

الرج

Ministry of Higher

Education & Scientific Research

Baghdad University

College of Political Sciences

# **INTERNATIONAL POLITICS**

**Fourth Year**

2012



## CHAPTER ONE

### POWER IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

#### 1. Defenition of Power:

The concept of power is central to politics. It has a wide range of defenitions. Most modern defenitions agree that **power denotes the capacity to produce intended results**. Specifically, **political power** is not over nature, material, or oneself, but over minds and actions of other people. One may speak about power when its possession or exercise makes a difference to the behaviour of others, whether of individuals or states.

**"Power"** means something similar to the cognate notion of "influence". It may be used in all kinds or ways, ranging from a demonstration or mild application of force to unres-trained violence (10).

Thus "power" may be simply defined as **"the capacity to produce intended effects"**, or **"the ability to influence the behaviour of others in accordance with one's own ends"**.

The exercise of a power by a state is to be observed when the government of one state, because of the actions or existence of another, changes its proposed behaviour; the change may involve an alteration of policy or the maintenance of a

---

(10) Frankel, p. 118.

policy which without the exercise of power would have been changed. The ability of a state to impose its will by military victory is the ultimate measure of power; but it may on the contrary be argued that the need to resort to violence demonstrates a state's lack of power. This argument gains force in an age when nuclear weapons contain the threat of total destruction for their users(11).

## **II. The new concept of power:**

The meaning of power in the contemporary international system differs, in several important aspects from its meaning in the last century.

First, the meaning of military security has completely changed. With the development of modern missiles and nuclear weapons, no state can ensure that its territory will remain immune to attack, however great its military forces may be.

Second, power today means something different in every set of relations. Power suitable for one purpose or for a set of similar purposes, adequate for dealing with one state, may not serve another purpose or relations at all; in fact it may have a negative value, it may become "counter productive".

The third change has arisen from the growing importance of the people as distinct from their governments. This new phenomenon has given rise to a whole range of complications. When a government is unpopular and faces a discontented population, it becomes dependent on outside support. A divorce between the people and their government enhances the

---

(11) Reynolds, P.A. *Introduction to International Relations*, London 1976' pp. 115-116.



power also of states unfreindly to the regime. Moreover an outside attempt to drive a wedge between the rulers and the ruled can lead to the opposites result by cementing national soildarity (12).

### III. Elements of Power:

Apart from its preference, each state has certain elements, which are called sometimes capabilities, that enhance its position. Capabilities could be defined as that part of a nations resources that is available for the pursuit of foreign policy objectives.

Acatalogue of the various elements that constitute a nation resources could be classified under three general headings:

- a. internal-nonhuman.
- b. internal-human.
- c. external.

A- Internal-nonhuman: resources are the most obvious indicators of national resources; they include all natural and manufactured material, the industrial capacity and the economic and financial status of the country, its geography its size and location. It also includes state's dependence on trade and its level of technolog-, and its economic structure and stability.

B- Internal-human resources include the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the nation's population, particularly that section of it which is directly involved in the government and the armed forces. It also involves

---

(12) Frankel, pp. 122-123.

things as national spirit and morale as well as the size, structure, skills and trends of the population.

- C- External resources are additional to internal resources acquired from other states, especially from allies. This element also includes the nature of the state's international environment, ethically, legally, institutionally, diplomatically and the quality and range of interaction between state's domestic and international environment.

(13)

Speaking in more details one could make another classification of the elements affecting the strength and security of states. Under this classifications the elements of power could be divided into the followings:

**1. Geographic Factor:**

One of the most obvious and constant factors of national power is geography. The size of a state implies the existence of a large population base, natural resources and communications networks. In the past, great size taken in conjunction with weapons and strategies enabled states to buy time with space. But size in itself does not necessarily assure power unless a state is able to harness its natural resources, organise its population and create effective political, economic and social organisation.

Power is also dependent on location and on the nature of a state's frontiers conditions.

The close connection between geography and foreign policy has given rise to "geopolitics" or as some writers prefer to

---

13) Chatterjee P. *Arms, Alliance and Stability*, London p. 46-47.



call it "political geography". Geopolitics is the analysis of state policy in terms of physical space.

However this factor is gradually losing much of its former significance due to development in the fields of technology, communications, transportation and military science.

## **2. Demographic Factors:**

It is difficult to determine the relationship between population and national power. Considered alone, population determines very little. The importance of population as a source of national power lies in its dependence upon other factors, such as education, training, skills and motivation. Moreover, the technological gap between the West and the more populated states of Asia and Africa is narrowing with the spread of education and training, which in turn means that these developing countries could in few years time overcome their technological inferiority.

Nevertheless, it remains a fact that powerful nations are the most populous on the earth. It is very difficult to wage limited war and sustain military effectiveness and economic production without reliance on a large population.

## **3. Natural Resources:**

Natural resources contribute significantly to the exercise of national power. Possession of or access to foodstuffs, oil, iron, coal, steel and rubber is particularly crucial as a determinant of national power. The importance of natural resources could rise even highly if it was coupled with technological skill.

