

Foreign Policy

The Challenge

The foreign policy of the United States should focus on the moral, security, and economic aspects of our actions. Since World War II, when we helped free the world from the threat of fascism, we have helped overthrow dozens of governments around the world, including democracies (e.g. Chile, Guatemala, Iran); we have supported brutal dictatorships (e.g. Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Nicaragua, Iraq); and have invaded sovereign nations to protect our “interests” (in reality, the interests of the military industrial complex), at the cost of thousands of American lives, and millions of lives of the countries we have attacked (e.g. Iraq, Vietnam, Korea).

We cannot hope to lead the world when much of it sees us as a threat. A 2006 Pew Research poll showed that among European and Middle Eastern countries, we are viewed as the biggest threat to world peace.¹ That, of course, is a major obstacle to persuading countries to support us in our foreign policy efforts, building international coalitions, and persuading other countries to respect international law when we don't do it ourselves.

The economic costs of our self-defeating empire-building are staggering. Even in 2008, the costs of the Iraq conflict were estimated at \$3 trillion – that is 20% of the national debt!² As of mid 2011, our air conditioning budget in Iraq and Afghanistan exceeded the entire budget of NASA.³ We have some 1,000 overseas military bases throughout the globe,⁴ at a value of close to \$150 Billion.⁵ These costs cannot be justified, particularly at a time when we are failing to feed our poor and provide basic health care for millions of our citizens.⁶

The close of the Second World War saw an unprecedented level of goodwill from the world towards the United States. This was then squandered. The same has happened following 9/11. As the global superpower, we have an unparalleled

¹ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/5077984.stm>

² http://www.amazon.co.uk/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=three+trillion+dollar+war&x=0&y=0

³ <http://www.npr.org/2011/06/25/137414737/among-the-costs-of-war-20b-in-air-conditioning>

⁴ “Officially the Pentagon counts 865 base sites, but this notoriously unreliable number omits all our bases in Iraq (likely over 100) and Afghanistan (80 and counting), among many other well-known and secretive bases. More than half a century after World War II and the Korean War, we still have 268 bases in Germany, 124 in Japan, and 87 in South Korea. Others are scattered around the globe in places like Aruba and Australia, Bulgaria and Bahrain, Colombia and Greece, Djibouti, Egypt, Kuwait, Qatar, Romania, Singapore, and of course, Guantánamo Bay, Cuba — just to name a few. Among the installations considered critical to our national security are a ski center in the Bavarian Alps, resorts in Seoul and Tokyo, and 234 golf courses the Pentagon runs worldwide.”

http://www.fpif.org/articles/too_many_overseas_bases

⁵ <http://www.alternet.org/story/47998/>

⁶ “Even the Bush administration saw the wastefulness of our overseas basing network. In 2004, then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced plans to close more than one-third of the nation's overseas installations, moving 70,000 troops and 100,000 family members and civilians back to the United States. National Security Adviser Jim Jones, then commander of U.S. forces in Europe, called for closing 20% of our bases in Europe. According to Rumsfeld's estimates, we could save at least \$12 billion by closing 200 to 300 bases alone.” *Id.*

responsibility to be a moral leader to the world. We can no longer economically afford not to be.

The Record of the Republicans and the Democrats

Historically there has been very little to choose between the Republicans and Democrats; both have been guilty of extreme illicit aggression against other countries. Eisenhower (who ordered the overthrow of the democratic governments of Iran and Guatemala) and Nixon, just like Kennedy and Johnson, escalated the war in Vietnam (leaving 3 million dead Indochinese); both Ford and Carter supported vicious regimes such as Suharto, and the Iranian Shah; Clinton waged destructive economic and military attacks against the Iraqi people (sanctions leaving roughly 500,000 children dead), just like his predecessor, George H. W Bush had done before him. George W. Bush's "War on Terror" was a virtual repeat of Reagan's "War on Terror" from 1981, which focussed on supporting right wing military juntas in Latin America, leading to hundreds of thousands of deaths; and President Obama has continued this trend, expanding the war in Afghanistan, continuing the occupation of Iraq (20,000 US personnel are to be stationed in Baghdad, even after the troop withdrawal), as well as bombing Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia.

Obama has continued the tradition of transforming overwhelming global goodwill into hatred and hostility. There was huge international optimism when he came into office, but this has now evaporated. Negative appraisals of his presidency in the Middle East tripled between 2009 and 2010.⁷

Given the aggression we have historically displayed towards the rest of the world, these attitudes are no surprise, and the blowback that we experience in the form of terrorism and attacks on our military personnel is surely to be expected. The Arab Spring, with citizens rising up to overthrow dictatorships, many of which are, or have been, supported by the U.S. (e.g. Egypt, Bahrain, Yemen), is a reflection of the resentment of millions of people toward oppressive governments bolstered by the United States.

Rocky Anderson's Approach Toward Solutions

The Anderson administration will focus on the key moral and economic elements of our foreign policy. There will be a key distinction made between militarism and empire-building (historically, the primary emphasis of our foreign policy), and national defense (i.e. the security of our citizens).

Our policy will be based around three pillars:

1. Eliminate militarism and empire-building: The US will never again engage in an illegal war of aggression. (The U.S. and its allies prosecuted defendants at the Nuremberg Tribunal for aggressive war, an international crime.⁸) The

⁷ 2010 Arab Public Opinion poll, conducted by the University of Maryland in conjunction with Zogby International

⁸ U.S. Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson, the chief prosecutor at the Nuremberg Tribunal, stated during his opening statement that aggressive war is a violation of law that applies to all nations:

Anderson Administration will respect the UN Charter and international law, and cease aid and assistance to countries that do not.

2. Moral leadership: We will no longer support regimes that abuse human rights and suppress democracy.
3. Economic rationality: We will close down all overseas military bases that are not demonstrably critical to our security, along with at least a 50% reduction in the Pentagon budget. (The U.S. military budget is now larger than the military budgets in all other nations combined.) This money will be allocated to domestic priorities, including reducing the accumulated debt and interest burden. As Martin Luther King said, every dollar spent on a missile is a dollar taken from a child's education, or the food budget of a poor family.

But the ultimate step in avoiding periodic wars, which are inevitable in a system of international lawlessness, is to make statesmen responsible to law. And let me make clear that while this law is first applied against German aggressors, the law includes, and if it is to serve a useful purpose it must condemn aggression by any other nations, including those which sit here now in judgment. We are able to do away with domestic tyranny and violence and aggression by those in power against the rights of their own people only when we make all men answerable to the law. This trial represents mankind's desperate effort to apply the discipline of the law to statesmen who have used their powers of state to attack the foundations of the world's peace and to commit aggressions against the rights of their neighbors. "Second Day, Wednesday, 11/21/1945, Part 04", in Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal. Volume II. Proceedings: 11/14/1945-11/30/1945-11/30/1945. Nuremberg: IMT, 1947. pp. 98-102.