



Исторический вестник. 2021. Т. XXXVIII  
DOI: 10.35549/HR.2022.2021.38.004

Todd Jeffery Lefko

## THE NEW WORLD FROM AN AMERICAN VIEWPOINT



A new world order is developing. It is the end of an American-dominated world, with Washington as the unipolar force and others as reactive forces. The United States will continue to declare dominance, but now seeking acceptance of any responsibility. China will continue to challenge American leadership, following the older American tradition of power being both economic and military. Russia will continue to declare equal decision-making, but dependent upon the vulnerabilities by others and the capability of nuclear weapons. The Chinese-Russian relationship will increasingly be dominated by China, with Russia being viewed as a weakened third-force.

In 1949, George Orwell published his dystopian novel 1984. Fiction contains an element of truth, which has become a new form of the Cold War. Orwell projected a world reflecting expanding surveillance, continuing conflict, and the distortion of information. That world has developed. Orwell creates a division of three major powers, possessing the ability to continue struggle, but without the ability to overcome the others. In the current world, China and Russia form one alliance, the United States a second grouping, and Europe, a third force. Orwell did not see the appearance of Fareed Zakaria's »Rise of the Rest« where India, Brazil, Nigeria, and others

potentially become forces. The concept of the Overton Window declares that a concept or event must arise at the most fortuitous historical point to become reality. The interaction of Russia, China and the United States will produce different current outcomes than past moments

The new world is being shaped daily by forces of technology, communication, pandemics, cyber-warfare, shifting supply chains, corporate power and non-state actors. The answers to the future require asking the right questions. Every new world order produces different questions, whose answers will determine the future. Elements of each set of questions remain the same, such as power, forms of strengths, the access to resources, levels of available technology, and national character. What changes are the actors, technologies, shifting alliances, the momentary definitions of power, and the ability to influence over ever-expanding numbers.

The questions are clear and apparent. The answers are not, but will become the basic deciders. The interconnection of questions increases the complexity of the answers. We seek simplicity in an ever more complex world. The dichotomy increases frustration with our lack of solutions.

These new questions include:

*\*Has the United States become a neo-isolationist nation?*

One of the constants of American foreign policy is the swing between liberal internationalism and realist approaches. The current move in US foreign policy is away from the liberal internationalism which has guided Washington for much of the past seventy years, and a guarded set of international relationships.

Following American losses in the Middle East, those favoring liberal internationalism are in a distinct minority.

Is the prediction of Thucydides that that rivalry between the major power of the day and rising competitors the natural historical path? The American thinker Richard Haass notes that. «There is no guarantee any American posture toward Russia and China would have the desired effect. At least as important a factor, one in part or even largely beyond America influence, will be the internal trajectories of both countries and how their leaders choose to deal with their respective challenges.»<sup>1</sup>

The domestic decisions of each nation will determine the form of Thucydides' prediction.

*\* Are democracy and capitalism models for the future?*

<sup>1</sup> Haass Richard. A World in Disarray-American Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Old Order. Penguin Press, 2017. P. 223.

America made the mistake during the fall of Communism that democracy and capitalism were the automatically the next historical phase. We were foolish. Democracy and capitalism did not replace communism.

Robert Kaplan, reviewing Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* states. «The fact that the world is modernizing does not mean that it is Westernizing. The impact of urbanization and mass communications, coupled with poverty and ethnic divisions, will not lead to peoples' everywhere thinking as we do.»<sup>2</sup>

Many now question if growing economic inequality is an automatic result of capitalism, and if democracy provides the ability for response in a complex world. Whether capitalism or state centralization of economic development reflects the future remains to be decided.

*\* What impacts have new technologies produced relative to the control of governmental and individual systems. communications, the internet, privacy, secrecy, hacking, robotics, warfare, AI, commercial and military drones, driverless vehicles, technological disruption, quantum computing, medical changes, big data, and the internet of things?*

*\* Have we created a process where technologies move at a faster rate than governance, ethics, morality and an understanding of second and third-order implications. Has scientific capability outpaced our decisional processes?*

*\* Has our world become dysfunctional? Do others in the world believe this lack of functionality has become reality and requires major changes in governance? If so, what will be the processes and outcomes?*

*\* How has the nature of governance changed across the world relative to authoritarianism and democracy?*

*\* How are the impacts of production and labor, the role of work, structural unemployment, underemployment, changes in demographics, and the shortage of labor in major industries affected the world?*

*\* How do we develop across the world the educational and retraining programs focused upon required future skills.*

*\* Has the growth of worldwide economic inequality changed politics?*

*\* What impact does nationalism and populism have upon national and world order?*

*\* What are the roles of austerity and debt upon required investments?*

*\* What governmental as opposed to private control and development required for economic growth?*

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<sup>2</sup> Kaplan Robert D. *The Return of Marco Polo's World-War, Strategy, and American Interests In the Twenty-First Century*. Random House, 2018. P. 163.

