Security Council, but through regular consultation of the NATO Allies, with occasional joint action, as the situation changed. The American nuclear deterrent was the ultimate sanction behind the policy. Of course, the American nuclear arsenal was maintained by the United States unilaterally. But arms control treaties, both bilateral and multilateral, clarified and stabilized the terms of nuclear deterrence. They also convinced Moscow that the Western array of power was not a threat to the Soviet Union, but part of a defensive Western deployment to prohibit further expansion of the Soviet empire. In dealing with the attack on South Korea, the United Nations used its machinery and symbolism to show that Western policy was limited to containing Soviet expansion, and therefore did not threaten the existence of the Soviet state. The blue helmets as well as U.N. flags and brassards in Korea were not legally necessary, but they were politically helpful.

Under the Charter, actions of collective self-defense like the Korean War and the war in the Persian Gulf are as legal and legitimate as "enforcement actions" by the Security Council. The history of forcible peacekeeping since 1945 demonstrates that enforcement actions by the Security Council under Article 43 are beyond its capacities in dealing with substantial breaches of peace. Consequently, and for a long time to come, the enforcement of Article 2 (4) as a legal norm will continue to be the jurisdiction of NATO or similar ad hoc instrumentalities of collective self-defense, like the coalitions that fought the Korean and Persian Gulf wars.

Thus, by trial and error, the states seem to be groping toward a pragmatic compromise over the rigidity of Article 43 of the Charter. In cases of substantial aggression, the major powers should rely for peace enforcement primarily on arrangements of collective self-defense like those of NATO. This acknowledges that the peace enforcement provisions of the U.N. Charter endow the Security Council with responsibilities and powers incompatible (as Kant had predicted) with the nature of the state system and with prevailing ideas about the law of nations. People cling stubbornly to the principles of national sovereignty and patriotism. Despite the increasing pressures of worldwide economic and cultural integration, and the comparable pressures of changing military technology, they resist or deny the growth of supranational super states, whether they are called the USSR or the United Nations.

Peace and the Pursuit of Power

by Marc Trachtenberg

The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848. By Paul W. Schroeder. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994. 894 pp. $49.95.)

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The study of international politics has a moral dimension. Its goal is not simply "scientific": it is concerned not just with understanding how the international system works. A more fundamental goal is prescriptive in nature. How, in general terms, is foreign policy to be conducted? What, in particular, can be said about what makes for a stable international system? What, broadly speaking, are the sorts of policies that lead to a more peaceful world?

There is one great argument that dominates this discussion. On the one hand, there are those who say that a world in which states are concerned above all with their own power, or even mainly with their own security, is bound to be unstable. A policy based primarily on power political considerations may serve the immediate interests of the state that pursues it, but the claim is that from the standpoint of the system as a whole, such policies are bound to be destabilizing. A truly peaceful system cannot take shape in a world where governments pursue policies of that sort. It is only when international society is *organized*—when a different sort of system, based on self-restraint, on shared principles, on something like the rule of law, comes into being—that peace can be put on a firm basis.

This is, in fact, the common-sense view. If international anarchy leads to war, the obvious solution is to organize something different, to limit the degree to which states pursue their own parochial interests, to try to bring about a system based on shared rules and common norms.

But there is an opposing view, and its importance derives from its counterintuitive nature—that is, from the fact that it takes issue with an approach that is on the surface so natural and so obvious. This is the "realist" view. This label covers a whole family of arguments, some of them purely descriptive in character—arguments, for example, about the central role of power in international affairs. But the realist tradition is concerned with more than just puncturing illusions and pointing out how things in practice really work—indeed, how they have to work. Instead, the fundamental aim once again is normative: the ultimate goal is to affect the way states, and in particular one's own state, actually behave in the real world.

