

Recent U.S. Foreign Policy

Two takes on “Empire”

Bacevich – Take One

American Empire from the End of the Cold War to 9/11

- **“Globalization “Is” the international system that replaced the Cold War**
- **The “desired” NSC-68 state of affairs – US economic (dollar), cultural, military and political “hegemony**
- **The sense of “unlimited opportunities – a new global order**

- **Claim – US policy derived from “American Exceptionalism**
- **No to power politics ---to achieve values**
- **No to War -- use force in measured amounts**
- **No to limits -- Resources were no constraint**

The 1991 Gulf War

- **The War to establish a new world order – get rid of tyrants and demonstrate US military superiority --- dissuade challengers and get those not in line with the new world order in line**
- **War a military success but little else**
- **New problems brewing and old ones lingering**
- **War lords (Somalia)**
- **Terrorism (bin Laden)**
- **Tyrants (Iraq, N. Korea, Serbia)**
- **Revolutionary regimes (Iran)**
- **Destabilized old empire (Russia)**
- **Ethnic conflicts ((Rwanda, Congo, Bosnia)**
- **As a result in the 90s the US ended up using military force more and less**

Gunboats and Gurkhas – the militarization of US Foreign Policy

- **Note our claim is that of course gunboats and gurkhas is nothing new and the militarization of US FP started long ago**
- **Bacevich argues that in the 90s US force was heavily used (Yes) -- in Albright's language “the indispensable nation” -- but puts Somalia – low to no casualties and play to US military strengths**
- **Gunboats – cruise missiles and precision munitions (Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan)**
- **Gurkhas - foreign armies or proxies (Australians in E Timor, UN peacekeepers, and other regional peacekeeping organizations, private military organizations, Croatian forces in Bosnia, advisers in Colombia)**

War for the Imperium

- **Bacevich claims pre 9/11 globalization making war as opposed to the use of military force obsolete – post 9/11 perpetual war against the enemy (terror)**
- **War against terror was continuation of a strategy of to maintain economic openness and US dominance -- -- preemptive war doctrine and more openness of US policy to stay “first” -- US policy “wrapped” in protecting freedom**
- **9/11 did not change US strategic purpose nor is methods – remember book written before the Iraq war of 2003 –**
- **Afghanistan – a war fought with gunboats and gurkhas (our node 22)**
- **Initial air war not successful – then resort to Gurkhas (Northern Alliance) and then CIA and special forces and good old B52s**

The combo works – Taliban defeated, almost no US casualties, new coalition government -- some key mistakes – bin Laden allowed to escape, limited US forces committed, diversion toward Iraq, nation building on the cheap

New relations in Central Asia, more bases

And as Bacevich summed it up – the not so dirty little secret that the US had an informal empire and the problems that come with it

An Empire of Bases – Take Two

Chalmers Johnson

the militarization of US foreign policy 1989-2002

claims the US no longer had a foreign policy but a military empire and claim US rather being first among equals wanted or did become a unipolar power

Responsibilities the US assumed

- 1. Humanitarian intervention**
- 2. Spread of market democracy**
- 3. Open warfare on drug cartels and indigenous political reform movements**
- 4. Quarantining of rogue states**
- 5. Preventive intervention**
- 6. Endless war on terror**

only new this is (6)

An empire of bases

- **Permanent naval bases**
- **Military airfields,**
- **Listening posts**
- **Strategic enclaves**
- **On every continent**
- **All told over 700**

- **Key argument**
- **Forward deployed troops and bases not really contribute to war fighting capabilities but to show the reach of US power and control**
- **War fighting comes largely from forces from the home land**

- **The US form of empire --- “an international protection racket” –**

Mutual defense treaties

Military advisory groups

Military forces stationed in foreign countries (SOFAs)

Produces what he calls satellites (clients)

Examining the empire of bases

- **Data Sources**
- **DOD Base Structure Report**
- **DOD World wide Manpower Distribution by Geographical Area**

- **Some data as of 2001**

- **725 foreign bases**
- **254,788 military personal deployed**
- **In 153 countries**

- **Overheads of table**

Johnson's claims

Bases for spying,

Surveillance

Protecting access to resources (mostly oil)

Claim represents a symbiotic relationship between big oil, government and the military

Note the counterfactual claims about invasion of Afghanistan

New bases in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan (since vacated)