WHAT IS THE
NATIONAL INTEREST?
BY ALAN TONELSON

For almost half a century U.S. foreign policy has been based on internationalism—on the assumption that the security and prosperity of every place on earth is vital to America's own. Internationalism, the author argues, has entailed enormous risks and costs—more than we can continue to bear or need to pay—and offers scant promise of success. It is time, he argues, for a new foreign-policy blueprint—a stripped-down strategy whereby the United States looks out for itself and recognizes that building its own strength, not creating a perfect world, is the best guarantor of its safety and well-being.

For the first time since the end of the Second World War the United States faces the need to redefine the international requirements for its security and prosperity. Circumstances today demand that the United States rethink the ends of its foreign policy—that is to say, its national interests.

With the recent victories in the Cold War and the Gulf War, those who have been responsible for U.S. foreign policy are in a triumphant mood. There is little reason for it. The world continues to fray; ever more threatening weapons become ever more widely available. The gap between the stated ends of U.S. foreign policy and the means to achieve and pay for them remains wide and unbridgeable, as it has been for decades. Nor is it clear that the ends of U.S. foreign policy, when they are achieved, do more good than harm—for ourselves or for those we seek to assist. Perhaps most important, the recent victories have brought few benefits to the home front; indeed, they seem scarcely relevant to the daily lives and pressing concerns of most Americans today, or to the economic and social problems that bedevil the nation. The disconnection between the nation's needs at home and its ambitions abroad is at once bizarre and dangerous.

And yet, faced with all these facts, much of the nation's foreign-policy elite has chosen variously to ignore them or to berate those who have called attention to them.

Since the end of the Second World War, Americans have by and large defined their foreign-policy objectives in what may be called globalist or internationalist terms. Internationalism has been protean enough—liberal and conservative, hawkish and dovish, unilaterist and multilateralist—to have commanded the loyalty of figures as different as Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter. But its essence springs from three crucial lessons learned by most Americans and their leaders from the Great Depression and the rise of fascism during the 1930s, from the global confla-
gration that those events helped produce, and from the emergence of a new totalitarian threat almost immediately after that war.

The first lesson was that the United States would never know genuine security, lasting peace, and sustained prosperity unless the rest of the world also became secure, peaceful, and prosperous. The second lesson was that international security was indivisible—that the discontent that produced political extremism and, inevitably, aggression was highly contagious and bound to spread around the world no matter where it broke out. The third lesson was that the only way to achieve these fundamental goals and prevent these deadly dangers was to eliminate the conditions that breed extremism wherever they exist, and somehow to impose norms of peaceful behavior on all states.

The result of all this was a global definition of vital U.S. foreign-policy interests, with globalist international-security and economic structures to back it up. The United States supported the United Nations and forged alliances with scores of countries to guarantee security in all major regions and to deter aggression everywhere. In the process Washington expanded the definition of the U.S. defense perimeter to encompass literally every country outside the Communist world. At the same time, the imperative of resisting subversion as well as aggression everywhere in the world created an equally vital interest in the political and economic health of all these countries, which was fostered by U.S. foreign-aid programs and by an international economic system built on such mechanisms as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

The internationalist approach led U.S. foreign-policy makers to insist that no corner of the world was so remote or insignificant that it could be ignored. Of course, not all parts of the world were given equal attention or resources. But disparities emerged not because foreign-policy makers viewed certain regions as expendable but because they perceived no serious threat either to these regions per se or to crucial international norms at the moment. Whenever a serious threat did appear, America’s leaders usually favored a prompt response. The power of internationalist impulses has been underscored by military interventions, paramilitary operations, peace-keeping missions, and diplomatic initiatives in marginal countries and regions such as Angola, the Horn of Africa, and Lebanon, and also by a foreign-aid program that continuously sprinkles funds on virtually every Third World mini-state, micro-state, and basket case that has won its independence since 1945.

Internationalism has insisted that U.S. foreign policy should aim at manipulating and shaping the global environment as a whole rather than at securing or protecting a finite number of assets within that environment. It has yoked America’s safety and well-being not to surviving and prospering in the here and now but to turning the world into something significantly better in the indefinite future—into a place where the forces that drive nations to clash in the first place no longer exist. Internationalism, moreover, has insisted that America has no choice but to “pay any price, bear any burden” to achieve these conditions, even though humanity has never come close to bringing them about. In so doing internationalism has sidestepped all questions of risk and cost. In fact, it has defined them out of existence.

Yet even before the Gorbachev revolution in Soviet foreign policy—during the Cold War years, when the case could be made for a total response to the ostensibly total Soviet threat—the problems created by the internationalist approach to foreign policy were beginning to loom as large as those that it was meant to solve. Militarily and strategically, internationalism identified America’s foreign-policy challenges in such a way as to turn any instance of aggression into an intolerable threat to America’s own security, whether or not tangible U.S. interests were at stake, and no matter how greatly the costs of intervention may have outweighed any specific benefits that the United States could plausibly have realized. Vietnam is the classic example. Internationalism also drew America into nuclear alliances—notably, in Europe—deliberately structured to entrap the country in nuclear conflict even in cases when our own national security had not been directly affected.

Economically, as early as the late 1960s internationalism showed signs of turning into a formula for exhaustion. Richard Nixon brought the post–Second World War international monetary system to an end, in 1971, precisely because America could no longer meet its foreign-policy obligations and its domestic obligations simultaneously. Politically, the internationalist strategies and rhetoric employed by U.S. leaders throughout the post-war era generated tremendous pressures on these same leaders to follow through. Remembering the political firestorms that followed the “losses” of China and Cuba, they repeatedly resolved to prove the nation’s mettle when the next outbreak of trouble occurred, reducing to almost nil the possibility that non-involvement would even be considered as an option, much less chosen.

Now, in the post–Cold War era, internationalism has become even more problematic. As our chronic budget gap shows, our foreign policy is politically unaffordable in today’s America—as opposed to the America of the 1950s, when popular satisfaction with the barest skeleton of a welfare state and the country’s economic predominance permitted levels of military spending two and three times as high as those of today (as a proportion of total federal spending). Internationalism continues to deny us a strategic basis for selectivity, a way of thinking about our international goals that would enable our leaders to resist the temptation to plunge into every crisis and right every wrong that life brings along, and to stand
aside without being perceived by the American people as impotent or callous.

