American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World

SPECIAL PROVIDENCE

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Chapter Five

THE CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN THE COURT OF KING ARTHUR

Wilsonianism and Its Mission

Another Logic

In 1912, senators from states like South Dakota and Iowa found themselves deluged by mail from angry constituents. From one small community after another, the letters carried the same message: Stop the China Railway Loan.

The senators, most of whom had passed their lives in happy ignorance of Chinese railroad financing, sent their assistants to the library shelves to research the issue. With China's finances reeling following years of civil and international war, a group of European governments had helped put together a bond-issue package to bail out China's railroads and support new construction and badly needed repairs.

What mysterious force was responsible for U.S. farm communities

and elderly widows knowing about, let alone protesting, this measure? The answer to that question was the missionaries.

Since early in the nineteenth century there had been a substantial worldwide presence of American missionaries. Beginning in 1806 with a handful of Massachusetts seminary students who asked God to guide their lives as they took shelter by a haystack from a sudden thunderstorm, tens of thousands of missionaries proceeded out of the United States to the four corners of the earth, determined to relieve the world's peoples of the burdens of superstition, paganism, feudalism, and ignorance; to combat exploitation of the poor; to promote democracy, public health, and literacy; to reform the world's sexual mores; and to end the oppression of women overseas.

This vast popular movement, stronger than ever today, knew no boundaries of race, sex, or denomination. African American missionaries were among the early colonists in Liberia; within a generation of the abolition of slavery, African American churches in the south as well as the north were supporting a network of missionaries bringing the light of Christ to the home of their ancestors. At a time when women were denied the vote, relegated to secondary roles in religious life, and barred from access to most professional schools, one generation after another of pioneering American women gained medical, theological, and other training to serve all over the world. Women established and led forty-one mission boards, actively sending missionaries abroad. By 1890 women constituted 60 percent of American missionaries serving abroad, and by 1900 there were more than three million women actively participating in denominational societies.[1]

The politicians deluged with mail about the Chinese railway proposal quickly learned what was happening. Sun Yat-sen, a Chinese Christian educated in missionary schools, had just established a republican government in China with strong support from the missionary community. Sun's movement seemed to fulfill the fondest hopes of three generations of American missionaries in China and their millions of American supporters: A Christian Chinese, educated and trained in American spiritual and democratic values, had overthrown China's rotten feudal government and was proceeding to regenerate that vast and ancient land. That is exactly what the missionaries had planned—that is why they labored to convert the Chinese to Christianity; that is why they established and supported thirteen colleges and a medical school in China; that is why for generations they had been helping the best and most promising

young Chinese study in the United States. It was the firm purpose of the American missionaries to make China an advanced, Christian, and democratic country, and when Sun Yat-sen took power, those missionaries were convinced that the destined hour was at hand.

With Chinese democracy dawning, the missionary world was outraged that greedy capitalists should take advantage of the temporary difficulties of the new regime to impose onerous conditions on the loan. Now was the time to treat China with generosity, to help this forward-looking democratic regime. American policy certainly could and should lead the way. The missionaries, generally sent out from and supported by small groups of American churches in rural as well as in urban areas, wrote to their friends and supporters denouncing the loan and urging them to protest to Congress. The good church people complied, and the halls of Congress soon echoed to anti–railway loan rhetoric.

In the end the missionaries got their way. U.S. opposition killed the original railway proposal, and a new agreement, more favorable to China, was drawn up.

This is but one example of a second school at work in the American foreign policy process, a school that often favors what some misleadingly call an "idealist" foreign policy. For convenience we can call this school Wilsonian, but the label should not blind us. Wilsonians were actively shaping American foreign policy long before Wilson moved to Washington, and the ideas that underlie this Wilsonian school are more deeply rooted in the national character and more directly related to the national interest than might appear at first glance.

While Wilsonianism has unique characteristics drawn from American culture and history, the phenomenon of a great power linking its destiny to the spread of a particular ideology is not unique to the United States. Athens and Sparta looked for allies, respectively, among the democratic and aristocratic parties of the Greek city-states of their era. The spread of Hellenic civilization was an object of policy for Alexander the Great and his successors; the Christian emperors of Rome and Byzantium and the Muslim caliphs of Damascus and Baghdad believed that faith could, would, and should follow the flag, so to speak.

As the Cross and the Crescent slugged it out in the Near and Middle East, the powers of Western Europe also consciously sought—and generally found—ideological rationales for their political ambitions. England, Holland, Sweden, and the Lutheran princes of Germany were Protestant powers; the Hapsburg dominions were proudly Catholic. The cynical power politics of eighteenth-century Europe, in which "enlightened"

despots agreed on all major philosophical and religious questions, disputing only the possession of various pieces of turf, was an exception to the general rule that the wars of great powers have spiritual or at least ideological importance. The French Revolution put an end to that unnatural state, and from the war of the First Coalition against the French Revolution to the present day, competition among powers has usually been linked to a competition among ideas.

