

Robert Bates
April, 91

①

The initial phase of the war in the Persian Gulf has ended. Future and present battles continue and undoubtedly will involve the United States, ~~in the future.~~ This ~~was~~ provided the American public with an exciting and arresting interlude --- home team beats invader by wide margin. A multitude of experts ranging from retired military personnel to such notables as (one of my favorites!) Daniel Ellsberg were proven terribly wrong in their predictions as to U.S. losses. Not since Agincourt, where the English lost 29 to the thousands of French, has there been such a lopsided margin of victory. During the same period of time in which we fought a war with Iraq, domestic accident fatalities on the nation's highways numbered 504 and there were more than 29 violent handgun deaths in Detroit alone. But while we try to figure out whether we actually won anything in Operation Desert Storm and file ~~this little war~~ ~~it~~ somewhere south of the Spanish American War, the more pressing issues of international relations return to the forefront.

This war may have represented the last time that the U.S. presented itself as a superpower and the first time that a new coalition has supposedly been formed to insure, define and support international order. But how real is this NEW WORLD ORDER that President Bush speaks of and of what will it be composed? I propose to describe to you a new world order not composed of coalitions founded on military strength but a cooperative and competitive order of new civilian powers unlike those seen to this date.

Ever since it became clear that an exhausted Soviet Union was calling off the Cold War, the quest has been on for a new American role in the world. Roles, however, are not invented in the abstract; they are ~~a~~ ~~response~~ ~~s~~ to a perceived world structure. As the post-World War II international order dissolves, some of the initial concerns that informed and shaped it are resurfacing. One key objective of this post-World War II order was the containment of the Japanese and German military expansionism and its ~~s~~ ~~threat~~ to the international status quo in the Far East and in Europe. This was brilliantly achieved in the late 1940s and 1950s by embracing both of the defeated foes in an American-led alliance system directed against a new

adversary, the Soviet Union. However, this rationale is rapidly fading now and old specters are once more raising their ugly heads; the power of Japan and Germany has again become a cause for concern for their partners in the alliance.

Some observers fear the return of either or both states to traditional temptations of military power politics. More realistically, others worry about the implications of a changing distribution of economic power as a result of Japan's and Germany's single-minded pursuit of economic gain abroad and tendencies toward parochial and closed societies and economies at home.

Most fears about Japanese and/or German revanchism turn less on perceived political strategies by today's leaders in Tokyo or Bonn than on the dynamics of ungovernable change. German unification and its impact on the alliance are seen in terms of a "runaway freight train" headed for a collision as a result sheer momentum and the inability or unwillingness of the drivers to apply the brakes. And as for Japan, we are told by the ^{revisionist} Karl van Wolferen in his book THE ENIGMA OF JAPANESE POWER that nobody is really in charge there. The forces of change which have worked so powerfully in favor of the West and against the East are now seen as possibly threatening American control over events.

These concerns no doubt reflect certain realities. The redistribution and diffusion of economic weight is a fact although it is not often appreciated that the U.S. share of gross world product actually grew in the 1980's. It also seems correct to suggest that to some real degree the dynamics of international relations have shifted from the military-political sphere to economic and social developments -- a shift that favors Japan and Germany as economically dynamic and socially cohesive nations.

Yet on balance I would suggest that the alarmist are probably wrong --not in identifying trends correctly but in failing to put them in the proper perspective. International relations are not just undergoing a reshuffling of power hierarchies but a sea-change affecting both the structure and the substance of international politics. With the demise of the East-West conflict, Professor Kennedy's book THE RISE AND FALL OF GREAT POWERS directed our vision along the traditional play of geopolitics - namely the balance of power calculations, the struggle of nation-states for power and

a relentless security dilemma. It could be proposed however that more fundamental changes have occurred. Change which would suggest that power no longer means "hard" power as in the ability to command others but increasingly means the "soft" power of persuasive ability. Neither Japan nor Germany then is about to become a superpower for this role may no longer exist in the future.

This does not imply that the United States is about to be dethroned as the leader of the Western alliance but rather that the United States will need to evolve into a new type of international power of which Japan and Germany are already in a sense prototypes.. It must become a CIVILIAN POWER. This implies the following principles to define the new paradigm: acceptance of cooperation with others in the pursuit of international objectives, concentration on non-military, primarily economic, means to secure national goals with military power left as a residual instrument serving essentially to safeguard other means of international interaction, and a willingness to develop supranational structures to address critical issues of international management.