In fact, internationalism dismisses as morally reprehensible questions that other nations ask routinely in order to inject some discipline into their decision-making: What is it that we need to do in the world to secure a certain level of material and psychological well-being? What is it that we simply would like to do in the world? What are we able to do? How can we pursue our objectives without wrecking our economy, overloading our political system, or convulsing our society?

At best, post–Cold War internationalism is a recipe for intense, genuinely worrisome domestic political frustrations. Repeated failure to achieve declared foreign-policy goals and especially to avert foreign-policy outcomes officially characterized as intolerable or disastrous could poison and destabilize American politics and democracy. A string of such failures could bring calamitous international consequences by undermining America's ability to conduct a minimally responsible, rational foreign policy. At worst, internationalism raises the threat of drawing the nation into dangerous conflicts for the slightest of stakes. And even if such political and military disasters are somehow avoided, internationalism will continue to drain the nation to its core, especially if U.S. allies do not lend enough help.

Internationalism has not only locked the foreign policy of this nation of self-avowed pragmatists into a utopian mold; it has led directly to the primacy of foreign policy in American life and to the consequent neglect of domestic problems which has characterized the past fifty years. Internationalism encourages us to think more about the possible world of tomorrow than about the real world of today. Thus the strange irrelevance of our recent foreign policy, and even its victories, to the concerns of most Americans.

A NEW FOREIGN-POLICY BLUEPRINT

If internationalism is no longer an acceptable guide for U.S. foreign policy, what should take its place? What can take its place? Assuming that the means available to U.S. foreign-policy makers will not change significantly anytime soon—that American scientists will not devise a new ultimate weapon and preserve monopoly control of it; that U.S. allies will remain reluctant to increase their military and foreign-aid spending dramatically or to compensate the United States for its leadership role in other ways; that the American public will remain unwilling to make the sacrifices needed to carry out an internationalist foreign policy effectively (through some combination of higher taxes, reduced consumption, and reduced demand for public services); and that the unprecedented increases in national economic productivity needed to finance such a foreign policy soundly will remain nowhere in sight—the United States will have to make some profound adjustments.

If the United States cannot hope to achieve the desired level of security and prosperity by underwriting the security and prosperity of countries all over the world, and by enforcing whatever global norms of economic and political behavior this ambition requires, then it must anchor its security and prosperity in a less-than-utopian set of objectives. It must therefore distinguish between what it must do that is absolutely essential for achieving this more modest set of objectives and those things it might do that are not essential. It must, in other words, begin to think in terms not of the whole world's well-being but rather of purely national interests.

The adjustments that are required would produce a foreign policy largely unrecognizable to Americans today. The U.S. government would still be a major force in world affairs, and the American people would still trade with, invest in, work in, and travel to other lands. But the preferred instruments of the new foreign policy would differ radically from those of internationalism. And the policy itself would spring from a completely different vision of America, of its strengths and weaknesses and, most important, its basic purposes. The new orientation, moreover, would reflect the manifest (if seldom articulated) wishes of the great majority of Americans, rather than those of the small, privileged caste of government officials, former government officials, professors, think-tank denizens, and journalists whose dreamy agenda has long dominated foreign-policy decision-making in America. For surely American foreign policy has been conducted with utter disregard for the home front largely because it has been made by people whose lives and needs have almost nothing in common with those of the mass of their countrymen.

Unlike internationalism, interest-based thinking rests on a series of assumptions drawn both from common sense and from classical strategic maxims; and it can help prevent counterproductive outcomes by forcing decision-makers continually to examine the impact of their poli-
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...cies on national security and well-being within a finite time frame. In the first place, a foreign policy derived from interest-based thinking would accept today's anarchic system of competing nation-states as a given. It would neither seek to change the nature of this system nor assume the system's imminent transformation. Instead, the new policy would confine itself to securing certain specific objectives that are intrinsically important to America's security and welfare—for example, the protection of regions that are important sources of raw materials or critical manufactured goods, those that are major loci of investment or prime markets, and those that by virtue of their location are strategically vital.

Interest-based thinking holds that in such a world U.S. national interests can and must be distinguished from the interests of the international system itself and from those of other individual states. This is just common sense. Because states differ in location, size, strength, natural wealth, historical experience, values, economic systems, degree and type of social organization, and many other particulars, their foreign-policy needs and wants—their interests—cannot always be identical or harmonious, and will in fact sometimes clash with those of certain other countries and those of whatever larger international community those states are supposed to belong to. Internationalism's assumption of an ultimate harmony of interests among states and between states and the larger system often obscures these critical truths.

In addition, interest-based thinking assumes that since the world lacks a commonly accepted referee or means of resolving clashes of interests, states cannot count on other states or entities to define their interests or to protect them. States therefore need the means to accomplish these tasks on their own. Interest-based thinking assumes that because countries can in the end rely only on their own devices, national self-reliance and freedom of action are intrinsic goods. With an internationalist foreign policy, these imperatives tend to get lost in the shuffle.

Further, interest-based thinking maintains that because resources are always relatively scarce (if they were not, the discipline of economics would not exist), once foreign policy moves beyond the quest for what strategists call core security—the nation's physical, biological survival, and the preservation of its territorial integrity and political independence—the specific, concrete benefits sought must be brought into some sustainable alignment with the policy's economic, social, and political costs. And the payoff of policies cannot be put off into the long-term future. A country with finite available resources simply does not have the luxury of infinite patience.

Thus an interest-based foreign policy would tend to rule out economic initiatives deemed necessary for the international system's health if those initiatives wound up siphoning more wealth out of this country (in the form of net investment, interest on debt, military expenditures, foreign aid, trade credits, jobs destroyed by imports versus those created by exports, and so forth) than they brought in. Similarly, it would oppose economic policies that actually destroyed wealth—for example, by stimulating inflation, by committing excessive resources to economically unproductive military spending and research and development, by necessitating excessive currency devaluations, by requiring exorbitant interest rates that discourage productive investment, or by blithely accepting the loss of industries that have been technology and productivity leaders for the sake of free-trade ideology or alliance unity.