The particular set of ideas with which the United States has been most closely associated, and the cultural stratum from which they chiefly proceed, is closely linked to those that informed our predecessor at the apex of world power. In the nineteenth century, indeed, British commentators often remarked on the instructive difference between the selfless altruism of British Liberal foreign policy and the gratingly self-seeking activities of their Yankee cousins. The twists and turns of the "nonconformist conscience" of Liberal Britain—so named because of its roots among the heirs of the Puritans and Dissenters of British history—were by turns sources of amusement and frustration for continental statesmen. British Liberals fought against the pragmatic tilt toward the Ottoman Empire that British imperial interests seemed to require, arguing that Ottoman atrocities in the Balkans demanded what we would now call a "human rights" response from the world's hegemonic power. It was the British who abolished slavery and put the British navy to work suppressing the slave trade in Africa and the surrounding seas; British Liberals defied American opinion and risked an international crisis rather than return fugitive slaves who reached British soil. It was Britain whose emissaries trekked the wilds of Africa and sent punitive expeditions to put down the slave trade; Britons summoned the powers of Europe to squelch ethnic conflict and terrorism in the Balkans, suppressed the thuggee cult of ritual murder in India, and ended the practice of suttee, in which high-caste Hindu widows were expected to commit suicide by leaping onto their husband's funeral pyres.

British Liberal opinion continued to support what, in an American context, we would call Wilsonian policies up through the fall of the British Empire and into modern times. When Wilson tried to impose a Wilsonian peace at the end of World War I, his strongest foreign allies were found in the British Liberal Party, and the most savage attacks on the shortcomings of the Versailles treaty were penned by John Maynard Keynes, the towering intellect of British Liberal thought in the twentieth century.

Disgruntled Conservatives, overlooking the worldwide rise in con-

ABE LINCOLN'S LAST CARD; OR, ROUGE-ET-NOIR

The shared heritage of the "nonconformist conscience" in the U.S. and Britain has not always brought the two countries closer together. As this 1862 *Punch* magazine cartoon by Sir John Tenniel (the most famous British political cartoonist of his time, chiefly remembered today as the illustrator of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*) reminds us, many idealistic Britons sympathized with the Confederacy, believing that Southern whites should have the right of self-determination. The Emancipation Proclamation is shown here as the last, desperate throw of a losing gambler (playing against Jefferson Davis).

Sir John Tenniel. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-1973

sciousness and nationalism among the Empire's third world subjects, and ignoring the impact of the rise of other industrial powers on Britain's relative economic and military power, went so far as to blame Liberal wimpishness for the fall of the Empire. Churchill, for one, was convinced that a show of determination would have crushed Gandhi's movement and cemented Britain's hold over the Indian subcontinent.

The Empire is gone, but the British Liberal conscience is still on display today. Prime Minister Tony Blair was the sole strong and unconditional advocate of the use of ground troops in the 1999 war between Yugoslavia and NATO. More broadly the new Labour government he has

built is an attempt to reconstruct the old Liberal party and tradition on the ruins of British socialism, and should Blair's movement succeed we can look to a revived and invigorated British Liberal voice calling for "idealistic" policies on every subject from Third World debt relief to minority rights. True to their traditions, Blair's New Labour liberals sought to ban foxhunting but declared an open season on human rights violators, holding Chile's former dictator, General Pinochet. Under house arrest for seventeen months in Britain, Pinochet was released on March 2, 2000, after the UK decided on grounds of the General's poor health not to extradite him.

The nonconformist conscience migrated into other former British colonies besides the United States. In a 1966 essay, "Canada: 'Stern Daughter of the Voice of God,' " former secretary of state Dean Acheson chided Canadian statesmen for what he called a "moralistic" rather than a "moral" foreign policy: a policy that, in his view, could be said to value omelets too cheaply and eggs too high. No one familiar with political debates in Australia and New Zealand will miss the common note of nonconformist moralizing; it was also heard among the English-speaking whites in South Africa who opposed apartheid.

Far from being uniquely American, or uniquely confined to the twentieth century, the prevalence of this common streak—morality, say its friends; moralism, say its critics—in the offshoots of the British Empire is one of the chief marks by which other countries define what they somewhat anachronistically continue to call a common "Anglo-Saxon" tradition of statesmanship. Europeans, Indians, Chinese, Africans, and Latin Americans have also noticed something about this tradition that tends to escape notice in the "Anglo-Saxon" world: that the espousal of these high ideals has not prevented the successive rise of two English-speaking empires to global hegemony. The Anglo-Saxon conscience may be sensitive and easily excited, they say, yet it is also flexible, and generally manages to concentrate its outrage on those aspects of the world's evils that threaten to thwart some interesting project of an Anglo-Saxon state.

