

PAX AMERICANA & "THE NEW WORLD ORDER"

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For the first time in history, one nation has both (1) world military preeminence & (2) the near-unanimous backing, in an instance, of the only global political organization. In an instance, viz the Gulf War: this meaning of "the new world order" is fragile. But while it lasts, we Americans are more #1 than any other nation ever has been before; & we should be full of fear, trembling, & prayer as we face the responsibilities thereof. Old questions must be reframed for fresh answers, & new questions must be faced. Here are some of my first feelers:

1 The first geopolitical reality after the collapse of the Cold War is that the paper tiger has become a striding lion, the USA in diplomatic & military vigor. (Ironical touch: Saddam's ancient expansionist hero was Nebuchadnezzar, whose totem was the striding lion of Babylon, not far from Baghdad.) Only so severe a time of troubles as the USSR has fallen into could have created the unipolar planetary space Geo. Bush has stepped into. Whatever you think of it, however you feel about it, the new world order was designed & built in the White House.

2 What you think & how you feel depends partly on whether you're a US citizen & partly on whether you think a Pax Something (an imperial military hegemony or at least superiority, a "pax") is necessary. Some believe the world is ready for a world federalist military hegemony, eg a UN military force capable of crushing all challenges from individual nations or coalitions of nations--let's call it Pax Terrana. Put this way: When everybody's nobody (no national sovereignty), everybody's somebody (participating in the collective sovereignty of nations, as Lincoln [rightly] held that S.Carolina should participate in the Federal sovereignty but have no sovereignty of its own). My view is that the UN lacks, among other things, the maturity for that task, & Pax Americana is the most humane arrangement the present world can manage for global order-&-freedom. No nation is worthy of the responsibility, my nation has the responsibility. I'm unimpressed with the suggested alternatives I've come upon, but always eager to hear of a better way.

3 Global questions need global addressing--all of them diplomatic (UN et al), some of them military (Pax Americana or successor). Take nuclear proliferation: Some nations outside the nuclear club would like to join. Should they be permitted? forbidden? And if forbidden, how? By persuasion? If that fails, how shall they be coerced? By a single nation, as Israel's destruction of Iraq's nuclear facilities in 1981? Or by an ad hoc coalition of nations? Or by a UN military force?

I'm assuming that the penultimate reality should be that the nuclear club be exclusive, admitting no new members, & that the ultimate reality should be global nuclear disarmament. And I've been astounded at those who argue, on an invalid & insane egalitarian base, that "Saddam has as much right to develop nuclear arms as we have." The truth is that we have the intermediate right to bear nuclear arms, he has no right at all. Why not? Because we fear that, with his record of nonconventional-weapons use, he'd make a credible-threat use of his nukes & thus immobilize internal & external resistance to his will.

4 Those who make their living with their mouths--diplomats, teachers, clergy--underrate the weapons factor in geopolitics. Take three facts, all of them underrated by leaders in other nations: (1) By late 1921, Japan was running its weapons factories round-the clock; (2) By 1935, ditto for Hitler; (3) By 1990, Saddam had spent, in one decade, \$50 billion in constructing the world's fourth largest military machine. All three of those machines burned the same fuel, viz mythic-imperial dreams that would not weaken their grip till the machines broke down. In each case, the psycho-historical project was how to effect the breakdown of the military machine. The first of those military machines shot Geo. Bush, age 20, out of the sky: I've no doubt that his steady unspoken purpose vis-a-vis Saddam was to effect the breakdown of his military machine, & that accordingly his greatest fear was that Saddam would voluntarily pull out of Kuwait, at no significant loss of military power (thus the "Hail Mary" entrapment of 4/5ths of Saddam's military between Kuwait & the Euphrates). In weapons perspective, the anti-Saddam coalition did everything right. And the

human cost was minuscule in comparison with those of crushing the Japanese & German military--& I'm referring to the costs on both sides of the conflicts.

