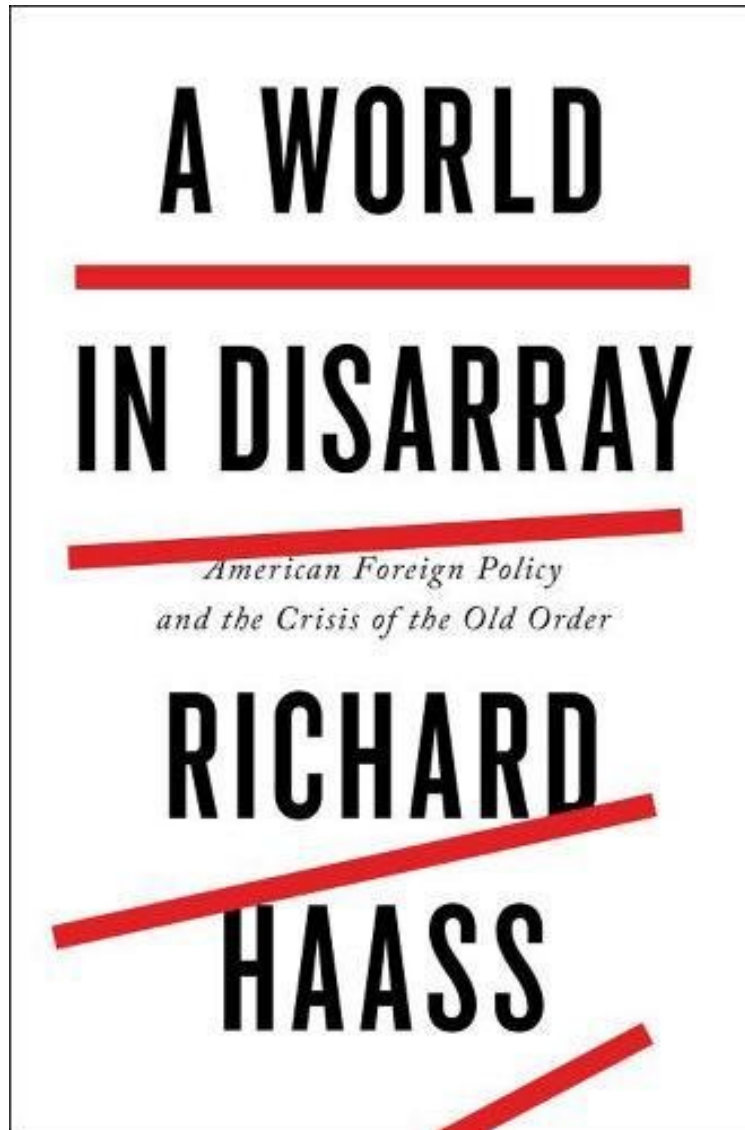


A World in Disarray: American Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Old Order

Richard Haass

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Richard Haass : A World in Disarray: American Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Old Order before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A World in Disarray: American Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Old Order:

40 of 41 people found the following review helpful. A prescription for our foreign policy from America's establishment

By Mal Warwick

It would be difficult to identify anyone other than Henry Kissinger who represents the tradition of America's bipartisan foreign policy more fully than Richard A. Haass. Haass is the longtime president of the Council on Foreign Relations, which comes as close as any institution to sitting at the center of gravity for the internationalist wing of the Eastern establishment. For decades before he began at the Council, he cycled in and out of senior policy planning and diplomatic posts in government and a series of positions in academia and other establishment thinktanks. If you want to get a handle on the conventional wisdom that emanates from that elite group of scholars and officials, read Haass latest book, *A World in Disarray: American Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Old Order*. The three phases of international relations