The Anglo-Saxons may be as innocent as doves, note our neighbors and critics, but that has singularly not interfered with our ability to be as cunning as serpents.

Our concern here is not with the nonconformist conscience across the "Anglo-Saxon" world, or with its more distant cousins found throughout the Protestant, Germanic-language-speaking peoples of

northern Europe, but with its specific history and meaning in the United States. Rooted originally in the separatist piety of Puritan New England, and nurtured in the long, cool afterglow of Yankee Calvinism in decline, the Wilsonian subculture has exercised a continuous and powerful influence inside and outside government from the eighteenth century onward. Despite its long historical record in the United States and abroad, this streak of the national character continues to make both foreign and American analysts uncomfortable. The Hamiltonian school of foreign policy is a well-known, comfortable presence in international relations. It is familiar, if often misunderstood. Much more problematic from the standpoint of conventional diplomacy is the Wilsonian streak in the national character: a view that insists that the United States has the right and the duty to change the rest of the world's behavior, and that the United States can and should concern itself not only with the way other countries conduct their international affairs, but with their domestic policies as well.

The venom and ridicule that realists in Britain and elsewhere have poured and continue to pour on the Wilsonian approach to foreign policy is both startling and strange. Ever since the first Washington administration, when, especially before the Reign of Terror, a substantial force in American politics believed that the duty and interest of the United States required it to join revolutionary France in a general war against the monarchical states, the Wilsonian impulse has been treated with the kind of hostility with which Ahab and Jezebel greeted the sermons of Elijah, or with which Herodias heard the preaching of John the Baptist.

Indeed, it was Wilson's head on a platter that Sigmund Freud sought to serve up when, with American diplomat William C. Bullitt, he penned the most venomous portrait extant in psychoanalytic literature, a "psychobiography" of Wilson. Henry Kissinger's warnings against moralism in American foreign policy are a recent and relatively mild example of this genre. Even so thoughtful and generous a historian as the Pulitzer Prize–winning Walter McDonough has singled out the "global meliorist" Wilsonian tradition as an illegitimate interloper in the otherwise stately procession of American foreign policy.

And yet, as with so many biblical prophets, the sons build a tomb for the visionaries their fathers had killed. We have already noted that Europe has come to accept the prophet that it scorned, and that every European state west of the old Soviet Union now conducts its policy along recognizably Wilsonian lines. Ronald Reagan, who came to office

preaching a realist gospel and denouncing the liberal wimpery of the Carter foreign policy, made the international support of human rights a cornerstone of his own administration. Even the archrealist Kissinger himself now takes pride in the Helsinki Accords, which realists once dismissed or condemned.

The Missionary Tradition

From the end of the Cold War to the end of the Clinton administration, Wilsonianism battled with Hamiltonianism to be the dominant force in American foreign policy. Much of the contemporary fighting over foreign policy—as, for example, with respect to China—reflects a conflict between the Hamiltonian quest to build a global commercial order and the Wilsonian view that that order must also be based on principles of democratic government and the protection of human rights. And just as contemporary Hamiltonian politics emerge from a long historical development, so too the forces seeking to give a Wilsonian shape to American foreign policy today have deep roots in American history, and have developed their ideas through many generations of experience and reflection.

When most students of foreign policy, whether American or foreign, think about American idealism in action, they think about acts of statecraft by politicians. They think of Wilson at Versailles or Bill Clinton sending marines to Haiti. But just as the story of American commercial relations with the rest of the world is only in part, and indeed in very small part, the story of governments interacting with other governments, so *a fortiori* is the story of Wilsonianism a story of popular action. Wilsonianism represents to a large degree part of a consistent and centuries-old foreign policy of the American people, something related to, and both influenced by and influencing, the foreign policy of the American government, but still something to be understood on its own terms and in its own way.

The story of American missionary activity—a story by no means confined to the actions of religious missionaries of any or even of all denominations, but encompassing the work of countless Americans in religious work, medical work, relief work, and political activism of various kinds throughout the world—is part of the "lost history" of American foreign policy. It has played a much larger role in the relationship of the United

States to the world, in that of the world to the United States, and in the growing sense of a world community than is generally recognized. Yet the missionary endeavor, one of the greatest and most sustained efforts ever made by large numbers of the American people in any field, and one with vast consequences for this century, is in intellectual eclipse. Feminist historians are mining its rich ores for the sake of uncovering the role women played in this venture. Some African American historians, likewise, are looking into the ways in which grassroots African American church communities were able to plan and sustain an international program even before the abolition of slavery. There have been strong surveys of missionary activity in particular countries such as a 1974 study of Chinese missions edited by John K. Fairbanks. Daniel J. Boorstin's *The Democratic Experience* recognizes the centrality of the missionary experience for understanding the American engagement with the world. But in general, mission history has lost the importance it once had in the field—when, for example, the great historian of American missions, Kenneth Scott Latourette, served as president of the American Historical Association in 1948.