*\* What can be done with failed-states?*

*\* What impact has China and the trade wars had upon supply chains and the world. Will the One-Belt, One-Road become the Chinese path to world domination?*

*\* What impact will the Rise of the Rest have upon the world-considering the role of Iran, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Australia, India, North Korea, Brazil, and the potential North to South and East to West divides?*

*\* How do we deal worldwide with the rise of terrorism and non-state actors, like ISIS. Al-Qaeda and both right and left wing nationalistic movement?*

*\* What impact has the fight over globalization produced?*

*\* Can the dollar remain the dominant currency and what would a replacement do to financial stability?*

*\* What is the relationship between continuing pandemics and factors of climate change, supply chains, globalization, and nationalism?*

*\* Has climate change moved beyond the point of governmental control?*

*\* Have societies lost the capacity for human compassion?*

*\* Does perceived power change any concepts of relationship which extend beyond your border? Do we remain tribal in a world in which borders have less meaning? Do national governments remain a relic of societies based upon power?*

Power justifies itself, and actions become interpreted in moral and ethical standards.

The Harvard Professor of International Affairs, Stephen Walt cites following the collapse of the Soviet Union: «As President George H.W. Bush and National Security Advisor Brent Snowcroft later recalled, they found themselves ‘standing alone at the height of power’ with the ‘rarest opportunity to shape the world and the deep responsibility to do so wisely for the benefit of not just the United States but all nations.»<sup>3</sup>

The issue becomes whether increased power alters analysis, both in terms of rationality and meaning.

*\* How has migration impacted the world? Who has responsibility for the factors producing migration?*

*\* How do we deal with asymmetrical relations in a world where major issues are increasingly becoming international?*

*\* Has fear of nuclear weapons and irrational leaders and loss of mutually assured destruction had any impact upon world action?*

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<sup>3</sup> Walt Stephen M. The Hell of Good Intentions-America's Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018. P. 22.

*\* If Russia continues to lose economic capacity in a world shifting away from fossil fuels, will the country become more radicalized in attempts to maintain influence.*

*\* How do we deal with the older concepts of «progress», which assumed our future was automatically better than the past. Does society require hope and a belief in improvement for positive change?*

*\* Does authoritarianism hold a false promise for those upset with current systems?*

*\* How can we determine which information to believe, in a world of increasing AI, virtual reality, misinformation, control of the press, and development of national, rather than worldwide internet systems?*

*\* What will we choose in the developing battles between secrecy, privacy and security? What would it mean to lose the ability for individual privacy?*

*\* What will an increasingly centralization of both economies and wealth mean for entrepreneurship and power?*

The questions and answers become interrelated. The increasing number of factors produces issues of complexity, where each decisions is felt across a number of nations and relationships.

The world was structured after World War Two to guarantee America control. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund became Washington-dominated. The United Nation was based in New York, as a symbol of US control. The General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs, and the successor World Trade Organization became American tools to manage a global trade system. The difficulty came as the world changed. Costs of communication, travel and trade were reduced. Containerization and global supply chains allowed advantages of worldwide labor and markets. The connector became the world-wide-web, bringing markets and individuals together. Washington and New York believed they controlled the structures, since they had declared America the sole superpower.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Fukuyama declared the «End of History», which American sincerely believed. In Hegelian terms, history ended, but with the victory of «capitalism and democracy». But the rise of China, the failed American conflicts in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan, the ability of American hubris to refuse to understand changes in the world order, and the changes in the meaning of «power» altered the US-based world.

Power has always been based upon the ability of an individual or nation to control the actions of other. Power came from military and economic influence, resource availability, and domination of financial, cultural and

informational centers. Americans assumed power was zero-sum based. That as long as the US maintained control of the former definitions of power, others would not replace America. Nations with perceived power often do not understand the responsibility, depth, effective use, nor moral imperatives of their power. Nations create psychologically a Dunning-Krueger Effect, where a bias develops, and those with limited knowledge or competence who are often in power greatly overestimate their own competence and knowledge relative to others. Short-term thinking replaces long-term thinking, with the maintenance of power becoming the essence of decision-making. It is not simply the «Power corrupts, Absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely» of Lord Acton, but where we make Gods of mortals. The ability of self-assessment leads to errors of judgment.

As Talleyrand is reputed to state, criticizing the actions of Napoleon: «They are worse than a crime, they are a mistake.»

Both Russia and the United States did not understand that power is not a limited quantity, but increases. While Washington and Moscow retained control over the nuclear weapons that could destroy civilization, dependence upon new systems of information would forever alter the nature of power. For the first time, it was not the size of the economy, or the number of troops, bombs, or battleships, but the ability to alter command and control functions, which had become essential.

The world centralized any of our systems of communication and control into the internet. Our finance, power grids, communication and structure of control were increasing in our internet systems. As we centralized our control systems, we decentralized access. The control of weapons, information, banking accounts and power systems was possible from across the world.

An Osama bin Laden, in a cave, could organize a 9/11 attack.

Suddenly, small numbers of Russian hackers in St. Petersburg, Chinese information specialists, Israeli counter-intelligence officers, or American cyber-warriors could change the world.

They understood that the concept of centralizing information, with a connecting systems of finance, business, public and private operations, became the new power. The irony became that the internet, developed as the symbol of world unification became an instrument of division, with governments suddenly seeking to control the flow, production, and distribution of information. Technology was moving at a faster pace than governance or morality. The rapidly developing issues forced reactive responses since the world had not developed strong patterns of planning or joint action on bioethics, climate change, pandemics, cyber warfare, or privacy.