Haass's abbreviated survey of international relations in the modern world divides history into three phases. The first began with the Treaty of Westphalia in the mid-17th century that ended Europe's Thirty Years War and established the primacy of the sovereign state. That phase lasted through the end of World War II, which upended world affairs in profound ways. The second phase lasted from 1945 until the end of the Cold War in 1989. This was a period of superpower supremacy, the absence of large-scale conflict, and unsurpassed economic growth. We now live in the third phase, a troubled world in which centrifugal forces are gaining the upper hand. Haass argues that the past twenty-five years since the end of the Cold War constitute a break with the past . . . [S]omething very different is afoot in the world. He characterizes the current state of affairs as disarray. In his view, the word captures both where we are and where we are heading. This is not the multipolar world so many observers write about. It's a nonpolar world. Power is more distributed in more hands than at any time in history, Haass notes. The same holds for technology. In Haass view, the multiple uncertainties and dangers of today's world require that the United States be more assertive on the world stage. He argues for the stationing of military forces in and around areas that either China or Russia might claim or move against, something that translates into maintaining increased U.S. ground and air forces in Europe and increased air and naval forces in the Asia-Pacific. Other observers might see greater reliance of this sort on the U.S. military as a prescription for bankruptcy at home and dangerous conflict abroad.

A new approach to foreign policy

The essence of Haass thesis is that the concept of state sovereignty established by the Treaty of Westphalia is no longer adequate in a nonpolar world. Today's international landscape is no longer dominated either by the major powers or exclusively by nation states. Nonstate actors, including international and regional organizations, corporations, terrorist groups, some major cities, and numerous other entities all play roles in setting the direction of civilization today. Haass contends that the post-World War II order effectively World Order 1.0 provided only a degree of structure for the international system once the overlay and discipline of the Cold War order disappeared. Just as important, the world was not well positioned to deal with the diffusion of power that was to come. In this much more complex environment, U.S. foreign policy must be directed toward establishing a new concept in world affairs: sovereign obligation. Haass views this as the ideal operating principle in contemporary international affairs. Under sovereign obligation, every state would be expected not merely to tend to its domestic affairs but also to play a role in addressing the multiple global challenges that bedevil us today: nuclear proliferation, climate change, terrorism, restrictions on trade, threats to global health, the vulnerable state of international finance, and the abuse of cyberspace. (The author's laundry list does not include drug trafficking.) It's difficult not to see this prescription as wishful thinking. Another failing in Haass analysis is his failure to distinguish between global threats that are existential and those that aren't. Any dispassionate observer of climate change, nuclear proliferation, and the growing potential for pandemics would surely agree that any of these three challenges could be fateful for civilization if not for the human race. The other challenges in Haass list, while serious, do not rise to the same level. Global trade could constrict, terrorism increase, the international financial system seize up, and cybercrime and cyberwarfare proliferate, but it's highly unlikely that any of these events would end human civilization, much less lead the human race to extinction. What is to be done?

Haass makes clear his belief that yesterday's foreign policy is not adequate for a world in which not all foes are always foes and not all friends are always friendly. He advances a detailed set of recommendations, not just for U.S. foreign policy but for changes in domestic policy as well. His advice about foreign affairs is, as anyone might expect, highly nuanced. On domestic affairs, his approach is less so. It's hard to distinguish from traditional moderate Republican policies. For example, he advocates both decisive action to reduce the nation's debt and increasing the Pentagon's budget. To enable all this, he favors raising the retirement age, reducing Medicare and Medicaid, and eliminating tax deductions for home mortgage payments and charitable deductions. Wishful thinking again, given any reasonable expectation for Congressional action.

A nonpartisan analysis?

At the outset of *A World in Disarray*, Haass claims that his analysis will favor neither Republicans nor Democrats. It doesn't come across that way. It's true that he is pointed in his criticism of the decision to invade Iraq and of the conduct of the war that followed. But his discussion of President Barack Obama's foreign policy is savage. Haass reserves his most hard-edged criticism for Obama's decision to accelerate the drawdown of troops from Iraq, the conduct of the war in Afghanistan, the outspoken support for the Arab Spring, the intervention in Libya, and the decision not to attack Syria after Hafez el-Asaad crossed the red line by using chemical warfare on his citizens. This is not a nonpartisan analysis.