An eclipse this dark of a subject this important requires explanation, and there are several reasons why so few contemporary historians turn their attention to this vital subject. The general indifference to nineteenth-century American foreign policy plays a role. Eurocentric historians ignore mission history because it deals primarily with events in what are now developing countries. Elite-oriented historians of foreign policy pass over what was always primarily a grassroots movement. Historians sympathetic to the aspirations of the developing world find the subject inherently distasteful: From a certain angle missions appear as a particularly odious variety of cultural imperialism, one with close links to political and economic imperialism. Additionally, until very recently many mainstream postwar American historians have largely discounted the importance of religious matters in American history. Partly for methodological reasons and partly for cultural and ideological ones, those historians have concentrated on secular topics. Missionary history—complex, crossing denominational and geographical boundaries, with its original documents often scattered in obscure denominational archives—has been even more seriously neglected. Furthermore, the missionary enterprise is distinctly unfashionable in the multicultural world of the contemporary campus. The contemplation of a prolonged American attempt to export Christian values and beliefs to the develop-

ing world was inherently distasteful to the fin-de-siècle liberal mind. Exporting values to unenlightened parts of the world—Africa, Alabama, China—remains a central concern of American liberals today, but it makes people uncomfortable to see the same dogmatic certainties and missionary impulses that were prevalent among their grandparents used to spread such different values and beliefs. At some point the contemplation of such historical disparities might lead one to question the comfortable ethical and political certainties of enlightened opinion today—and this is not an enterprise to be recommended to young academics with careers to build.

Conservative Christian scholars who might be expected to celebrate and therefore study mission history also have problems with the subject. Although the denominations that still maintain active missionary programs do study "missiology," their interest lies in training future missionaries and developing more successful ways to preach the Gospel. Real mission history poses problems for evangelicals and other conservative Christians. The modern ecumenical movement, like many of the pioneering figures of liberal theology, emerged from the missionary world. A dispassionate study of the American missionary record would probably conclude that the multicultural and relativistic thinking so characteristic of the United States today owes much of its social power to the unexpected consequences of American missions abroad.

If a full account of the American missionary movement is beyond us here, even a quick sketch will suffice to indicate its central importance in the development of American foreign policy and of the subcultures that shape and sustain it. After the famous 1806 Haystack Prayer Meeting outside Williams College, in which a group of students vowed to dedicate their lives to foreign missions, a small trickle—soon to become a mighty flood—of missionaries left the United States for service abroad. Adoniram Judson and his wife stopped briefly in India before reaching Burma (now Myanmar). By 1819, Mrs. Judson found that, while the women of Burma showed distressingly little interest in the Gospel of Christ, they were extremely eager to learn to read and to sew, and that both they and their menfolk were desperate for information about the wider world.[2]

As the extraordinary religious revivals known as the Second and Third Great Awakenings of the early nineteenth century deepened the element of religious fervor in American culture, the number of young people seeking careers in foreign missions grew rapidly. But since every

denomination kept its own records in its own way, and some of the most missionary-minded denominations (like the Baptists) eschewed the kinds of hierarchical organization beyond the congregational level that promotes record-keeping, good estimates of the number of missionaries and mission-related personnel are hard to make. One listing counts about five thousand American Protestant missionaries abroad in 1900, with the number increasing to more than nine thousand by 1915.[3]

These numbers are surely incomplete. They are restricted to full-time religious workers and do not count the instructors serving in missionary schools and colleges abroad, medical personnel, or agricultural and other technical specialists supplementing mission efforts. The wives of male missionaries also generally worked in medical, educational, and religious endeavors but were not always counted as mission workers. In addition, a significant number of American missionaries came from outside the ranks of Protestant churches. Such indigenous American religious movements as the Seventh-Day Adventists and the Latter-day Saints have long had an active presence in international missions.

The number of Protestant mission workers would increase throughout the twentieth century, reaching approximately fifty-two thousand missionaries by the end of the 1970s. Catholic, Pentecostal, Adventist, and Latter-day Saints missionaries would increase even more rapidly during the twentieth century; by the start of the twenty-first it appears that something on the order of one hundred thousand Americans were serving religious missions abroad.[4] Fourteen thousand Utah residents were estimated to have been omitted by the 2000 Census because they were serving tours of duty as missionaries abroad—a number large enough to cost Utah an additional seat in the House of Representatives.