Unlike internationalism, an interest-based foreign policy would not emphasize alliances and multilateral institutions, or promote worldwide economic efficiency to the point at which U.S. dependence on other countries is seen as a good in and of itself. Rather, the new policy would recognize the importance of maintaining the maximum degree of freedom of action and self-reliance in a still dangerous world. Indeed, an interest-based policy would also recognize that the related realms of economics and technology are as nakedly strategic as the military-political realm. While the Cold War was raging, internationalists viewed economic initiatives and technology as little more than assets to deny the Communist world or as a collection of baubles, to be doled out periodically as political favors to allies and neutrals. The end of the Cold War has produced many acknowledgments by internationalists of the rising importance of economic power. But even this outlook still tends to be nonstrategic. Internationalists still assume that, economically speaking, winning and losing have no meaning whatever—unless one cares about national pride—so long as the competition takes place among nonhostile states. And they continue to believe that economic competition can always be kept reasonable and constructive, as if it were an athletic contest.
Despite its heightened sensitivity to questions involving resources, the new foreign policy would proceed from an assumption of American strength, not weakness. While conceding that the United States is neither powerful nor wealthy enough to remake the world in its own image, or to achieve security and prosperity for itself by securing these benefits for every country on the planet, it would recognize that America is powerful, wealthy, and geopolitically secure enough to flourish without carrying out this ambitious agenda. And it would understand that the cultivation of America's economic and military strength, not the creation of international institutions or global norms of behavior, is the best guarantor of national independence and well-being over the long run. The emergence of transnational threats such as environmental destruction and drug trafficking does nothing to reduce the importance of national power. The nations whose preferred solutions are adopted will be those bringing the most chips to the table.

Perhaps most important, an interest-based U.S. foreign policy would firmly subordinate international activism and the drive for world leadership to domestic concerns. Indeed, it would spring from new and more realistic ideas about what can be expected of a country's official foreign policy in the first place. The new approach would acknowledge that the modest policy tools actually at a government's command—weapons, money, and persuasion—cannot build a fundamentally new and more benign or congenial world political order, or change the millennia-old patterns of poverty, tradition, and misrule in which so much of humanity is trapped. Such changes can occur only on the organic level of international relations, as the result of informal social, cultural, and economic interactions over long stretches of time. And even if modern science and technology have greatly accelerated the pace of change, there is little reason to think that change can be controlled or manipulated at the operational level of international relations—by a state's day-to-day foreign policy.

The interest-based approach would also eschew any notion of foreign policy as first and foremost a vehicle for spreading American values, for building national character, for expressing any individual's or group's emotional, philosophical, or political preferences, or for carrying out any of a series of additional overseas missions that, however appealing, bear only marginally on protecting and enriching the nation: promoting peace, stability, democracy, and development around the world; protecting human rights; establishing international law; building collective security; exercising something called leadership; creating a new world order; competing globally with the Soviets (or whomever) for power and influence. None of these sweeping, inspiring, quintessentially internationalist goals can serve as guides for U.S. foreign policy. They are simply free-floating ideals. From time to time they may represent ways of advancing particular and advanceable American interests. But first we have to know what interests we want to advance. An interest-based approach would also reject the idea that meeting a set of global responsibilities can be the lodestar of U.S. foreign policy. Whose definition of this unavoidably subjective notion would be chosen? And on what basis?

Nevertheless, the interest-based approach would recognize that in a democracy such views—that is, simple national preferences—frequently influence foreign policy. That is to say, Americans from time to time favor a course of action (invading Grenada, for example, or aiding the Kurds) not because it serves vital national interests but simply because they like it. An interest-based foreign policy would acknowledge that the citizens of a democracy have every right to choose whatever foreign policy they please; certainly they are answerable to no one but themselves. And it would hold that there is nothing intrinsically wrong with sometimes basing a foreign policy on the whim or preference of the majority. The new approach would insist, however, that the American public be willing to finance its whims soundly—something the United States government has not done for decades. If the public favors aid to insurgents around the world, or fighting poverty in developing countries, or helping new democracies in Eastern Europe or Latin America, or defending certain parts of the world because of a shared cultural heritage, then it should be willing to raise the revenues needed to pay for these policies. If the revenues are not forthcoming, the whims are probably not very strong to begin with and are probably best ignored.

The new foreign policy certainly would not preclude acting on principle. But it would greatly de-emphasize conforming to abstract standards of behavior. In fact, the new foreign policy would shy away from any overarching strategy of or conceptual approach to international relations. Unlike isolationism, for instance, it would not elevate non-intervention to the status of a commandment. And it would view other popular doctrines of American foreign policy—containment, détente, multilateralism, unilateralism, idealism, realism, the achievement of a global balance of power—with skepticism. It would be free to use whatever approach or combination of approaches seemed likeliest to achieve the best ends for the United States in a given situation. Its only rule of thumb would be “whatever works” to preserve or enhance America's security and prosperity and—provided that Americans are willing to pay the bills—what the country collectively wishes to define as its psychological well-being.

Internationalists worrying about this policy's potential lack of moral content might think harder about channeling more of their compassion into good works at home—where there is no shortage of grievous wrongs to be righted and where, as is not the case in many other countries,
the social and institutional wherewithal for successful reform actually exists.

As for the issue of defining the ends of U.S. foreign policy beyond core security, there are no magic formulas to rely on. Once national survival and independence are assured, all the major objectives of U.S. foreign policy must be subjected to a rigorous cost-risk analysis. If objectives are truly vital—if physical survival or the continuance of America's democratic values and institutions are at stake—costs and risks can never exceed benefits. But if objectives are less than vital, costs and risks can exceed benefits. For a country with America's built-in geopolitical and economic advantages—with its capacity for achieving security, prosperity, and independence—the top priority is not to settle on a fixed definition of vital interests. It is much more important to learn to think rigorously and strategically about foreign policy, in order to ensure that whatever set of interests is chosen is not so ambitious that it exposes the country to more risks than it repels, drains it of more strength than it adds, and makes Americans feel bad about themselves and their nation more than it makes them feel good.

The new policy's aversion to grand doctrines and frameworks would be in keeping with the conviction that the fundamental purpose of U.S. foreign policy should be nothing more glamorous than attempting to cope with whatever discrete developments arise abroad that could endanger American security and prosperity. The stress would not be on comprehensive initiatives to get at the root causes of the world's ills and conflicts, on promoting greater international cooperation or integration, or on getting on the right side of history—for these favorite internationalist aims entail enormous costs and offer scant promise of success. In a perilous strategic world, it is usually a mistake to consider foreign policy to be an activist instrument at all. Rather, Americans should start thinking of foreign policy in terms of avoiding problems, reducing vulnerabilities and costs, maximizing options, buying time, and muddling through—objectives that may be uninspiring but that are well suited to a strong, wealthy, geographically isolated country.