5 Pacifism deftly deals with the weapons factor by saying "No problem": no weapons. As distinct from humanist pacifism, **pious pacifism** uses religious sources as ultimate sanction. Jn. Howard Yoder concludes his 13 Mar 91 CHRISTIAN CENTURY attack on just-war theory by claiming the higher ground, "my testimony to Jesus' words and work" (p.298). His fundamentalistic quoting of dominical texts to the neglect of sociopolitical context finds him faithful to his sectarian ancestors & contemporaries but unfaithful to contemporary hermeneutics. In one of his books, he implicitly claims to be more faithful to Jesus than I. But what "Jesus"? Textual authenticity (most radically challenged by "The Jesus Seminar"), & the fact that Jesus (if he did) preached quietism as one who had no vote under the occupying power, both forbid a straight-line, noncontextual reading of Jesus' "words & work." Besides, he's at best a flawed pacifist paradigm: he believes not in "the power of love" (or any other such modernization) but in the final need for military intervention, albeit by direct divine action. ("Final": He could call in supernatural soldiers against his captors, the Roman soldiers, but believes the cup of time not yet full [Mt.26.53].)

6 Norman Gottwald gave me an unpublished paper of Carl Ridd (prof. of relig. studies, U. of Winnipeg, 27 Jan - 15 Feb 91), "To the Gulf and Beyond: Lest We Forget", which he calls (& I agree) "a careful critique." He's rightly concerned about "the loss of the critical faculty" under saturation news-bombing during the war. But in 23 packed pp. he hasn't a word to say about the national (therefore the USA) & global (therefore the UN) necessity of converting Saddam's steel-edged dream into a tangled nightmare. He thinks we were out to get Saddam, whereas we were drawing a bead only on his **romantic expansionist dream**, a dream the world has finally learned not to tolerate & (this is a world-class lesson) need not. Freud's THE FUTURE OF AN ILLUSION was a stupid prediction of the demise of religion; but perhaps now there's no future for any leader's illusion of military expansion. (Rita Hayworth: "Men go to bed with Rita Hayworth, but the next morning they wake up and find only me." I believe that nothing but decisive defeat could have awakened Saddam out of his false sweet dream &/or his people out of their dream of his potency.)

7 Like scores of others I know of, Ridd carps at Bush for "offering half a dozen conflicting reasons" for the war. Do all these complainers imagine that Bush could have laid out clearly his reasons from the start? If so, how little they know of the history of war! Lincoln couldn't have met that spec: at the Civil War's close he could state so much more clearly his reasons for the conflict. Have you never discovered your grounds shifting during an argument? It happens because the argument is a learning process, not because you're shifty! Further, Bush is not very bright, & (to use a WWII analogy appropriate to his role in that conflict) he flies his crate by the seat of his pants.

Nor is it realistic to scorch Bush for getting all worked up about the immorality of one of Saddam's incursions, viz into Kuwait, but not about a former, viz into Iran. Moral indignation is only one of many factors in how one reacts to, acts in, events. One must know little of politics, or even of social psychology more broadly, or even of the complexity of human decision-making, to object--as Ridd & others do--that Bush was inconsistent in applying principles, ie that his behavior was unprincipled.

8 In our "nation with the soul of a church," the people can't be moved without a powerful ethical component in the rhetoric. Congress & the people (& the nations & the UN) would not have backed Bush had he been less revved up with righteous indignation. And it's unfair to him, & untrue, to accuse him of merely rhetorical indignation. He's a long-fuse WASP, & his explosion was authentic. Well, maybe under all the considerations & pressures he was guilty of a bit of (Ridd) "exaggerated vituperation." (He's clumsy with language & is occasionally guilty of bloopers, eg "kick ass.") But he comes across here & across the world as real & sincere & friendly & decisive & even visionary. (I wish now I'd've voted for him.)

9 Speaking of principles, **frozen borders** is now an established geopolitical principle even though it flies in the face of the hallowed principle of "the self-

determination of peoples." The Kurds think the UN hypocritical in pushing for Palestinian, but not Kurdish, self-determination. But creating the state of Kurdistan would require taking bites out of Iraq, Iran, Turkey, & Syria! One reason the coalition did not "go after" Saddam is that he's been (though unwillingly) converted from a destabilizing to a stabilizing factor: we need him to maintain Iraq's 1922 Europe-imposed borders. Right now, he's using poison & gas as well as conventional weapons to put down the Kurdish revolt in the north, & we're not about to help the poor suffering Kurds though their cause is as just as is the Palestinians'.

