

LIMITS OF INTERVENTIONIST POWER: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TRADITIONAL AND EVOLUTIONARY PARADIGMS

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Abstract

The ambient limits imposed by the various formal-legal and operational factors on the use of interventionist power by dominant powers condenses into three possible paradigms: (1) violence-based hegemonic interventions, (2) resort to covert operations and overthrow of regimes, or (3) major powers assisting the Lesser Developed Countries (LDCs) to develop economically. Violent or subversive intervention occurs when the international system is bypassed or manipulated by a major power or a group of major powers. Purely hegemonic projection of power is increasingly becoming irrelevant and anachronistic, and prone to gruesome violations of human rights. The evolution of effective and agile international economic and development agencies in the past sixty years makes the third possibility a favourable option. The formal-legal limits imposed on the use of coercive power by the UN Charter define the sailing boundaries for major powers, but difficulty is frequently encountered in defining such contested terms as, for instance, hegemony. Semantics leave ample room for arm-twisting and mounting of pressure.

This paper posits that prospects of a long cycle of international peace would be greatly enhanced and chances of costly errors would be reciprocally reduced by a watertight international order that restrains and discourages such overt and covert interventions falling outside the ambit of the UN Charter. A stronger international regulatory environment will improve prospects for peace. Focusing on the socio-economic development of LDCs will lift third world populations out of the morass of living half-in-and-half-out-of-dirt.

Keywords: *Hegemonic intervention, Less Developed Countries, UN Charter, International system*

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Introduction

This paper compares three models that describe the complete range of possibilities in the application of a major power's resources viz-à-viz weaker nations, to either coerce them through war or destabilize them through covert means, or alternatively, to develop them socially and economically and mature them into potential allies. The first two options will generate wars or a situation of no war, no peace. The third one, related to social and economic cooperation, will produce cycles of durable peace. Three models can possibly serve as crude predictors for assessing the likely behaviour of a major power inclined towards an intervention. The first one is the Prussian historian Leopold Von Ranke's *Die Grossen Machte* (the great power) model of 1833 that leads towards hegemony; the underlying assumption being that the hegemon enjoys absolute supremacy in military power over any or all of the world nations combined. The second one is Joel H. Westra's "Prudential Restraint" model, based on the assumption that unilateral intervention by a major power will invoke a strong reaction or resistance from the subject nation, moderating the intensity and manner of intervention. The third and the last is the World-Leader role that has been at least partially fulfilled by the US through the Marshall Plan in the 1950s and 1960s, and is currently extended to developing nations through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), etc.

The three models have been compared and contrasted to arrive at one best model. The paper attempts to address the following questions:

1. Is the present state of US hegemony absolute, or is it a state of decline? Is hegemony operable in the 21st century?
2. How does Pax Americana is comparable with Pax Britannica?
3. What limits are imposed on major power intervention by UN Charter Article 2 (4)? How do the major powers modify their behaviour in the face of such limits?
4. Has the "Prohibition on use of Force" provision worked in the past? Is "Prudential Restraint" a viable model?
5. Is "World-leadership" through ECOSOC/OECD programmes viable as an alternative? Is it complementary to the objectives of the human rights law?

Interventionism

Interventionism has been defined by Britannica as, "Interfering with another country's attitudes, policies, and behaviour."¹ Intervention can take many forms such as military (intrusion into

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/interventionism>

sovereign territory or the Exclusive Economic Zone or with the right of innocent passage of vessels or commercial flight of aircraft of another country); political (meddling in another country's internal affairs); cultural (interfering with the target population's values and belief system); or humanitarian, (to provide relief to another state's population from hunger, militancy or threat to life from an epidemic/endemic source). An intervention remains an intervention, regardless of the motivation, if undertaken against the will of the subject nation. However, the term 'intervention' is, also frequently used to describe efforts undertaken with positive intentions, such as in the field of development economics and in education as well. The use of the term in the present study is limited to (1) military intervention under the UN or a regional organization's mandate, (2) covert intervention through intelligence agencies or security companies, and (3) intervention through UN agencies or Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for the purpose of economic development and education. A potent distinction has been established between the first two categories and the third one by statutory provisions of the UN Charter.

UN Charter Article 1(1) defines the purpose of the Charter as:

Prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace.

Article 2(4) of the UN Charter reads:

All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.²

The United States alone has undertaken more than 45 military interventions in other countries since World War II. These interventions have been the subject of moral judgment and criticism for having caused frequent humanitarian suffering. Contemporary debates on the manner and ethics of these interventions may be categorized into three groups. The first of these proposes that the US has established its hegemony over the world; since there is not much that can be done about it, the legitimacy of these interventions is hardly a worthwhile question. The second group puts forward the view that even though US is the superpower, the use of interventionist power at its disposal is moderated by the UN Charter and

² <http://legal.un.org/repertory/art2.shtml>.

the willy-nilly cooperation or resistance of regional bodies and sovereign nations; therefore, channelizing some restraint in US intervention is the best the rest of the world can do. The third and the last group believes that the US is a world leader with principally a benign character that helps develop LDCs; this gratitude atones for the offensive character of US interventions, and the world might as well go along with the US and reap the harvest of social and economic relief.

The latter view tends to condone overt and covert interventions focusing on human protection and relief but would like to see it happen under the international humanitarian aid regime through regular armies, if circumstances so dictate, rather than through private military and security companies. This paper compares interventions under three broad categories or 'models'. The first model refers to overt interventions impinging upon the sovereign rights of a nation, by virtue of being a great power having all or some of the characteristics of 'hegemony'. The second model explains predominantly covert interventions because of fear of political or popular resistance, with the potential of turning into overt operations (described below as Westra's model). And the last model focuses upon interventions through ECOSOC, OECD, USAID and other agencies for the purpose of economic development and education.