Suddenly, world decisions were being shaped by the Silicon Valley giants, focused upon profit, with little concern for international common good. Power had now become asymmetrical, with investment in research and development, an educated populace, the strength of science and tax policies, availability of resources and national risk cultures becoming the new weaponry. In the United States, the power of the new technology class, their financial ability to both lobby Congress and their growing investments for broad economic control have reduced the ability of the government to limit this new private authority. In Russia, attempts for investment in Skolkovo and new research took second place to the question of benefits being retained in a small group of the power center. International sanctions, the lack of new global investments and governmental limitations upon a potentially strong entrepreneurial class have provided negative projections on Russia's future.

Many dismiss Russia as a spent power.

Russia risks this future, unless they invest more in their infrastructure and alternatives to oil and gas. Whether the Russian power structure allows this potential to develop will determine their future. To dismiss the potential of Russia is a mistake. Timothy Frye declares: «Russia remains a great power, albeit a diminished one...Russia's nuclear capability, geography, and seat on the UN Security Council ensure that it ranks among the great powers-as do its educational, scientific, and energy prowess. The country has more college graduates as a proportion of its population than almost any member of the Organization for Economic Development. It produced an effective COVID-19 vaccine in less than a year, and it will provide Europe with low-cost energy for years to come and remain a major player in global energy markets. Those who dismiss Russia as a regional power are mistaken».<sup>4</sup>

China understood the role of technology and wished to avoid any opportunity for the new capitalists to grow beyond the power of the Chinese Community Party Control.

The Chinese leadership understands as David Goldman notes: «If artificial intelligence is the engine of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, data is the fuel. Consumer of the financial data is one of the most valuable commodities in the emerging world of AI-based fin-tech, and one of the most vulnerable to abuse».<sup>5</sup> He states «These policies arise out of China's

<sup>4</sup> *Frye Timothy*. Russia's Strong Weakman, The Perilous Bargains that Keep Putin in Power. Foreign Affairs, May/June 2021. P. 126–127.

<sup>5</sup> *Goldman David P.* . China Attempts to Avoids the Monopoly Trap. American Affairs, Summer 2021. P. 40.

fundamentally different vision for its technological future. In contrast to America; et on entrenched monopolies with inflated stock prices, China is betting on innovation».<sup>6</sup>

The benefits of that innovation would be controlled by the government.

The Chinese Communist Party clearly understood the implications of the new technologies and focused upon the complete development of this potential, while maintaining full control.

They understood that challenges to the regime would occur through impacts of economic control and potential changes in technology.

The writer Minxin Pei states: «But in a “frozen” post-totalitarian regime, such as that of post-Mao China, reforms of this sort were seen as anathema, because of their potential to undermine one-party rule. Consequently, few real obstacles could block the regime’s regression to neo-Stalinism under Xi».<sup>7</sup>

Xi understood that emerging technologies were the key to party and personal control. Jude Blanchette observes: «Xi also hopes that new technologies can help the CCP overcome, or at least circumvent, nearly all of China’s domestic challenges. The negative impact of a shrinking work force, he believes can be blunted by an aggressive push toward automation, and job losses in traditional industries can be offset by opportunities in newer high-tech sectors... New technologies serve other purposes as well. Facial recognition tools and artificial intelligence give China’s internal security organ new ways to surveil citizens and suppress dissent. The party’s “military-civil fusion” strategy strives to harness these new technologies to significantly bolster the Chinese military’s war fighting capabilities. And advances in green technology offer the prospect of simultaneously pursuing economic growth, and pollution abatement, two goals Beijing has generally seen as being in tension».<sup>8</sup>

China may not possess the strength to directly challenge the United States at this point, but will in the future. The fear of conflict by mistake exists, and with increasingly close proximity of interests, become a greater probability.

The historian Gregory Mitrovich states «While China’s rise may not trigger a Thucydides Trap with the United States, the possibility of conflict remains due to increasing tensions in the South China Sea and the ratcheting

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Minxin Pei. China’s Totalitarian Shadow. Journal of Democracy, April 2021. P. 21.

<sup>8</sup> Blanchette Jude. Xi’s Gamble-The Race to Consolidate Power and Stave Off Disaster. Foreign Affairs, July/August 2021. P. 15–16.



up of threats against Taiwan. Foreign policy matters-wars erupt far more frequently over strategic miscalculation than by grand systemic pressures».<sup>9</sup>

From an American's viewpoint, this is the current nature of the relationship between Russia, China and the United States. There are no formal national doctrines stating the following, but they exist as both reflections and shapers of foreign policy.

## AMERICAN POLICY

At this moment, the American foreign policy is under flux following Afghanistan. This is not a new question. The challenge of declinism, as a historical certainty for empires, or as a reflection of the loss of American values and direction has been a theme for years. Had American become so focused on its' own importance, that it had forgotten the nature of power. Or does the flexibility of choice provide a salvation to America's ability to respond to new challenges.

Referring to H.G. Wells *The Invisible Man*, the French philosopher Bernard-Henry Levy observes «it is when a being has made himself invisible that he is at the height of this powers. ... So goes today's empire. It cannot be rule out that it has never been so dominant as it has been since it gave to everyone on the planet — without any shouting from the rooftops, without even showing itself — the mandate to make each other speak, sing, and reveal themselves, since deciding that it would be content to propagate its waves, good and bad, over the seas, the soil, and the summit of the world».<sup>10</sup>

American foreign policy is unresolved, only knowing some of the questions, but few of the answers. These questions include: How does a nation extricate themselves from a region, such as the Middle East, but with remains in major issues of Israel, Iran, energy politics, terrorism and a fear that others will move into the space which Washington has fled.