Still, how might the new approach affect specific aspects of U.S. foreign policy? What alternatives would it entail?

THE SOVIET UNION: ONLY TREAT THE SYMPTOMS

The internationalists' utopianism has been evident even where utopia has seemed furthest away—in dealings with the Soviet Union. Since the beginning of the Cold War, Washington has been striving to achieve genuine, durable superpower cooperation. For all the hostility and conflict that has marked U.S.-Soviet relations in the postwar era, American leaders have aimed to create a relationship that would have the capacity to elicit desired Soviet behavior irrespective of power considerations. Yet even in the Gorbachev era this objective is badly misconceived.

It may seem strange to describe postwar U.S. policy toward the Soviets as a quest for community. Through the mid-1980s America built a vast, globe-girdling military machine to contain Soviet power, fought what it viewed as Moscow's proxies in the Third World, placed tight clamps on Western economic dealing with the Soviet bloc, and fenced with the Soviets diplomatically in countless forums. Yet from its inception Soviet containment has been portrayed as the first stage in a process aimed at ending East-West hostility by transforming the USSR and other Communist countries into model international citizens.

Since 1985 the revolution in Soviet foreign policy sparked by Mikhail Gorbachev has created a widespread impression that Moscow has been converted to American ways of thinking, even to the point of denouncing the militarism of its past foreign policy and spouting the rhetoric of international law and common security. Internationalism's goal seems closer than ever.

Nothing, however, could be further from the truth. Moscow's unconditional acquiescence in German unification should have made this obvious. A country that accepts the rebirth of a mortal enemy because its political survival may depend on substantial foreign aid from that erstwhile enemy is not a country that has seen the light but one that has been defeated. Since the late 1980s the West has not been negotiating with a sovereign equal but has been unwittingly dictating the terms of surrender. Moscow is de-emphasizing classical concepts of strategic and economic self-interest because those options are no longer available. It speaks of transcending power because it has none—at least none to prevent outcomes that it has understandably dreaded for decades. It is taking a leap not of faith but of desperation.

The moment the Soviets become stronger, or feel stronger, the cooperative veneer will be stripped away.
And even if a candidate endorsed by Mother Teresa were to win power in Moscow, geography alone would guarantee that Soviet and U.S. aims will not always be compatible. Recall the U.S.-Soviet rift that developed near the end of the Gulf War. Whatever they thought of Saddam Hussein, Soviet leaders were understandably uncomfortable with a Western and Arab force of half a million soldiers, armed with aircraft carriers, tanks, self-propelled artillery pieces, bombers, cruise missiles, and a swarm of other smart weapons, perched close to their southern doorstep.

How can internationalism cope with such problems? The theory behind our quest for East-West community holds that such tensions aren't supposed to break out anymore. How can this provide helpful guidance for policy-makers? Here internationalism's shortcomings result from its assumption that viable U.S. policies can be based on analyzing international threats and conditions rather than on identifying U.S. interests. The Bush Administration and most outside analysts have justified a new course for America's Soviet policy—notably involving cuts in defense spending—by pointing to Gorbachev's foreign-policy spectaculars and, to a lesser extent, his domestic reforms. By the fall of last year, however, the pace of Soviet diplomatic surrender began to slow. The cause of domestic reform also began to lose ground. If the situation worsens, the internationalist method of divining U.S. interests indirectly might dictate reversing the current modest decline in U.S. military budgets. But who believes that an increase in the Pentagon's budget will occur, even after the Gulf War? And which internationalists will call for the tax increases or domestic-cutting cuts needed to finance a new military buildup responsibly? The alternative internationalist recipe for Soviet policy holds no more promise: promoting reform by aiding the Soviet economy. Even most internationalists admit that Moscow's problems are so vast that no realistically available amount of American or even Western resources can suffice to solve them—assuming that the main problem is lack of resources.

Thus the quandary looming before us, thanks to internationalism: We supposedly have a vital stake in bringing democracy and capitalism to the Soviet Union, but we are powerless to do so. And we will not go back to a Cold War military posture if reform fails. It's hard to imagine clearer proof of policy breakdown.

A policy that derived from serious thinking about national interests would look very different. Because the United States, acting on the basis of such a policy, would regard the root causes of international conflicts as basically uncontrollable even in a post-Communist age, and because it would doubt that in achieving important foreign-policy goals any arrangements or institutions could adequately substitute for power, it would concern itself primarily with the symptoms of U.S.-Soviet rivalry should this rivalry heat up again. Moreover, because it would be acutely conscious of the cost of and limits on U.S. power, it would address only those symptoms that directly affected regions or activities important to the United States. Thus the United States would concern itself with the activities of the Soviets (or other hostile powers) in Third World trouble spots mainly when the fate of such trouble spots bore directly on America's core security (for example, Mexico and the Caribbean Basin). Regarding countries that represent major markets or sources of critical raw materials or manufactures, the new policy toward the Soviets would require officials to ask whether the costs and risks of securing these assets outweighed the benefits of non-internationalist solutions. Because the United States under the new policy would not see international peace and security as a seamless web, it would respond to many instances of Soviet (or any other) troublemaking by doing nothing at all.

The new policy would also strictly curb U.S. objectives when responses to Soviet or other hostile challenges were necessary. Unlike internationalism, it would not see every one of these challenges as a golden opportunity to advance the cause of global cooperation or to go after the roots of the troubles that hostile powers were seeking to exploit. An interest-based policy would view such crises as discrete problems that, no matter how alarming, America could realistically hope only to deter or beat back as they arose.

The new policy toward the Soviets would not rule out aiding Moscow economically or technically—provided that U.S. taxpayers were willing to foot the bill or take the revenues out of other programs. But it would focus on ensuring that America could tolerate the consequences if Soviet reform fails. In this respect, Washington's top priority must be coping with the possibility that a breakdown of order in the Soviet Union will fragment control over Soviet nuclear weapons and increase the odds of an accidental launch or a launch by extremists. A non-internationalist policy would address this specific military problem not by vainly trying to hold the Soviet Union together but by constructing the kind of thin missile-defense system that seems technologically within our grasp. Above all, it would recognize that without nuclear weapons the Soviet Union is itself today little more than what Walter Lippmann, in 1947, described the regions adjacent to the Soviet Union as consisting of: a collection of "disorganized, disunited, feeble or disorderly nations, tribes and factions." For America, the only available option worse than strategic detachment would be futile engagement.

