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The primacy of the US is expected to remain, though contested by some for the forthcoming future. Though the emerging economies would like to have some influence in the conduct of global affairs the huge gap between the US, China and India will constrain these powers to challenge the US.

In 2030 per capita income of the US will be US \$60000/- while that of China will be almost half and that of India is expected to be US \$10000/-. According to IMF the GDP per capita in the US was \$59,495 (PPP) / \$59,500 (Nominal) as at end 2017. In China it was just \$16,624 (PPP) / \$8,643 (Nominal). Militarily America's military superiority remains unrivaled spender.

The United States has a strong military alliance with Europe through NATO, Japan, Australia South Korea, GCC countries (Saudi Arabia, Qatar etc.), while China is not part of any significant military alliance. Could the US and China fall for "Thucydides Trap"? Given the latest US-China trade talks, reports by The New York Times (Alexandra Stevenson Sept 11 2019, President Trump's vow to raise tariffs on \$250 billion in Chinese goods, including cars and aircraft parts, to 30 percent from 25 percent on Oct. 1. may chart a difficult path for the two countries to reach an amicable settlement.

One has to remember that China accounts for a large percentage of the US total imports. However, the US does not account for a similarly large percentage of China's imports or exports. China imports and exports a lot with other Asian countries and Europe, not just with the US. Basically the US needs China more than China needs the US. US trade deficit with China was \$419 billion in 2018. US imports was \$540

billion while her export were \$ 120 billion. That's not to say China can ignore the US, but rather it is necessary for the global prosperity for the two to reach an amicable settlement. It should not, however, be presumed that conflict for influence is inevitable. On the contrary efforts are being taken to enable nations to be more responsible. Indeed as Stephen Walt(of Harvard University) points out the world is afflicted by (Asia Has Three Possible Futures foreign policy SEPTEMBER 5, 2019) an escalating trade war between the United States and China, North Korea's growing nuclear arsenal and improved missile capabilities, deteriorating relations between South Korea and Japan, and increased cooperation between the United States and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Afghanistan peace talks and India's heavy-handed actions in Kashmir. Walt's scenario depicts rise of China and a stumbling US where "Unless India had somehow managed to keep pace with China, a balancing coalition confined to Asia would still be weaker than this hypothetical Chinese colossus and would face the usual dilemmas of collective action. This vision of the future is undoubtedly Beijing's preferred scenario, and Chinese President Xi Jinping has suggested as much in the past.

Pushing the United States out of Asia and getting its immediate neighbors to defer to Chinese preferences would maximize Chinese security while making it easier for Beijing to project power in other areas that it might deem critical such as the Persian Gulf". But does it have to be so? Democracy imbued with liberal principles still remain to be the preferred destination of most of the countries of the world. Besides China is faced with aging population, environmental degradation, lack of adequate water supplies, geopolitical constraints, restive minorities, financial imbalances, etc.), while the United States retains a number of important strengths, such as a highly favorable geographic location, ample natural resources, and a still-innovative economy.

Stepping back to the 20th century one may recall that during the Cold War neither of the super powers thought of nuclear war though the world was at an edge during the Cuban missile crisis. Dwight Eisenhower's refusal to use the atomic bomb was a reflection of Eisenhower Doctrine to keep peace after the untold devastation wrought by the Second World War. This required him to stand steadfast in the gap against civilian and military authority who wished to lower the threshold or trigger for authorizing the use of nuclear weapons in any confrontation with the Communists. Instead, he refused to use atomic bombs in the Korean War, or against China in that War, or in later fighting over the islands of Quemoy and Matsu off of Formosa after the Nationalist Chinese fled from the mainland. The islands had no strategic value, which he easily recognized since he could not be bluffed or fooled on military matters. Significantly, he fully recognized that nuclear war with the Soviets would be the end of civilization, and he acted accordingly to prevent atomic War. The doctrine was intended to check increased Soviet influence in the Middle East, which had resulted from the supply of arms to Egypt by communist countries as well as from strong communist support of Arab states against an Israeli, French, and British attack on Egypt in October 1956. Eisenhower proclaimed, with the approval of Congress, that he would use the armed forces to protect the independence of any Middle Eastern country seeking American help. It was a continuation of the U.S. policy of containment of or resistance to any extension of the Soviet sphere of influence. The continuing struggle got influence between the East and the West came to an end with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Empire.

