# GLOBAL POLITICS

## IN THE HUMAN INTEREST

### THIRD EDITION

## MEL GURTOV

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Third Edition, Fully Revised

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LYNNE
RIENNER
PUBLISHERS

BOULDER
LONDON

# Preface

I am again delighted to have the opportunity to present a new edition. This time I was prepared: Shortly after the manuscript for the second edition was sent off, the Gulf crisis entered a new phase as U.S. aircraft bombed Iraq. No sooner had the second edition come out than the USSR collapsed. These two events alone set the tone for the third edition, in which there is a case study of the Gulf War, analysis of the "new world order" the war was supposed to inaugurate, and consideration throughout of the meaning of our post–Cold War, post-Soviet era.

Those are not the only developments that provided new material, of course. I have added or extended analysis of United Nations peacekeeping, the 1992 Earth Summit in Brazil, sustainable development, European integration, and arms control issues such as nuclear proliferation and conventional weapons transfers. Important figures and data have been updated through mid-1993.

I regret that for reasons of space and other constraints I have had to drop case studies of the Philippines, Nicaragua, Canada, and Poland from this edition. However, the key points in those studies have been integrated into the text. And the China, Japan, and Brazil cases have been augmented.

I want to thank my colleague from Nigeria, Professor Mohamed Wader, for his careful review of the manuscript; Milton Leitenberg and John Hall for providing various pieces of information; and Mary Krug for again assisting in the manuscript's preparation.

Writing a concise account of the enormous changes in world affairs since the second edition (1991) is not only an analytical challenge but also an editorial headache. I beg the reader's indulgence for having to make frequent use of phrases such as "since the end of the Cold War," "new (world) order," and "post–Cold War"; and for incorporating "FSU" (former Soviet Union) into an already too lengthy list of global acronyms. (The reader will be happy to know, however, that "FY" and "FC" for "former Yugoslavia" and "former Czechoslovakia" are nowhere to be found!) Fortunately, I had

the wise and able help once again of Gia Hamilton at Lynne Rienner Publishers, for which I am very grateful.

—*Mel Gurtov*

# Preface to the
# First Edition

Teaching world politics has made me acutely aware not only of the limited perception most U.S. students have of other societies. That is hardly a novel discovery. But I have also become more aware of, and concerned about, the direction most studies of world politics seek to take students: away from recognition and appreciation of the world's diversity; away from an understanding of how closely interlinked peoples and societies really are—that what happens "out there" really does affect what happens at home; toward acceptance of conflict and violence as the unalterable pattern of state politics; and toward embracement of the "American way" as the only reasonable path toward a satisfactory world order.

Hence this book, the chief purpose of which is to propose a relatively new way of looking at world politics. It challenges conventional thinking and hopes to awaken readers to a global crisis that directly affects them. My approach is not merely to define the dimensions of this crisis but to redefine national and global security in ways that promote the human interest. By "the human interest" I mean satisfaction of the basic material and nonmaterial needs of the overwhelming majority of the planet's people, especially in the underdeveloped countries but also in the so-called developed world.

Two contrasting global trends also motivated my writing: profound inequalities between and within nations whose fates are increasingly interdependent; and the emergence of projects and ideas at many levels that have the potential to move human society toward greater equity and sustainability. The first of these trends is, of course, dominant in world politics, and as such is a principal cause of dangerous instabilities: arms races, state as well as group terrorism, war, revolution and counterrevolution, resource and ecological crisis. Yet, if we can understand how all these forms of violence—to ourselves, to others, to the environment—are structured into political-economic systems and into the international behavior of states, we have the conceptual basis for transforming the rules in humane

ways. And as the rules change, a new global agenda is fashioned for restoring security at every level of human activity.

Underlying my analysis is a set of values, identified as Global Humanist (see Chapter 3), that distinguishes my approach from most other studies of world politics. Human-centered values, such as peace and social justice, are increasingly being recognized as important tools for defining, analyzing, and resolving the great world-scale problems of our time—and doing so while avoiding becoming captive to particular political institutions and ideologies. But to emphasize values, as Saul Mendlovitz reminds us, is to cut against the grain of the social sciences, which traditionally have been biased "against work that explicitly utilizes preferences and values as a way of defining problems to be investigated, and as a standard to be used for what will be considered an adequate solution to the problems."[1] My own personal and political evolution leads me to conclude that the credibility of social science research rests to an important degree on the explicitness with which we identify our own values and how they affect what and how we analyze.[2] There is simply no such thing as value-free research.