In essence, America's Soviet policy should be to have no overarching Soviet policy as such. Rather than seeking positive objectives, the policy's goals would be predominantly negative—to make sure that Soviet actions do not damage the security or welfare of the United States or interfere with any ambitions that it truly holds dear.
FRIENDS AND ALLIES: AN END TO SMOOTHERING

If U.S. internationalists have viewed relations with the Soviet Union as the wilderness they have been trying to civilize, they have seen relations with major treaty allies as a promised land they have already reached. Nevertheless, U.S. policy toward Western Europe, Japan, and the countries where we maintain military bases vividly represents how the internationalist approach to securing U.S. interests can heighten more security risks than it neutralizes and drain America of more wealth than it brings in.

Since 1945 this internationalist alliance strategy—especially regarding Western Europe and Japan—has aimed at more complex, even more grandiose, goals than has generally been realized. The objectives have involved far more than protecting Western Europe and Japan against Soviet military aggression and political intimidation, as should now be clear from Washington’s insistence that sizable U.S. nuclear and conventional forces remain in place in these regions even after most Soviet forces pull back. Nor does U.S. alliance strategy limit itself to that task of protection plus the task of preventing German and Japanese revanchism. Instead, both aims flow from a larger strategy: one of meeting all the major needs—principally those for security and prosperity—that historically led the Western European countries and Japan to conduct their own foreign policies in the first place.

This is why America has been determined to provide an enormous, guaranteed market for these now wealthy, heavily trade-dependent, and heavily protected countries (often at considerable cost to its own fortunes) as well as to cover them with a nuclear shield. In the case of Japan, the strategy has gone even further. Not only did America write the constitution that was instrumental in turning Japan into a political and military midget. (Unlike the members of NATO, Japan is not obliged by its security treaty with Washington to come to America’s aid in the event of attack.) It provided the economic blueprint that Japan followed to become a highly bureaucratized, monomaniacal, mercantilist powerhouse, and encouraged Japan to rely on America, not the rest of Asia, for most of its export market. Since 1945, then, the United States has been struggling to contain not only the Soviet Union but all the world’s great nations—to do nothing less than prevent them from acting like great nations in the first place.

This strategy of smothering the foreign-policy (and economic) independence of Western Europe and Japan initially constituted an effort to balance two deeply held but conflicting goals set by U.S. foreign-policy makers shortly after the Second World War. On the one hand, they were determined to put these regions back on their feet—in order to create both markets for American goods and powerful allies capable of resisting Soviet power and of helping the United States manage the rest of the globe. On the other hand, U.S. officials knew that rebuilding these nations raised the possibility of restoring the pre-1914 global balance of power, which had proved highly unstable and in fact had collapsed into two terrible conflicts. In a nuclear age the next world war might very well be the last.

As the Cold War intensified, American internationalists convinced themselves that they could have it both ways: their allies could be strong enough to help in the struggle against the Soviets but not so strong as to challenge U.S. world leadership. Smothering, the means to this end, was conceived of gradually during the 1950s and involved a huge forward deployment of U.S. conventional and nuclear forces in Europe and the Far East; guaranteeing the allies’ prosperity by opening U.S. markets wide to their exports; tolerating and even encouraging their own protectionism (the European Community, a discriminatory trade bloc, was avidly promoted by Washington); and upholding a stable international monetary order.

The most obvious problems with this strategy have been difficult enough. America has paid the lion’s share of the free world’s defense costs. And it has borne the lion’s share of the nuclear risks in its major alliances as well. In Europe, in particular, the strategy of “coupling,” by deploying nuclear weapons in such a way as to deny Washington any choice in whether or not to use them, has sought to convince the Soviets that the United States would indeed use nuclear weapons if necessary to repel an attack and run the risk of all-out nuclear war—something that U.S. leaders have understandably been loath to tell the public. In fact, from the signing of the first U.S.-Soviet strategic-arms agreement, in 1972, to the breakdown of communism in Eastern Europe, in 1989, the story of intra-alliance relations was the story of Western Europe and America trying to foist the bulk of this risk onto each other. Meanwhile, Washington’s indifference to maintaining U.S. economic strength led America to make most of the near-term sacrifices demanded by
The allies to hold the common military front together and to keep the Western economy stable.

This strategy has entailed a less obvious but more troubling long-range cost. Numerous analysts have written—and many Europeans have complained—that America has frequently exploited the dollar’s key currency role in the world economy for its own advantage. Specifically, the United States has been able to lean on its allies to finance the huge balance-of-payments deficits it has run, and thus to avoid the painful discipline imposed by the international economic system on other deficit countries, ranging from Brazil to Britain. What these complaints have overlooked, however, is that this arrangement has been bad for the United States in the long run. It is at most a second-best strategy, a substitute for repairing the mounting structural problems of the U.S. economy. It is second-best because it suffers a fatal internal flaw: ultimately, the real political and military clout on which it is based cannot be wielded without that real economic strength which it neglects, and has in fact squandered.

Mainly because the circumstances that made it possible have changed, the smothering strategy needs to change. The overwhelming nuclear superiority that enabled America to deter Soviet conventional attacks without worrying about Soviet retaliatory strikes is gone, and Europe has known this ever since the goal of superpower strategic parity was formally endorsed in the U.S.-Soviet strategic-arms agreement of 1972. Gone, too, is the overwhelming relative economic strength that enabled the United States literally to buy Western European and Japanese cooperation without requiring visible sacrifices from the American people—or exacting tribute from the allies themselves. In fact, by the late 1960s the smothering strategy had turned hegemonic in all but name. The United States brazenly exported first inflation and then sky-high interest rates in order to run larger and larger budget and overall payments deficits. As the price of alliance has risen for Western Europe and Japan, their willingness to accept subordinate status and entrust their fate to U.S. leadership has understandably diminished. And the three power centers will surely continue to drift apart strategically as the Soviet threat that helped hold them together fades. Worse, the short-term gains reaped by the United States came at the expense of its long-term ability to create wealth.

Internationalists advance powerful arguments for persisting in adherence to the smothering strategy. Stability in Europe and the Far East has indeed been achieved, and America has undeniably benefited. But, as usual, internationalists miss the main question. It is not whether smothering is necessary, a so-called vital interest. Smothering is not in fact necessary, because the stability of Europe and the Far East no longer bears on America’s physical survival; our nuclear arsenal affords whatever military protection we need. The main question is whether these benefits of smothering can be achieved at tolerable cost, and for two related reasons the answer increasingly is no.