At the heart of the realist tradition is an interpretation of why things go wrong, and thus it involves claims about how international politics should work and about what sorts of policies should be pursued. The argument here is that power politics is not in itself the problem; that power considerations indeed should lie at the heart of policy; that things go wrong when these crucial factors are ignored or not given the weight they deserve. The argument is partly negative in nature, a critique of an excessively moralistic or legalistic approach to international politics. (The Wilsonian experience is the prime, but by no means the only, case in point here.) Just as a certain skepticism about the value of state intervention—that is, the suspicion that whatever its theoretical merit, intervention is in practice likely to do more harm than good—was one of the great taproots of classical economic liberalism, so a certain pessimism about the ability of human artifice to change things for the better was always part of the realist tradition in international politics. The deep structure of the system is resistant to fundamental change, so the attempt to alter it might well backfire.

It is better to adjust to its fundamental structure, to work within its constraints, to attune one's own policy to those central realities—not to try for too much, because the odds are that one's efforts will have a negative return. Instead of imposing solutions based on principle, it is better to allow the forces at play to reach their own natural equilibrium.

But there were also positive arguments to be made, and these in fact are the most interesting part of the realist tradition. Policies based largely on power considerations, the argument runs, are not the problem, but rather in important ways a major source of stability. From a power political point of view, it makes sense, for example, for a state to have as many friends and as few enemies as possible. In a Europe of five great powers, the goal, Bismarck thought, was to be one of three. But that implies that it is even better to be one of four, since one would be less vulnerable to an ally's threat to defect; and by the same token, it would be best of all to be one of five. But this logic applied to every state in the system. A concern with relative power should therefore lead each of those states, other things being equal, to improve their relations with each other and to avoid actions which would put them at odds with the other major powers. To the degree that it shaped state behavior, this logic therefore should lead to a more peaceful system all around. The problem was thus the intrusion of some exogenous factor, which poisoned relations between states and prevented that logic from shaping policy—a lust for territory, for example, or an ideological interest of some sort.

Many other arguments could be made pointing in the same direction— that is, the stabilizing character of policies in which power considerations loom large—and of course every one of these arguments could be met with coun- terarguments. But how could all of this be brought into focus, so that arguments and counterarguments could be weighed against each other in some meaningful way? If one could find some method for doing that, it was possible that important, practical conclusions could emerge from the process of thinking about these problems.

In recent years, it has become increasingly clear that one major way to bring this about is to approach the fundamental issues in specific historical contexts. One of the great values of historical analysis, or at least of the right kind of analysis, is that it provides a method for weighing the validity of these various arguments in the light of empirical evidence. Historical reality, in other words, can act as a control on a purely abstract process of analysis. Historical arguments, of course, always had a certain place in discussions of foreign policy. But those arguments were often rather flat and superficial—mere stereotypes trotted out to illustrate a point the author was trying to make. What was new here was the idea that serious historical work based on extensive research could make a real contribution.

Paul Schroeder is one of the handful of historians who have played a key role in this area. Schroeder has long been deeply concerned with the central problems of international politics. His new book, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848*, is not just a narrative history. The whole argument of the book is built around an answer to certain basic questions of

a theoretical nature. Schroeder does not leave the reader in any doubt as to where he stands. His fundamental thesis is that a system in which power considerations are dominant is inherently unstable. The "balance-of-power" system of the late eighteenth century, based on the idea that a state had to maintain and if possible increase its relative power, was not a "solution to the problem of war," but rather for Schroeder "a major source of the problem" (p. 6). "Seeking durable peace through a balance of power was futile," he writes, the promise of security that balance-of-power policies offered was "illusory" (p. 10). The story of international politics in this and other periods, he says, "refutes the notion that balancing practices and techniques promote equilibrium, limit conflict, and preserve the independence of essential actors, *or can do so*" (p. 48; emphasis added). Only a fundamentally different kind of system, he argues, based more on law than on power, more on restraint and consensus than on narrow national interest, can provide the basis for a lasting peace. The story of how such a system came into being, how the leaders of Europe came to terms, during the Napoleonic wars, with the bankruptcy of the old eighteenth-century system and constructed a radically new framework for the conduct of international affairs at the Congress of Vienna, 1814–15, is in fact the central theme of the book.

> **Schroeder holds that a "balance-of-power" system is inherently unstable.**

Schroeder has done an enormous amount of work; one is amazed by all the books and articles he has read, and by the great mass of information he was able to pull together. Books based on this kind of scholarship do not appear very often. But do his conclusions about power politics—about how it was, and is, inherently destabilizing—really follow from the evidence and analysis presented in the book? Does he really show that the balance-of-power system was to blame for the wars and instability of the late eighteenth century?