Some years ago, in a process that began with rethinking U.S. intervention in Indochina, I gradually moved away from a traditional, U.S.-centered conception of international politics. This book is a road stop on that continuing journey of personal and political renewal. I owe a profound intellectual and emotional debt to a rather diverse group of contemporaries, including Carl Rogers, Paolo Friere, Ram Dass, George Kennan, and Richard Falk. And by their example as well as their written work, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., John Vasconcellos, and Daniel Ellsberg have also inspired and changed me. I doubt that any of these people would reflect on world politics in the same way I do. But I would like to think that they would regard what I have written as a contribution to making the world a little bit better.

I also wish to thank Dariush Haghighat, a doctoral student from Iran, for his skillful research on several of the case studies in this book. He has been a joy to work with. We both are grateful to the University of California, Riverside, for an intramural research grant and the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C., during 1986. At that time I interviewed key people in several of the globalist organizations mentioned in Chapter 7, and I would like to express my appreciation for their help: John Marks of Search for Common Ground; Nancy Graham of the Institute for Soviet-American Relations; and Mark Rilling of the U.S. Institute of Peace.

The manuscript profited from the counsel of Ray Maghroori, Elise Boulding, and Sam Kim, each of whom read it in its entirety and offered valuable suggestions for improvement. I thank them as well as several anonymous reviewers. Of course any errors or omissions are my responsibility alone. Finally, the actual production of the manuscript could not have

been accomplished without the wonderful skills of Aline Messer in Riverside and Peggy Tombleson in Portland.

My final words of thanks are for my family: my wife, Leigh Anne, and my daughters, Ellene, Marci, and Alia. Their love and gentleness are a constant inspiration to work harder at being a global citizen.

*M.G.*

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# 1

# Crisis and Interdependence in Contemporary World Politics

*This dominant culture set the tone and standard for most of Shikasta. For regardless of the ideological label attaching to each national area, they all had in common that technology was the key to all good, and that good was always material increase, gain, comfort, pleasure. . . . And all this time the earth was being despoiled. The minerals were being ripped out, the fuels wasted, the soils depleted by an improvident and short-sighted agriculture, the animals and plants slaughtered and destroyed, the seas being filled with filth and poison, the atmosphere was corrupted. . . . These were maddened creatures, and the small voices that rose in protest were not enough to halt the processes that had been set in motion and were sustained by greed. By the lack of substance-of-we-feeling.*
——Doris Lessing, *Re: Colonised Planet 5, Shikasta*

*The splitting of the atom has changed everything save our mode of thinking, and thus we drift toward unparalleled catastrophe.*—Albert Einstein

## GLOBAL INSECURITY

Someone once defined fanaticism as "redoubling your efforts when you have lost sight of your original objective." The blind pursuit of national security fits this definition of fanaticism perfectly. As state leaders invest more and more political, human, and economic resources in weapons, aid programs, alliances, and the exploitation of resources, the security of persons, societies, and the planet as a whole actually seems to decline. In the industrialized, technologically advanced countries of the First and Second Worlds, insecurity is mainly reflected in acute anxiety about the efficacy of political systems and frustrations about any system's ability to deliver the "good life" except at very high social and ecological costs. In the underdeveloped countries of the Third and Fourth Worlds, where three-fourths of the world's population of over 5 billion people live, insecurity takes a more basic form: the daily quest for survival. (The four "worlds" are depicted in Chart 1.1.)

The causes and consequences of this pervasive insecurity, and the extent to which its different forms are interrelated and mutually reinforcing—the degree, for example, to which the quest for security in the industrialized world takes place largely at the expense of the underdeveloped world, yet also has profound economic and social impact at home—are the principal subjects of this study. The reasons are simple: The human costs of global insecurity are staggering; the narrow understanding of "national security" by most state leaders keeps these costs high and mounting; the penetration of every aspect of world politics (such as alliances, the ecosystem, global finance and trade, and people's movements and exchanges) by this global crisis has created great foreboding but equally great hesitancy to take bold remedial action; and, as a result, the prospects for planetary survival itself are not optimistic.

State leaders everywhere invariably seek to put the best possible face on their own situations, and many serious scholars persist in arguing that humankind will resolve today's problems just as it resolved yesterday's. Indeed, events since the Berlin Wall came down on November 9, 1989, gave some cause for optimism. German reunification was completed less than a year later. Massive demonstrations challenged the legitimacy of single-party states from China to Czechoslovakia, and in most cases toppled them. The creation of a single market among the twelve countries of the European Community (EC) was set to start in 1993. This radical alteration of the map of Europe took place against the background of revolutionary changes in Soviet–U.S. relations. Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev, whose "new thinking" essentially discarded the old rules of the Cold War game, was the single most important figure. His mid-1990 summit meeting in Washington, D.C., with President George Bush continued U.S.–Soviet arms talks that had already led to the first actual reductions, and destruction, of nuclear weapons in the postwar period. The peacekeeping role of the United Nations revived, with missions in diverse locations such as Afghanistan, Cambodia, and Namibia. Prominent human-rights activists were freed from captivity, including Nelson Mandela after twenty-seven years in South African prisons.

