

After Vietnam: The Future of American Foreign Policy. By Robert W. Gregg and Charles W. Kegley, Jr. (eds.) (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1971.)

In February 1970, the Maxwell Graduate School of Citizenship and Public Affairs of Syracuse University sponsored a symposium on the topic of American foreign policy after Vietnam. The result is this study, a collection of eighteen articles in which the authors attempt to determine the course of American foreign policy during the 1970s. Most of the contributors to this volume start with the premise that the war in Vietnam was coming to an end in February 1970, thirteen months after Richard Nixon's inauguration as President. Only Immanuel Wallerstein, Professor of Sociology at Columbia University, points out in his essay's opening statement that it is a "depressing but crucial fact . . . that we are not yet 'after Vietnam.'" On the whole, the authors take it for granted that the war is coming to an end and that the time has come to look to the future. As the editors of this book state in their introductory essay, this volume "constructs scenarios for the future."

The authors develop two basic trends of thought. One position, which nearly half of the contributors hold, advocates the continuation of the basic premises which have guided American foreign policy since World War II because they are basically sound. Only the implementation needs to be changed, *i.e.* improved and made more efficient and selective. The other position rejects the premises of Washington's dealings with foreign nations and urges a radical departure from the ideological, strategic and tactical foundations which have dragged this nation into an Asian land war.

William D. Coplin, Professor at Syracuse University, for example, is a typical advocate of the first position. In his essay he evaluates the "folklore," or the "set of assumptions," on which United States foreign commitments are based. He argues that our view of the world, as it developed since 1945, is sound and that it is not to be blamed for our fiasco in South East Asia. "To blame the folklore for the mistakes of the past," he writes, "is to ignore the large role of human [presumably Lyndon Johnson's] failings" and that the "search for a radically different folklore may be the worst form of escapism, especially if it allows men to avoid accepting responsibility for what they do." Graham T. Allison, Ernest R. May, and Adam Yarmolinsky, all Professors at Harvard University, argue in a similar vein. American intervention, strategically correct, lacked a "systematic analysis of proposed uses of American forces" and a "careful projection of enemy reactions." They go on to present guidelines on how the United States should react in case of overt North Vietnamese, Chinese, or even Soviet aggression against Thailand. They weigh all the alternatives and risks in order to avoid repeating the mistakes made in Vietnam. This time the Pentagon would defend America's national interests more intelligently and thus more successfully.

Another contributor, Inis L. Claude, Jr., of the University of Virginia, argues that America's quest to seek peace and stability is essentially correct, but he wants to see United Nations-United States collaboration in this endeavor. He offers suggestions, therefore, as to how "the United Nations

may serve the interest of the United States in the maintenance of world peace" during the 1970s. The United States could tolerate local, isolated disruptions of peace, but larger outbreaks of violence must be halted. "A major task for the United States in the next few years," he writes, "is to promote the development of the United Nations to conduct peacekeeping operations." The implication is that the next time the United States becomes involved in "keeping the peace" abroad it should be done under international auspices as in the case of Korea. The American involvement, therefore, would no longer be unilateral and thus more respectable. Joseph S. Nye, Jr., of Harvard University, urges that the United States make use of regional organization such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organization of American States, etc., as a means of maintaining international stability and order. Both Claude and Nye agree that the United States should pursue its goal of the past quarter century and continue to try and keep the peace throughout the world.

A number of contributors, however, reject a foreign policy that has led the United States into the jungles of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Richard J. Barnet, codirector of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C., challenges the intellectual framework which guides American foreign affairs. He opposes a foreign policy based on fear and misconceptions which dictates armed intervention wherever instability seems to threaten the very existence of the United States. Barnet writes that the "role the United States has chosen to play makes it the world's most dangerous nation." He rejects the use of brute force in an attempt to expand the American presence throughout the world in order to find security. The United States must cease its attempts to "'organize the peace,'" to use Dean Rusk's words, and must instead learn to live in a changing and complex world which has no use for the philosophy of John Foster Dulles who saw the world in simple, stark black and white colors. The United States, to cite Marshall D. Shulman of Columbia University, must become involved in a "process of learning," of "overcoming old habits of thinking and to redefine concepts of security" in light of the new weapons available. Martin C. Needler, Professor at the University of New Mexico, too, sees a need "for a learning process to produce more enlightened policy" than the one which constantly call for interventions in other nations' affairs.

The book's final essay is by Richard A. Falk of Princeton University who reviews the lessons American foreign policy planners might be learning from Vietnam. He maintains that three positions still dominate official thinking in Washington. Position One sees the American involvement as a qualified success which will cause future aggressors to have second thoughts about starting a new war. Position Two, which liberals generally hold, does not repudiate American objectives in Vietnam. It tries instead to limit future involvements of that kind and, in the words of Professor Samuel Huntington who headed Hubert Humphrey's Vietnam task force during the 1968 presidential campaign, to keep them "reasonably limited, discreet, and covert." Position Three, presently the dominant one, sees the war as a failure of tactics. The result is the Nixon Doctrine which Barnet calls an "exercise in

nostalgia" since it is based on concepts nearly a quarter of a century old. It urges a continuation of the war; the American aims remain the same. South Vietnamese forces, equipped by the United States, will take over the ground combat role. As Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker reportedly said, Vietnamization merely involves changing the color of the bodies.

Events after the symposium have confirmed Falk's pessimistic analysis. Since then the United States has overtly invaded Laos and Cambodia and has subjected South East Asia to saturation bombing in a continuing effort to win the war. As a recent study by Cornell University scholars has shown, the Nixon administration in less than three years has dropped more explosives (about three million tons) on South East Asia than did the Johnson administration. (Neil Sheehan, "Study Shows U. S. Presses Air War," *New York Times*, 8 November 1971, p. 6.)

Falk, in rejecting the three official positions, advocated a fourth: the total abandonment of America's counterrevolutionary posture. Unfortunately, he says, this position is not even under discussion in official circles.

No one has ever been able to look into the "foreseeable future." The future simply cannot be predicted. No one knows when and how the war in Vietnam will be brought to a conclusion. The only thing certain is that the war has caused an agonizing reappraisal of America's role in the world. Falk, with a great deal of justification, laments the fact that official Washington does not consider his alternative to past policies and has continued in a familiar pattern of behaviour. Since he wrote his essay, however, the Nixon administration has moved toward the implementation of some aspects of his alternative position (such as an attempt to establish relations with Peking).

It seems, therefore, that American foreign policy is presently guided by a mixture of old assumptions and old theories modified by new visions. Under the impact of the Vietnamese war, United States foreign policy seems to be heading toward new concepts. To what extent the planners in the Pentagon, in the State Department, and in the White House will abandon their old views is impossible to say. It depends on the course of future events. These essays under review, because they offer analyses of past events and suggestions for the future, offer the reader a valuable introduction for an understanding of America's position in the world during the 1970s.

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