It is important, first of all, to pin down exactly what these claims mean. To say that the system was the root cause of the problem is to imply that the different states involved had little choice but to act the way they did, and Schroeder is quite explicit in arguing along these lines. His problem, he says, is to explain why statesmen "genuinely desirous of peace and stability" failed "so strikingly" to achieve those goals at the time (p. 5). And his answer is that they were locked into a system that virtually forced them, regardless of their intent, to pursue aggressive and expansionist policies: they were "trapped" by the system and had no way of escaping it until a new regime was constructed (p. 10).

But these arguments are simply not persuasive. Schroeder does show a major Austrian statesman talking as though his country really were trapped, saying that Austria would be happy to keep the status quo "if all the other powers were willing to do likewise" (p. 48). If this were the general attitude and one still had war, one could make the argument that the system as such, rather than the particular policies pursued by the countries involved, was to blame. But this is not the picture that emerges from Schroeder's account. One

does not find a Europe full of statesmen who would have been quite happy to maintain the status quo and pursue aggressive policies reluctantly, simply in order to safeguard their political positions vis-à-vis the other powers. Indeed, Schroeder himself refers specifically to Russia, Prussia, and even to Austria as "expansionist, aggressive" states (p. 50).

It was the specific policies that were to blame, not the "system," because those policies were never simply determined by the "system." This comes out quite clearly in Schroeder's detailed historical discussion, and yet he can never quite bring himself to accept this simple conclusion. Thus, he shows that the wars after 1802 were due essentially to Napoleon's aggressiveness—to "nothing more than this, nothing deeper in the structure of European international politics" (p. 230). "All the other great powers," he writes, had in fact "come to terms with French hegemony" (p. 229). The Austrians sought to appease Bonaparte (p. 267). Even the British accepted "French hegemony in all of Western Europe" (p. 243). But in spite of this, and right after denying that there was anything in the basic structure of the international system to explain the Napoleonic wars, he goes on to assert that "the tenacious sway of the competitive politics of balance of power, the inability of Europe until 1814–15 to conceive and practise anything better than eighteenth-century schemes of peace" was the real cause of international instability at this time (p. 230).

And this was a problem, he says, that might well have continued indefinitely were it not for a truly revolutionary development in the art of statecraft that took place at the end of the Napoleonic era. Europe, around 1812, was "lost." "Out of the collision between the amoral, unrestrained international politics of the eighteenth century and the ideologically charged, pseudo-moral international politics of the French Revolution," he argues, "had emerged a wholly lawless Napoleonic politics, not even international but colonial-imperialist in essence." The European state system was being destroyed and "nothing durable" was being "put in its place. No one knew how to stop this process, or escape it, or put it right" (p. 441).

But almost miraculously, a solution was found, and a new system was brought into being at the Congress of Vienna. This was a system built on a "sense of inherent limits, acceptance of mutual rules and restraints, common responsibility to certain standards of conduct, and loyalty to something beyond the aims of one's own state." It was this that "distinguished early nineteenth-century politics from what had preceded and would follow it" (p. 802). It was this system that made a relatively stable, peaceful period possible after 1815. The Vienna system was not built, in Schroeder's view, essentially on a restored balance of power. It worked as well as it did because power politics was held in check by a sort of communitarian ethos, based on something like the rule of law. It was a system that rather successfully balanced "the needs of the international community" against the "claims of individual states," and that "reconciled great-power demands for influence and control with small-power requirements for independence" (p. 577).

Does Schroeder really prove that balance-of-power politics is inherently destructive? Are we to draw the lesson from his analysis that there is essentially

only one answer to the problem of international conflict, and that is to create a system rooted in a fundamentally different set of principles, one based on something like the rule of law? Schroeder, to my mind, is certainly not wrong in thinking that there has to be something more to international politics than the unconstrained pursuit of self-interest. Stability does depend, to a certain degree, on the acceptance of common rules and restraints, and indeed on "loyalty to something beyond the aims of one's own state" (p. 802). This is something that the greatest statesmen, people like Lord Salisbury, have always understood. But Schroeder takes the argument too far. Balance-of-power politics as such is supposedly discredited; the whole "realist" approach, in his view, is basically misguided. But those claims are just not convincing.