A nation may use its resources to reward friends or punish

enemies. Yet the lack of natural resources may push states to acquire them through conquest, or colonialism.

#### **4. Technology:**

Technology contributes not only to war but also to science and human welfare. Technology means organised knowledge and know-how. It contributes to the building of military weapons and to the betterment of human life.

#### **5. Military Power:**

One of the most obvious dimensions of national power is military capability. All states maintain military establishments in order to cope with threats of outside aggression. The strength of any military establishment depends upon such considerations as the number of people in uniform, the percentage of people of military age and in uniform to the population as a whole, the quality of training and armaments acquired by armies, the morale of personnel and the quality of leadership.

#### **6. National Morale:**

By national morale we mean the degree of trust and support which people give to their government in pursuing its policies. In other words it signifies willingness to subordinate personal interests to public welfare.

Willingness to support governmental policies and endure hardships during wartime has a positive effect not only on the armed forces but also on the diplomatic service. Low morale among fighting troops can impair their combat effectiveness.



Signs of disunity within the civilian population can seriously undermine national power and adversely affect foreign policy.

Morale denotes the spirit of sacrifice, courage, loyalty, cohesiveness and respect for leadership. As such, morale is closely related to ideology. Men fight for ideals and to preserve their ideologies or political beliefs. In the end high morale enables the government to devote a greater proportion of national resources to the attainment of foreign policy objectives, particularly during periods of crises.

#### **7. Governmental Organization and Administration:**

An effective governmental-administrative system is another important element of national power. What is the attitude of the people towards their government? Are the people loyal to it and willing to support it? Do the various governmental agencies cooperate with each other? Does the government allocate its resources wisely? Are civil servants trustworthy and efficient? Answer to such questions obviously vary from country to country. Many nations are weak because of the lack of specialists and competent administration. They suffer from common weakness such as an apathetic public, official corruption and unskilled personnel(14).

#### **Rules governing the analysis and use of capabilities:**

Several general rules should govern the analysis of capabilities.

---

(14) See Winter, H., and Bellow, T., *People and Politics*, pp. 433-435. And, Abcarian G. and Masanant *Contemporary Political System*, US 322-328.

**Most important of them are the followings:**

1. States should not always concentrate upon measurable elements and neglect the non-measurable ones. A defect in one element should be overcome by increasing the importance of another and quantity should always be qualified by quality.
2. States should try to benefit from all its capabilities and elements of power by mixing them altogether. A deficiency in one capability may destroy the value of other capabilities depending on it.
3. States should always be ready to mobilize all its resources. A time-lag in mobilization procedures can make crucial differences.
4. Policy makers should always bear in mind the continuing changes in the relative importance of the various elements. An element which is sound today may become extremely precarious if an element, in which a state was weak, rises in importance. (15)

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE CONTROL OF POWER

#### I- The Balance of Power:

The balance of power concept is old as that of the state. It was known and employed in ancient Greece, Mesopotamia, Egypt, India and China.

The concept of the balance of power has become a major feature of international relations since the rise of the modern nation-state and especially after the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648. Its first application in Europe was in the Italian state system of fifteenth century. Later on it dominated relations among such members of the European state system as France, Britain, Prussia, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Germany, and Russia.

#### What does "balance of Power" mean?

The concept has been defined in various ways by students of International relations. One of them defines it as an "equilibrium" resulting from the formation of "alliances and counter-alliances, treaties of guarantee and neutralisation" which under favourable conditions produces "a certain amount of stability in international relations". Another writer states that whenever the concept is used in its most general sense it means approximately equal distribution of power among sovereign states.

Balance of power in multi-state system may be regarded as the process in which a state seeks to maximize its power



by achieving dominance or preponderance of power over its opponents. Since the Balance of power is never in a condition of exact equilibrium, statesmen have always sought not only to maintain, but also to increase their power.

### **Balance of Power and Peace:**

It has been argued that the balance of power system is conducive to peace. Although there is substantial evidence in support of this argument, the fact remains that a precarious balance of power may keep the peace for a time but in the long run cannot deter an aggressor who sees advantage in changing the status quo. The balance of power could be conducive to peace if several conditions are present. These conditions are:

First, if nations are dedicated to the preservation of the status quo.

Second, If non-expansionist states hold the preponderance of power,

Third, if states which have vested interest in preserving the balance of power are willing to go to war to prevent others from changing the balance and endangering their vital interests.

Fourth, the balance of power can ensure peace if a nation outside the power system is willing to play the role of balancer by throwing its weight behind the weaker bloc of nations in order to check the aggressor (16).

---

(16) Abcarian and Masanant P. 329.



### **Methods employed in the Balance of Power:**

Essentially, the balance of power is a process of checking power with counterpower. Many states seek to protect their vital interests and to avoid war by pursuing balance of power strategies designed to prevent a would be aggressor from achieving overwhelming strength. These strategies are in fact the modern methods employed in the Balance of power. The most important methods are:

#### **1. Alliances:**

The most obvious preventive method is forming alliance system with state pursuing common interests and willing to take concerted action. An alliance is a treaty which provides for combined action on the part of two or more states to repel or to defeat a potential aggressor if the effort to deter fails. Under the alliance system every member binds itself to mutual assistance.