These events, when compared with the baleful character of international relations only a decade earlier, appeared to herald a new era of peace and security. Then, war and preparations for war dominated world politics, topped by the intense nuclear arms competition between the United States and the Soviet Union and a long list of civil and interstate conflicts in Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. Driven by this short-term comparison, some commentators were quick to proclaim the "end of history," in the sense that the demise of the Soviet empire and the seeming victory of Western liberalism in Eastern Europe had opened the way to a stable, if rather boring, epoch devoted mainly to technological development.[1]

The end of history? The breakup of the Soviet Union and the resur-

gence of ethnic and religious nationalism in central Europe and central Asia quickly revived history. A new world order? So President Bush declared following the outbreak of the Gulf crisis (see Chapter 2)—Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait—in August 1990. The contention of this book is that although the ideological battles of the Cold War have largely ended and led to a lessening of tensions elsewhere, a global crisis remains *when international and national security issues are evaluated from a planetary and long-term perspective.* Proclamations of victory in the Cold War and of a new order may be politically satisfying in some circles; but they are no substitute for analysis, particularly when they ignore events in the underdeveloped world and the multitude of threats to global environmental security. As we will see in the remainder of this chapter, in spite of some positive signs of international cooperation, global insecurity is deepening and is beyond quick technological or diplomatic fixes.

The urgency of developing a global approach to security was first pressed by U Thant, then former secretary-general of the United Nations, in 1969:

> I do not wish to seem overdramatic, but I can only conclude from the information that is available to me as Secretary-General, that the Members of the United Nations have perhaps ten years left in which to subordinate their ancient quarrels and launch a global partnership to curb the arms race, to improve the human environment, to defuse the population explosion, and to supply the required momentum to development efforts. If such a global partnership is not forged within the next decade, then I very much fear that the problems I have mentioned will have reached such staggering proportions that they will be beyond our capacity to control.[2]

In its essentials, the secretary-general's warning has come true. Although planetary extinction has thus far been averted, the depth and scale of the problems U Thant cited have indeed increased to nearly unmanageable proportions. By 1992, as the next section begins to document, Maurice Strong spoke of a "civilizational crisis" as he opened the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, the so-called Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Few government or major corporate leaders have shared U Thant's or Strong's sense of urgency; most have acknowledged one or another aspect of a global crisis but have not considered that the problems are symptomatic of a contagious and potentially fatal disease. Life, and politics, go on as before.

It is indeed strange that at one and the same time, monumental leaps of scientific creativity occur for the benefit of humankind while political leaders stick to tired formulas and outdated rituals in pursuit of self-interest. The practice of politics has not kept pace either with scientific advances or with global ecological, economic, military, and social changes. U Thant appealed for a "global partnership" because he believed the future of the

human species itself was imperiled. But the governments he addressed were not (and clearly still are not) ready to integrate global changes into narrowly national perspectives. And therein lies a crisis of our times that is equally as burdensome as any U Thant described: a crisis of political will in the nation-state system.

The emphasis throughout this book is on information, explanation, and argument. This chapter begins with some basic facts about the global crisis that are essential to understanding and interpreting the changed shape of world politics—its *interdependence* during and after the Cold War. I introduce the two schools of thought that dominate writing and thinking about world politics—Realism and Corporate Globalism—along with a third school, Global Humanism, the values and analytical method of which I use throughout the present study. In Chapter 2, Realism and Corporate Globalism are critically examined. Two case studies of efforts to reshape the world order back up the discussion of how Realism and Corporate Globalism both compete and collaborate in the real world. Chapter 3 elaborates on Global Humanism as an alternative perspective with specific relevance to global human and environmental needs. The Third and Fourth Worlds' oppressed are given special attention here, for they constitute the global majority. This discussion sets the stage for a more specific investigation of insecurity from a human-interest point of view, in the Third and Fourth Worlds (Chapter 4), in the United States and Russia (Chapter 5), and in Europe and Japan (Chapter 6)—in each case buttressed by brief studies of particular countries. The concluding chapter is policy oriented: It lays out an agenda for changes addressed to the main features of the global crisis.

