defense without the benefit of cooperation with the United States--or even against the United States.⁴⁸

The rogue state problem thus takes on a new relevance in the years ahead. Until now, it has been significant primarily for what successful acts of aggression by such rogues might have implied about the utility of aggression more generally. In the coming decade or so, the problem will be significant also for what it conveys to others about how the United States conceives its world role. Crises generated by rogue states will become a test of the existing order and of the U.S. role within it. Successfully met by the United States and the international community, such crises, if they occur, may well help to bolster and enlarge order. Poorly met, they will contribute to a weakening of international cooperation and a sharpening of division. If an enlarging order contributes to the subsequent emergence of relatively benign regional and global balances of power, then the world will have moved beyond the rogue state problem by moving generally beyond the problem of armed challengers to that order. Any remaining states using military power for offensive purposes would be likely to find themselves very isolated. If a contested order contributes to the subsequent emergence of less felicitous regional or global power relationships, then the world will have moved beyond the current rogue state problem by moving to more substantial armed divisions.

In summary, to increase the likelihood that its preferred world order (an enlarged order) will in fact emerge over the next decade or two, the United States must: (1) sustain bilateral relations with Russia and China in a way that makes Cold War with either unlikely; (2) orient itself increasingly to the interests of states other than the major powers; (3) deepen its multilateral engagement (while also maintaining a capacity for independent action); (4) address the concerns among both major and minor powers about the inherent justice of the existing international order; and (5) respond to challengers to the existing world order in ways that reinforce that order and underline U.S. legitimacy in the eyes of those who are uncertain of that legitimacy.

This agenda might be dismissed as 'soft internationalism' by some critics. After all, this agenda is aimed at restraint in the use of U.S. power, respect for the views of others, and greater emphasis on a moral view of the American world role. Such criticism would miss the point. In the current historical moment, long-term interests oblige the

⁴⁸ See Brad Roberts, "Rethinking How War Must End: NBC War Termination Issues in the Post-Cold War Era," draft report, Institute for Defense Analyses, June 1996.

United States to act in certain ways that might seem unnecessary when the mere brute use of force will suffice for short-term purposes. If it wishes to broaden and deepen the international order that it has labored for the past five decades to create, the United States must find the middle ground between soft internationalism and impulsive unilateralism. If the former mode of behavior makes America look confused and weak, the latter makes it look imperious and dangerous. An America perceived as imperious and dangerous in the post-cold war era would likely find itself coping with the emergence of balancers and challengers to its power in the post-post-cold war era.

The key issue then is how the United States should act in order not to motivate balancers and challengers. In analyzing why states form alliances, University of Chicago political scientist Stephen Walt has come to the following answer:

“The explanation is often framed in terms of *power*: states with lesser capabilities are presumed to combine against stronger powers in order to prevent them from dominating. But it is more accurate to say that states form coalitions to balance against *threats*, and power is only one element in their calculations (albeit an important one). In general, the level of threat that states face will be a function of four distinct factors: aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive capabilities, and aggressive intentions.”⁴⁹

This implies that there is nothing inevitable about the emergence of states seeking to balance or counter American power. But it also implies the high likelihood of the emergence of such a state or group of states if American power is seen as threatening. The capacity of the United States to deploy military forces globally, backed by its substantial strategic nuclear reserve, means that the United States has the power, proximity, and capability to project a threat. The fourth factor--aggressive intentions--is thus the critical one. America is unlikely ever to become a predatory power in the traditional sense of aggression, but states fearful of U.S. power in its unipolar moment might come to see its use of power as so capricious and self-serving as to generate military responses of their own aimed not so much at inflicting military defeat on the United States as driving the costs of U.S. military action beyond what American society might want to bear. Moreover, what it says and how it acts will also convey much to the rest of the world about America's picture of itself--is it a nation that still aspires to the best in its national tradition, whereby its power is asserted internationally for beneficial

⁴⁹ Stephen M. Walt, “Containing Rogues and Renegades: Coalition Strategies and Counter-Proliferation,” paper prepared for a counterproliferation symposium at the Institute for Defense Analyses, November 16-17, 1995, pp. 10-11.

purposes, or has it allowed itself to be corrupted by its singular status, and thus is to be feared as an assertive hegemon?