#### **2. Compensation:**

Another method of maintaining the balance of power is through compensation. This technique was commonly used in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The best illustration was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when European powers agreed on a delimitation of spheres of influence in Africa and Asia.

#### **3. Buffer States Or Zones:**

This method sometimes play an important role in maintaining a balance of power system. The rationale behind the creation of a buffer zone is to neutralise, by mutual consent,

a weak but strategic state so that no unilateral control or occupancy will occur.

#### **4. Armaments:**

Armaments serve as another factor in the balance of power. The armament race between the United States and the Soviet Union is an illustration of states aiming not only at military parity but also at superiority. An unstable balance of power usually results. Recognition of unstable conditions prompts states to enter into disarmament negotiations in order to establish a balance of power or a stable peace.

#### **5. Divide and rule:**

This technique is one of the oldest methods of balancing power. This approach depends on the ability of a nation or a bloc of nations to keep their competitors divided or weak.<sup>(17)</sup>

### **THE BALANCE OF TERROR:**

The balance of power has undergone radical transformation since the end of the Second World War. The United States and the Soviet Union have emerged as nuclear superpowers with power capabilities exceeding all other nations or combinations. What followed was a bipolar system. The balance of terror between East and West gives some assurance of peace and security since mutual deterrence power tends to discourage the initiation of nuclear war. Fear of national destruction and possibly of humanity as a whole constitutes a strong incentive to avert a nuclear holocaust. Indeed the fear that humanity may be brought to the brink of total des-

---

<sup>17)</sup> Ibid pp. 331-332.



truction has prompted the superpowers to take certain steps towards arms control.

As atomic weapons proliferate and nations such as China, India, France, Germany and others join the nuclear club and realise their nuclear capacity, we may see the transformation of the present bipolarity into multipolarity. Such a transformation would add to the risk of nuclear holocaust because the number of states that could trigger nuclear war is vastly increasing. The small powers may not attain great power status, but armed with nuclear weapons they could subject the world to varying degrees of political blackmail. There is danger that a small power might covertly precipitate a war between the great power given the difficulty of pinpointing the source of a surprise nuclear attack. Thus multipolarity is undoubtedly increasing the mathematical prospects of war. (18)

## **II - Collective Security:**

Collective security is a system in which aggressive nations will be met by the collective action of the international community. These defensive measures to check aggression may or may not include the use of force. (19)

Collective security is an innovation stemming from the experience of the First World War. It was launched as the basis of a new international system no longer based upon the balance of power. This system was established in accordance with chapter seven of the United Nations' Charter

---

(18) Ibid pp. 330.

(19) Jordan D. World Politics in our Time, USA. 1970 pp. 121-124.

which stated that it will be concerned with "action with respect to threats to peace, breaches of peace and acts of aggression".(20)

### **Assumptions of Collective Security System:**

The idea of collective security rests upon five assumptions that must prove to be correct if the idea is to work out in practice.

#### **These assumptions are:**

1. In any armed combat, all nations will agree on which combatant is the aggressor. What's more, they will reach this agreement immediately, since rapid and united action is necessary if aggression is to be brought to a halt before extensive damage is done.
2. All nations are equally interested in stopping aggression from whatever source it comes. Preventing aggression is a value which overrides all other in international relations. Neither friendship nor economic advantage will stand in the way of action against an aggressor.
3. All nations are equally free and able to join in action against an aggressor.
4. The combined power of the collectivity, i.e. of all the nations in the world except the aggressor, will be great enough to overwhelm the aggressor.
5. Knowing that overwhelming power stands ready to be used against it, an aggressor nation will either sheathe its sword or go down in defeat. 21

---

(20) Frankel P, 209.

(21) Organski A, Collective Security in McWilliam W. *Crisis and continuity in World Politics* (ed) USA 1973 pp. 304-411



### **The Collective Security System in Practice:**

In examining the historical record of collective security one would notice that the world was never close to developing an effective collective security system. This was because the three historical attempts at collective security, The league of Nations, The United Nations and The Organisation of American States, were not really complete collective security systems.

The League did not meet the required conditions because key powers were not members in it; thus, the basic universality requirement was not met. The United Nations does not meet the conditions because of the veto power which enables any of the permanent members of the Security Council to block the use of collective force. The Organisation of American states also fails to qualify because one of the members of the organization the USA, has sufficient power to successfully resist the combined force of all other member states(22).

### **III - Disarmament:**

Disarmament is another approach to world peace problem. Those who believe in it argue that a world totally free of arms may make war impossible as well as painless. According to this idea one can define disarmament as:

**"The reduction or abolition of armaments. It may be unilateral or multilateral; general or local; comprehensive or partial; controlled or uncontrolled; quantitative and qualitative; voluntary or enforced".**

---

(22) Jordan Ibid.

