

America\222s Place in the World (Foreign Policy)
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History of Foreign Policy

President Washington wanted no foreign entanglements. But look at the Founding Fathers\222 Diplomats: Jefferson, Franklin, John Adams, and John Quincy Adams. Couldn\222t do much better than that.

With President Monroe\222s "Monroe Doctrine," we staked our claim to the whole Western Hemisphere even without the ability to enforce it.

But from the first, we regarded our mission as being the model of democracy to the world. European powers knew this and detested us. They still do. But Europe was lucky to have a dumping ground for their surplus population.

From 1820-1860, expansion collided with unresolved slavery. Southern states wanted to expand into Caribbean, bringing slavery with them. Northern states did not want this. They practiced isolationism until after the Civil War, when we became again a player in the world.

With Theodore Roosevelt, who won a Nobel Peace Prize (mediated Russia\222s and Japan\222s peace treaty in 1906), the buildup of US Naval Power began\227and our influence increased.

Perennial Foreign Policy Issues

Isolationism. During the 19th century and the 1920s, this view prevailed. Since 1930s to today, we have engaged\227and since WWII, have been one of two world leaders. In 1991, we became the sole world leader. President Trump\222s policies reverted to selective isolationism. His preferred allies were authoritarian.

Internationalism. No American president has been a pure internationalist (because of isolationist populist opposition); but WWII set the tone for globalism: the desire to have as many international organizations (voluntary) as possible as a preventive to war. Even Bush II, who didn\222t like this, had to do it. This isn\222t "World Government." It is using the civilizing values of the developed world to work together for common good.

The Big Stick. Teddy Roosevelt suggest walking softly but carrying a big stick. The big stick is military power, which we have (despite what you hear). NOBODY could take us on if it were to be a purely military contest; the trouble is, too many people are watching (press, human rights, and a clever enemy). We cannot use that big stick as we used to. A dilemma for us.

Our four Historic Styles of Foreign Policy

Hamiltonian, which believes that trade with the whole world is the best guarantee of America\222s prosperity and general well being. Later day advocates: President Clinton and both Presidents Bush.

Jeffersonian, which believes that we should beware of foreign entanglements and that minding our own business is the best policy, except where our interests are concerned. (See Monroe Doctrine, see the pursuit of the Algerian pirates, and see the purchase of the Louisiana Territories from the financially strapped Napoleon. Advocate: the early Bush II administration.

Jacksonian, which believes that we should use muscle whenever our interests require. Don\222t Tread on Me! Advocates: Roosevelts (both of them), and Harry Truman. Also, Reagan and Bush I and II. (British agents in Florida were kidnapped by Jackson operatives and hung without trial!). This method can be highhanded. It was the preferred principle of Donald Trump: threaten loudly and carry a small stick.

Wilsonian, which believes that we should be making the world safe for democracy, which includes being part of (and leading) as many international institutions as possible. (Roosevelt and Truman in founding of UN. Reagan and Bush father and son.

Throughout the Cold War, the US had to put national security over promoting

democracy. Some allies were thugs, but not Marxists.

Liberal International Order. What we today call "the world order" really isn't that.

It is tacet agreements only among the liberal democracies that certain behaviors are civilized: religious tolerance, gender equality, universal education, universal health care (in some), and international agreements over a range of institutions (e.g., law of the sea). The problem is that some less developed countries in the world haven't bought into these values yet and some are actively defying them by violence. Resisters are Muslim majority countries and anarchistic war lords.

Today, we are facing challenges to democracy and increasing authoritarians (China, Russia, Latin America, and Middle East. However, authoritarianism is currently being challenged by new champions of modern democracy.

679 words

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