We now face a future in which technological and commercial capabilities more than military strength are the significant determinants of state power and influence. National security is ever more reckoned in terms of economic and environmental concerns.

In short, what Richard Rosecrance calls "the military-political world" is giving way to "the trading world" and Japan, as a "trading state," could provide a potentially useful model.

Thus the central argument of this essay is that international relations are undergoing a profound transformation that offers an opportunity to take history beyond the world of the nation-state, with its inherent security dilemmas and its tendency to adjust to change through war.

~~Let me return to some fundamental history.~~
As a result of their own hubris, the farsightedness of the American victors in World War II and a series of historical accidents, Japan and Germany now in some ways find themselves representing this new world order of international relations.

Both nations lost ruthless gambles for regional supremacy and world power.

The victor's most immediate and pressing concern was to ensure that German and Japanese militaristic expansionsim would never again pose a threat to the international status quo. As sharp divisions developed between the Allies, these came to supersede ~~their~~ ^{the West's} concern about the Japanese and Germans. The result was the American strategy of "double containment", in which Germany and Japan were embraced as junior partners in the effort to contain the Soviet Union; and at the same time they were firmly anchored in the U.S. - centered alliance system by a web of security, political and economic ties. Or ~~as~~ ^{put} more bluntly by ^{British} Lord Ismay in his comment about the purpose of NATO "Keep the Americans in, the Russians out and the Germans down." Both nations were subjected to selective screening and weeding out of old elites, the dismemberment of industrial concentrations and democratic reforms by the occupying forces. As a result, democracy in Japan and Germany may not be perfect but it looks strong enough to prevent any return to militarism, fascism or nationalistic authoritarianism.

Both nations accepted a renunciation of autonomous security policies. This monumental step profoundly transformed international politics in the direction suggested by European visionary Jean Monnet toward an international order created through mutually accepted reciprocal dependence. These two post-war security arrangements were key elements in the transformation of the post-war era in making possible the stabilization of two critical areas: Europe and Northeast Asia. The shift of emphasis was from military to prosperity. Japan and Germany turned their attention toward economic resurgence and thus both become prototypes of the modern trading state. The American policy of double containment provided a cheap solution to their defense problems, a new international respectibility, economic integration into an open world economy and financial support. ^{Forty years later,} Both Japan and Germany must ~~now~~ define their interests and objectives in the context of integration and interdependence and pursue them through cooperation and negotiations with their partners. This makes the return to old policies nearly impossible.

Despite their transformation however, both nations now have again become sources of concerns to many Americans. These concerns can be grouped around the

following themes: old-fashioned national expansionism, whether military or economic; a shift of international leadership from America to Japan and/or Germany; and maintaining international stability and prosperity under "new management",

Opinion polls show a high percentage of Americans perceiving Japan as a greater threat to their future than the Soviet Union. The real issue behind these fears are the economic successes of the Germans and the Japanese industries in comparison to those of the United States. ^{However} Economic imbalances reflecting differences in national savings rates and the relative competitiveness of certain sectors of industry do not in themselves constitute "threats". These fears are based on the assumption the these nations direct their economic activities toward non-economic goals -- ie the pursuit of national power. Considerable evidence would suggest the contrary and that the forces of international interdependence will produce changes and adjustments of the economic imbalances. Such forces are difficult if not impossible for governments to control and direct.

American worries about being pushed aside and replaced as the leading Western power also largely missed the point. For one thing, U.S. leadership is not really threatened as evidenced by the recent war in the Persian Gulf. It is to undergo qualitative changes however. The American concern about losing preeminence, as pointed out in the Wall Street Journal in March of 1990 by Herbert Stein, confuses leadership with dominance and economic strength with economic monopoly.. Put differently, these worries look at today's world of international relations--shaped by the dynamics of interdependence-- through the lenses of yesterday's balance of power politics among nation states obsessed with territorial insecurity and expansion. Ours is ^{quickly becoming} ~~no longer~~ an international system of superpower hegemony, but one of cooperation and conflict among highly interdependent partners.