10 In Ridd & other such interpreters (chiefly clergy!) there's not a word about the **arms/borders/self-determination equation**. I believe in the (armed) sovereignty of some peoples, the (unarmed) autonomy of some peoples (eg, the Palestinians), the (disarmed) suppression of some peoples (eg, after WWII, the Japanese & the Germans), the (reduced-arms) surveillance of some peoples (eg, Iraq now), & the suppression of no people. Those pestiferous Wilsonian banners, "the self-determination of peoples" & "the sovereignty of nations," assume every people's right to be armed to the teeth & help explain the scores of brush-fire wars since WWII....Historical analogy: Till the (1825) founding of the British Police Force, every British gentleman considered it a matter of dignity as well as security to go armed. Laws soon removed the dignity without reducing the safety. The PLO considers it a matter of dignity that a Palestinian state be armed, & Israel rightly contends that such would reduce security for the region--yet has since 1967, & expressly since 1989, offered the Palestinians autonomy, which they, in the person of the PLO as their "sole representative," continue to reject. Is not the arming of the Palestinians an insane proposal? Their rage against Israel is Olympian, for they've been repeatedly humiliated militarily & their Intifada-use of their children as warriors has been a bust & their support of Saddam (& rejoicing at his 41 scuds hitting Israel) a calamity. Yet they persist in naming as their "sole representative" an organization whose name proclaims its intention to liberate Palestine, an historical entity all know of as inclusive of all lands in any way under the State of Israel; & all know that "liberate" means to free from foreign domination, which translates as the demise of the State of Israel. If the Palestinians do not choose autonomy (ie, if they continue to insist on sovereignty), the impass, already more than four decades long, could go on for decades longer. But in the perspective of the arms/borders/self-determination equation, it's a small problem Washington need not worry overmuch about, for the situation is borders-stable: Israel is nonexpansionist, & no Mideast power is capable of challenging Israel's territorial claims--including its claims to military hegemony of the West Bank, Gaza, & the Golan Heights. The panArabist vision (illusion) of "the Arab nation" is now weaker than ever, with Araby more divided than ever. No need for Euramerica to divide & conquer: the Arabs do an excellent job of keeping themselves divided among themselves. We are to worship God with all our minds: why do I find among the clergy, & in pronouncements from national church offices, no nuancing of this equation? Because thinking thus nuanced is considered (Ridd) "realpolitik, that collection of pervasive Machiavellian-Clausewitzian dogmas that still govern international relations long past their time...; for the only final morality of the system is 'national security,' the self-interest of the individual nation (in this case, the U.S.)." To me, this whining is like complaining against lions that they've not yet changed their diet to grass even though the Lord God hasn't yet given them the molars they need to do so (Is.11.7).

11 Bush's emergent objectives were (1) to destroy Saddam's military-expansionist capability, (2) to restore the 1922 Iraq/Kuwait border, (3) to prevent the disruption of Iraq's 1922 borders, & (3) to complete the military operation swiftly enough to prevent significant grumbling in the USA & among the other coalition-members. All this he accomplished in six weeks. ("Most of the things we worry about never materialize," said Fosdick. Most of the things Ridd worries about in his paper didn't materialize.) The breath-catching dangers were (1) that Saddam would pull out of Kuwait with his military intact, (2) that the efforts to switch from sanctions to war would fail, giving Saddam a chance to complete his far-advanced nuclear-arms program (Ridd suggests sanctions should have continued 1½-2 years!), & (3) that Saddam (under pressure from France & the USSR) would accept an in-place cease fire, after which it'd be virtually impossible to continue the destruction of his military.