If we add to these numbers other Americans involved in secular service overseas—working with nongovernmental organizations dealing with refugees, development, medical services, and such agencies as the Peace Corps—we see that the fire kindled at the Haystack Meeting has spread to all the corners of the world, and that the effort to spread what Americans in each generation have identified as the key features of the American way of life to the rest of the world is a powerful, long-established, and growing force in our society.

The larger mission boards functioned in some ways as the first multinational corporations in American history. Receiving contributions in dollars, they dispensed funds all over the world. They employed local inhabitants, established networks of schools and colleges, ran demon-

stration farms, and set up printing presses—sometimes in alphabets designed by the missionaries for previously analphabetic cultures. By 2000 one missionary organization, the Wycliffe Bible Translators, had translated at least part of the scriptures into 1,571 languages.[5] By 2001, the United Bible Societies had published copies of the scriptures in 2,261 different languages and dialects;[6] the Gideons—known to most Americans as the source of the Bibles found in hotel and motel rooms across the country—had distributed, gratis, nearly one billion copies of at least the New Testament in eighty languages and 175 countries around the world.[7]

The missionary presses published Bibles and other inspirational literature; they also published scientific, medical, agricultural, and historical works, often giving local inhabitants their first systematic exposure to the ideas and the background of the Western world. The digests of political, historical, cultural, and economic information that were prepared by missionaries and compiled by mission boards, into what sometimes evolved into annual or biannual publications, were the most comprehensive collections of information on the non-Western world that the nineteenth-century public could find. Diplomats moving to a new posting and businessmen seeking new markets turned to the missionary world as their best source of information. Dictionaries and grammars prepared by missionaries were often the best or the only sources available for language study.

It would be a mistake, however, to think of the missionaries as nothing more than psalm-singing fishers of souls. From the early days, when Ann Hasseltine Judson found herself introducing literacy to the women of Burma and Reverend Judson was teaching Western technologies to Burmese men, the missionary movement has done much more than build churches and sing hymns. Indeed, much of what we now regard as left-wing secular idealism has its roots in the missions, just as such schools as Harvard, Princeton, and Yale began as religious colleges before evolving into the secular universities we know today.

The transition from full-time religious missionary to doctor, nurse, or agronomist was easy to make. The missionaries inevitably found themselves dealing with a wide range of problems in the countries to which they moved. Very early on, missionaries found that, in order for them to be effective, they had to do more than preach the Gospel. Foreign languages had to be learned, and in some cases alphabets developed for them, so that the Scriptures could be read in the new language. But the

problems were greater: How to attract the heathen to the church? The obvious answers sprang to mind, especially because they were hallowed by Christ's own instructions: Feed the hungry, educate the children, treat the sick.

Religious missionaries, however zealous for souls, could not be blind to the other needs of those among whom they lived. Ignorance, lack of sanitation, the oppression of women, disease—these also had to be dealt with, partly as evils in and of themselves that the missionaries felt obliged to combat, and partly because opposition to them would draw souls to Christ's message.

And very quickly the missionaries' task grew more complex. Social injustice was the greatest evil found in many parts of the earth. Feudal bondage systems offended the missionary heart as much as Arthurian England's feudalism offended Twain's Connecticut Yankee. How could a Christian brother or sister stand silent in the face of such injustice, especially when, as in Korea, the feudal nobility were the fiercest foes of Christianity and used their power to keep the humble poor from attending church?

And then there was the problem of the nonmissionary presence of the West. Unscrupulous traders, lascivious sailors, and rapacious imperialists were constant sources of danger to the peoples of the non-Western world. Great civilizations and empires like the Ottoman Empire and China were hard pressed to cope. Many tribal peoples were utterly overwhelmed; some would not survive the nineteenth century, and others would lose touch with their own cultures without finding a way to approach the new cultures and technology of the West. Missionaries, who often saw themselves as the allies of the non-Western peoples among whom they lived, had complex relationships with all these forces. Thus missionaries generally opposed the opium trade in China and certain aspects of Western economic imperialism, but welcomed the presence of Western troops when their lives and property were endangered. Individual missionaries, of course, had outlooks ranging from wholehearted support for business to suspicion of any endeavors that diverted the attention of their flocks from the Cross. In virtually all cases, however, missionaries saw themselves as filling an intermediary role—attempting to protect their congregations from the depredations of unscrupulous Westerners, while also serving as avenues through which Western values, ideas, and techniques could penetrate local cultures.

American missionaries played an important role in stabilizing and

policing the behavior of American businessmen and others overseas. Women serving as independent professionals or wives of accredited missionaries were often the only women of European stock in a particular city or area; they set a social and moral tone for respectable expatriates, while the missionary community generally considered itself responsible for the care of the souls of Americans overseas. American merchants, who of course often saw no contradiction between their economic activities and their spiritual values, were included in church and missionary activities. Missionaries played a role in the spread of such institutions as Rotary International and the YMCA.