About the author

President of the Council on Foreign Relations since 2003, Richard A. Haass has also served as a senior advisor to President George H. W. Bush and to his son, President George W. Bush, as well as in a number of

other diplomatic and scholarly posts. *A World in Disarray* is his 12th book.⁴⁵ of 47 people found the following review helpful. Haass also prescribes substantive solutions for steps both governments and civil societies can take at coming up with better andBy Andy LaubIn a "World In Disarray" Dr. Haass gives a comprehensive and thoughtful overview of the old international world order and how we got where we are today. Additionally he offers an objective analysis, covering all the hot spot areas from Russia, the Middle East, China and nuclear nonproliferation. Haass also prescribes substantive solutions for steps both governments and civil societies can take at coming up with better and more feasible foreign policy decisions for a more complex as he refers to it "world order 2.0." A badly needed breath of fresh air for a new American foreign policy and a must read for global citizen.Andy Laub- Young Professionals in Foreign Policy, Director.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. World turmoilBy CustomerDetailed summary of the events,actions,foreign policies,and mistakes that paved the foundation for the current chaos in the world today.

"A valuable primer on foreign policy: a primer that concerned citizens of all political persuasionsnot to mention the president and his adviserscould benefit from reading." The New York TimesAn examination of a world increasingly defined by disorder and a United States unable to shape the world in its image, from the president of the Council on Foreign RelationsThings fall apart; the center cannot hold. The rules, policies, and institutions that have guided the world since World War II have largely run their course. Respect for sovereignty alone cannot uphold order in an age defined by global challenges from terrorism and the spread of nuclear weapons to climate change and cyberspace. Meanwhile, great power rivalry is returning. Weak states pose problems just as confounding as strong ones. The United States remains the worlds strongest country, but American foreign policy has at times made matters worse, both by what the U.S. has done and by what it has failed to do. The Middle East is in chaos, Asia is threatened by Chinas rise and a reckless North Korea, and Europe, for decades the worlds most stable region, is now anything but. As Richard Haass explains, the election of Donald Trump and the unexpected vote for Brexit signals that many in modern democracies reject important aspects of globalization, including borders open to trade and immigrants. In *A World in Disarray*, Haass argues for an updated global operating systemcall it world order 2.0that reflects the reality that power is widely distributed and that borders count for less. One critical element of this adjustment will be adopting a new approach to sovereignty, one that embraces its obligations and responsibilities as well as its rights and protections. Haass also details how the U.S. should act towards China and Russia, as well as in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. He suggests, too, what the country should do to address its dysfunctional politics, mounting debt, and the lack of agreement on the nature of its relationship with the world. *A World in Disarray* is a wise examination, one rich in history, of the current world, along with how we got here and what needs doing. Haass shows that the world cannot have stability or prosperity without the United States, but that the United States cannot be a force for global stability and prosperity without its politicians and citizens reaching a new understanding.

"A valuable primer on foreign policy: a primer that concerned citizens of all political persuasions not to mention the president and his advisers could benefit from reading."-Michiko Kakutani, The New York Times"A must-read for the new American president and all who are concerned bythe state of the world and the prospect of things getting worse. Richard Haasstakes the reader galloping through the last four centuries of historyto explain how we got to where we are, and then offers an insightful and strategically coherent approach to coping with and managing the challenges before us. Practical and provocative: a book that sets the policy table."Robert M. Gates "Haasss views demand the highest respect, because he understands that the foremost requirement for stability is that the great nations can deal with each other, and should use diplomacy, an art that recent British governments have almost abandoned in favour of soundbite broadcasts, and that in America threatens to be displaced by a tweetocracy. He understands the limits of power, and of the possible: terrorism must be contained, but cannot be eliminated. China and Russia must be granted respect on the world stage, but a willingness to resist their acts of aggression must be supported by credible western armed forces. America needs to change its Middle East policy, but cannot conceivably walk away from the region. If we had grounds to suppose that the new tenant of the White House was taking Haasss book to his bed with him, the rest of us might sleep a tad easier in ours." Sunday TimesThis is a thought-provoking book that suggests the new foreign policy 2.0 requires more global engagement. Huffington Post Richard Haasss *A World in Disarray* is an important primer on the chaotic landscape Trump will inherit."New Republic "In a world where power has become decentralized and respects no borders, we need an updated operating system, one that provides a new method for conducting diplomacy. In this wise and historically grounded book, Richard Haass shows what we need to do at home and in our foreign policy to make this work. It's a brilliant approach for a troubled world." Walter Isaacson "With bracing intellectual rigor and a sure feel for the realities of politics and of culture, Richard Haass offers us an invaluable window on a world, as he puts it, in disarray. A wise and engaging voice, Haass is always worth listening to--now more than ever." Jon Meacham "We live in an age when trends once thought irreversible -- globalization, unipolarity, even democracy -- have proven no longer to be. I know of no better guide through these upheavals and toward the new strategies they require than Richard Haass's*A World in Disarray*.It'sessential for anyone trying to