12 In his gorgeous Florida home not many days ago, an earnest & wealthy Christian, whom I'd complimented for spending so much time in Bible study, said to me, "99% of the prophecies have been fulfilled, so the Lord is coming soon." To me, he seems no further from the truth than are liberal Christians who excoriate nations for failing to behave as if the Lord had already come! All three of us believe & teach that God is the Lord of History & Eternity (in a Hebrew phrase, "King of Time-&-Eternity"). It's hard to hit up adjectives that will capture the three positions, but I'll try. My Florida friend was **apocalyptic**, & I agree with him that history's end is as much in God's hands as was its beginning. I'll call the "Mr. President, NO WAR" clergy banner-carriers **pacifistic** (though not all are pacifists). And I'll call myself **realistic** (yes, even real-politisch), ever suspicious of the military-industrial complex & of those whose anti-war sentiments feed the dreams of military adventurers.

13 As an oilman himself, Bush sensed the global threat of having Gulf oil under the thumb of one man; & Third World nations, increasingly dependent on Gulf oil as they "develop," shared Bush's fear, as did the Second World. Typically, Ridd does not deal with this, but rather piddles around with what he considers the UN's self-infractions in its anti-Saddam decisions. But he grudgingly grants that "the fact that the U.S. found it necessary to seek U.N. co-operation is a gain for world order." (But the accurate word is "expedient," not "necessary.")

14 Biblically, **repentance** & **humiliation** are the two bases for a fresh start. In WWII, Germany & Japan were humiliated into fresh starts. Now, a number of Muslim nations have helped some Euramerican nations humiliate Iraq; & in that, I believe, there's more hope for peace & prosperity in the region than if Saddam had been left free to humiliate his neighbors.

15 "The earth is the Lord's," the sand belongs to the Arabs, & (on the finders-keepers principle) the oil (subsoil mineral rights) belongs to the West. But even if one holds that by expropriation the oil belongs to the Arabs, the problem is fading: oil is **zero-sum**, & the Arabs would soon run out of it even if 600 Kuwait wells were not now burning. Position 3: Oil is a global resource & should be under global control, not the control of particular nations. This is a necessary piece of any truly "new world order." No, it's not fair that a Kuwaiti's annual income is 10x that of an Iraqi's, but Kuwaitis should not be permitted to become filthy rich on a resource that belongs to the world. (There goes "national sovereignty" again!) The environment also belongs to the world & is another factor that should set limits on national sovereignty.

16 If we can't even manage gun-control at home, how can there be **arms** control abroad either as arms-reduction agreements or as free-trade or as free-market constrictions? Another need for limits on national sovereignty. Under the criterion of frozen borders, the U.S. will judge that in particular circumstances some nations should have fewer arms and some more. We thought that Saddam, faced with Khomeini, should have more arms; now we think he should have less. The policy is consistent, consistent with the frozen-border criterion. The principle is political, not moral, & is rejected as "unprincipled" by moralists-legalists who believe that "principle" implies morality. (Moral principles, which are under judgment of spiritual principles, have a critical relationship to political principles--but are identical to neither spiritual nor political principles. Confusing these three ethical spheres fosters both irrelevance & self-righteousness.)

17 Great power makes for great good &/or great mischief, & the greatest power (now that of our country) makes for the greatest good &/or the greatest mischief. With the end of the Cold War--communism suffering internal collapse because of its too high view of human nature & its too low treatment of human beings--we've a window of opportunity for **new uses of arms**. We daily pray "Thy Kingdom come," a coming after which we'll "study war no more," have no need of arms. Meanwhile, like all the other arts, sciences, and technologies, warfare is evolving, getting better (though only in the sense of the good that war can accomplish: to say, as some do, that war can do no good, is stupid & an insult to, eg, our American Minute Men). While Vietnam gave war a bad press among us, it now has the best press it's had

since 1945, when our willingness to use The Bomb introduced a brief global Pax Americana, destroyed by the U.S.S.R.'s production of their version of The Bomb.

In the Gulf War (WWIII I began to call it on its first day, 16 Jan 91), the military reached its highest historical level of efficiency, with almost no loss of life on the winning side & with unconventional weapons present though unused. (Saddam is now using chemical warfare against his Kurds, but his fear of our nukes kept him from using it against us.)....Curious reversal: Those who said Saddam's magnificent war machine would bog us down & bloody us are now complaining that we beat up unmercifully on a Third World country lacking state-of-the-art military equipment. This proves that if you don't mind being disingenuous, you can have it both ways.