## A BRIEF REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE PLANET

In 1992 more than 1,600 of the world's leading scientists, including a majority of the living Nobel science laureates, signed a "Warning to Humanity." The statement began by observing that "human beings and the natural world are on a collision course . . . [that] may so alter the living world that it will be unable to sustain life in the manner that we know."[3] During the following year, twenty leaders of the world's major faiths joined in a Declaration of a Global Ethic that condemned violence, "in particular . . . aggression and hatred in the name of religion," and urged that "disarmament is the commandment of the times."[4] The scope of the global crisis that so alarmed distinguished groups like these becomes apparent from the following figures:

• Over 2 billion people in the Third World (including four out of five persons living in rural areas) do not have access to clean water. A rough

estimate by the World Bank and UNESCO is that about half of them (a billion people) are chronically malnourished.[5]

• Despite advances in world literacy, there remain thirty-four countries with over 80 percent illiteracy.[6]

• Approximately 1.2 billion people, overwhelmingly in the Third World, were living in absolute poverty in 1989—a figure equivalent to the population of China. Their incomes generally range between $200 and $400 a year. They live in countries with the world's largest and fastest-growing populations.[7]

• The world population, according to the World Bank, is expected to be well over 6 billion by 2000, even though fertility rates are declining everywhere. In the mid-1980s it was commonplace to say that world population was growing by "another Mexico" (80 million) annually, whereas by 1990 the phrase had changed to "another Bangladesh," or about 100 million people every year.[8]

• At current rates of depletion, by the year 2000 the Third World's forests, especially in tropical zones, will be reduced by one-half (thus intensifying an already serious shortage of firewood for fuel). Up to 1 million plant and animal species out of a total of 5 million may become extinct. One-third less topsoil will be available for food production. Already, world food reserves have shrunk to only a forty days' supply, from over 100 days in 1960.[9]

• The developed-world states currently account for more than four-fifths of the world's income but only one-fourth of its population. (The United States, with about 6 percent of the world's population, consumes over 30 percent of its total product.) By contrast, the underdeveloped states account for three-fourths of the world's population but less than one-fifth of its income.

• Military spending worldwide roughly doubled in twenty years, reaching $940 billion in 1985—well over $2 billion a day. Over 80 percent of that amount was spent by the two superpowers. Since 1987, arms spending has declined, but it still totals around $900 billion a year. About 20 percent of the world's scientists are involved in military research and development.[10]

• Third World governments, especially those under military rule, buy three-quarters of all marketed weapons. They are paying for the arms with their own scarce resources and with money borrowed from the banks and governments of the developed countries, to which the Third World owed close to $1.1 trillion by the end of 1987.[11]

• Alternative uses of tiny fractions of the world's military spending could produce meaningful change in education, health care, and nutrition. For example, the cost of one new nuclear submarine (about $1.5 billion) could educate 160 million schoolchildren in twenty-three developing coun-

tries. About $3 billion is estimated to be enough to enable the poorest countries to begin moving toward food self-sufficiency. Similar small amounts could probably prevent the deaths each year of about 15 million children from malnutrition, dehydration, and other easily curable conditions.[12]

•  More and more people are moving into cities. The UN predicts 47 percent of the world's population will be urbanized by 2000. Third World cities will grow 160 percent between 1990 and 2030, and will include seventeen of the twenty-one largest cities in the world. Urban environmental quality, accordingly, is declining rapidly. A comprehensive study of air pollution reveals health-threatening problems in all twenty of the world's largest cities, Mexico City being the worst.[13]

•  The world's displaced population is rising at an astounding rate, mainly because of war, poverty, and environmental decline. About 2,700 people become "political refugees," refugees in their own country, or economic migrants *every day*.[14]

•  An estimated 14 million people worldwide have AIDS, and researchers at an international convention predicted in 1993 that by the end of the century the figure will more than double.

Statistics of these magnitudes may be difficult to absorb at one sitting. But they give an immediate sense of what a global perspective on world politics does: It highlights the multidimensional and transnational character of a common crisis. And that is why we turn next to the phenomenon of interdependence.

### INTERDEPENDENCE

U.S. citizens demonstrate in Washington, D.C., and across college campuses for human rights in South Africa. The Japanese prime minister asks his people to buy foreign products, while U.S. labor unions debate how to respond to Japanese automobile plants' being built in the United States. Two hundred million Russians watch a televised conference of U.S. and Soviet doctors discussing the medical consequences of nuclear war. The Indian government briefly arrests the chair of the board of Union Carbide, then sues the company in a U.S. court, after a catastrophic gas leak from the company's branch plant in Bhopal kills over 3,700 people and injures 20,000. The government and people of New Zealand express outrage and incredulity when French agents bomb and sink an antinuclear organization's ship in Auckland harbor in order to prevent it from witnessing French nuclear tests. A worldwide emergency food relief effort begins in Ethiopia and Sudan after a BBC broadcast dramatizes the fact that several million people are starving to death. An Islamic terrorist group proclaims: "Let them know that sooner or later we shall reach the heart of the White House, the Kremlin, the Elysée, 10 Downing Street." A Japanese study of