One reason is that the strategy is now completely unsustainable for America. The military budgets required to provide the degree of military protection or stabilizing “assurance” that the allies still want are a formula for the continued hemorrhaging of U.S. economic strength and the fall of American living standards vis-à-vis these countries’. This decline has become unacceptable. The other reason is that although Western Europe and Japan and the rest of the Far East plainly wish to remain stable, they no longer wish to be contained. However these regions wind up organizing themselves, they will increasingly assert control over their own destinies no matter what America wants or does, cultivating their own strengths, pursuing their own goals, and placing their own interests above everyone else’s. This increased Western European and Japanese independence will undoubtedly make the world less stable. Will the United States continue to try to stop the inevitable? Or will it focus on coping with the consequences of a less stable world?

The Bush Administration currently seems torn between two inconsistent beliefs. One is that there is no alternative to smothering—hence the President’s repeated insistence that smaller but still sizable American conventional and nuclear forces will remain in Europe and the Far East. The other is that institutional arrangements—for example, a U.S.-European-Japanese troika—can be devised to make up at least partly for a diminished American military presence. Neither belief seems promising as a basis for policy. The first assumes that a level of military deployments in Europe and the Far East can be found which is low enough to grant the United States real budgetary relief and just high enough to provide real assurance and stability for those regions. The second suffers from a practical flaw: institutional arrangements cannot substitute for a power shortage. Had such arrange-
ments been important in shaping America’s alliances, in theory they could be rejiggered—burdens and risks could be shifted. But U.S. alliances have been predominantly creations of power—the power to smother. The burden of proof rests on internationalists to show that the leap to true cooperation can be made—that America can get from here to there.

In fact, one danger created by the Gulf War is that America’s smashing victory will tempt Washington into a new burst of hegemonism. After all, the current European and Japanese weakness outside the economic sphere has been exposed anew. The allies’ willingness to join or finance a U.S.-dominated military operation has been demonstrated—even in a case when all except the United Kingdom obviously had serious misgivings. Add in that George Bush is manifestly uninterested in domestic economic revitalization, and it is easy to envision him concluding that he has given new life to an internationalist arm-twisting strategy.

Yet even in a post-Saddam Hussein world the fatal flaw of smothering remains: a strategy of manipulation and arm-twisting is not viable because it neglects and even fritters away the economic strength that it depends on. A new, non-internationalist approach would reorient U.S. policy around two objectives. The first would be to decouple America’s security from that of its allies, and above all to eliminate—not reduce but eliminate—the automatic nuclear risks built into the alliances. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with a decision by the American people to help their allies resist aggression militarily. But they should be free to make this choice. Coupling and forward-deployment strategies (deploying enough U.S. troops and their families on allied soil to make the threat of nuclear response credible) are designed to lock Americans into what is by far the most important decision they could ever face as a people—the decision to precipitate a nuclear war. Once America’s overwhelming nuclear superiority faded, adherence to this strategy became nothing less than depraved, especially since it grows out of the Western European countries’ refusal to pay for an adequate conventional defense. The United States should announce the unilateral withdrawal of all of its nuclear forces and all but token conventional forces from Europe within a fixed period—say, two years. And the vast majority of these forces should be demobilized. Removing most of our armed forces from Europe is doubly important given the new potential for instability on the Continent caused by the fall of the Soviet empire. If order breaks down in Eastern Europe, the last thing we should want is large numbers of American soldiers and nuclear weapons right next door.

Second, the United States should seek to maintain access to European and East Asian markets not by wielding military and political clout but by the much more reli-
able strategy of insisting on complete reciprocity in trade and investment and restoring our leadership in a wide range of major industries. The aim must be to produce goods of such high quality that even the most protectionist nations will be forced to buy them or fall behind economically and technologically. The savings achievable through troop cuts could provide much of the financing that a domestic-revitalization strategy would need. Of course, it would still be up to Americans to spend this money wisely. But first we have to give ourselves the option.

Regarding the Far East, the coupling problem is less serious, since the U.S. allies (except Korea) lie offshore and therefore have never been vulnerable to sudden ground attacks from the Soviet Union or China. Moreover, the cost of maintaining America’s forces in the Far East is lower than the cost of maintaining its forces in Europe. Still, the prime mission of the Far East forces, especially in a post-Cold War era, is completely misconceived. Japan can no longer be contained at a reasonable cost to the United States. Until that distant day when China attains modernity, Japan will be the region’s natural predominant power. It is already East Asia’s leading supplier of private capital and foreign aid, by far. And despite America’s historical opposition to the emergence of anything like Japan’s wartime Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, the Japanese-supervised integration of the region is well under way.

If Japan (which has every interest in using its power peacefully and constructively in the Far East) and its neighbors (who still fear the Japanese, even as they pursue Tokyo’s economic vision) want U.S. forces in the region to ease their anxieties, Washington should provide them—as long as the local countries pick up the tab (including the “rent” that America pays for its Philippine bases, if maintaining those bases is something the local countries want). If they refuse, the United States should simply go home (and in the process end the degrading practice of submitting to Philippine blackmail for something that Manila needs much more than we do). Whatever U.S. forces remain in the region, moreover, should be deployed so as to maximize America’s freedom of choice in using them. And any U.S. nuclear weapons should be deployed in naval units well offshore, especially from Korea, which remains the region’s most dangerous flashpoint.

U.S. alliance policy should vigorously seek opportunities for cooperation with the countries of Europe and East Asia. But advancing U.S. national interests will depend on keeping this cooperation ad hoc—abandoning the illusion of restoring perfect control and establishing idyllic relationships—and on our maintaining the strength to drive hard bargains. We need both the diplomatic skill to create healthy partnerships when specific interests coincide and the street smarts to protect our interests when they do not.
THE THIRD WORLD: TIME TO DISENGAGE

INTERNATIONALISM'S GEDIG for focusing U.S. attention on sideshows has nowhere been more evident than in America's relations with the generally weak, poor, politically fragile nations of the Third World. During the Cold War, internationalism's characteristically exaggerated fears—of Soviet power and prestige, and of losing valuable military bases, raw-material deposits, and export markets to hostile forces—turned the Third World into the only theater in which U.S. and Soviet ambitions clashed violently, and the theater in which these conflicts most often threatened to ignite wider war, from Korea to Indochina, from Cuba to the Middle East, from Afghanistan to Central America. Meanwhile, internationalism's equally excessive hopes led U.S. policy-makers to try to combat the Soviet threat not only by protecting these countries militarily and organizing them into facsimiles of alliances but also by spending hundreds of billions of dollars trying to turn them into modern, subversion-resistant societies.