Efforts to achieve complete, or even partial disarmament, still face enormous difficulties. After a long and protracted attempts to achieve complete and general disarmament, it became clear that partial disarmament was the best the world could hope for in the near future. This was not only because of the difficulties to achieve such an objective, but also because of the belief that total disarmament might be undesirable because it would produce great political tension and mutual mistrust. Suspicion of deception and violation would abound, as the assured retaliatory potential of the major powers did not exist. As a result the major powers reversed to the policy of **arms control**. Believers in this method argue that a more realistic way to ease international tension is by the skilful management of arms policy. Thus, arms control has been defined as; "**the restraint internationally exercised upon armaments policy, whether in respect of the level of armaments, their character, development and use**".

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE OBJECTIVES OF STATES IN WORLD POLITICS

States have wide range of objectives. In classifying these objectives there are many methods. One method is to distinguish among military, economic, political and ideological objectives. But we are going to study objectives as divided into three categories, short, middle and long range objectives.

#### **Short Range Objectives:**

These objectives are in fact called by some writers as "Core or Essential" values and interests, to which governments and nations commit their very existence, and which must be preserved or extended at all times. These objectives could also be described as those kinds of goals for which most people are willing to make ultimate sacrifices. They usually become the basic principles of foreign policy and articles of faith that societies accept them uncritically<sup>(1)</sup>.

Essential (core) interests and values are usually related to self-preservation of a political unit. They are called short range objectives because other objectives cannot be achieved unless the political units pursuing them maintain their own existence.

Another essential objective of any foreign policy is to ensure defense of the home territory and perpetuate a particular political, social and economic system based on that territory.

---

(1) Holsti p. 137.



Some governments regard controlling or defending neighbouring territories as an essential objective. This is because they believe that major threats to their own territorial integrity might materialise through adjacent lands.

In the end achievement of favourable strategic frontier has been a traditional short-run policy objective to which states have been willing to commit great resources.(2)

### **Middle Range Objectives:**

There are three types of middle-range objectives. **The first type** of middle range objectives would include the attempts of governments to meet public and private demands and needs through international action. Social welfare and economic development—a primary goal of all governments in our era—cannot be achieved unless states interact with others. To increase social welfare states must cooperate with each other to ensure the flow of trade, foreign aid, access to communications facilities and sources of supply as well as foreign markets.(3)

**The second type** of middle range objectives is to increase a state prestige in the international system. In the past, as today, this was done primarily through diplomatic ceremonial and displays of military capabilities. But increasingly in our era prestige is measured by levels of industrial development and scientific and technological skills. In fact developing countries usually undertake massive development pro-

---

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid pp. 139-40.



grammes in order to raise their international prestiges as well as responding to domestic pressures for higher standards of living. Thus development has become one of the great national goals of our time and is sought through committing all national resources.

Industrialised countries and major powers look also to increasing their international prestige through a number of policies and actions, including expansion of military capabilities, distribution of foreign aid, diplomatic ceremonial, industrial and scientific exhibitions and development of nuclear weapons and the capacity to explore outer space.

**The third type** of middle-range objectives would include the many different forms of self-extension or imperialism, which also means territorial expansion. This objective becomes an end in itself, whether or not it fulfills any strategic, economic, or social needs. This type will be discussed in details later on.

### **Long-Range Objectives:**

Long-range objectives are those plans, dreams and visions concerning the ultimate political or ideological organisation of the international system, rules governing relations in that system, and the role of specific nations within it. The difference between middle-range and long-range goals relates not only to different time elements inherent in them; there is also a significant difference in scope. In pressing for middle-range goals, states make particular demands against particular states; in pursuing longrange goals states normally make **universal** demands, for their purpose is no less than to

reconstruct an entire international system according to a universal applicable plan or vision. In other words long-range objectives includes the destruction and construction of an established international order, with the hope of creating a new order(4).

### Imperialism:

Imperialism, or colonial expansion, denotes the practice, by a country, of acquiring and administering colonies and dependencies after it has achieved national unity and embarked upon commercial or industrial expansion. Thus in its essence it shows the desire to seek additional power. It may also derive from psychological and cultural forces that drive men to seek power, prestige, honour or greatness. But the most dominant motivation of nations seeking territorial expansion is the desire to gain economic advantages, which usually leads to political control, especially in weak and developing countries.

Imperialism, however, does not always mean occupation of foreign territory. It may take the form of seeking advantage, including access to raw materials, markets, and trade routes, which an imperialist state cannot achieve through ordinary trade or diplomacy(5).

Ideological self-extension is also a modern form of imperialism, where agents of a state undertake to promote its own socio-economic-political values abroad (6).

---

(4) Holsti *ibid.*

(5) Grievs, *Fl. • Conflict and Order, USA, 1977, p. 207.*

(6) Holsti. p. 141.



### **The Age of Imperialism:**

Although some writers argue that imperialism is as old as human political organisation, one cannot escape the belief that actual imperialism began in the fourteenth century. Imperialism, therefore could be divided into two major periods:

**The first period** of imperial expansion go back to the time when dynamic states began to develop in Europe and to look outward. The emergence of strong competing governments in England, France, Spain, and Portugal stimulated the "age of discovery". Explorers were followed by settlers, who moved to settle and exploit the new world.