How the United States uses its military forces in the years ahead will have a bearing on each of the five tasks enumerated above. In its strategic forces policies, it must refrain from undermining the mutual deterrence that so far at least has been the basis of stability among the major nuclear powers. It must remain willing to work cooperatively and collectively with other nations to protect regional allies and other vulnerable states. It must be capable of defining how individual uses of military force contribute to the broader interests of the international community, and not just its own preeminence. It must meet the military challenges of rogue states in concert with others, and in ways that demonstrate its use of power to be both restrained and purposeful. It must actively promote multilateral approaches to security problems while also maintaining a capacity for substantial independent action in reply to the aggressions of current NBC-armed rogues. This review is suggestive of the ways in which the cold-war vintage debate between Colin Powell and Caspar Weinberger about when and how the United States should use military force must be updated in the light of post-cold war realities and post-post-cold war interests. Of course, how the United States uses its military forces will hardly be the only determinant of alternative outcomes.

One fundamental implication follows from this line of argument: as 'the world's only superpower', the United States is a very particular type of power. It has unparalleled military power, but it is very unlikely to go to war except in coalitions with others. It is the only major power with a global view of its interests, but in any particular region its power is limited. Its credentials as world leader depend not so much on its military as on its political power, yet it is uncertain in its new role as political first-among-equals, and is often unwilling to use its power for anything other than traditional vital interests. The order that it leads depends on economic forces to an unprecedented degree--forces that constrain the United States as much as they help it to prosper. In its moment of unparalleled power, its capacity to act is inhibited by domestic social forces and by the need to act according to the dictates of moral philosophy. In many ways, it is no longer a superpower at all. As one Asian commentator has noted, "It is astonishing how few

Americans realize that in many, many ways, the United States has effectively shrunk. It has become a normal nation-state, subject like any other to global winds and currents.”⁵⁰

In sum, the United States faces real challenges in using its power to promote and enlarge the existing order. It has not yet defined for itself whether it seeks to lead that order, or only to defend it, or only to defend itself. It is uncertain about how to safeguard its own interests and about how to act in stewardship of the interests of order. Such uncertainty does not bode well for the effort to enlarge the existing order.

E. CONCLUSIONS

Six conclusions follow from this analysis. First, rogue states may or may not remain on the international scene for many years to come. But the rogue state problem is likely to pass as an organizing principle of U.S. foreign and defense policy. There are new challenges on the horizon, and these are discernible.

Second, among the feasible alternative futures for the period 2000-2010, no one future appears especially likely. Among the alternatives, the least likely are also the least desirable. The group of more likely alternatives includes the one that is most desirable from the viewpoint of the United States (order enlarged)--but it also includes a particularly undesirable one (contested order). A potential confrontation between status quo powers and those who view the status quo as unjust and the U.S. power used to defend it as corrupt, looms as a serious possibility.

Third, perceptions of U.S. will, credibility, and staying power are critical determinants of alternative outcomes. But even more so, beliefs about the existing world order, and about the competence of the United States to lead that order, will shape the choices of others with regard to alternative futures. In the long term, the will and ability of the United States to act internationally may be less important than the perceived justice of the order it seeks to lead. Moreover, it has expended little or no political capital or energy articulating and defending the justice of that order.

Fourth, when the United States uses military force in support of the existing order, that use must meet two requirements. Restraint is one, and it is much commented upon. Purposefulness is the other, and it receives much less attention. The purposeful use of

⁵⁰ Kishore Mahbubani, “Go East, Young Man,” in Roberts, *Order and Disorder after the Cold War*, p. 91.

American power is as central to the legitimacy of U.S. leadership as is the restrained use of its overwhelming potential.

Fifth, disputes about the necessary world order cannot easily be ignored. History has known many eras when challengers emerged to contest and even vanquish the power of a hegemon. But history has never known an era when so many countries have within their domestic scientific and industrial competence the means to make weapons that are massively destructive, and to do so relatively quickly. The United States must refrain from acting in ways that motivate challengers to its power and to the order it seeks to lead. U.S. power is not incontestable, however substantial its military power. As the 'world's only superpower' its power is sufficient only for certain purposes. Unless it is careful, the United States may find that through sins of both omission and commission it has stimulated the emergence of new challengers to its power and influence, and to the order in which it is first-among-equals.

Sixth, as the rogue state problem plays itself out in coming years, there is a breathing space in which to tackle the problems of the next world order. Whether this will be a period of decay or consolidation will largely be determined in Washington. Whether the United States is seriously interested in tackling these problems is today uncertain.

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