Hegemony

The opening up of the continents to exploration in the past three centuries exposed vast tracts of Asian and African territories to exploitation, colonization and cultural invasion by European races, who claimed a superior intellect and intervened under the pretext of trade and civilizing the so-called native barbarians. The impact upon subjugated peoples varied from rapid and audacious social and economic development, such as was the case in British India, where pre-existing ancient learning and the indigenous culture provided a base for the uptake of new knowledge and industry; to the perpetuation of hunger and disease such as in Africa, where food crops were replaced with coffee by colonial masters.

The major historical instances of classic and incipient/pretender cases of hegemony recognized by most historians include: Portugal (1494-1580), lasting from the end of Italian Wars to Spanish invasion of Portugal and based on Portugal's dominance in navigation, Holland (1580-1688), with Treaty of Utrecht 1579, marking the foundation of the Dutch Republic to William of Orange's arrival in England and based on Dutch control of credit and money, Britain (1688-1792), lasting from the Glorious Revolution to Napoleonic Wars and based on British textiles trade and command of the high seas, Britain (1815-1914), from Congress of Vienna to World War I and based on British industrial supremacy, steam-

propelled ships and railroads, and lastly the United States (1945-1971), based on petroleum and nuclear technology.

Interventionism is a behavioural aspect of hegemony. The status of being a hegemon, or the “world leader,” a title emphasized by some American writers, entails bearing the bulk of security and peacekeeping burden. This task presupposes a preponderance of war-fighting and entails frequent stationing of military forces abroad. Economic coercion and cultural invasion are complementary courses of action. Such actions naturally cause apprehensions and trigger complex behavioural reactions on part of the subject sovereign nations. Even Germany was not spared such vexation during the 45-year long stationing of 256,000 American troops in that country after WW II.

American hegemony, just like its forerunner of British variety, established itself through the unethical and arrogant use of brute military force, occupation, or political exclusion of subject territories. The hegemon, having once established its hold, proceeds to tighten its grip over the world system and perverts it to self-interest. Frequent ways to achieve this goal include deliberate misinterpretation of international law, disinformation, corruption, forced regime changes to install kings and dictators who would willingly serve the hegemon, and imposition of sanctions under national and international law wherever resistance is met.

Once in the first place, the natural concern of a superpower is to remain in that position and not slide down. Many authors have noted that US hegemonic power is declining. To check power erosion, a hegemon develops global control mechanisms through trade, monetary and security regimes enveloping the core industrial world. The greater the hold of the leader in these areas, the higher is the quality of hegemony. Some authors link the rise to great power status with the occurrence of a long peace cycle. Others hold the view that the hegemon is invariably the inventor of the lead technology of an era, such as steam, electrical technologies, nuclear energy etc. However, they like to point out that monopoly in technology does not remain static. Despite curbs on the transfer of technology, diffusion does take place, which tends to dilute lead status and to erode hegemony.

Prussian historian Leopold Von Ranke is renowned for his great power theory based on his study of European history. His ‘Geschichten der romanischen und germanischen Völker von 1494 bis 1535’ published in 1824,³ was the first of his 50 odd books on European history and politics written mostly based on primary sources. In an essay published in 1833, he had defined Die Grossen Mächte (the great power) as one that, in war,

³ L. V. Ranke, “Geschichten der romanischen und germanischen Völker von 1494 bis 1535”, (Leipzig: Reimer, 1824). tr. P. A. Ashworth, *History of the Latin and Teutonic Nations 1494-1535* (London: George Bell and Sons. 1887). [Full text may be seen at <https://archive.org/stream/historyoflatinte00rankuoft/historyoflatinte00rankuoft_djvu.txt>

"must be able to maintain itself against all the others, even if they are united."⁴ The Washington Naval Treaty, 1922 (ratified in 1925), and the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) and the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) negotiations, reflected this philosophy. Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) had recognized certain generally beneficial aspects of hegemony, such as a prolonged cycle of peace and stability.

Hegemonic stability theory, in general, suggests that the presence of a hegemon makes it possible and expedient to enforce rules and norms across the board in a certain area of influence. The role of the United States in putting in place an open trading system through the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), may be cited as an example. Immanuel Wallerstein's world system theory associates the term 'hegemony' with a long cycle of prosperity, mustering of economic power and military muscle, domination, coercion, exploitation, and inequality. Lars Mjoset defines hegemony as an economic interaction between great powers, "a relationship of legitimate domination exercised by one country over the other great powers of the core of the world economy."⁵ Mjoset introduces mastery in leading edge technology as a new precondition. He qualifies the present day hegemon, the US, as the single largest unit in the international division of labour, describing the hegemonic state as,

...the source country of decisive technological and institutional innovations that define the leading sectors of the relevant period. The diffusion of these technologies to follower countries is one of the major socio-economic processes spurred by the hegemonic dominance.⁶

George Modelski prefers the term "World Leadership" and discards the term hegemony altogether. Modelski, based on an analysis of the pre-1988 coalition victories, suggests that goals and interests served by the winning coalition, the quality of cooperation among its members, and their grasp of the world situation are just as important as the economic factors. However, he considers that the masterly trend of the 21st century is not economic growth but democratization.⁷ Robert Cox sees dominance as being subtle and more ideological and cultural in nature. His understanding describes a hegemonic world order as one that is essentially a state of compromise between the hegemon and other states. Cox sees such as order as, "... universal in conception, i.e. not an order in

⁴ L. V. Ranke, "Die GrossenMächte/ The Great Powers" in T. H. V. Laue, *Leopold Ranke: The Formative Years* (New Jersey: Princeton Univ. Press, 1950), 181-218.