Religion, adventure, and greed were the main factors that motivated European colonisation of the different parts of the world(7). This period of imperial expansion came to an end by the beginning of the nineteenth century.

**The second period** of imperialism could be dated at the late 1800s. Having lost the Americas, the European states turned their attention towards Africa and Asia. As a result many "empires" were created in Europe.

The empires created during this second period were severely shaken by World War I, and after World War II the process of breaking apart which was already under way, proceeded quite rapidly. The main characteristic of this period was the belief of the European states that colonies were essential to the ballance of power system.

---

7) Grievs pp. 205-206.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### MEANS OF ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES

#### 1. Diplomacy:

Diplomacy is "the management of international relations by means of negotiation". Through diplomacy, states negotiate military alliances, trade agreements, peace treaties, disarmament, and the establishment of international organizations. Diplomatic success depends as much upon the skill and personality of the diplomat and his understanding of the opponent's ability as it does on his response to promises of rewards or threats of punishment. It also depends upon the flexibility of foreign policy and the range of agreement between negotiators. In short, diplomacy may be described as "the business of communicating between governments".

Formal relationships between sovereign states are effected by the exchange of official diplomatic "missions" composed of ambassadors, ministers, ministers resident, and charges d'affaires. The level of diplomatic representation between two states is a matter upon which both states must agree. Diplomatic officials enjoy certain immunities. They have complete freedom of communication with their home government. On the other hand, they are not permitted to interfere with the internal political processes of the host government.

Diplomatic representatives perform a variety of functions. **First**, they protect and advance the interests of their country.

**Second**, they gather informations essential to the formulation of foreign policy decisions and evaluate the objectives of other countries and the resources available for meeting them. **Third**, they observe and report events in the country which may be of interest to their government. **Finally**, they provide information and answer questions about their country to the people of the government to which they are accredited.

Prior to World War I diplomacy was mainly secret.

The emergence of open diplomacy in the twentieth century means that the public has come to play a greater role in governmental processes and that public support for major foreign policy decisions is essential.

Diplomacy has increasingly become multilateral. The deliberations of the United Nations, where many nations participate in open discussion of major international problems, is the most visible example.

Another feature of diplomacy is the use of summit conferences attended by heads of state who engage in direct negotiation of international disputes.(8)

## 2. Propaganda:

By propaganda we generally mean any systematic deliberate attempts to affect the minds, emotions and actions of a given group for public purposes. International propaganda differs from diplomacy that it is directed to the people of other states, its effect on governments is therefore only

---

(8) See, Van Dyke, International Politics, USA 1972. pp. 185-188 And Abcarian and Masrnat, pp 336-37.



incidental. Thus international propaganda is a form of verbal intervention in the affairs of other states which was impossible on an extensive scale until the evolution of the modern means of communications, especially the radio(9).

As a result of the revolution in the media of communications the use of propaganda as an instrument of foreign policy has been intensified. The use of information agencies, libraries radio broadcasts, films and newspapers has become universal.

Governments use their cultural attaches abroad to praise their own countries through the use of films, books, slides and lectures. More recently, international fairs, exhibits and sports have been employed by various governments to present favourable images of themselves and their achievements.

In an era in which public opinion can affect diplomacy, propaganda will continue to play an important role in international politics (10).

#### **f. Economic Instruments:**

By economic instruments we mean the reliance by states upon economic resources and putting them in the service of foreign policy. This factor gained importance as a result of the fact that modern nations are politically and technologically interdependent, and that they need each others resources and commodities in order to sustain viable economies. Some economic systems are particularly dependent upon external markets and sources of supply and could not func-

---

(9) Frankel, p. 156-57.

(10) Abcarian and Masannat, pp 2338-39.



tion for more than a few weeks if they were cut off from the rest of the world. Thus such states tend to behave in a way that would keep international markets, as well as sources of materials open to them.

Yet developing countries try to use their possession of rate and raw minerals and materials to wield effective international influence(11).

Another important instrument of foreign policy is economic aid. Economic aid, particularly technical assistance, plays a very important role in the policies of the major powers, especially the United States and the Soviet Union. Foreign assistance programmes vary from loans and grants to technical and military aid.(12)

#### **4. Military intervention:**

State can never remain entirely indifferent to the domestic affairs of other states and occasionally they find it necessary or convenient to interfere in them to obtain their objectives or defend their interests. They are especially prone to do so when they wish to promote social values and ideologies in other countries.

Intervention is extremely broad and loose concept which describes all sorts of interference in the domestic affairs of other states. No precise political definition can be suggested; international lawyers have been concerned mainly with types of cases in which intervention is directed against the government of the country and involves the use of force. Interven-

---

(11) Holsti, pp. 240-41.