Improved educational opportunity often struck the missionaries as an important weapon. Offering education to bright young people would give missionaries an opportunity to mold the impressionable minds of a new generation of leaders and would win them the goodwill of the parents. Education would expose the young people to the nineteenth-century synthesis of faith, science, morality, and political economy that the missionaries themselves believed to be the last word in human affairs. The development of education became one of the hallmarks of American Christian missions. Even today, some of the most famous and prestigious institutions of learning in the Middle East are missionary foundations, including Robert College in Turkey and the American University of Beirut. Before 1949 the American missionary network in China supported many of that country's strongest and most outward-looking universities, as well as a large program promoting Chinese study in the United States. The missionary colleges and universities recruited scholars from the United States in many fields besides religious studies, and many of these campuses became the nurseries of the political movements that would shape the struggle of the non-Western world for political and cultural independence in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

The missionary movement played a major role in the development of international civil society. It can be difficult for Americans today, used to the bitter alienation that now exists between organizations like the National Organization for Women (NOW), for example, and much of the conservative Catholic and evangelical communities, to appreciate the close historical link between many of today's secular civil society organizations and the missionary movement. There was a time when the supple hands of a Woodrow Wilson could thump together the two tubs that more recently have been thumped separately by Pat Robertson

and Hillary Clinton. In those days an aggressively proselytizing and self-confident Protestantism was the home and natural ally of the feminist, prohibitionist, peace, and antitobacco movements. Some glimpse of that earlier era can still be seen in the way that right- and left-wing groups attack such countries as China for a poor human rights record, and for the way the wars on smoking and drugs bring diverse communities together in a coalition not altogether dissimilar from the large social movement for Prohibition.

The very concept of a global civil society comes to us out of the missionary movement; apart from a handful of isolated intellectuals, no one before the missionaries ever thought that the world's cultures and societies had or could have enough in common to make a common global society feasible or desirable. Certainly before the missionaries no large group of people set out to build just such a world. The concept that "backward" countries could and should develop into Western-style industrial democracies grew up among missionaries, and missionary relief and development organizations like World Vision and Catholic Relief Services remain at the forefront of development efforts. The idea that governments in the Western world had a positive duty to support the development of poor countries through financial aid and other forms of assistance similarly comes out of the missionary world. Most contemporary international organizations that provide relief from natural disasters, shelter refugees, train medical practitioners for poor countries, or perform other important services on an international basis can trace their origin either to missionary organizations or to the missionary milieu.

The missionary movement indeed deserves far more credit for promoting the idea of a global human community than it often receives. At a time when advanced opinion in the western world was increasingly susceptible to theories of eugenics, "scientific racism" and social Darwinism, missionaries, sometimes acting on the basis of a literal reading of Genesis, stoutly maintained that human beings of all races and nations were descended from common ancestors, shared a common and universal heritage, and were all possessed of equal and inalienable rights.

In any case we can see that in the secular as well as in the religious branches of the missionary movement there has been a concerted, two-centuries-old attempt by an important segment of the American people to transform the world and to bring about a social, economic, medical, and religious revolution. This group has believed that it is the responsibility of their government to support this effort, and while they have

never fully succeeded in converting the U.S. government into an entirely eleemosynary organization, they have had and continue to have a substantial amount of success in influencing and shaping the foreign policy of the United States.

Those who saw an American duty to remake the world in its image spent the nineteenth century seeking action from the United States government on three different levels. On the first level came the demand for an active role by the American government in giving American missionaries the right of entry into other countries, providing them with legal protection once there, protecting their property, and, ultimately, as converts were made, protecting the Christian minority against private pogroms or government discrimination and/or persecution.

At this level the missionaries enjoyed a substantial degree of success. Arguing that the American citizen spreading the word of God deserved at least the same degree of support from his home government that an American merchant shipping opium could expect, missionaries rapidly established the principle that the United States government would use its good offices wherever possible in the interest of missionary endeavors. Early treaties with China, Japan, Siam (now Thailand) and the Ottoman Empire gave American missionaries the right to take up residence, hold property, and proselytize without persecution. Missionaries, like other foreigners, sought and usually received extraterritorial status in non-European countries. Exempt from the laws of the land in which they lived, they were subject only to the jurisdiction of their own country's officials.