⁵ L. Mjoset, "Turn of Two Centuries" in D. Rapkin, ed. *World Leadership and Hegemony* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1990), 21

⁶ *ibid.* 22-23

⁷ George Modelski, "Is World Politics a Learning Process?" *International Organization* 44, 1, Winter 1990, 1-24.

which one state directly exploits others but an order which most other states... could find compatible with their interests."⁸ Cox views hegemony as a complex set of social relations that stretch from the local to the global level. His formulation of a hegemonic world order posits that,

The dominant state creates an order based ideologically on a broad measure of consent, functioning according to general principles that in fact ensure the continuing supremacy of the leading state or states and leading social classes but at the same time offer some measure of a prospect of satisfaction to the less powerful.⁹

Paul M. Kennedy assesses a nation's potential as a great power to be a function and, given the right set of governmental policies, a near automatic outcome, of its wealth accumulation, industrialization, and strategic acquisition cycle. With an economist's keen sense for tabulated data, he measures vague notions like demographic character, war-fighting potential and imperial overstretch in terms of Gross National Product (GNP), hard cash expended in a war, and hoards of strategic raw materials.

Morton A. Kaplan's System's Theory (Kaplan's Six) expounded in '*System and Process in International Politics* (1957)', helps understand the relationship between sets of 'objects' (groups of nation states or actors) and their 'attributes' (power, domination, polarity, etc.). He argues that as the attributes change, a whole range of possibilities emerge, from a total absence of any international system to a world republic. This range is represented by, (1) the Balance of Power System, (2) the Loose Bipolar System, (3) the Tight Bipolar System, (4) the Universal International System, (5) the Hierarchical International System, and (6) the Unit Veto System. Kaplan's model is purely theoretical and does not take into account the actual dynamics of international politics that make it difficult for a hegemon to enjoy absolute dominance. Even in the Roman Empire, power had to be shared with local leaders, without which administration of such vast territories was not possible. The US enjoyed a nuclear veto briefly from 1946 to 1949. It is doubtful whether it gave the US any particular advantage over the USSR in political terms, or contributed to stability in the Pacific region where the bombs were used.

As for legitimacy, while the realist tradition emphasizes material capabilities, the Gramscian School focuses on the ideological aspect. The hegemon endeavours to arrange for legitimacy on moral grounds through a re-orientation of the value system of the secondary states, by means of financial incentives and occasional sanctions. David Rapkin comments:

⁸ Robert Cox, "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method," *Journal of International Studies*, 12, 2 (1983), 162-175.

⁹ R. Cox, *Production, Power and World Order: Social Forces in the Making of History* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1987), 7.

There are scant formal-legal basis for legitimacy in the world political system, so... the secondary states' definitions of their interests are transformed so as to be consistent with the hegemon's normative concept of the world order... Alternatively, policy compliance may initially be coerced by the hegemon through positive inducements, with normative convergence occurring later.¹⁰

The successful re-orientation of post-1945 Europe towards liberal multilateralism by the US is offered as an example of the former approach and the British introduction of Western values as that of the latter.

Paul M. Kennedy bases his argument for a nation's rise to great power status on the generation of wealth, which is considered essential to acquire military strength, and which in turn creates opportunities for domination and economic exploitation. "It sounds crudely mercantilistic to put it this way," Kennedy concedes in his 'Rise and Fall of Great Powers (1989)', "but wealth is usually needed to underpin a nation's military strength." Modelski as under has summarized Kennedy's analysis of the reasons for the fall of a nation:

A nation projects military power according to its economic resources but eventually the high cost of maintaining political supremacy weakens the economic base. Great powers in decline respond by spending more on defence and weaken themselves further by directing essential revenues away from productive investments.¹¹

Modelski emphasizes factors such as the search for identity, knowledge or the processes of learning for legitimizing the supremacy. By comparison, Mjoset links clear instances of hegemonic domination to the emergence and mastery of new technologies, and further breaks down each hegemonic era into two distinct periods: one of prosperity and recession, and the other, following the diffusion of technology to secondary states, of depression and recovery. Mjoset identifies the 1845-1873 period (prosperity and recession) as the zenith of British hegemony and ascribes the dominance of that country to the advent of steam power and railway. This period was followed by 1873-1896 (depression and recovery) characterized by decentralization and the equalization of economic and military power among a number of great powers. Hence, no clear-cut hegemon appears. The next major technology to emerge, just before the outbreak of World War I, was electricity and heavy engineering in which Germany had the lead. This period was highly turbulent, however, and no clear hegemon appeared.

¹⁰ D. Rapkin, "The Contested Concept" in D. Rapkin, ed. *World Leadership and Hegemony*, (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Pub, 1990), 10-11.

¹¹ G. Modelski, "Global Leadership and End Game Scenarios" in D. Rapkin, *World Leadership and Hegemony*, ed. (1990), 242.