(12) Abcarian and Masannat, p. 339.

tion could therefore be classified according to the amount of force employed and the seriousness of the action, and also according to whether they are undertaken by the superpowers or other states. Thus, intervention is an unfriendly instrument of foreign policy.

Another, and more recent form of intervention is **subversion**. Subversion is more serious, since it involves the use of force, although only by proxy, through others. It denotes the support for any rebellious activity aiming at replacing local government or breaking up the unity of the state (13).

---

(13) Frankel, P. 160.



# The Eclipse of the Multi-polar System

The pace of world political evolution began to speed up even more by the beginning of the 1900s. Democracy was rapidly eroding the legitimacy of monarchs. In 1900 there were still czars and Kaisers; they would be gone in less than two decades. Nationalism increasingly undermined the foundations of multiethnic empires. World War I was a pivotal point. Two empires, the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman, were among the losers. From their rubble, countries such as Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Yugoslavia re emerged. Other countries like Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and Palestine came under the mandate of the League of Nations.

## The Collapse of Europe as a Global Power Center

The end of the balance of power that had governed European relations during the 1800s was marked by the tragedies of two world wars. The reasons for the end of the multi-polar system are complex and subject to dispute. What is important, however, is that the European based multi-polar system lost its ability to maintain a balance of power as the major powers had become two rigid, nearly bipolar alliances that soon engaged in a death struggle. In World War I (1914- 1918) the central powers included Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey. The Allied Powers consisted of France, Russia, Great Britain, and Italy. After its defeat in the war, Germany was at first treated severely, but the multi-polar system soon led to a *realpolitik* attempt to re established balance by allowing Germany to rebuild its strength in the





1930s.that suited the British , who worried that France might once again dominate Europe and threaten them as it had under Napoleon. The seizure of power in Russia by Lenin s Bolsheviks in 1918 also prompted London and Paris to tolerate German revitalization. The French were especially alarmed by the specter of communist ideology combined with Russian military might and saw a rearmed Germany as a bulwark against the "Red menace". For the British and French, these balance -of power maneuvers constituted a near -- fatal mistake.

World War I was another reason why great Britain and France did not seriously try to restrain resurgent Germany. The two victors had each lost almost an entire generation of young men. When Adolph Hitler came to power (1933) and rearmed his country, Great Britain and France had no will to resist him. The Munich Conference (1938) became synonymous with this lack of will. In that conference, Great Britain and France gave way to Hitler s demands for the annexation of part of Czechoslovakia based on the false hope of British prime minister Neville chamberlain and other leaders that an appeasement policy toward Germany would satisfy it and maintain the peace.

#### The Rise of Non-European Powers

While all this was happening in Europe, the rest of the world community expanded and changed during the first 40 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some states gained independence; other existing states, especially Japan and the United States, gradually began to play a more significant role and to undercut European domination of the international system. China began the century saddled with a decaying imperial government and foreign





domination, but it overthrew its emperor in 1911 and started a long struggle to rid itself of foreign domination and to reestablish its role as a major power. Also during the first four decades of the century, the League of Nations was established, and many non-European countries became active in world diplomacy through membership in the league. Although international relations still focused on Europe during the early decades of the 1900s, a shift was under way. The voices of Africa, Asia, and Latin America began to be heard, and two non-European powers, the United States and Japan, readied themselves to take center stage.

### The Cold War and the Bipolar System

World war II was a tragedy of unequal proportions. It is also marked major changes in the nature and operation of the world political system. On the political front, a series of shifts in the system occurred in the decades after 1945 that involved the actors and, indeed, the polar structure of the system itself. World war II finally destroyed the European -based multi-polar structure. It was replaced by a bipolar system dominated by the Soviet Union and the United States. To those who experienced its anguished intensity, the hostility between the two super powers seemed to augur an unending future of bipolar confrontation and peril. As is often true, the view that the present will also be the future proved shortsighted. The bipolar era was brief. Significant cracks in the structure were evident by the 1960s; by 1992 it was history.

### The rise and decline of the bipolar system

World war II devastated most of the existing major actors. In their place, the United States emerged as a military and economic super power and



the leader of one power pole. The Soviet Union, though incredibly damaged, emerged as the super power leader of the other pole. The USSR never matched the United States economically, but the soviets possessed a huge conventional armed forces, a seemingly threatening ideology, and by 1949, atomic weapon. The uneasy alliance that had existed between the United States and the Soviet Union during world war II, followed by suspicious maneuvering during the first few years after the war, was replaced by overt hostility. Indeed, the rivalry that divided much of the world into two antagonistic spheres was so bitter that it became known as the cold war, a conflict with the hatred but not the military clashes of a "hot war".

The exact causes of the confrontation termed the cold war are complex and controversial. It is safe to say, however, that varying economic and political interest and the power vacuum created by the collapse of the old balance-of-power structure created a bipolar system in which a great deal of world politics was centered on the confrontation between the two super powers.