The desire to continuing a position as «Leader of the Free World», but without the financial, emotional and personnel threat which accompanies this position. This is paired with a growing understanding that the US does not control the world, the way we previously believed.

<sup>9</sup> *Mitrovich Gregory*. Rising Rival. *The National Interest*, May/June 2021, P. 61.

<sup>10</sup> *Levy Bernard-Henri*. *The Empire and the Five Kings,-America's Abdication and he Fate of the World*. Henry Holt and Company, 2019. P. 106.

Washington seeks control and influence without responsibility or cost. National psychological fatigue has made the US tired of war and unsure of peace. This growth of neo-isolationism has developed within both parties and public opinion.

When George Washington in his 1796 Farewell Address declared that the new nation should avoid «entangling alliances», he foresaw the current mood. Like the Chinese and Russians, we desire alliances which we control and can choose to exit when required. We want others to be loyal toward our interests, without having to be burdened by the interests of others.

- \* The desire to improve the United States prior to seeking changes internationally.

- \* The increased fear of the instability in American political and economic systems

- \* The growth of economic inequality, producing pressures within the political process

- \* The complexity, interrelationship, and number of issues facing public scrutiny. These include the pandemic, climate change, uneven economic development, divided politics, growing inequality, a loss of faith by many in science, a growing discussion over the role of the United States in the world, changing demographics with whites becoming a plurality, but not a majority of the nation, the renewal of infrastructure, a return on investment in education, the growing control of large corporations, the loss of personal privacy, the growth of urban crime, and the questioning of the ability of American governance. The political strength of interest groups within each sector acts as a imitation upon a wholistic analyses of the problems. Each sector believes their focus is the key to everyone else's problem.

- \* How to deal with the emergence of China as a competitor, both economically and militarily.

- \* The fear that America has become a nation with short-term vision, and a loss of a long-term strategy

- \* The fear of inflation and debt. The growth of governmental decisions being viewed as an expenditure, rather than as investments, The growing discussion over the level and impact of debt relative to GDP.

- \* The politics of public decision-making. The increasing divisions reject cooperation and compromise, and reinforces the assumption that different interests cannot work together for common solutions.

- \* The frightening sense that the US has lost its way and has lost the ability to determine what America should be in terms of meaning and as a world power.

\* The fear that the rest of the world does not respect America any longer. Americans wish to be loved and become upset when others do not see the US as a model of be emulated. This is a realization that power comes partially through how others perceive the nation, and this admiration is disappearing.

\* The growing fear that we are surrendering privacy for stability and security, though the use and sale of our personal data and whether our privacy can be protected.

\* We have always viewed ourselves as a nation of immigrants. There is not a growing sense that we no longer wish immigrants, because they take jobs, are not Caucasian, and present alternatives to older concepts of a Christian nation.

\* The underlying belief that «the world requires an America as a model» that a relevant, effective, and just system is possible. This understanding has become tied to the possibility that current America can no longer present that possibility to a world which seeks what America was supposed to represent. We are afraid that we have lost the essence of what made the US the model, and this is still required, but forever unavailable. We American are looking in the mirror, and secretly fear that what we previously saw as our pride and quality has disappeared.

## RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Russia foreign policy has the following elements, from the viewpoint of this observer.

\* The need for Russia to be recognized and accepted worldwide as a major power. This power demands respect even though they may not be equal economically to other nations.

\* Russians make alliances, but believes they are alone in the world. As Czar Alexander III noted, «Russia has two allies-its army and navy.”

\* Russia believes they are equal to China in all alliances. The Chinese believe the Russians are an unequal second-class partner ,offering mainly resources and technology to be copied.

\* The Russian face great difficulties with their economy. There is a lack of infrastructural investment, a dependence on oil and gas as major sectors, with the knowledge these are of decreasing importance. The fear is that fossil fuels will remain the center of foreign policy, which provides a diminishing role for the nation.

\* The fear of bankruptcy if competing with the West for new weapons systems, while realizing that new missiles and weapons are required.

\* The need for foreign direct investments in infrastructure, technology, and social welfare. The reality that sanctions have limited the potential of outside investment and a desire that a *modus vivendi* be reached where the West accepts Crimea as Russian.

\* The demand that the world accepts Russian control and influence over border regions. The growing fear that Chinese development of OBOR will move the Stans toward Chinese, rather than Russian influence.

\* Russian desires to divide the world into spheres of influence with the US and China. This is a concept rejected by the US.

\* The knowledge that Russia requires a strong state domestically as a precondition for advancing international interests. The inability for a sizable investment strategy limits this goal.

\* The understanding that Russia cannot face the West militarily, using weapons of the past. This requires a new doctrine of asymmetrical warfare, the Gerasimov doctrine, which balances cyber warfare with military weaponry, and ability to move quickly into international vacuums, and creation of frozen conflicts in Ukraine, the Baltics, Moldova, Georgia and Belarus, limiting these areas from seeking Western alliances.