In contrast Harry Truman was the only head of government who actually used a nuclear weapon in warfare. After entering into office, he learned of the atomic bomb and had to decide whether or not to use it. Although he knew that Japan was seeking to surrender, he chose to use the bomb on two Japanese cities in short succession. This brought the war to a quick end. Truman's other motive was to deter USSR from expanding the limits of Eastern Europe. Truman in an address to the Congress appealed for support to stop the expansion of communism. He said "At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one. One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms".

Pronouncement by Pres. Harry Truman. Engaged in the Cold War with the Soviet Union, the U.S. sought to protect those countries from falling under Soviet influence after Britain announced that it could no longer give them aid. Despite the moral support of a part of the world to Truman Doctrine one could smell a whiff of Machiavellism.

Machiavelli set the precedent for the cold and calculated regardless of the century they live in. He discusses frankly, the necessity of

cruel actions to keep power. He was in the business of power preservation not piety. Those who desire power in any situation may look to his strategies for solid aid. "...he (the leader of the state) must stick to the good so long as he can, but, being compelled by necessity, he must be ready to take the way of the evil. Thus the term Machiavelli's is defined: "The political doctrine of Machiavelli, which denies the relevance of morality in political affairs and holds that craft and deceit are justified in pursuing and maintaining political power." .

It was a continuation of the U.S. policy of containment of or resistance to any extension of the Soviet sphere of influence. The continuing struggle for influence between the East and the West came to an end with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet empire. As the world saw during the Iraq war George Bush's failure to bring together the important players like Russia, China and France who after the fleeting unipolar moment wanted a multipolar world to regulate international affairs.

Yet Harvard Professor Joseph Nye like conservative Robert Kagan believes that American power and leadership will remain crucial to stability and prosperity at home and abroad. But presidents will be better served by remembering their transactional predecessors' observance of the credo "Above all, do no harm" than by issuing stirring calls for transformational change.

The problem arises when non-state actors like al-Qaeda and now ISIS in the name of a faith is causing turbulence in a world that is transforming from industrial age to an information age. Whether such a change with consequent unemployment will bring happiness to the people of the world is debatable. As is debatable the progression of people from one class to another. Barring exceptions people are more likely to find themselves bound in the same class, albeit with more money than their parents earned, compared with those born with silver spoon in their mouth. One may cite FDR and JFK as examples of gaining the highest office in the land while most of the post-second world war Presidents came from modest background. Yet social scientists and economists are convinced that the great divide between the rich and the poor has come to stay. This divide more prominent between the developed and the developing nations coupled with religious divide will not let the world rest in peace.

Many in the West would agree with people like Christopher Caldwell that the grim fact is that no Western European country—not one— has managed even a marginally successful integration of its Muslim immigrants, despite half a century of vast treasury outlays, wholesale constitutional re-workings, and indefatigable excuse-making. One is drawn to the conclusion that no successful integration was ever to be expected. Larger historical currents were at play. Islam was on the rise. Europe had lost its élan vital, or whatever you choose to call it. The idea that Europe could handle a mass immigration of Muslims may have been a momentous historical mistake.

As Roy Jenkins, the leader of the Liberal Democrats in Britain, remarked in 1989, "We might have been more cautious about allowing the creation in the 1950s of substantial Muslim communities." Additionally, there are people like Bernard Lewis and Samuel Huntington with his civilizational thesis to spur the movement of a fresh crusade though not in mediaeval form. The question is does it have to be so? The formation of G-20

or

BRICS or ASEAN-- have all been directed towards economic benefit (EU is omitted as all are of the same faith though that is not the binding rope). In South Asia SAARC is a glaring example of economic cooperation which hopefully will turn into a customs union and a free trade area. The similarities are more than the differences. Yet there is tension particularly between Pakistan and India, and to an extent though dormant in Bangladesh.

Though India has signed on to the China sponsored AIIB one trillion offered by China for the infrastructural development of the Belt and Road Initiative may only provide seed money as the Asian Development Bank estimates that Asian infrastructural development will need more than \$ 20 trillion dollars.

Yet the Chinese initiative should be welcomed but the recipients should be careful lest they fall into a “Debt Trap” like a few other countries. For countries like Bangladesh it would be easier to cooperate with India as closely as possible because of shared history, culture, language (with West Bengal), and entwined economic interests.

The writer is a former Ambassador and Secretary of Bangladesh.

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