While US power increased steadily after WW I and exponentially after WW II, the operation of hegemony par excellence was never again practical, thanks to the evolution of the international system and that too, despite failure of the League of Nations. The Great Depression of 1929-33 followed World War I. The first three decades after World War II were the periods of Fordist and Mass Production, and are collectively referred to as the era of US hegemony. By late 1950s, the Europeans, having rebuilt their economies at an amazing pace, rapidly became more independent in their policies. From 1973 onwards, the decline of US hegemony had begun to set in. The present era is one of information and communication technology and, borrowing a term from Brzezinski, may be described as the 'Technetronic' era. Japan competed but failed to emerge as the leader in that field. At any rate, Japan has no offensive capability, a pre-condition for hegemony.

Clear historical instances of hegemony thus include only Pax Britannica and Pax Americana, while the Netherland's bid for hegemony is generally treated as one that failed at the incipient stage due to lack of preponderance. The real source of British power in the 19th century lay in Britain's lead in steam technology, industry, and trade. The military facilitated commercial entrepreneurship and protected overseas shipping, the primary means of trade. London emerged as the world's commodity centre, as well as, a seat of global power. In the 20th century, the industrial lead slipped out of British hands.

The US emerged as a clear victor in WW II which, in its nature, was an industrial war; the lead industry then represented by nuclear technology. The US established itself as the world leader in trade, industrial innovation, and finance. It firmly established its grip over European trading partners through the dollar-based Bretton Woods monetary system. The vast American military machine ensured Pacific and European security arrangements. Pan Americana was generally accepted by Europe, even if somewhat grudgingly. India aspires to assume the role of a regional leader but its interaction with core industrial nations is minimal. India is no more than an embryonic case of hegemony, just like the Netherlands of the 17th century.

The grudge often faced by the US in finding manageable political and economic partners in its attempt to create a world order of its liking, is a predicament the British were largely spared of. Whereas the British-led trade and monetary regimes were more spontaneous, the US had to create markets risking the hostility of its European partners. At the same time, the US has enjoyed a far greater structural power and freedom in monetary matters than Britain ever did. Therefore, the US could afford to and did act parochially at times. This is evident from the interventionist role it played in, the 1949 Syrian coup d'état, the 1953 Iranian coup d'état, the 1954 Guatemalan coup d'état, the 1959 Tibetan uprising, the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba, the 1964 Brazilian coup d'état, the 1973 Chilean

coup d'état, the 1976 Argentinian coup d'état, the 1979–89 Afghanistan war, the 1980 Turkish coup d'état, and the 1981–87 intervention in Nicaragua. A sense of pride in the superior military strength and finer technology has led the US to involve itself in unwarranted wars that could have been avoided through better diplomacy, such as the Vietnam War in the 1960s and the Iraqi invasion in 2003.

In the nineteenth century, when Britain was the leader, the competition to grab colonies for trade and expansion of power was within the European states and it was simultaneously economic and geo-strategic in nature. By comparison, in the case of American leadership, all the European powers allied against a common enemy in the post-1945 period. Since they were competing with each other only in trade and not in the strategic domain, the chances of the system deteriorating into a global war were much lesser than during the British-led peace system which, while collapsing, had pushed the world into two world wars.

The grand wartime alliance of Western powers with Russia broke up right after the victory in 1946. US hegemony was born the day Germany surrendered. Italy and Japan were absorbed in the Western club and aligned against the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The North American Treaty Organization (NATO) emerged in 1949 out of the Berlin Crisis. It successfully integrated European nations stretching from Norway to Turkey, guarding Europe's northern, central and southern flanks. Even though no occasion arose during the Cold War to test its effectiveness in the field or on the high seas, NATO, together with the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the US forces in Japan, ensured a complete encirclement of the USSR. The arrangements successfully contained the threat of Soviet aggression for some forty years until the Soviet Union fell out of competition and Communism capitulated as an ideology. The title of the 'world leader' rightfully belonged to the US during the Cold War era. We cannot say the same for the post-1990 era. The emerging strategic pattern in the post-Iraq and post-Ukraine years is the most destabilizing as it offers little prospect for peace, hegemonic or otherwise.

Westra's 'Prudent Restraint' Model

UN Charter's Article 2(4) explicitly prohibits the use of force against a sovereign state. The only permissible use of force is through a UN mandate. Joel H. Westra, in his 2007 book titled 'International Law and the Use of Armed Force: The UN Charter and the Major Powers', observes that major powers have at times manipulated Article 2(4) to create a semblance of use of legitimate force through a regional body's mandate. The UN Charter explicitly restrains any military action on part of a foreign nation against a member state and this prohibition considered the

principal instrument of the international order enforced by the Charter. By implication, the prohibition is equally effective against a coalition of forces.

Westra points out that the rules are interpreted variously to their own advantage by major powers through the threat of exercise of veto power. The psychological pressure mounted on the subject state includes but is not limited to the creation of 'an expectation of compliance.' The action of major powers, when not conducted strictly under UN Security Council (UNSC) mandate, does not escape international scrutiny through the General Assembly. However, the larger body has little prevalence over the Council and such delinquency in the past has been the source of tension between the said two principal organs of the UN. Resistance to the Council's plans was particularly profound during the run up to the 2003 intervention in Iraq. Westra's "Prudential Restraint" model features typical behaviour of the interventionist power as under,

To reduce the likelihood of resistance from states threatened by such actions, major powers exercise prudential restraint, altering the manner and timing of their military actions in accordance with the legal arguments offered to justify those actions as consistent with the Charter and therefore not threatening to the existing international order.¹²

