What Does the World Want from America?

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

EDITED BY ALEXANDER T. J. LENNON

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What Does the World Want from America?

Alexander T. J. Lennon

Introduction: Through the Looking Glass

Editorial pages and the halls of Washington are often filled with discussions about U.S. interests. Yet much of this discussion is introspective: What do we, as Americans, want from the world? What should we, in Washington, do around the world to secure those interests? And what do we, the United States, want the world to do? Such an introspective debate is appropriate to determine and pursue national interests and, as a government, to promote and defend the interests of its citizens, just as any other government would. To the extent that these debates ignore what the rest of the world wants, however, the United States risks losing the confidence, if not provoking the ire, of the rest of the world. The United States also may overlook opportunities to work with the rest of the world to pursue mutual goals and, where interests diverge, negotiate among conflicting ones.

This book stands those introspective questions on their heads. In essence, the chapters in Part I can be conceived as a mosaic of prescriptions, or reflections, for the United States. In that sense, they function as a looking glass that reflects on the United States, not other countries, as strategic thinkers from around the world answer the question, "In an ideal world, what role would you want the United States to perform with your country and region?" Admittedly, there is some fantasy in this exercise: no government will determine its interests based solely on the ad-

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vice of those outside its borders. Yet that is what we hope makes the responses so interesting: the authors' unique perspectives on the role that the United States could perform in today's, and tomorrow's, world.

To attempt to answer these questions we began by soliciting responses from various regions of the globe. Although every country could not reasonably be represented, we believe the twelve articles included in Part I of this volume provide an appropriate sample of world opinion. It is critically important that the reader not misconstrue the authors' viewpoints as the national consensus of their respective countries. Just as a wide variety of assumptions, opinions, and recommendations exist among U.S. authors, each chapter is an individual's perception partially shaped by their national experiences and perspectives. They are not, however, national positions, nor should they be perceived as representing a national consensus.

In seeking authors, we made a conscious effort to avoid those who are, or hope to become, political leaders. Frankly, political figures may be constrained from expressing their individual thoughts and could in turn produce political statements. Most of the authors included here are preeminent figures in academia or think tanks. In many cases, they have spent some of their professional careers in the United States.

Our guidance consisted merely of a one-page invitation focusing on the question, "In an ideal world, what role would you want the United States to perform with your country and region?" We asked the authors not necessarily to refer to current U.S. policy but rather to use this opportunity to lay out an ideal world—even if it is a fantasy—where the United States plays the role that they wish to see. This intentionally left tremendous latitude for the authors, whose perspectives in Part I are presented roughly in order of those located geographically furthest from, to those nearest to, the United States.

With such latitude, some different perspectives, a number of common themes, and notable differences emerge. Although it is not fair to the authors to attempt to summarize their work, for fear of misrepresenting the nuances of their analysis and prescriptions, previewing these similarities and differences to help focus the reader's attention may be worthwhile.

First, no country, willingly or unwillingly, will arguably be involved as globally as the United States. While reading these prescriptions, one might consider the scope of each author's perspective—does each contemplate concerns globally, or is the focus regional, or even national?

Second, the degree to which each author relies on, or is ready to discard, the role of the nation-state in today's world is notable. What does globalization mean to, or even to what extent has it reached, each of these authors? Maria Claudia Drummond from Brazil, for example, focuses her chapter on the role that the United States could play globally. Others discuss local or national concerns.

Beyond these questions, a few common themes are worth mentioning to synergistically introduce the authors' work in Part I. The first and most obvious theme is that U.S. power is unparalleled. Although acknowledging the economic and military superiority of the United States, Peter Ludlow, based in Brussels, did question whether the size of the economic gap between the United States and the rest of the world is as big as rhetoric would have one believe and whether the gap in military power is really relevant in today's world. Nevertheless he, and just about every other author, acknowledged the U.S. economic and/or military lead in comparative national power.

Second, many authors expressed concern with the way Washington wields its power. No author explicitly declares that their country should seek to balance the United States or become its global peer because of their concerns. Some authors, such as Wu Xinbo from China and Pascal Boniface from France, even explicitly reject that idea. The only exception is arguably a vague warning by South African specialists Francis Kornegay, Chris Landsberg, and Steve McDonald that Africa should be taken "more seriously" or a "less benign 'G-8' of the South may be inevitable." In other words, as both Wu and Akio Watanabe from Japan argued, the key is not whether, but *how*, the United States should lead.

Some, such as Watanabe, simply highlight the potential dangers of complacency and arrogance that could naturally accompany a preponderance of power. Taken to their logical conclusion, these strategies risk evolving into isolationism or unilateralism. Others, such as Boniface,

were more explicit in their criticism. Wu and Dmitri Trenin of Russia specifically criticized the United States for interfering in domestic political affairs of other countries. The degree of concern, and the tone in which it was expressed, varied widely. Most, such as Michael Stürmer from Germany and Drummond from Brazil, recommended a greater U.S. reliance on multilateralism. In contrast, Barry Rubin from Israel was the only author expressing no such concern.