understand the new pivotal moment we all inhabit." John Lewis Gaddis

About the Author Dr. Richard Haass is president of the non-partisan Council on Foreign Relations. He served as the senior Middle East advisor to President George H.W. Bush and as Director of the Policy Planning Staff under Secretary of State Colin Powell. A recipient of the Presidential Citizens Medal, the State Department's Distinguished Honor Award, and the Tipperary International Peace Award, he is also the author or editor of twelve books on foreign policy and international relations. Dr. Haass lives in New York.

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1. From *War Through World War* It is tempting to begin this book with answers to the questions of what is wrong with the world, why, and what to do about it, if for no other reason than there is no shortage of material to consider. But it is better, and in fact necessary, to take a step back, first to understand how we arrived where we are and, second, to discern what about this world is genuinely new and different. The best place to begin is with the concept of world order. For many reasons, the concept, from its modern inception nearly four centuries ago to the present, is central to this book. Order is one of those terms that is used a great deal, but like a lot of popular terms, it is used differently by different people and can obscure as much as illuminate. It is best used and understood in a neutral, descriptive way, as a reflection of the nature of international relations at any moment. It is a measure of the world's condition. It includes and reflects arrangements that promote peace and prosperity and freedom as well as developments that do not. In short, order is not the same as orderly; to the contrary, the term order implicitly also reflects the degree of disorder that inevitably exists. One can have world orders that are anything but stable or desirable. The term is experiencing something of a revival. World Order is, among other things, the title of a recent book by Henry Kissinger.¹ Kissinger, the preeminent foreign policy practitioner of the second half of the twentieth century, is also one of the most influential writers not just on this subject but on many aspects of diplomatic history and international relations. And for these and related reasons I will come back to him more than once in the course of this book. I want to begin, though, with another academic, an Australian, Hedley Bull. I came to know Hedley when I was a graduate student at Oxford in the mid-1970s. We became friends, and his thinking and writing came to have a major influence on me. Bull wrote in 1977 what I find to be the most important contemporary book in the field of international relations, *The Anarchical Society*. Its subtitle, appropriately enough, is *A Study of Order in World Politics*.² Bull writes about international systems and international society. It is a distinction with a difference. An international system is simply what exists at the international level absent any policy decisions, in that countries and other entities along with various forces interact with and affect one another. There is little or nothing in the way of choice or regulation or principles or rules. An international society, by contrast, is something both different from and very much more than a system. What distinguishes a system from a society is that the latter reflects a degree of buy-in on the part of participants, including an acceptance on their part of limits on either what is sought or discouraged, how it is to be sought or discouraged, or both. It is rules-based. These rules (or limits) are accepted by the members of the society for the simple reason that they determine it is their best (or least bad) course of action given the choices that are realistically available. Such rules as there are can be enshrined in formal legal agreements or honored tacitly and informally. In the international sphere, the notion of society as described by Bull has specific meaning. First, the principal citizens of this society are states, a word used interchangeably here and elsewhere in these and other pages with both nation-states and countries. Second, a founding principle of this society is that states and the governments and leaders who oversee them are essentially free to act as they wish within their own borders. How those individuals come to occupy positions of authority, be it by birth, revolution, elections, or some other way, matters not. Third, the members of this international society respect and accept not just this freedom of action on the part of others (in exchange for others in turn accepting that they can act as they wish within their own borders) but also the existence of other members of this society. States therefore seek to avoid war among themselves. It is not far off to describe this approach to international relations as being something of a live and let live cross-border understanding. But history is always more than just the narrative of consensus; it is also at least as much a narrative of disagreement and friction. The mix of success and failure, of order and disorder, is central to the work of Bull. As suggested by the title of his book, history at any moment or in any era is the result of the interaction between forces of society and anarchy, of order and disorder. It is the balance between the two, between society and anarchy, that determines the dominant character of any era. This is a useful framing concept for approaching and understanding the world. At any moment, it provides a snapshot of where things are. And if enough snapshots are saved and strung together from days or months or years before, it provides a moving picture of trends. Before going any further, it is essential to make clear just what is required for there to be order. Here I want to return to Henry Kissinger and to an early book of his, *A World Restored*.³ The book was published some sixty years ago and based upon Kissinger's doctoral dissertation, something that should probably give every graduate student more than a little pause. Replete with vivid character portraits, it is a wonderfully written book, one that darts back and forth between specific history and larger lessons. Kissinger writes about the building of a new international order, about a world that was in large part resurrected in the aftermath of revolution and the Napoleonic Wars in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It is the history of an international, that is, European order that was recognized at the Congress of Vienna gathering in 1814 and 1815 where, among others, the foreign ministers of Great Britain, France, Prussia, Russia, and Austria-Hungary met to shape Europe's future and that survived for much of the nineteenth