Westra introduces five case studies to support his thesis: the US intervention in the Caribbean (1953-61), the Anglo-French intervention in Egypt (1956), the Soviet intervention in Hungary (1956), the US-British intervention in Iraq (1990-98) and the US-British intervention in Iraq (1999-2003). Through the analysis of interventions in Iraq, Westra sees an opportunity for "possible reforms of the UN Charter system." The whirlwind rise of Islamic State (IS) power in Syria and Iraq after the withdrawal of American forces demonstrates the limits of the superpower in successfully concluding interventions with durable peace. The misadventures further demonstrate the contemporary nature of unilateral interventions as being asynchronous. Lack of interest on part of the US in strict enforcement of international legislation may account for the fact that reforms to the UN Charter system have not materialized despite popular demand of the majority of member states. The five case studies of Westra's prudential restraint model are discussed below.

i. US intervention in the Caribbean, 1953-61

Interventions by the US in the Caribbean include the toppling of Jacobo Arbenz's elected government in Guatemala, an armed intervention to check increasing communist influence in the Dominion Republic, and

¹² J. Westra, *International Law and the Use of Armed Force: The UN Charter and the major powers* (London and New York: Routledge 2007), i.

unsuccessful bids for the removal of Fidel Castro from the Cuban government.

In Guatemala, the US decided to intervene to change the regime but preferred to act through covert means. Even though a military intervention had been planned, it was delayed with the realization that the "Latin American states would perceive the United States as an aggressor and would respond with resistance to it."¹³ The Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA's) covert operation code named 'Operation PBSUCCESS' succeeded in toppling the democratically elected government of President Árbenz and installing a military dictator instead.

The Bay of Pigs invasion, sponsored by the CIA, was intended to overthrow the Communist government of Fidel Castro. Operating from Guatemala, Paramilitary Brigade 2506 landed by boat on Cuban soil on 17th April 1961. Eight B-26 bombers attacked Cuban airfields. The 1,400 strong invading force was defeated within three days by the Cuban armed forces. The covert intervention provided the Soviets with an excuse to deploy nuclear-armed missiles in Cuba, which led to the Cuban missile crisis the details of which are well known.

In the Dominican Republic, increasing Communist influence worried the Americans. Westra reports on the strength of Gall (1963), that in January 1961, the Kennedy government approved a plan for a covert intervention to assassinate Trujillo, but delayed the operation for fear of an adverse reaction from other states "if the US involvement was discovered."¹⁴ Referring the matter to the Organization of African States (OAS) was considered not merely useless but a handicap.¹⁵ The US intervened militarily on April 28 and occupied the Republic with 42,000 soldiers on September 3, 1965. In doing so, it acted without Security Council/OAS authorization for intervention. Westra comments :

In each of these cases, US policymakers delayed planned military operation to seek OAS authorization under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, and when OAS authorization appeared unlikely, they decided to act covertly and deny US involvement.¹⁶

In most cases, when covert means failed, use of brute force was resorted to, as in the case of the Dominican Republic.

ii. Anglo-French Intervention in Egypt, 1956

Gamal Abdel Nasser's assertions of autonomy over the Suez Canal, his support of Algerian rebels and Egypt's ties with the USSR worried

¹³ Ibid. 64.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.80.

¹⁶ Ibid. 81.

Britain. When Nasser nationalized the Canal on July 27, 1956, Britain and France planned a military intervention. The campaign was, however, delayed in its implementation due to apprehensions that Britain and France would be regarded as aggressors by Asian and African states. They tried to obtain a favourable resolution from the Security Council but failed. They used Israel's invasion of Egypt as a ruse and invaded Egypt, but the delay made the invasion ineffective. They could not remove Nasser from the office of the president and the influence of the two major powers suffered adversely in the region.

iii. Soviet Intervention in Hungary, 1956

The Soviet intervention in Hungary was undertaken from October 24, 1956 onwards to suppress Hungarian protesters and overthrow the government of Imre Nagy. Fearing resistance from other states, the Soviets refrained from deploying forces from other states in Hungary, until Hungary formally requested assistance from the USSR. The Soviets later concluded that, "...their failure to exercise sufficient restraint had prompted non-aligned states to downgrade their perceptions of Soviet interventions."¹⁷ The impression formed of the Soviet Union as a status quo power stood in sharp contrast with its overall image in handling such uprisings within the Union promptly and sternly.

iv. US-British Intervention in Iraq, 1990-98

Westra cites, in support of his thesis that, the US and Britain in their efforts to remove Saddam in the post-Kuwaiti-liberation years, "delayed and/or cancelled several military operations for lack of a sufficient legal pretext"¹⁸ Westra considers that, as a result, the Shiite and Kurdish rebels lost faith in the Allies and did not take up arms against Saddam when a major air campaign was started for this purpose in 1998.

v. US-British Intervention in Iraq 1999-2003

On September 11, 2001, Al-Qaeda attacked the twin towers in New York. Westra observes that the American and British policymakers were now confident that the incident, coupled with the WMD threat, provided "sufficient legal basis for direct military intervention."¹⁹ The UN Security Council hesitated in allowing an invasion of Iraq, which finally came about in 2003 without a UN mandate. By this time, the US enjoyed the status of being the world's sole superpower. Westra introduces the invasion as a 'hard case' in a discussion of the salience of the UN Charter system.

¹⁷ Ibid.103.

¹⁸ Ibid. 111.

¹⁹ Ibid. 131.

Westra documented these five cases in support of his construct that major powers exercise 'prudential restraint' so as to reduce the likelihood of resistance from the threatened states. The strategy involves altering the manner and timing of their military actions depending upon the strength of legal arguments available at that time to justify those actions as consistent with the UN Charter.