In WWII we were in a coalition whose other members sought us out: in WWIII we had to seek out our coalition partners, for both fighting & financing. This is the great new fact about Pax Americana II. America is not about to engage in unilateral warfare to maintain or shift earth's political boundaries. **Partnership war**, the coalition in place before war begins, is the new style. And it has a built-in constraint on violence: it begins with persuasion, not coercion. In this sense, it's more democratic than the old unilateral style Saddam used. Theologically, the U.S.A. now has a new stewardship entailing a new responsibility for peace & a new accountability to God for the ways we exercise our stewardship. A theology that preaches against arms is irrelevant to this stewardship. The Gulf War was (Rep. Les Aspin, Pres. Geo. Bush) "the defining moment for America's role in the world for a decade or more to come." The Jews flourished, in Babylon (Iraq!) & Jerusalem, under Pax Persica (6th c. BC/BCE): pray all peoples will flourish under Pax Americana II....While I was praying against a cease-fire (as worse than a decisive defeat of Saddam & radical reduction of his military), the World Council of Churches' 7th Assembly called for a cease-fire. I hate to be out of line with church-conciliar actions, but often must be. Half the benefit of the separation of church & state is that it keeps the church from interfering with the state's necessary actions: when the church's banners should read "Make Love AND War" & "Sanctions AND War," they read NOT for AND. The prize for being out of it is the group that tried to go between the opposing armies with signs reading "War Achieves Nothing."....Typically, churchy types condemn all warriors in sight. Says SOJOURNERS' Jim Wallis (Apr/91, p.11), "The outbreak of war reveals a profound failure of political leadership on all sides." Thus he reveals two absurdities before & after breakfast: (1) Faith in the omniscience of diplomacy, & (2) Disbelief in war. On the next p., this blanket: "Ultimately, this war is a sin against God." The peace movement wasn't "wrong; we just didn't win"; but we were "faithful." Nor can I find myself in his division of Christians into "those who identify their religion with the expansion of Pax Americana to the rest of the world" & "those who identify their faith with the victims of Pax Americana, both at home and around the globe." The next p. concludes with "A Call to the Churches," "by leaders of more than 20 Protestant & Orthodox denominations" & many Catholics & "evangelical groups" & "a variety of ecumenical organizations and movements." It concludes with this egregious literalism: "The words of the gospel cannot be reconciled with what is now happening in the Gulf. It is on Jesus' call to be peacemakers that we are united and will take our stand." The basic error here is to think that "war" is the antonym of that peace which our Lord refers to in the word "peacemakers." This lexical falsity can be overcome if we translate εἰρηνοποιοί as "shalom-makers," for shalom action often includes war, which it only ultimately, eschatologically, excludes.

18 I was for letting Hitler alone (till Pearl Harbor) & for letting Ho alone (all the way through "Nam") & for letting Saddam alone (till the rape of Kuwait). Usually my posture has been that other people's tyrants are their problem. So I'm not entirely unsympathetic with those who think we should have let Saddam alone in spite of the rape of Kuwait, but I'm intolerant of their claim that their position is more Christian. Their claim tempts me to claim that my position on war in general & this war in particular is more Christian: I think it is, but I don't claim it is (& can't know it is: like everybody else, I know little of what is & even less of what, because of the Gulf War, will be). We are living "between the times" (ZWISCHEN DEN SEITEN, a German periodical I used to read a half century ago), between the INbreaking of the Kingdom of God (M.1.15) & the OUTbreak of history's final conflict (M.13).

19 Good Friday '91: Is the Mideast being crucified in Pax Americana's new world order? Schwarzkopf told David Frost that if Bush had given him "another 24 hours," he could have eliminated the tanks & military copters Saddam is now using to crush his Shiite & Kurdish opposition; & Syria, with 40,000 troops in Lebanon, demanded that all Christians surrender their arms; & the Israeli crackdown on Palestinian knifing of Jews was escalated to death to knife-bearers, one yesterday only twelve years old.