The American reaction to the perceived world soviet / communist threat was the containment doctrine. This principle transformed U.S. foreign policy from a prewar norm of isolationism to post war globalize, a policy of opposing the Soviet Union (and later communist China) diplomatically and militarily around the world. The United States sponsored a number of regional alliances, most notably the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, (NATO, established in 1949). The soviet responded in 1955 with the Warsaw Treaty Organization (or Warsaw Pact). Both sides also vied for power in the developing countries (known as the Third World), and both Soviet and





American arms and money flowed to various governments and rebel groups in the ongoing communist- anticommunist contest.

Despite intense rivalry marked by mutual fear and hatred, the reality that both super powers possessed nuclear weapons usually led them to avoid direct confrontations. Of the few that did occur, the scariest was the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. The soviets had begun building nuclear missile sites in Cuba, and President John F. Kennedy risked nuclear war to force them out.

The containment doctrine also led to the U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Vietnamese forces led by nationalist/communist Ho Chi Minh defeated Frances colonial army in 1954 and achieved independence. But the country was divided between Ho's forces in the north and nondemocratic, pro-Western government in the south. The struggle for a unified Vietnam soon resumed, and the United States intervened militarily in 1964. The war quickly became a domestic trauma for Americans as casualties mounted on both sides. Perhaps the most effective symbol of opposition to the war was the death in May 1970 of four students at Kent University during clashes between antiwar demonstrators and the Ohio National Guard. War- weariness finally led to a complete U.S. disengagement. Within a short time Ho's forces triumphed and Vietnam was unified in 1975.

Vietnam caused a number of important changes in American attitudes. One was increased resistance to the cold war urge to fight communism everywhere. Second, Americans saw more clearly that the bipolar system was crumbling, especially as relations between the Soviet Union and China deteriorated.





Beginning approximately with the administration of Soviet leader Leonid I. Brezhnev (1964-1982) and American President Richard M. Nixon (1969-1974), U.S.-Soviet relations began to improve. Nixon accurately assessed the changing balance of power, especially the rise of China, and moved to improve relations through a policy of détente with Moscow and Beijing. They came to similar *realpolitik* conclusions about the changing power configuration of the international system and sought improved relations with Washington.

#### The End of the Bipolar System

During the 1970s and early 1980s, relations between Moscow and Washington continued to warm, slowly at first, then more rapidly. Mikhail S. Gorbachev became the Soviet leader in 1985 and instituted a range of reforms designed to ease the Soviet Union's oppressive political system, restructure its ill-oriented bureaucratic and economic system. While Gorbachev's goals were limited, he tried to open the closed communist Soviet Union and unleashed forces that were beyond his control.

Gorbachev also sought better relations with the West in an effort to reduce the military's burdensome share of the USSR's economy, to receive more favorable trade terms, and to generate other economic benefits. Among other things, Gorbachev announced that the USSR was willing to let Eastern Europeans follow their own domestic policies. They responded by moving quickly to escape Moscow's orbit. This was symbolized most dramatically in East Germany, where the communist government fell apart rapidly. East



Germany dissolved itself in October 1990, and its territory was absorbed by West Germany into a newly reunified Germany. Other communist government in the region also fell, and the Warsaw Pact dissolved in early 1991.

It was hard to believe that, the Soviet Union was next. It soon collapsed as its constituent republics declared their independence. On December 25, 1991 Gorbachev resigned as president of a country that no longer existed. That evening, the Soviet flag was lowered for the last time from the Kremlin's top and replaced by the red, white, and blue Russian flag. The Soviet Union was no more.

## The 21<sup>st</sup> Century:

### The Creation of a New System

#### The Structure of Power in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

There are a number of important changes occurring in the shape of the international system. A new polar structure is emerging, the Western orientation of the system is weakening, and the authority of the state is being challenged from without and from within.





## The Polar Structure

Clearly the bipolar system is gone. What is not certain is how to characterize the current, still evolving system. Although not all scholars would agree, the view here is that, what exists in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is best described as a limited uni-polar system what is struggling to become a multi-polar system.

A Unipolar Moment Just before the Soviet Union's final collapse, analyst Charles Krauthammer wrote an article entitled "The Unipolar Moment". In it, he argued that the widespread assumption that "the old bipolar world would beget a multiplier world with power dispersed among several countries was wrong". "The immediate post - cold war world is not multipolar," he observed. "It is unipolar. The center of world power is the unchallenged superpower, the united states".

Many other analysts scoffed at Krauthammer's view and some still do, but he had a point. Since then, U.S. global economic dominance has grown further, especially as Japan and Europe have struggled. Militarily, U.S. arms with allied support have won many wars. This mostly attributed to the vast and growing lead of U.S. military technology.

Others concur with Krauthammer's view that a unipolar system exists. For one, scholar Joseph Nye, has written of the united states that "not since Rome has one nation loomed so large above the others". Nye observes that the U.S. status as the hegemonic power is not just based on military dominance. Instead, he quotes the observation of France's foreign minister that "U.S. supremacy today extends to the economy, currency, military areas, lifestyle,





language, and the products of mass culture that inundate the world, forming thought and fascinating even the enemies of the United States".