World-Leadership Model

Prolonged peace cycles provide an opportunity to divert much-needed funds to, and focus energies on, the social and economic development of the LDCs. It also gives impetus to the process of formulation of new legislation on humanitarian issues, at times hampered by adverse external relations, sensitized religious disharmony, hyped ideological differences, and division within UN agencies. The cause is frequently ignored during periods of war and heightened tension. During the Cold War era, characterized by the rivalry of the two opposing ideologies of Capitalism and Communism, the US was generally accepted as the leader in the Western world. The USSR could not keep up with the US in heavy spending on space-based and other sophisticated defence systems. Colossal mismanagement of industrial and agricultural resources, coupled with economic inefficiency, forced the USSR to capitulate, and the Union crumbled in 1989. Optimists swiftly predicted a peace cycle and announced "the end of the history" and the arrival of the "springtime of nations."

However, such hopes were short lived and the typical product of the post-1990 "peace cycle" turned out to be frequent interventions under UN mandate as well as without it. The funding of development programmes in the LDCs has been somewhat irregular in this era. At times, UN aid workers were unable to reach famine-stricken areas due to internal strife. The US commitment to humanitarian relief around the world was showing signs of stress. A general lack of serious interest in UN affairs was particularly noticeable during Kofi Annan's term as Secretary General. A systematic under-commitment around the world on part of the world leader is attributable to too much consumption, not enough savings, and a slowdown in the economy. Trade wars and a cultural invasion from the G-7 states are discouraging LDCs from reciprocating cooperation with donor nations in seeking and absorbing much-needed knowledge of development strategies and cutting-edge civilian technologies. The level of technical cooperation between the Global North and South remains insignificant.

Within the UN, the ECOSOC serves as the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to the United Nations General Assembly. ECOSOC facilitates international cooperation on standard making and

problem-solving, in everything from the environment to cultural issues and from food to meteorology. Human rights and development constitute the two largest areas of interest. Fourteen specialized agencies including but not limited to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) play primary roles in operational activities devoted to economic and social advancement. ECOSOC is also the forum that provides a platform to G-7 nations to compete for the status of world leader in pursuit of a benign image, in contrast with the role of a classic hegemon or a major power pursuing similar policies while exercising “prudential restraint.”

Overt or covert aggression creates more problems than it solves and pushes subject nations decades behind others on the development ladder. Some of these nations lie on the borderline of perpetual failure while others have remained stagnated at the take-off point for decades. By taking an interest in core social and economic problems of the LDCs, leading nations can provide technical assistance for infrastructure development and much-needed training, essential for introducing new technologies. Knowledge and finance is required urgently in the Third World to improve living standards, the state of human rights, and the status of women. Basic infrastructure and law enforcement is required to make narcotic drugs control and crime prevention effective. Environmental conditions are deteriorating and forests are being destroyed in most parts of the world including the under-developed world. A reversal of negative trends requires close cooperation between the leading nations and the LDCs.

Ironically, political considerations override developmental concerns at times. Noam Chomsky and Andre Vltchek, in their 2013 book, ‘On Western Terrorism: From Hiroshima to Drone Warfare’ observe that the US administration had been intervening for years to prevent American corporations from entering Cuba, “because America has to punish Cuba for what Washington called its “successful defiance” of US policy, going back 150 years to the Monroe doctrine of 1823.”²⁰ The US has started to relent on its policy viz-à-viz Cuba lately but the notion of American exceptionalism and the pre-supposition of impunity were both challenged as a consequence of intervention without a UN mandate, and is still hurting its image as a world leader. Noam Chomsky observes that,

The United States is self-immunized from any prosecution. When they joined the World Court in 1946, the U.S. basically initiated the modern International Court of Justice, which it joined but with the reservation that the U.S. cannot be tried on any international treaty – meaning the UN

²⁰ N. Chomski and A. Vltchek, *On Western Terrorism: from Hiroshima to Drone Warfare* (London: PlutoPress 2013). 114.

Charter, the Charter of the Organization of the American States, the Geneva Conventions.²¹

Would Europe overtake the US as the world leader? Joseph S. Nye Jr. in his 2015 book, 'Is the American Century Over?' compares American power with that of Europe as an entity. The comparison shows that Europe is the largest economy in the world, the total GDP of the European Union being slightly larger than that of the United States; Europe's population (500 million) is considerably larger than America's (310 million); and America's per capita income is higher than that of the EU. Nye concludes that, "in terms of human capital, technology, and exports, Europe is very much an economic peer competitor for the United States." He observes that Europe spends less than half of what America appropriates to defence; Britain and France possess nuclear arsenals, but have only "a limited capacity for overseas intervention in Africa and the Middle East." He also raises the key question as to whether the EU will act as an entity on international issues "with different nationalisms, political cultures, and foreign policies", He concludes that, "Europe's power conversion capability – or what Francis Fukuyama has called the discount rate between resources and outcomes – is limited, and it varies with different issues. On questions of trade and influence within the World Trade Organization, Europe is the equal of the United States and able to balance American power."²²

Howard J. Wiarda, in his 2011 book, 'American Foreign Policy in Regions of Conflict: A Global Perspective' notices a 'Continental Drift' that has shifted the focus of US politics and strategy from Europe to Asia, 'where the money is.' Asia, in addition to being more populous houses more nuclear powers than Europe. Post-1990 Russia, having "shrunk drastically in size, population, and internal coherence... is no longer a threat to [US] but it is to its smaller neighbors... Russia is a worry, but it is not a danger."²³

The foregoing views suggest that, while the US is granted the status of a superpower in military terms, grudgingly by some, in other respects its power to intervene gets more and more limited due to internal factors. Andrew J. Bacevich in his 2008 publication, 'The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism' describes the central paradox:

... as events have made plain, the United States is ill-prepared to wage a global war of no exits and no deadlines. The sole superpower lacks the resources – economic, political and military – to support a large-scale, protracted conflict without, at the very least, inflicting severe economic

²¹ *ibid.*

²² J. Joseph Nye, *Is the American Century Over?* (Cambridge: PolityPress, 2015), 15.