\* The approach of challenging the United States and the West up to a point of conflict and then a retreat to avoid the potential of war.

\* The understanding that the current differences with the West are not ideological in terms of communism versus capitalism but based upon *realpolitik* and not idealism.

\* The need to be included at the table in an international settlement as an equal player.

\* The need to be considered as capable of advanced cyber and weapons capabilities.

\* The desire to be feared, rather than loved.

\* The ability to be seen as capable of surviving any foreign attack and providing a response.

\* The desire to be seen as a Eurasian nation, with influence in both continents.

\* The desire to be seen as the international defender of traditional moral values, relative to religion, the role of women and the family and the protector of perceived historical tradition. This includes a belief that the West has abandoned these values.

\* The belief that as Putin stated in 2005, that the «Demise of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century with the epidemic of collapse spilling over to Russia itself.»

\* The understanding that China will reverse engineer most of the Russian weapons within a decade.

\* The continuing fear of the loss of Siberia to China along their 2500-mile border.

\* The knowledge that the relationship with China is based upon Russia providing resources and technology, and the Chinese providing markets and funding.

\* The knowledge that China believes since Russia is isolated from the world by sanctions and issue regarding the Donbass, Crimea, Georgia, human rights abuses, and election meddling, the Russians do not have many of their negotiating strength of previous years.

## CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY

The Chinese foreign policy has the following elements:

\* The belief that the future is Chinese and this is a historical inevitability. «We are living in the Asian century, already a time when the movement of global gross domestic product (GDP) from the developed economies of the West to the those of the East is taking place on an astonishing scale-and at astonishing speed.... by nearly doubling its share of global GDP (by 2050), to 52 percent, as one recent report put it “Asia would regain the dominant economic position it held some 300 years ago, before the Industrial revolution”». <sup>11</sup>

\* The belief that they will have control over an expanding geopolitical territory.

\* That planning should be done on a long-term, up to 100-year basis-not an American next quarter approach.

\* That the One Belt One Road is the key to world economic and political domination.

\* That they must develop their domestic economic market, as well as the world market, but essential to this control of key elements of the global supply chain, in terms of rare earth, pharmaceuticals, technological processes, etc.

\* The realization that a number of problems exist internally, relative to banking, labor, movement of factories out of China, control of the Uighurs, oversupply of housing, a dependency on coal, climate change and pollution.

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<sup>11</sup> *Frankopan Peter*. The New Silk Roads-The Present and Future of the World. Bloomsbury Publishing. 2019. P. xix.

\* The continuing anger upon Western domination of the past and the «Century of Humiliation». The viewpoint that the actions of other nations are to limit Chinese growth.

\* The continuing symbolism of the conflict with Taiwan and the desire of Xi Jinping that his place in history will be assured by the conquest of Taiwan.

\* The desire to lessen global dependence upon the dollar, and the rise of the renminbi as the currency of use.

\* The desire to ensure state capitalism with the Chinese Communist party controlling private entrepreneurs.

\* The understanding that the United States is the major economic and military competition for the present and future.

\* The beginning understanding that many nations are reacting negatively toward the terms and repayment of the OBOR investments. The discussion over how to build upon this without producing anti-Chinese reaction.

\* The danger of accidental conflict with the United States over expansion of Chinese continental waters and shipping zones.

\* The use of Russia as a resource base and initial supplier of technology, while seeking to have the Russian believe they are equal partners. Almost 80% of Chinese arms imports are from Russia, but this number will decrease as the Chinese reverse engineer. Russia requires Chinese electronic components and naval diesel engines, because of western sanctions

\* The demands of the Chinese policy hawks who believe China could currently defeat the United States in a war. The danger that this group would gain increased influence in Beijing. This group believes the United States is no longer capable of fighting a two-front war, with Russia engaging America in Europe and China fighting the US in Asia.

\* The role of demographics, and the influence of size on decision making — China has roughly ten times as many citizens as Russia and about four times the American numbers.

\* The major Chinese textbooks which state that Russia stole Siberia from the Chinese, and that this area will return to China.

## THE NEW WORLD

This new context developed as globalization and the Davos man were no longer declared the future. The future of democracy and whether inequality was essential to capitalism became intertwined. Global supply chains



became questioned with the growing economic and military power of China, national security and maintenance of American economic determinism.

The threatening thought appeared that we had built smart bombs, smart cities and smart system, but had failed to develop smarter decision-makers. We have developed a new power context in which our emerging issue were increasingly unrelated to national borders. The growth of nationalism and populism strengthened local demands or decisional control. Existing international institutions proved incapable of providing either direction or solution.

The new realities of pandemics, climate control, supply-chain capability, communications, terrorism, the Arctic, conflict resolution, nuclear proliferation, and financial interconnection requires multinational analysis and governance. The forms for their discussion existed, but they have failed due to lack an overarching sense of world responsibility.

We have finally realized there is a growing disconnect between our need for shared governance and the demand for national control. We begin to better understand this disconnect at the same moment that we comprehend our increased need for connections.

The new world power arrangement has been developing, without any understanding of meaning, for decades. It was not due to Donald Trump alone, but to decisions of Bush, Obama, Trump, and Biden, President Putin, the Russian oligarchs and the Chinese leadership. We lived for years according to what believed was an international rules-based system. These rules changed, and Washington never understood that an end to the older rules, implied an end to the post-cold war American era.