**The Multipolar Urge** There is something in the balance -- of- power nature of the international system that does not like unipolarity. U.S. dominance rankles many countries, whether they were allies, enemies, or neutrals in the cold war era. As evidence, consider the following three statements, all made within three days in mid-2003. In Moscow, Russia's President Vladimir Putin, with China's President Hu Jintao at his side, told reporters that the two leaders believed that "the world order can and should be multipolar". The following day, some 2,700 miles to the southeast in New Delhi, Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee of India commented that his discussions with visiting German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder made it clear that "our two countries..... share a vision of a cooperative multipolar world order". And two days after that, over 4,000 miles to the northwest in France, President Jacques Chirac assured the press, "I have no doubts whatsoever that the multipolar vision of the world that I have defended for sometime is certainly supported by a large majority of countries throughout the world".

These expressions of support for a multipolar world by the leaders of China, France, Germany, India, and Russia do not mean that the leaders are anti- American, merely anti-unipolarity. The reason is that a world in which there is one dominant power, the United States in this case, is an international system in which all other countries are at least partly subordinate.

**Limited Unipolarity** There is no precise line where unipolarity begins and ends, which is one reason why not all agree that the world is unipolar





now. Perhaps it is more accurate to depict the current state of affairs as a limited unipolar system, which means that one power center dominates, but the extent of that control is restrained. In the current international system, there are many restraints on U.S. power. The most important of these result from the extensive degree to which the United States, like all countries, is intertwined with and reliant on other countries. For example, the U.S. war on terrorism will make little progress unless other countries cooperate in identifying and arresting terrorists within their borders and dismantling the financial networks on which terrorists often rely. Similarly, the U.S. economy may be the world's most powerful, but it depends heavily on favorable trade relationships with other countries for its prosperity. A third example, involves the frequent U.S. need for diplomatic support. The simmering crisis with North Korea is likely to be resolved much more easily if the region's countries, especially China, cooperate with Washington in persuading Pyongyang to desist from building nuclear weapons. The point is that because the United States frequently benefits from the cooperation of others, it can only go so far in riding roughshod over their preferences on a range of issues. Currently, there are probably not too many issues on which a determined Washington cannot get its way, but there is a price to pay for unbridled unilateralism.

The extent of U.S. unipolar power is also limited by Americans themselves. If you ask them whether they think their country should take an active part in world affairs, about two thirds will usually respond yes. If, however, you ask Americans whether they favor a dominant U.S. role, which is what a unipolar power must play if it wishes to retain its status, then you find a much more cautious approach. Thus, the unipolar role of the United States is limited by what the public will tolerate, and presidents risk a



politically dangerous backlash if they follow a policy that Americans feel overly involves their country.

**Future Polarity** Predicting the future configuration of world power is difficult beyond Krauthammer's safe-bet prediction that, "no doubt, multipolarity will come in time.....{when} there will be great powers coequal with the united states ". Certainly, as the statements by Chirac and others demonstrate, a great deal of the diplomatic strategy of many second-tier powers ( such as France, Russia, China) centers on hastening the arrival of that multipolar time. For example, many observers expressed the reasonable suspicion that the German and French opposition in 2003 to war with Iraq, which prevented the united states from getting U.N. Security Council support of the invasion ,was based in part on a desire to assert their own authority in the system.

Particularly if overly aggressive and unilateral U.S. policy alarms the next tier of powers and drives them into alliance with one another and opposition to the united states, or if the united states is a reluctant hegemon, then a multipolar system could quickly reemerged. Some scholars believe that such a system will be state-centric and look and function much like the traditional multipolar system that existed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Yet other scholars believe that the system is evolving toward becoming a modified multipolar system. They think that it will not look or operate like a traditional multipolar system because states and alliances are now being joined as important actors by regional and global international organizations, such as the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN). Analysts believe that





these new types of major actors will change the dynamics of the international system.

#### The Weakening Western Orientation of the International System

Another dynamic of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century is that the dominant western orientation of the international system continues to weaken as a result of the expansion of the number and power of non-western states. The colonial empires established by the imperial western powers collapsed after world war II, and in the coming years over 100 new countries have gained independence. The vast majority of these new countries are located in Africa, Asia, and other non-western regions. A few, especially China, have achieved enough power to command center stage. Even the smaller non-western countries have gained a stronger voice through their membership in international organizations. For example, non-western countries now command a majority in the U.N general assembly and in the Security Council the U.S. attempt in 2003 to gain support for war with Iraq failed because Washington was unable to persuade such council members as Angola, Mexico, and Pakistan to support the U.S. position.

While the non-western countries have many differences, they share several commonalities. Most struggle economically, are ethnically /racially not Euro white, and share a history of being colonies of or being dominated by Euro whites. Furthermore, the value system of many of these countries differ from western values, which form the basis of current international law, concepts of human rights, and other standards in the international system. It should not be surprising, that many of these new or newly empowered countries support changes in the international system.





### Challenges to the Authority of the State

Along with the changing polar configuration and the rise of non-western

states, the 21<sup>st</sup> century system is also being affected by the fact that states

starring role in the world drama has become somewhat less secure.