A handful of authors expressed a third theme: a desire for U.S. military superiority to continue. Watanabe and Rubin explicitly stated this in their analysis, as well as Chong Guan Kwa and See Seng Tan in their coauthored chapter from Singapore. That is not to say that these authors unequivocally support U.S. military strength, however, as some of them express reservations about potential dangers derived from unilateralist concerns similar to those mentioned earlier.

A fourth, and potentially most surprising, theme emerged from at least three authors who independently highlighted that the same potential asset is being underutilized: U.S. science and technology. Wu, Mahmood Sariolghalam from Iran, and Kanti Bajpai from India all called for the United States to share its technological resources more liberally to help address issues of concern around the globe or at least with their particular country.

By highlighting these four common themes, I do not mean to imply that this comprehensively covers the similarities throughout these articles. Each reader will undoubtedly find their own threads of agreement, and disagreement, among different authors. This introduction simply is meant to serve as a starting point to provoke you, the reader, to draw your own lessons from this book.

One area of disagreement worth mentioning is the authors' varying prescriptions for the extent or manner of U.S. involvement in the world. Although no author recommended that the United States retreat to its own borders, some advocated deeper bilateral relations with their home country. Bajpai, for example, suggested five areas of cooperation for a deeper partnership with India. Others, such as Kornegay, Landsberg, and McDonald, recommended a different means of U.S. engagement,

focusing on subregional and multilateral actors in Africa rather than just bilateral relations. Still others, such as Trenin, wanted "less" from the United States, although he strongly emphasized the importance of respect from Washington, a theme common to many other authors as well. Sariolghalam explained that if U.S. interaction in the world was based on fairness, rather than realpolitik, relations with countries like Iran could improve. Although the general theme advocating U.S. engagement ran throughout every one of the chapters, each author in Part I recommended a different form for that U.S. role with their country, in their region, or toward the world as a whole.

Part II presents responses from U.S. authors to the first twelve articles from around the globe in Part One. These U.S. authors wrote their chapters in the immediate aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks. Although the authors do not necessarily argue that those terrorist attacks were inevitable because of U.S. global predominance, all four of them seek to find a balance between a U.S. role that provokes international hostility, from either states or transnational actors, and one that secures U.S. interests. From Steven E. Miller's skepticism that U.S. unilateralism will vanish to Simon Serfaty's depiction of the new normalcy of global strategic affairs, these authors looked at how the heightened awareness of the terrorist threat would or would not change the U.S. role in the world. Coupled with Christopher Layne's prescription for offshore balancing and Michael J. Mazarr's appeal to capitalize on a post–September 11 window of global sympathy, all the authors give their view of how the U.S. role in the world may, or should, change in the coming years in light of global perceptions of the United States.

The articles in this volume intend to provide global perspectives and a starting point for debates about benevolent leadership, perceptions of U.S. hegemony, and ultimately the potential rise and fall of great powers. How long can a superpower remain a superpower if it does not seek the same goals as the rest of the world? How similar must those goals be? The first question to ask is: How similar are those goals now? This book explores that preliminary question.

Our goal in this book is to stimulate you, as a reader, to learn from the authors' insight, challenge their thoughts, and continue the debates yourselves (whether in a classroom, online, in the halls of power, or elsewhere). With due recognition to Lewis Caroll, you can begin by enjoying Wonderland in the first part of this book, where U.S. policy is prescribed from abroad. You might be surprised by what you find when you enter the looking glass....

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Part I: How the World Sees the United States

Wu Xinbo

To Be an Enlightened Superpower

The twentieth century passed with a vivid U.S. fingerprint on almost every aspect of human life. As we move into the twenty-first century, the magic of globalization and the information age has rendered U.S. influence omnipresent on the earth. The United States' primary role in world affairs is understood, but for many observers, it is full of contradictions. The United States pledges to stand for human rights and democracy, but this promise is coupled with a certain degree of hypocrisy. The United States claims to promote peace and stability but often intrudes into the internal affairs of others by abusing its supreme military power or waving the stick of sanctions. The United States cherishes a high degree of self-pride but often neglects to show respect to, and consideration for, the national feelings of others. Washington tends to seek absolute security for itself but is inclined to dismiss the legitimate security concerns of other countries.

Without the United States the world might be less stable and prosperous; but Washington certainly can do better in promoting peace, harmony, and prosperity in the world. Hypothetically, how can the United States act as an enlightened superpower? In particular, from a Chinese perspective, what are the ideal policies the United States should under-

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take in dealing with China and the Asia–Pacific region? To explore what an ideal U.S. policy should look like, the baseline must necessarily be current U.S. policy.