We are shifting from a world of liberal internationalism to a return of the 19<sup>th</sup> century realist power structure. This will not destroy the United States, but will require a change in Washington's mindset. Whether this is possible, is difficult to predict, since there is no one alive in the United States who does not know of a world where they not have been the uncontested leaders. The question has become the reality of the American leadership possessing a definition of a world where they believe they are still in control of world events, but have been removed of any outcome for results. We are viewing the unfolding of this new and divided world.

Global supply chains for many products will be replaced by separated supply processes and regional agreements. One supply chain will remain in China, supported by Russia. A second supply chain will be centered within the European Union, and the third based in the United States. Latin America, Africa, Eastern Europe, Scandinavia and the Baltics will seek both

regional agreements and shifting ties to the larger systems. The internet and social media will increasingly be separated into national units, with the Chinese Firewall and Russian legal systems for local control.

Nations will increasingly seek to control information flows, taxation and program content. There will be increasing agony and finger pointing in the US changed from being the center of content and programming, to becoming one of the competitors to Bollywood, Nollywood, Chinese, and Korean films and programs.

International programming will become the supply chain for local delivery networks, as local decision makers determine acceptability. Information control combined with big data will become the new manager of citizen activity, with the Chinese model of social control becoming the international authoritarian standard. The dollar will come under increasing challenge from the renminbi, as well as new cyber instruments. Many will seek to replace the dollar's strength, which is based upon America's perceived strength in the globe.

The central truth has been for years that China, Russia and the United States each control their own destinies. Russia and China did not force the America leadership to determine tax system favoring the wealthy, nor decreases in support for research and development, or a broader educational and retraining process. The United States did this to themselves, as a reflection of growing centralization of power structures. Moscow and Beijing reflect similar issues of governmental actions seeking to benefit existing structures.

We claim to know history but we repeat the same mistakes in new forms. In each nation we believe we have the intelligence and experience to avoid the errors of the past. We are mistaken.

In each nation, we are witnessing the battle between the forces of the past and the future in politics, religion, education and culture. The Chinese desire to overcome the Century of Humiliation, the Russian desire to be recognized as a major power and the American self-definition of the existing international power remain as roadblocks to joint needs of this new world.

Globalization represented the path forward. That belief has suffered a reaction across the world. We now ask if we have the ability to design a new global architecture, or if entropy will continue a state of world fluidity. To answer the questions, a common language, determination of priorities and a broader redefinition of the concept of «we and they» are required. In a world which has become more related in issues, and separated psychologically, this remains difficult. For any chance of success, the current world reality must be examined.

The «Triangle Dance» of Russia, China and the United States has begun. Where two powers existed in 1990, there are now three nations capable of strong influence beyond geographical borders. New issues of authoritarian versus more democratic regimes arise, as does competition on the role of the government in economic development.

With additional powers, complexity does not grow arithmetically, but geometrically. Elements of complexity theory become mixed with climate change, pandemics, migration, new technologies, information control and other issues.

Russia increasingly becomes a weakened economic force, while retaining the military strength to destroy others. Russian demands for full participation in international decision-making, an ability to fill perceived vacuums of power and needs for oil and gas allows Russia to continue their present membership in the Triangle. We have developed a three-sided relationship, with economic growth leaving Russia as an uneven and weakened third side.

If power is as Joseph Nye states is the «the ability to influence events», then the new power is not simply military, but informational and scientific. It is not simply that Washington has lost power, for they retain the economic and military power to shape events, if they choose. It is that Washington has lost power in an expanding nature of power, with others able to exert influence with new technologies and resource needs. It is the growth of asymmetrical influence, by those with limited military or economic influence that has reshaped the world.

The control of systems, often built by others has become the Archimedes lever by which the world can be moved. In a world where increasingly centralized relationships in economics, finance, communications and military activity in the internet, while decentralizing access, everyone has become a potential participant.

Power is not zero-sum. It can be lost relatively, by a nation's decisions, without automatically having that power transferred to another. The United States has lost power with their defeat in Afghanistan. This will only potentially increase the global influence of China and Russia, depending upon their decisions. What is clear is that the US has less ability to influence the actions of others than it previously held. Few will trust Washington to support their pledges. This creates multiple American damage, for it accompanies a fear that a Trump-like administration will return to power. Doubts will continue that the United States has withdrawn and is no longer a provider of security or protection.

The United States is deciding what their international role can and should be, in a period of increased neo-isolationism. There is the extended possibility that foreign policy will be viewed as a secondary focus for America, unless it is directly attacked.

If a positive element exists, it is the end of an era of American triumphalism, and hubris. The American character is formed with a belief in goal-achievement, brought about by a confidence that anything dreamt can be attained. This attitude was the basis of American development. The lack of doubt allowed economic and political creation. What was never understood was that it could not automatically be transferred to every clan-based society. The United States has had previous reversals. Cuba in 1959, Saigon in 1965, and Iran in 1979, were American losses, but the nation recovered.