After speaking last evening on Passover/Easter, one of the question was this: Why is Arab rage against Jews so high? My answer must be along two lines:

(1) Arab arrested development during the past millenium contrasts with Jewish ever greater flowering during the same period. An astonishing world-historical fact is that fundamentalism, about a thousand years ago, strangled the creativity & prosperity out of the two most developed civilizations at that time, China's in the East & Araby's in the West. By contrast, Jewish fundamentalism, ie Orthodoxy, because of the diaspora has never been able to declare a halt to Jewish cultural development.

(2) The second root of Arab rage is post-WWI history vis-a-vis "Palestine." The best sources I know of are sets & single volumes of Garland Publishing (136 Mad.Av., NY, NY 10016): THE ORIGINS OF JUDAISM, 13 vols.; AMERICAN ZIONISM, 15 vols.; ARCIVES OF THE HOLOCAUST, 18 vols.; AMERICA AND THE HOLOCAUST, 13 vols.; THE HOLOCAUST, 18 vols.; & THE RISE OF ISRAEL, 39 vols. Let's thumbnail the history before commenting on the rage:

1917: Replacing the Ottoman Empire's grip on Palestine, the British Mandate intends the establishment of a Jewish National Home as outlined in the (British) Balfour Declaration. (The Palestinian Arabs never have had national [armed] sovereignty, &--under the PLO--hope to gain it.)....**1939:** Under pressure of Arab riots, a British White Paper repudiated the Balfour Declaration &, by prohibiting the immigration of Jews into Palestine, condemned Palestinian Jews to permanent minority status....**1942:** A Zionist conference in NYC called for a sovereign (armed) Jewish commonwealth in Palestine....**1943:** Chaim Weizmann asked FDR to tell the Arabs that Jews have a right to Palestine; but FDR opposed the arming of Palestinian Jews....**1944:** Congress supports the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine (Balfour is back)....**1945:** Pres. Truman supports the Zionist cause, including immigration to Palestine....**1946:** Dean Alfange accuses the British of complicity in arming Palestinian Arabs & depriving Jewish settlers of the means of self-defense....**1947:** The UN creates a Jewish state in Palestine; the US proposes a US trusteeship (rather than a sovereign [armed] state), a proposal the Palestinian Jews reject....**1948:** May 14, the provisional government of the State of Israel is proclaimed in Tel Aviv, & five Arab armies unsuccessfully attack the new state. Then, & repeatedly thereafter, Israel militarily humiliates Arab attackers.

Arabs are enraged at:

(a) AngloAmerican favoritism to Jews over Arabs. The actual picture, on both sides of the Atlantic, is mixed, an ambivalent "policy" of be kind/cold to Zionist hopes. Even the American Jews were disunited on what to do about rescuing Jews from Hitler (vol.5 of THE HOLOCAUST). In Jan/44 FDR set up the War Refugee Board, but only one US camp was set up--though by Nov/42 the US, via our State Department, knew of the extermination camps (vol.1, AMERICA AND THE HOLOCAUST).

(b) Jewish power in Britain & the USA, v. Arab weakness (low representation). On both sides of the Atlantic, greatly influential Jews pressured government. But deeper is the fact that Christianity is religiously & culturally closer to Judaism than to Islam....Pres. Wilson's 31 Aug 18 letter to Rabbi Stephen Wise expressed support for Zionist work in Palestine; & 3 May 22, Congress called for the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine.

(c) Jewish repeated military humiliations of Arabs.*

(d) Their own political ineptness, in comparison with the Jews. They continue to trust an organization, the PLO, whose history is full of deceptions, betrayals, self-cancelations, & the murders of Palestinian Arab rivals.

(e) The fact that the nonArab world is fairly content to put up with what they consider the injustice inherent in the existence of the State of Israel (though in 1947 they refused the UN invitation to set up a parallel State of Palestine). Further, Islam sees as blasphemy the existence of a nonMuslim state on formerly Muslim land.