Take, for example, his argument about Poland. In his view, the eighteenth-century system—and to a certain extent the European system in general—needed "intermediary bodies" like Poland for stability (p. 77). It follows that the destruction of Polish independence was a source of instability. But was it? As far as the great powers were concerned, did the partitioning of Poland in the late eighteenth century really poison their relations with one another? Schroeder himself views the first partition, in 1772, as an example of "international co-operation," a way for the great powers to settle important issues, a policy rooted in their "shared interest in the maintenance of general peace" (pp. 18–19).

Or consider what he says about the late eighteenth-century notion that Austria and Prussia could form an "alliance solid enough to prevent the rest of Europe from dominating them." Schroeder objects to the very idea of such a policy: "The concept of *Mitteleuropa*, of achieving German and European security by uniting Germany and putting it in control of all of Central and much of Eastern Europe, was as wrong and dangerous an idea at this time as it would be later" (p. 110). There is no real argument here showing that a unified Central Europe would have been a source of instability; indeed, what this passage suggests is that international stability is not the only thing Schroeder is concerned with. It seems that something else is going on here: some ways of structuring the European system are to be ruled out, for reasons having little to do with how stable they are.

Or take one final example. Britain, Schroeder writes, pursued a policy of balancing between the continental powers: their "natural rivalries" could be manipulated, and Britain would be the balancer. But this policy, he says, was a "potential danger to peace," even when British goals "were moderate, as they were most of the time" (p. 575). But why should such a policy threaten European stability? This is not really explained at this point, and at other points Schroeder shows this sort of policy having a stabilizing effect. Britain's ability to side with Austria in the 1830s, for example, as a counterweight to Russia—a typical balance-of-power strategy—was, in Schroeder's account, one of the basic sources of Russian moderation (p. 762). If British goals were truly moderate, such a policy would also serve to restrain Austria and thus tend to stabilize the status quo. Why then the presumption that such policies are inherently destabilizing?

And, more generally, it comes across clearly enough in Schroeder's account that a stable equilibrium in early nineteenth-century Europe depended

on a certain balance of power, both in Europe in general (in the sense of a bloc strong enough and united enough to keep France from posing a threat) and also within the anti-French coalition (to put some limit on Russian power). The style is certainly more moderate than it was in the late eighteenth century, and there was a stronger sense that the interests of Europe as a whole had to be taken into account. But the story Schroeder tells does not mean that the "realists" are wrong on fundamentals. If anything, it shows that balance-of-power politics is not necessarily destructive. If practiced with moderation—that is, with due regard for the interest of the system as a whole—it can be one of the central elements of a stable international order.

Who Won the Cold War—and Why It Matters
by Bruce D. Berkowitz

The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War. By Raymond L. Garthoff. (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1994. 834 pp. $44.95, cloth; $19.95, paper.)

Victory: The Reagan Administration's Secret Strategy that Hastened the Collapse of the Soviet Union. By Peter Schweizer. (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1994. 284 pp. $22.00.)

We All Lost the Cold War. By Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994. 552 pp. $35.00.)

National Security Directives of the Reagan and Bush Administrations: The Declassified History of U.S. Political and Military Policy, 1981–1991. Edited by Christopher Simpson. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995. 1032 pp. $119.95.)

Scholars, analysts, and politicians care deeply about how and why the cold war ended—not because of its innate historical interest, but because of its profound implications for current American policy. Did the Soviet empire collapse in part because of the Reagan administration's policies, thereby validating a "tough" conservative approach to foreign policy? Or did it collapse in spite of Ronald Reagan's policies, for reasons that justify the dovish cold war posture defined by negotiation, coexistence, and détente?

      As one might expect, the interpreters tend to divide into two camps depending on their own prior status as hawk or dove. What is more surprising, however, is that six years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the cold war doves have been doing the more credible job of presenting their case—surprising because, according to most estimates, the West *won* the cold war. After all, the

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