century. The Congress of Vienna is noteworthy as an early example of an effort to promote peace and stability. The final product included any number of territorial arrangements, land swaps, recognitions of rightful rulers, and more. It is also noteworthy for what it did not do. While it did help bolster Europe's peace for several decades, it ultimately came undone amid the emergence of revolutionary movements in or near several of the participants, a changing balance of power that reflected both Prussia's (and later Germany's) rise and the fading and ultimate disappearance of multiple empires. This is worth highlighting as it is a reminder of how orders can come to an end and in so doing become disorders. It is useful to deconstruct the concept of order, to break it down into its most essential elements. One critical element of order is the concept of legitimacy, defined by Kissinger to mean international agreement about the nature of workable arrangements and about the permissible aims and methods of foreign policy.⁴ Used in this fashion, legitimacy is a big idea, as it not just defines the rules of international relations—what is to be sought and how, as well as how these rules are to be set and modified—but also reflects the extent of their acceptance by actors with real power. But just as essential to this notion of order, just as essential as this concept of legitimacy, was something much less intellectual. Here again I quote: No order is safe without physical safeguards against aggression.⁵ Thus Kissinger, writing sixty years ago about a very different world, made clear that order depended both on there being rules and arrangements to govern international relations and on a balance of power. Bull and Kissinger have a good deal in common. Both were mostly concerned with order between states, especially the major powers of a particular era. Order reflects the degree to which those with substantial power accept existing arrangements or rules for conducting international relations, as well as the diplomatic mechanisms for setting and modifying those rules. It also reflects the ability of those same powers to meet the challenges of others who do not share their perspective. Disorder, as explained by both Bull and Kissinger, reflects the ability of those who are dissatisfied with existing arrangements to change them, including through the use of violence. This emphasis is hardly surprising. After all, great-power rivalry, great-power competition, and great-power conflict constitute much of what we think of as history. This was certainly the case for the twentieth century, which was defined by two world wars and a third that mercifully remained largely cold. Order can be understood in this way, reflecting efforts by states to discourage the use of military force to achieve foreign policy aims. Tied to this view is that order is a respect for sovereignty, defined as allowing fellow states (and the governments and leaders in charge of them) to do much as they please within their borders. This approximates what is best understood as the classical view of order. The premise of this approach is that the principal objective of the foreign policy of any government ought to be influencing the foreign policy of other governments rather than the nature of the society over which they preside. As will be discussed later, this definition of order is not universally shared; to the contrary, it is too much for those who do not accept existing borders and not enough for those who worry most about what takes place within borders wherever they may be drawn. The classical notion of order described above is normally attributed to the Treaty of Westphalia, the pact signed in 1648 that ended the Thirty Years War, a part-religious, part-political struggle within and across borders that raged across much of Europe for three decades. The treaty was something of a breakthrough, in that disorder and conflict born of frequent interference inside the borders of one's neighbors had been the norm. The Westphalian order is based on a balance of power involving independent states that do not interfere in one another's internal business. The historian Peter Wilson, who wrote one of the finest books on the Thirty Years War, put it this way: Westphalia's significance lies not in the number of conflicts it tried to resolve, but in the methods and ideals it applied... sovereign states interacting (formally) as equals within a common secularized legal framework regardless of size, power or internal configuration.⁶ All this constituted a significant change in how the world operated. Secular sovereign states had become preeminent; empires founded on religious identity no longer dominated. Size or power didn't necessarily matter the most, as states (all being sovereign entities) had equal rights in principle if not in practice. This approach to order may seem terribly narrow through the lens of the second decade of the twenty-first century, and in many ways it is. But in its time, in its day, in the first half of the seventeenth century, this was an enormous breakthrough. Until then, there was little order in the world other than that imposed by the strongest entity. War was a frequent occurrence between and among this or that principality or state or empire. The idea of trying to bring about a world in which there was not, to use modern parlance, nonstop intervention in the internal affairs of others was a major advance. And it helped set the stage for a considerable period of relative stability in Europe. As noted, the Congress of Vienna in the second decade of the nineteenth century was convened to come up with a post-Napoleonic diplomatic settlement.⁷ The leaders of the day were so traumatized by what had just taken place that they operationalized the concepts of the Westphalian model, resulting in the Concert of Europe. The concert, as the word suggests, was an orchestration of how international relations in Europe would be conducted given the mind-set of those involved at the time, about how they would accept current borders and for the most part leave one another alone within their territories.⁸ It encompassed frequent high-level diplomatic consultation among representatives of the major powers. In the words of one historian, the concert had a deeply conservative sense of mission. Based on respect for kings and hierarchy, it prioritized order over equality, stability over justice.⁹ It was hardly the only time in history when a great shock—in this case, revolution in France and the fear it might spread—changed collective behavior. And that is what happened. And for all the problems of the nineteenth century, it compares well in many ways with the century that followed. Indeed, it was not until the late nineteenth and early