²³ H. Wiarda, *American Foreign Policy in Regions of Conflict: A Global Perspective* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 180.

and political damage on itself. American power has limits and is inadequate to the ambitions to which hubris and sanctimony have given rise.... While the defense of American freedom seems to demand that U.S. troops fight in places like Afghanistan and Iraq, the exercise of that freedom at home undermines the nation's capacity to fight.²⁴

Bacevich hints at the root of the American dilemma, saying that the United States has “embarked on a disastrous career of empire building and military adventurism that is bankrupting and corrupting the country, all the while making it less secure.” He traces the United States' quest for Pax Americana to expanding notions of freedom and the good life, which over the decades have stimulated growing appetites.²⁵

Humanitarian Intervention

Humanitarian intervention is rapidly gaining its rightful priority and it provides a lens to see the behaviour of world nations towards people deprived of their human rights in a new light. James Pattison, in his 2010 book, ‘Humanitarian Intervention and the Responsibility to Protect’ raises two central questions in dealing with the right and the responsibility toward humanitarian intervention, “Who has the right to intervene?” and “Who has the duty to intervene?” Pattison suggests that, (a) “any agent that has an adequate degree of legitimacy has the right to intervene” and (b) “the duty to intervene should fall on the most legitimate intervener which, in most cases, will be the most effective intervener.” Pattison concludes that, “out of the currently existing agents of intervention (NATO states, the UN, regional organizations, and private military companies)... no, currently existing agent is fully legitimate.”²⁶

International Humanitarian Law is still evolving, largely through the combined efforts of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Institute of Humanitarian Law. There is wide-ranging support for positive action on this issue. Pattison informs,

Most of the proposals for reform of international law suggest doing this by codifying certain criteria for humanitarian intervention in international law. These criteria usually constitute some form of the traditional Just War principles of *Jus ad Bellum* (i.e. just cause,

²⁴ A. Bacevich, *The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism*, (NY: Metropolitan Books, 2008), Introduction: War Without Exits. 11. <https://www.amazon.com/Limits-Power-American-Exceptionalism-Project/dp/0805090169>

²⁵ Andrew Bacevich, “U.S. Defense Policy – The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism” *Foreign Affairs (Capsule Review)*, November/December 2008.

²⁶ J. Pattison, *Humanitarian Intervention and the Responsibility to Protect* (Oxford University Press 2010), 181.

right intention, legitimate authority, last resort, proportionality, formal declaration of war, and reasonable prospects of success).²⁷

Comparison of the Three Models

Distinctly, all three paradigms are mutually exclusive and theoretically speaking, only one of these is applicable at any given time. While the US possesses the status of a superpower, its power of classic military intervention has been moderated by the demands for acting out the role of the world leader and the sponsor of the principle of sovereign integrity of nation states. By comparison, Russia showed no inhibition in intervening militarily in Ukraine in 2014. The interactive mix of the two – the character and the role demanded – produces a curious paradox for Americans but somehow spares Russians. The collective trade and security patterns that have emerged in the post-1990 era, in which the US supposedly plays the role of world leader, tend to limit the capacity of the sole superpower to exercise its unrestrained might, as it did in the pre-1990 era in South America.

Classic hegemony being not very practical any more and covert intervention being fraught with the risk of self-contradiction, prudence demands that the US should work towards consensual and cooperative world politics rather than a coercive world order. The convergence of interests had prompted Americans in the 1950s to help rebuild war-ravaged European economies through the Marshall Plan. It remains a workable model with respect to the LDCs in the 21st century.

The broad generalizations presented in the foregoing discussion can be organized under three paradigms and plotted against their most active eras. The country or countries that practiced a particular model depending upon how some of these great powers enacted one or the other of the parent philosophies or pursued a normative, legislative or collaborative approach can also be shown. It is found that varying degrees of situational freedom available to a particular great power influenced the course of a line of action. The three competing models may be compared graphically as under:

²⁷ Ibid. 220.

Comparison of Competing Models of Interventionist Power

Model	Social/ Political Theories	Era	Examples	Approach	Pre- conditions	Likely Outco me
Hegemony (Classic)	Realism/ Neo-realism/ Hegemonic Peace Trade/ Industrial Peace	18 th and 19 th Centuries 1945 till date	Britain US	Coercion, economic power, military muscle, domination, cultural invasion, exploitation and in- equality.	Financial and Military Prepondera nce, lead in Technology	Bush fires/ Wars of Interve -ntion Overla pping War/ Peace State
Prudential Restraint	Expediency, Transactional Theories	1945 till date	US	Intervention through Security Council/ Regional Bodies or through covert means	Diplomatic/ Managerial Efficiency	Interm i-tent War/ Peace State
Economic & Social Cooperatio n	Idealism/ Neo-Idealism Democratic Peace, Rational Choice	Contem- porary	G-7	Aid, develop- mentthrough ECOSOC/ Regional Bodies/ NGOs equity,cultura invasion,	Aid, Donations, Direct Financing of Research and Industry, Diplomatic and Professional Efficiency	Long Cycle of Peace, Social and Econo m-ic Develo p- ment, Higher Stand ard of Life