What was central was a belief in American resilience. Part of the American character is the concept of revival. We can lose jobs, marriages, issues of health, and reversals, but know we will somehow recover. The United States has always felt that relative to other societies, such as China and Russia, the US was advantaged. As the analyst Robert Kaplan notes: «Bear in mind that power is relative. America's domestic tensions are out in the open, whereas China's and Russia's are more opaque. And their geographies are less fortunate. China has difficult borderlands and resorts to extreme oppression to manage its ethnic and religious minorities. Russia is an insecure land power with few natural borders, this prone to invasion throughout history: this is the deep unstated reason for Russian aggression. Moreover, China and Russia are much too dependent on one man at the top, and their inflexible autocracies mask deep social and economic cleavages across immense continental landscape of their own. Thus, we concentrate too much on the strengths of the three great powers. But all of them could weaken in their own way, creating a more anarchic world».<sup>12</sup>

Kaplan asks which of them will weaken at a faster pace than the others? Which of them has the flexibility built into their political structures? «American democracy, as unruly and problematic as it is, has demonstrated an historic proclivity to adapt and reinvent itself more than other big systems».<sup>13</sup>

What was at base was the continued American military ability...

<sup>12</sup> *Robert D. Kaplan*. Robert D. Kaplan on Why America Can Recover from Failures like Afghanistan and Iraq. *The Economist*. August 23, 2021.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

The lesson which was not learned in Washington was that we had the power to destroy, but not the ability to shape the world in our own image. Nations clearly understood how to begin war and could plan for different scenarios. What nations, including the US could not determine, was how to end wars. When you cannot achieve a clear victory, or when you declare a win, but only in a pyrrhic form, the costs exceeded any gain. Afghanistan cannot be declared a victory in any form for Washington, and this reality resonates with how will view American power in the future. Afghanistan will remain a potential base for Al-Qaeda and ISIS, which will be felt in the West for many years.

For Russia and China, any American defeat will be declared a victory. For Moscow and Beijing, the declaration may be premature.

Concerns in Moscow over the spread of Afghan opium, and the radicalization of the Southern region , including Chechnya, Dagestan and Ingushetia will grow. For China, fear of Taliban influence over the Uighurs in Xinjiang remains constant. The new factors in world affairs became the Black Swans and determination of what Russia, China and the US controlled, what we did not control as individual nations, and where positive outcomes were achievable.

We have not yet been able to control pandemics, climate change, the sharing of the Arctic region, the relationship of resources, such as rare earths, relative to need in supply chains. We are forced to respond because we have not developed a process or the effective institutional architecture to plan and act jointly. Other choices such as the Afghan and Iraqi wars, fights over the South China Sea, Ukraine and the Baltics, Syria, Libya, control over cyber criminals reflect individual national decisions, mirrored domestic political agendas.

The central factor has been the change in the world role of the United States. Neither Russia nor the United States have the same relative power they possessed thirty years ago. They retain the power to destroy the world, but new center of influence has emerged to change the equation. For Beijing, the economic growth both shapes and is shaped by their belief that China is the future as a historical inevitability. Many in the world have reaffirmed their view of history.

Historians often declared an era of Empires. The Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish, and English are now past rulers, now relegated to history books. The historical process of the passage of empire is reaffirmed in the minds of many. What changes is not the process, but only the names of the temporary powers. For the Chinese, the American Empire is entering this definition.

The 20<sup>th</sup> Century was the American Century, while the 21st is the Chinese Century.

The question exists if this is the end of the American era. This will be decided by the American leadership and society. If they fail, any process of American decline will occur, without regard to Chinese or Russian actions.

This mentality appears even in the United States. The American story contained essential belief that the future was always an improvement over the past. History was not a flat plane, but an upward movement. That belief is now challenged. With increasing inequality, political division, crime, and the inability of governance to produce solutions, many now question if their children will live a better life than they did.

There is a growing fear that the new challenges of climate change, pandemics, dependence upon oil and gas, the economic concentration and inequality and a sense of personal security are beyond the ability of society to resolve. The growth of authoritarian regimes in Hungary, Poland, Turkey and leaders like Trump, echo this fear that people seek easy answers to complex questions.

These new challenges have become global, while at the same time, the political desire for control becomes more national or local. We are creating an international division between our crises, and our institutional ability for potential solutions.

Russia, China, and the United States face challenges. The question will be their ability and leadership to respond.

For the United States, the role of the dollar as the international currency is central. More goods are being traded in dollars, but as a share of world GDP, the dollar's role has lessened. For many in the world, a desire for alternatives to the dollar has increased.

There are fights over reinvestment and definition of infrastructure. Past concepts of road, bridges, and sewers, and now being understood as education and retraining, healthcare, broadband connection, research and development and early childhood support. There is a new realization that a central relationship exists between domestic development and international policy. This is true for all three nations, not simply Washington. All three nations face the issue of the relationship between the public and private sectors. Chinese attempts to limit the role of the private economic forces as a subset of the government, reflect the Russian concentration of wealth and favoritism to limited groups.

In the United States, the fight continues over private concentration of corporate wealth and political influence. Discussions are increasing



over national plans focused on microchips, non-fossil fuels, batteries, and communications are required. The Chinese have declared nine major foci of development for world control in the future. Combined with their investment in the One Bridge, One Road (OBOR), the Chinese hope that they will possess both the content and the channels for economic dominations. The Russians are aware of their need for research and new technologies, but have lagged in their level of support. At the present rate, they will increasingly be excluded from future considerations as a world technological leader. The Russians have invested heavily in new weapon systems including hypersonic aircraft and missiles. The Chinese have also modernized their armed forces and weapons, often adapting Russian equipment. This dependence upon Russian goods will decrease as the Chinese develop their own systems.