It is true of course that interdependence implies loss of autonomy and in that sense American worries are real. ^{But} Opting against interdependence and for autonomy ^{and supremacy} has often produced disastrous results -- witness the socialist experience in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. To suggest seriously that Japanese companies could withhold their chips from the United States and sell them to the Soviet Union and thus

6

change the military balance of power as Ishihara and Morita have done in THE JAPAN THAT CAN SAY NO seems breathtakingly unrealistic.

Interdependence does not by itself supply a vision of world order other than to offer material welfare and comforts. ^{at this time.} It also entails the possibility of intense conflict over the distribution of its costs and benefits and will continue to rely heavily on the involvement of governments. ^{the} The legitimacy of the system will suffer if issues such as the protection of global environment or the gap between rich and poor are not addressed.

The core of the American problem with Germany and Japan is not the redistribution of power within the alliance but the overall change in the international system. A system of complex interdependence will require a security framework that guarantees political stability, it will need to satisfy peoples aspirations and it will need to be able to effectively and fairly manage the ~~possess~~ ^{process} of modernization and transformation in the Third World. The critical challenges and risks for the future will largely come from economic, social and cultural dislocations and their potential for producing political crises and turmoil. Social changes in this broad sense have been at the root of the crisis in the Soviet Union and they foster new and unique security problems such as terrorism, migration and drugs. Military power will become a residual rather than central element in international politics. This is not to deny the continued relevance of the security dimension for international relations. Nuclear deterrence and conventional forces will still play a role in guaranteeing the state centered character of international relations. And war and civil ^{war} will become more not less common in the Third World. However, military forces are likely to become largely irrelevant in confronting such new challenges as political instability and crisis in Eastern Europe or the Third World, terrorism, drugs or environmental dangers.

Japan has become the first global civilian power through its close trans-Pacific ties to the United States and its world-wide economic presence. To think of Japan as a purely regional identity seems inconceivable. Its political identity will now need to develop along those global lines. This means that Japan's sense of responsibility must be shaped around its alliance with the United States, and around global

challenges such as Third World development and environmental reconstruction. There are signs that such a sense of identity is indeed developing in Japan's strong support of the United Nations, the gradual opening and "internationalization" of Japan and the rapidly increasing assistance to developing nations over the past few years. There is also ~~the~~^a strong aversion of Japanese society to militarism.

Solidarity with other societies, and a sense of responsibility for the future of the world --and particularly the global environment--are values that will need to be inculcated. Those values must be developed domestically to make effective international interdependence policies possible

So in a very practical sense then what is our "problem" then with Japan. Why do we go through U.S.-Japanese crises so often? Why is there as columnist Robert J. Samuelson describes a "permanent state of anxiety between the two nations reflecting different cultural and world views"? It is the result I believe of our sense that Japan's spirit is one of taking more from the world than giving back to it. There is a touch of selfishness and amorality.

Our problem with the Japanese is not the trade deficit which is actually falling and will take continued attention from the U.S. to open the Japanese markets. It is not our dependence on Japanese technological advances although we need to protect vital industry and research. It may hurt our national pride but who is the worse off if the Japanese develop a better car, CD player or television. And it is not our dependence on Japanese capital which is also abating and only strengthens the bonds between the nations. In truth, England, Switzerland and the Netherlands all have greater investments in the U.S. than Japan *Separately*

What we learned in the Gulf Crisis is that when the rubber hits the road we can't rely on the Japanese to be dependable allies. They still have not developed a national vision which can be conveyed to their domestic population or projected to the world. As time goes on both nations will have to struggle to identify their enlightened self-interests and meld them with the world at large. *In the meantime* We should not use legitimate doubts about the Japanese to distance ourselves from them. At worst this promotes crude nationalism and Japan-bashing. At best, it justifies costly protectionism and

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

industrial subsidies. Commerce with Japan benefits us ^{by} but sharpening our companies and our technology. Their achievements demand respect and we cannot learn from them by denying them or their needs. We should be more candid in acknowledging their attempts to open their markets and less fearful about our own prospects. The image of our becoming a Japanese colony vastly underestimates our strengths

Our relationship with the Japanese is in our strategic interests. It ties them more to us than us to them. We should heed the words of Polonius given to Laertes in Hamlet " The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried, grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel"

Thank you.