Analysis

The history of the rise and decline of clear instances of hegemony highlight various aspects of a hegemonic order such as Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy; Political Responsiveness and Accountability; Legitimacy i.e. Legal Rights and Privileges, Equity, Humanitarian Law; and Ethics i.e. Morality, and Integrity. A dispassionate comparison of the two classic examples of hegemony – Pax Britannica and Pax Americana – brings out important lessons. Britain had done well in the nineteenth century in retaining world leadership based on its advantage in

mechanical technologies, steam- propelled ships, railways, etc. However, the institutional frameworks that provide a linkage between higher education and industrial production were much superior in the US and Germany and this was eventually the deciding factor.

The British industrial model was one of liberal Capitalism, and that of Germany was of state interventionist organized Capitalism. The neo-realist US tradition, which owed its functional success to superior managerial efficiency in the handling of capital, had clear advantages over both. The origin of organizational sophistication of managerial hierarchies in the US industry gave birth to mammoth multinational corporations in the twentieth century. The same MNCs breed US inaction on environmental issues and kill the collective efforts of the WTO to stop the US and China from burning coal. This further reduces the prospects of US acting out the world leader role in the decades to come, when pollution would be the prime concern at the international level. A similar self-serving approach in security matters precludes a replay of the 1991 coalition spirit demonstrated during the liberation of Kuwait. Contributors of military forces are not rallying around the US anymore to provide “boots on the ground troops” to fight the Islamic State.

The operation of classic hegemony being untenable, the US should adjust its policy to exercise ‘Prudential Restraint,’ avoid cloak and dagger covert intrigue, and make greater use of its resources towards putting the ‘Economic Development’ model to work. The model is viable and sustainable and has the capacity to serve US interests as well as those of its economic partners, follower states, and recipients of aid/donations in a win-win manner. Just to cite an example, if the US had not withdrawn from ongoing development programmes in Afghanistan, wherein it was competing favourably with the USSR until the mid-1950s, it is certainly believed that the USSR would not have had a free hand in propagating Communism in that country. The free hand it gained due to US disengagement led eventually to military intervention; continued engagement could have avoided the costly war that ensued.

Conclusion

The US interventions are too frequent to allow a long cycle of peace. These interventions are robbing the Third World of the chance to reap the benefits of devolution of technological knowledge in the post-1990 era. This devolution has resulted from the diffusion of space and military technologies to the civilian sectors, including the food and health sectors. The UN Charter specifically provides that intervention may proceed under a regional organization’s mandate only when approved by the UNSC. The Charter leaves no room for subversive strategies.

A comparison of competing models of interventionist power brings out the desirability of the International Development Model that must be put to work through international institutions. Ariel Ilan Roth, in his 2010 book, 'Leadership in International Relations' notes that "Liberal theorists such as Robert Keohane, Stephen Krasner, John Ikenberry, and Daniel Deudney have all long argued that neo-realism undervalues the role that international institutions can play in mitigating the most deleterious aspects of international anarchy".²⁸

The International Development Model reduces the vulnerabilities of LDCs to interventions, either real or perceived. This model correspondingly increases the prospects of durable peace by engaging them, (LDCs) in an interactive development process, whose benefits are lucrative enough for the developing nations to settle for a less resistive posture. As an evolving paradigm, international cooperation for economic and social development offers better and safer prospects to humanity.

The challenges posed by the shift from ideological to inter-civilizational rivalry are easy to set in motion but difficult to overcome, even by the major powers that may have triggered them. The prospects of a durable peace would improve if the US depends less on unilateral interventions, secrecy and intrigue, and more on building collective peace through international institutions. Regime change in the case of a democratically elected government is inconsistent with the UN Charter and must be given up as a strategy. Transparency is critical to highly functional governments and the US administration must move in that direction. Human rights concerns should take the centre stage. Going through the UN should be the norm of international politics and the UN must serve, heeding Kofi Annan's advice, not the member states but the people who live in them.

Unilateral intervention, intrigue, and covert operations are laying to waste the goodwill capital generated by cooperative efforts aimed at development and education, and tarnishing the image of the US as the world leader. It also means throwing away the tremendous advantage the US had over either its predecessor colonial powers or the ideological rivals. American Capitalism was fortunate in being immune from church, kingship, and aristocracy, which had impeded its British predecessor. The American political system is much stronger than that of Britain, with its two non-programmatic parties. Unfortunately, it backs military interventions.

The US military's combat power resides in technological innovation and a demonstrated superiority in waging industrial war. All these factors make the US power much more formidable than the nineteenth century British naval supremacy or the hegemony it helped

²⁸ A. Roth, *Leadership in International Relations: The Balance of Power and the Origins of World War II*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 146.

establish. The US leadership, working through a state of compromise, would suit their European cousins, Japan and Third World nations, who stand to benefit from civilian spin-offs of the US military and civil technologies or from direct financial aid. Irritants in the form of unilateral interventions, intrigue, and covert operations preclude the success of peace cycles that have been non-existent or extremely short. America may exercise the option to act out “the champion of rights” causes and lofty values that represent what the US was originally meant to be. US foreign policy needs to change the bus, not just shift the gears!