The Cold War is over, but similar fears continue to drive U.S. policy in the Third World. The specter of local tyrants armed with weapons of mass destruction and long-range delivery systems has replaced the specter of the Soviets, while access to the same markets and raw materials and even most of the same bases is considered as vital as ever. Archetypal internationalist policies—regional security arrangements, multilateral arms and technology export curbs, and aid programs to promote economic development and democracy—are still being proposed to deal with potential Third World problems.

With or without the Soviet threat, internationalists have portrayed America's extensive involvement in Third World countries as a security and economic imperative, resulting from tight, indissoluble links between the Third World's fate and our own. To the extent that these links exist, however, they are largely artificial—the products of internationalist policy. Since well before the Cold War ended, the importance of the Third World to the United States has been shrinking steadily. America's internationalist foreign policy perversely has sought to reverse this process, and to bind America's future ever more closely to these generally woebegone lands and their desperate problems. Worse, where troubles in the Third World do cause America difficulties, internationalism has prevented the United States from pursuing superior non-internationalist solutions.

With respect to security, the value to America of most Third World military bases on the Soviet periphery has been eliminated by the deployment of intercontinental nuclear weapons, which enable U.S. nuclear warheads to strike any spot on earth. And although the military arsenals of many Third World countries will continue to expand, America's military edge over the developing world will probably widen for the foreseeable future, as the latest advances in microelectronics and other technologies are built into American weapons systems. The Gulf War should have made that clear. In this vein, the Vietnam debacle should have taught us only that the United States will have problems using its military to serve its interests in the Third World when those interests are absurdly peripheral, and also when its objectives (in this case, nation-building) are utopian.

As for America's economic stakes in the Third World, they have always been small and they continue to shrink. Take the idea of the Third World and its teeming billions as the world's last great untapped market and the potential salvation of U.S. industry. Meaningless aggregate figures make this broader version of the myth of the China market seem credible. In fact America's Third World trade is dominated by a handful of countries—the so-called newly industrialized countries (the South Koreans and Taiwanese of the world), Mexico, and the OPEC oil producers. U.S. trade with the rest of the Third World rose impressively during the 1970s, but only because the West lent those countries so much money that some increase in their purchasing power was inevitable. Unfortunately, when the loans came due, it became clear that the money had been used not to encourage sound, self-sustaining growth—and thus the creation of reliable markets for U.S. products—but to line rulers' pockets and to finance politically popular national shopping sprees. The resulting debt crisis represents simply the return of those nations to their historical state of economic stagnation following an artificially induced spending boom. Consequently, private U.S. and other Western banks are falling all over themselves to cut their losses and get out of the business of making new loans to most Third World countries (except for loans made involuntarily, as part of government-mandated rescue packages). Indeed, on the whole, all forms of private foreign investment in the Third World are in relative decline. In 1956–1960 direct Western private investments in the Third World amounted to 27.4 percent of the $126.5 billion (in constant dollars) in net Western financial flows to those countries. In
1981–1985 such investments represented only 11.1 percent of the total Western financial flow of $442.4 billion—and this period included some of the peak foreign-lending years.

The United States is heavily reliant on Third World countries for many strategically and economically critical raw materials. But resource availability is hardly a cut-and-dried concept. Appearances to the contrary, statistics on the availability of such resources as petroleum and metals do not tell us definitively how much of these substances remains in the ground. Geologists simply do not know enough to provide credible numbers. And the domination of world production of certain resources by certain countries does not mean that those countries possess the planet’s sole deposits. It simply means that their easily accessible supplies can be extracted and refined at costs that the market considers profitable at a given time. Import dependence, moreover, is not the same thing as vulnerability to supply cutoffs. Specifically, the more countries that supply a given material, the less likely it is that a price increase or a supply interruption from any single source will be damaging to the United States.

In addition, materials science today is an exceptionally promising research field, and many new forms of plastics, ceramics, and composites are superior to naturally occurring metals and the alloys made from them. As a result, the smokestack industries now use decreasing amounts of Third World raw materials in their products. (The new information-intensive industries, of course, have never relied heavily on Third World raw materials.) And the development of synthetics will only accelerate, further lessening our reliance on Third World raw materials.

American interests in the Third World in fact boil down to a handful of concrete issues. On the security side the United States needs to worry about only one region: the Caribbean Basin. And in this region it has only two important concerns: that no hostile outside force establish any significant military or intelligence presence, and that Mexico not fall apart economically and socially.

The United States cannot live with social and econom-

THE COUPLE

Day after day their deep love softly decays.
This makes them wise. It makes them want to sing.
Sometimes, over cups in the kitchen or stirring
a warm soup in the dark, they feel such tenderness
as to turn quietly weeping for each other’s arms.
Weeping. Song. They are so much alike, after all.

-David Baker
THE NEW APPROACH WOULD ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE MODEST POLICY TOOLS ACTUALLY AT A GOVERNMENT'S COMMAND—WEAPONS, MONEY, AND SUASION—CANNOT BUILD A FUNDAMENTALLY NEW AND MORE BENIGN WORLD POLITICAL ORDER.

failed for entirely predictable reasons. The worldwide economic integration to which internationalists love to point means that technology—knowledge—is excruciatingly difficult to contain. It is all the more so when the line between military and civilian technology in the crucial high-tech sectors is blurry, when, consequently, many of the key technologies are in private hands (or heads), and when demand is high. In other words, the problem cannot be legislated out of existence. It is hard to see that diplomacy can do much either. How could the West possibly convince Third World countries that nuclear and other high-tech weapons are not valuable assets, especially in the dangerous regions in which many of the countries are located? And regional security agreements aimed at obviating the need for such weapons are little more than pieces of paper. If states felt secure enough to rely on such arrangements, they wouldn't want the weapons so desperately.