As the missionary movement grew, and grew more successful, missionaries and their allies moved to a second level of political activism. It became increasingly important to protect the lives, property, and other interests of American missionaries, and the effort to do so consumed more of the energy and time of the American diplomatic community. The breakdown of order, and the subsequent destruction of missionary property in countries like China, involved the United States government in forceful negotiations to obtain compensation. The threat to missionary and Chinese convert lives at the time of the Boxer Rebellion helped build the American domestic consensus for participation in the five-nation force that marched to the relief of the foreign contingent in Beijing. Afterward, however, missionary opinion led the United States to

dissociate itself from the extortionate demands for compensation that the European governments made to the defeated Chinese. Perhaps the missionaries' most dramatic success in persuading the U.S. government to make the protection of missionary property a chief diplomatic goal came in 1917, when they persuaded Wilson not to declare war on the Ottoman Empire, an ally of Germany in World War I. To declare war, they told the White House, would mean the closure of the enormous missionary-owned educational system and possibly the confiscation of property. It would certainly have left the Christian minorities of that empire without any international protection at a time of bloody communal violence.

Wilson agreed. The United States never declared war on the Ottomans, and the missionaries kept their schools.

On the third and highest level of activity, missionaries sought to persuade the U.S. government to use its influence to promote what would now be called a human rights agenda in the developing world. In some countries, even the very modestly sized native Christian communities that appeared in the nineteenth century alarmed local authorities and traditional religious communities. The introduction of Western-style printing presses and the development of increased written literature on sensitive political, cultural, and economic subjects further troubled the officials of some countries. Attempts to suppress the new Christian congregations—in Korea, in the Ottoman Empire, in China—met with stiff diplomatic resistance from the United States, and it was under the auspices of the missionary movement that American diplomats began to make a regular practice of negotiating with foreign governments to reduce human rights violations.

The formation of Western-style colleges and universities, with American norms of free academic discourse, was also an issue of concern, as was access by women students to educational opportunity. On the island now known as Sri Lanka, missionaries had to overcome local beliefs that it was "disgraceful" for young women to learn to read or to be seen in schools. Unwanted girl children adopted by compassionate missionaries were in some cases the only young women allowed to participate in educational programs.[8]

Missionaries also sought to shape American policy toward individual countries to promote their chances for peaceful, independent modernization. Wilsonians sought to control American policy toward countries like China, Siam, Hawaii, and the Ottoman Empire, not merely to protect their property but also to improve the chances that these and other

countries would develop in what Wilsonians considered to be promising directions. The results were sometimes very mixed, but the intent was always clear: The missionaries and their friends believed that American foreign policy should support the social and political objectives of the missionary movement.

One conspicuous example of missionaries playing a major, and controversial, role was in shaping American policy toward the then Kingdom of Hawaii. The archipelago's location had always made it a matter of concern to the United States government; possession of Pearl Harbor was in many ways the key to the control of the most important sea lanes of the Pacific. Denial of Hawaii to other countries was essential to keeping the west coast of the United States secure against attack. As American missionaries and their converts became increasingly influential, the U.S. government was increasingly lobbied—usually with substantial if not total success—to support missionary-backed "reforms" aimed at weakening the institution of the traditional monarchy and making Hawaii more of a democracy. That these reforms accelerated the decline of traditional Hawaiian society and made the country more vulnerable to American annexation did not trouble the missionaries unduly; then as now, Wilsonians do not grow excessively sentimental about "cultural differences" when those are used to legitimate nondemocratic forms of government.

The first treaties between the United States government and both China and Siam were largely the work of missionaries, and missionaries were valued advisers to the Siamese government during its long and ultimately successful attempts to fend off European imperialists.

Missionaries and their allies also exerted considerable influence over both public opinion and American foreign policy with respect both to great powers like Russia and Japan and to much of what, in the twentieth century, would become known as the third world. An open letter to Belgium's odious King Leopold II written by George Washington Williams, a well-respected African American foreign correspondent with strong links to the missionary community, helped fan the worldwide storm of outrage against the brutality taking place in the Congo Free State. Williams was attacked by a Belgian newspaper as "an unbalanced negro," but his writings helped force Leopold to give up his personal control over the Congo Free State.[9] In explaining his decision to annex the Philippines, President McKinley relied on missionary rather than mercantile logic when he told the American people that they had an obligation to "Christianize" the (Catholic) Filipinos.[10] Japan's concessions

to the missionaries, allowing them to operate schools and preach freely in Korea, helped reconcile American opinion to Japan's brutal occupation of that country, while it was missionary accounts of Japan's brutality in China that decisively turned American opinion against Japanese expansion in Asia, setting the stage for the Pacific phase of World War II. After the war General MacArthur's reconstruction of Japan was essentially an implementation of the missionary program at the point of bayonets. The traditional ruler gave up his claim to divinity; freedom of religion was established; feudalism was abolished and land distributed to the peasants; women were emancipated; a Western, democratic system of government was introduced; freedom of the press was granted; trade unions were legalized, and war was outlawed. Without the long missionary experience Americans would have had neither the chutzpah or the know-how that characterized the occupation in Japan, a foreign policy venture that despite all the attendant controversy is generally considered one of the most important and successful initiatives in American history.