Neither Rosy nor Grimy Glasses

An ideal U.S. policy toward China should be based on a correct perception of China. The United States should develop a full appreciation of three issues before a sound China policy can be developed: how to understand progress and problems in a fast-changing China, how to treat a rising China with respect, and how to define the nature of Sino–U.S. relations.

The Chinese have always been upset by an oversimplified U.S. view of China. From 1979 to the spring of 1989, the United States had viewed China through rose-colored glasses. In that light, China was a country embracing economic reform, political liberalization, and a diversified social life. After the Tiananmen Square conflict, the United States swung to the other extreme, looking at China through a grimy lens and seeing a country that violates human rights, restricts religious freedom, pollutes the environment, and bullies Taiwan.

In fact, understanding China has never been that simple. China has made huge progress over the past two decades toward turning itself into a modern country. At the same time, it has been carrying too much historical baggage and now faces many new challenges. China is not as good as U.S. observers used to believe in the 1980s, but it is not as bad as they assume in the post-Tiananmen period.

In the real world, the Americans, affected by their cultural background, may never be able to overcome a black-and-white approach to understanding China. In an ideal world, policymakers in Washington would take a more balanced view of China's achievements and problems and be reasonably patient when expecting more fundamental and positive changes in this country. Moreover, U.S. policy would be geared to facilitate China's progress, not to hamper it. For example, on the issue of human rights, the United States should welcome China's progress,

while acknowledging the complexity of this issue and help China develop its social, economic, and political conditions to improve human rights even further. U.S. human rights policy should not be focused on sponsoring anti-China bills at the annual Geneva conference of the United Nations Human Rights Commission and on supporting a handful of political dissidents.

A second problem is the U.S. attitude toward a rising China. In the 1980s, the U.S. political elite stated that a strong China would help promote regional stability and serve U.S. interests. At the time, they perceived that a more powerful China would contribute to U.S. efforts to contain the Soviet Union. With the end of the Cold War, U.S. policymakers no longer publicly claimed that they would like to see the emergence of a strong China. Instead, many U.S. strategists expressed concern, either publicly or privately, over the "China threat." Absent a strategic necessity to play the China card against a more threatening power, some U.S. policymakers worry that a stronger China would undermine the paramount U.S. position in East Asia and pose a challenge to U.S. interests in the region. In the real world, such a selfish and parochial view does have its currency; in an ideal world, however, the U.S. political elite would put China's rise in a broad perspective. First and foremost, they would come to realize that a stronger China will benefit the Chinese people. Having suffered from poverty and weakness in their modern history, the Chinese are eager to make their country wealthy and strong, and there is nothing wrong with their genuine wishes to reach this goal.

Moreover, a strong China would promote regional stability. The past has shown that, when China was poor and weak, a power vacuum emerged in the East Asia region. Chaos and turmoil prevailed in the midst of various powers' efforts to build their spheres of influence. Contrary to the concern of those who perceive a "China threat," a strong China is unlikely to be detrimental to regional stability. As Ambassador Chas W. Freeman convincingly argued, "China is not Germany, Japan, the USSR, or even the United States. China does not seek lebensraum; is not pursuing its manifest destiny; does not want to incorporate additional non-

Han peoples into its territory; has no ideology to export; and is certainly not a colonizer and does not station any troops overseas."[1]

Most importantly, the reemergence of China as a major power coincides with China's integration into the world community, which means that, as China accumulates greater material strength, it is also learning to become a responsible power. The past two decades have shown that China has become more responsive to, and cooperative with, international society. Based on this understanding, first, the United States should view the rise of China as an inevitable trend, welcome it, and interpret it as a great opportunity for peace and prosperity. Second, it should facilitate rather than obstruct China's growth into a world power and be sympathetic to China's pursuit of its legitimate national interests. Third, the United States should, through its own conduct, provide China with a model of behavior as a responsible power in the international community.

The third issue is the U.S. understanding of its relations with China. Two assumptions tend to complicate Sino–U.S. ties: that China and the United States have no common values and therefore cannot develop intimate relations; and that U.S. relations with China should be second to U.S. relations with historical allies in the region, such as Japan, South Korea, and Australia. The first assumption is flawed because, in fact, common interests do exist between these two countries. Although differing in ideology and political system, China and the United States have a wide range of common interests at the global, regional, and bilateral levels. History demonstrates that ideology has not impeded Sino–U.S. cooperation on many important issues that serve mutual interests. In international relations, what matters is not a country's ideology and political system, but its external behavior.

The second assumption is fallacious because it overlooks the fact that China is geopolitically more influential than any of the three U.S. allies in the region: Japan, the Republic of Korea, or Australia. For peace and stability in Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, or Central Asia, Beijing can play a more important role than Tokyo, Seoul, or Canberra. As China's economic boom grows, so will its weight in re-

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