Therefore, it's time for approaches recognizing that the genie is out of the bottle. One approach would replace denial with destruction. Israel understood this first: its bombing of Iraq's nuclear facilities in 1981 bought the world ten years of valuable time. Operation Desert Storm has bought much more. Better yet, such operations—especially if they are restricted to bombing runs over weapons factories—can easily be repeated against militarists and technologically inferior nations whenever necessary. The United States could also replace denial with protection. Ronald Reagan's dream of shielding Americans from the kind of mammoth nuclear strike that the Soviets could launch was never attainable. But a thin-shield defense against the kinds of much smaller strikes that developing countries can launch would be fairly easy, and if we lack the capability now, we should hurry up and get it. Financing would require only a small fraction of the money currently spent on protecting Western Europe and Japan.

ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE, AMERICA NEEDS TO MAKE sure that its banking system is not damaged by further Third World stagnation, and it needs more-reliable supplies of key raw materials found in the Third World. In each case, the internationalist solution has been more complicated, more expensive, less direct, and less reliable over the long term than non-internationalist alternatives. Creating flourishing Third World markets for American goods where none currently exist would be marvelous, but it does not seem possible at any cost that the United States could afford. It is true, as foreign-aid advocates note, that America spends a pitance, in relative terms, on development assistance. But aid has been the same kind of bargain as one on a used car with a bum engine. The prospect of any return at all on the money is so remote that the waste is likely to be total.

Moreover, the chief obstacle to modernization and self-sustaining growth in most of the Third World is not lack of money but, rather, the social, economic, and political disorganization and the official corruption from which Third World countries suffer. Indeed, many of these places are not real countries—at least not in the sense that states in the industrialized free world and parts of the Far East are. Third World countries may belong to the UN, they may have their own flags and airlines and armies and postage stamps, but many of them lack the critical attributes of statehood—the institutional structures and the bedrock cohesion needed both to generate resources and to use them productively.

Rather than persist in trying to solve problems that may be unsolvable, the United States should make the best of a less-than-ideal but eminently tolerable situation, and focus on insulating itself as completely as possible from the consequences of prolonged economic stagnation in the Third World. However significant, the costs could be a bargain compared with the costs and the uncertainties of continued bailout attempts and conventional aid programs. The United States should assume that any real economic promise shown by any of these countries will eventually be recognized by the private sector, however gun-shy it is now.

Since the end of the Second World War the United States has generally accepted its dependence on Third World supplies of strategic materials and has sought to secure them through a combination of military and political means—fielding the forces needed to protect the supplies from hostile powers, using foreign aid and diplomacy to court the regimes that controlled the resources, and, when necessary, helping the regimes fend off internal challenges. These national-security programs represent costs that must be added to the price tag of Third World raw materials. In fact, when one considers all the costs and uncertainties of securing access to these materials, the entire policy equation changes. It becomes clear that many "cheap" Third World raw materials are not cheap at all. In some cases the true cost of these materials

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may approach or even exceed the true costs of supposedly uneconomical alternatives. Oil provides the most striking example. The cost of the U.S. military forces maintained even in peacetime primarily to protect the flow of oil from the Middle East, together with the cost of U.S. regional-aid programs—not to mention the cost of the Gulf War—increased the real price of Middle Eastern oil to U.S. taxpayers by a staggering sum. Estimates of the actual amount vary, and preoccupy a small cottage industry; the estimates start at tens of billions of dollars a year.

These hidden costs of "cheap" foreign raw materials mean that in many cases the United States has the option of greater self-sufficiency. And because in a strategic world self-sufficiency and freedom of action are intrinsic goods that are worth much, Washington should be aggressively exploring alternatives to Third World supplies. The United States should be looking into developing artificial substitutes for both fuel and nonfuel minerals, stimulating alternative international sources of supply, encouraging exploration for new domestic supplies, and more fully exploiting low-grade domestic deposits.

In the Third World as elsewhere, internationalism has its hopes and fears backward. The modernization of most Third World societies may be out of the question for the time being. As a result, integrating those societies into the tightly interconnected, efficiency-oriented global economy envisioned by internationalism may be indefinitely delayed. Those countries cannot be counted on as strategic assets or substantial markets anytime soon. The United States must not concentrate on turning the situation around, and risk its own exhaustion in the process. Strategic and economic disengagement from the Third World, which has already begun, should be allowed to continue unimpeded.

The greatest obstacles to adopting this new Third World policy are plainly psychological. It is difficult in this era of Spaceship Earth, amid rampant talk of interdependence and globalization, to envision a future in which the developed and developing halves of the world are largely decoupled—in which one half continues to make great economic, social, and scientific progress while the other languishes in decrepitude and anarchy. Tragically, it is even more difficult to envision the kind of effort that would be needed to prevent this scenario from unfolding.

DOING FOR OURSELVES

A tighter focus on America's national interests could remove many of the political and institutional influences responsible for the seeming otherworldliness of our internationalist foreign policy. If internationalism has not been serving the interests of the nation as a whole especially well lately, it may be, as noted, because few influential internationalists have to live with the domestic consequences of their positions. Many—probably most—are affluent enough to bear a heavy tax load and to secure the best financial advice money can buy. Their children have not, for the most part, been the ones who have fought in the military conflicts of the past. Their jobs rarely are eliminated when predatory foreign trade practices close American factories. They can also shield themselves from the impact of internationalism's indifference to domestic decay. Their neighborhoods are not haunted by violent crime and drugs. Their sons and daughters are not educated at ineffective public schools. They are not struggling to pay medical bills and send their children to college.

Surely one explanation for internationalists' success at making their priorities those of U.S. foreign policy at large involves their belief that, given our perilous world and America's particular vulnerabilities, a democratically made foreign policy could be a dangerous luxury. The notions of globalization and interdependence and the indivisibility of peace and security all reinforce the belief that foreign-policy makers cannot waste time playing by the rules and seeking the consensus that democratic governance rests on. National security in particular, the internationalists seem to believe, is too important to entrust to the ignorant, fickle masses and their only slightly less ignorant, fickle representatives in Congress.

A foreign policy cognizant of America's considerable strengths and dedicated to enhancing them would automatically allow domestic quality-of-life issues priority on the national agenda. And it would also no longer implicitly accept the need for control by an elite. In this more relaxed environment internationalists would find it harder to portray their prejudices and obsessions as urgent national needs. Their priorities would no longer command automatic assent. Their world-order ideas would enjoy no automatic claims on the country's resources, its attention, or the lives of its young men and women.

After half a century of predominance, internationalism would be superseded by a foreign policy for the rest of us.