Russia is increasingly being viewed as a nation able to cause problems, but not dictate the future. The Russian demand to be declared as a major world forces and equal, even though their lack of investment in future needs, their concentration of wealth, and their desire for centralized political control limits their ability to grow. In the long term, Russia desires a slowing of the inevitable move to a non-oil and gas future. Moscow has perhaps twenty to thirty years before they become economically irrelevant, unless their patterns alter.

For China, the increasing role of the Communist Party for dominance, continuing conflicts with Taiwan, fights over control of Hong Kong, and internal social disputes with the Uighurs become indicators of the future. China also faces unresolved issues of growth of their senior population, the move to expand family size, the banking failures, overbuilding of housing, the price of labor, movement of factories to South Asia, the desire of the young for participation, changes in educational investment as a segment of foreign policy, and fights over the Law of the Seas, and the growth of new Chinese islands. The questions for the Chinese government is whether they have the will and desire to form military bases across the world, as they have in Djibouti. If reaction to repayment of Bridge and Road investments become negative in many nations in terms of cost and possible military implications, this will change their future actions.

All nations now understand that military power is not simply based upon number of aircraft, tanks, ships or soldiers, but upon the control of information, and cyber technologies.

In the American mind, Russia and China have formed a marriage of convenience. Both wish to limit any American role, but do not completely trust or respect each other. The concept of two against one is a continuing

pattern. «Nixon to China» reflected a momentary strategic partnership of Washington against Moscow. The Moscow-Beijing axis is opposition to Washington, not an expression of eternal brotherhood. Other factors of demography, reactions to continuing pandemic. The rise of India, the outcome of control of the Arctic, changes in the international alliances, the short and long term impact of climate change, modifications of international attitudes toward the US, Russia, and China will all have impact upon future decisions.

The Cambridge historian, Mark B. Smith observes: «No country is honest about their past. Being a nation, as Ernest Renan famously wrote in the nineteenth century, is to agree about what to forget. Even in the hands of a professional historian, the creation of a historical narrative is a program of omission. Coherence is simplification: selection is leaving out: and the process is never scientific, but a matter of individual judgment.»<sup>14</sup>

The relationship between Russia, China, and the United States involves more than three interpretations of history, and predictions for the future.

It is an amalgam of the past, present, and perceptions of possible futures.

It is being written at this moment, through both planned and accidental event.

The real question is whether our degree of wisdom, defined as individual and national interpretation, will focus upon our joint potential, and not our differences.

It will be not simply our historical interpretation which will prevail, but our desire to achieve the possible.

We must remember Winston Churchill's words at the Battle of the Atlantic «all the great struggles of history have been won by superior will-power wrestling victory in the teeth of odds or upon the narrowest of margins».<sup>15</sup>

We write the future with our present.



<sup>14</sup> *Smith Mark B.* The Russia Anxiety, and How History Can Resolve It. Oxford University Press, 2019. P. 340.

<sup>15</sup> *Conquest Robert.* Reflections on a Ravaged Century. W.W. Norton and Company, 2000. P. 298.



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### Key words:

Geopolitics, Capitalism, Democracy, Authoritarianism, Tripolar, Technology

Тодд Лефко

## НОВОЕ МИРОВОЕ УСТРОЙСТВО: АМЕРИКАНСКАЯ ТОЧКА ЗРЕНИЯ



Мир меняется, время доминирования Америки проходит. Россия, Китай и Штаты вступают в новые взаимоотношения. Природа технологий и инвестиций определяет никогда ранее в истории не встречавшиеся критерии социального, политического и военного превосходства. Технические возможности растут вне зависимости от роста моральной ответственности.

Притязания Америки на лидерскую позицию подвергаются сомнению, в тот же момент, когда сомнению подвергается и власть внутри страны. Статус России, как одной из крупнейших военных держав, оспаривается. Стремление Китая к господству наталкивается на внутренние преграды — зависимость от импорта ресурсов, реакцию инициативы «Один пояс и один путь», экономическое давление. Основополагающий принцип доминирования демократического устройства общества под вопросом из-за повсеместного распространения авторитарных форм правления.

Планирование стабильного развития перешло в разряд категорий теории сложности.

Новые задачи — контроль климата, пандемия, кибер-угрозы, негосударственные террористические группировки, внутренние экономические раздоры — вместе не позволяют выработать действующий сценарий стабильного развития.

Традиционные политические, экономические и религиозные учения не дают ответы на заданные обществом вопросы.

В статье обсуждаются эти факторы и описываются сложности, с которыми сталкиваются Россия, Китай и Соединенные Штаты.

**Ключевые слова:** геополитика, капитализм, демократия, авторитаризм, трехполярная система, технологии.

**Тодд Дж. Лефко** — президент компании по развитию международного бизнеса, председатель Российско-Американского совета по делам бизнеса и культуры.



Todd Jeffery Lefko



President of the International Business Development Company,  
Chairperson of the Russian-American Business and Culture Council