twentieth centuries that we witnessed wholesale breakdown of the Concert of Europe, and with it the Westphalian order. (The midcentury Crimean War between Russia and both Great Britain and France was a struggle more about who was to control territory of the fading Ottoman Empire than about anything fundamental.) What occurred were two dramatic developments. First, there arose new nation-states (most prominently Prussia, the forerunner of Germany) unwilling to accept the territorial and political status quo that had developed. They rejected the legitimacy of existing international arrangements. And they were strong enough to act. The balance of power no longer precluded action or deterred them from acting. This last point suggests the second development that so shaped the history of this period. Many of the entities that had dominated the world for centuries were failing and in some cases literally falling apart. This was true of Austria-Hungary, Russia (soon to be ravaged by revolution), and the Ottoman Empire. The United States was only decades out of its civil war and was focused on continental expansion and industrialization. Europe seemed a long way off. All these changes gathered momentum in the second half of the nineteenth century and reached their climax when in the early part of the twentieth century the world experienced the grim effects of a wholesale breakdown of order. Some of this history can be explained by the limits of the ability of orders to endure in the absence of great diplomatic dexterity. The Congress of Vienna, which led to the post-Napoleonic settlement and subsequently to the Concert of Europe, succeeded in no small part because it involved individuals of rare diplomatic skill. For this reason Castlereagh, Metternich, and Talleyrand, respectively the ministers of Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, and France, remain significant historical figures. An optimist would take a moment here to point out the power of human agency, the quality of diplomats, to affect the course of events. This was and remains true. One reason why the Concert of Europe got off the ground and lasted for as long as it did was the ability of some of the people involved in its creation. One factor, though, increasing the odds that a world order will survive is that it not require talented statesmen, the supply of which is likely to be insufficient. One has to assume that as often as not individuals of mediocre or poor skills will enter into positions of responsibility. When it comes to order, something robust and resilient is preferable to dependence on diplomatic dexterity. Indeed, one explanation for why order broke down in the early twentieth century is that Prussia, forged by the extraordinarily talented Otto von Bismarck, came to be led by individuals who inherited a powerful state but not the wisdom for managing its relations with its neighbors.¹⁰