Although the American Jewish community did not share the proselytizing zeal of its Christian neighbors, American Jews engaged in a substantial program of overseas relief and aid for Jews abroad and, often in association with Christian missionaries and philanthropists, began to exert influence in nineteenth-century American politics to ensure that the United States placed its diplomatic weight behind efforts to protect Jewish communities abroad from persecution. Shortly after the Civil War, when the newly independent Romanians began to celebrate their independence from Ottoman oppression by persecuting Romanian Jews, the Hayes administration sent an American Jew, Eugene Schuyler, to serve as consul in Romania with special instructions to support Romanian Jews. American diplomats also regularly protested the mistreatment of Russian Jews. American revulsion at Russian anti-Semitism and absolute rule was one of the powerful arguments advanced against U.S. intervention on the side of the Allies in World War I; as it happened, the United States entered the war only after the February revolution forced Nicholas II's abdication and an end to the feudal tsarist regime.

Beyond the influence they exercised on American policy toward particular countries, the missionary community and their friends, supporters, and others who shared their values back in the United States also sought to develop broad concepts for American foreign policy in

general: a grand strategic vision for the exercise of American power. As the British Empire declined and the United States moved toward replacing the British world order with one of its own, the missionary or Wilsonian vision had enormous impact in shaping the architecture of American hegemony. We will return to an analysis of this strategic vision and its impact on the construction of the United States–led world order, but we need first to round out the picture of nineteenth-century Wilsonianism by examining the impact that the missionary movement and the assorted philanthropical, spiritual, and political movements associated with it had on the United States and the world.

How the Missionaries Changed the World

Although the missionaries exerted a considerable influence over government policy, their major impact was outside government: the creation of institutions, relationships, and cultural and social realities in the United States and foreign civil society, along with other changes that resulted from missionary activity.

In many ways, the missionary movement has had more impact inside the United States than beyond its frontiers. First, through most of American history, missionaries and their offspring have served as a gateway between the mass of the American people and people abroad. While traders, travelers, government officials, sailors, journalists, consultants (like the ex-Confederate generals who advised the Egyptian government on military modernization after the Civil War), and government officials have long maintained a significant American presence around the world, missionaries and mission-related personnel were, for much of our history, the chief bridge between Americans and the non-European countries in which the majority of the world's population lives.

In particular the missionaries built personal connections between ordinary people in the United States and abroad. Although the exact structure varied from denomination to denomination, and although mission-related schools and colleges were structured differently from direct missions, the entire missionary endeavor rested on voluntary support and contributions by grassroots Americans. Missionaries were sent out by a local congregation or by a group of congregations in the same geographic area, and the personnel were often young women or men who had grown up in the communities that now undertook their support. Missionaries

corresponded regularly with their home congregations and periodically returned on leave to visit friends and family and to renew their supporters' enthusiasm and commitment. Millions of Americans who never visited a foreign country in their lives felt intimately connected to a women's literacy program in China, a secondary school in Armenia, a Bible college in the Balkans, or simply a local congregation building a church in Polynesia. Some missionary accounts became bestselling books, combining exotic details of foreign cultures with inspiring narratives of faith. Visits by local missionaries or nationally well-known mission figures were high points in the local year.

The mission movement was an early point of entry for women, African Americans, and Catholics into direct contact and experience in foreign affairs. Because professional education was open to women who were accredited to foreign missionary boards, many of the brightest and most ambitious women of the post–Civil War generations made their careers overseas. To some degree the mission movement was the lever that cracked open the doors of professional education to women; it was manifestly absurd to admit female students to professional schools only on condition that they leave the country immediately on graduation.

Missions were also egalitarian and democratic in that they brought Americans into direct contact with the external world regardless of geography and class. Poor rural communities supported foreign missions and received letters and visits from abroad; as politicians discovered when their mailboxes filled with protests over the Chinese railway loan, many American citizens who were not part of the foreign policy or economic elite of their day cared very deeply about events overseas.

Another important domestic consequence of the missionary movement was the internationalization of the American university. The idea of the college as a mission field goes back at least to Rev. Eleazar Wheelock's 1769 foundation of Dartmouth for the education of Indians along Christian principles; but by the middle of the nineteenth century, missionaries were regularly sending promising young people from abroad back to the United States for a college education. For many American students, the mission students were the first foreigners they met. Over the years, that they met under circumstances of equality in which all the power and prestige of the local religious and educational establishment supported courteous and friendly treatment of the foreigner had a major impact on many thousands of college students. In some cases mission students were the only members of non-European racial groups permitted to attend colleges.

The first Chinese student admitted to higher education in the United States was Yung Wing, enrolled at Yale in 1850.[11] By 1999 an estimated thirty-one thousand students from mainland China and Taiwan were enrolled in higher education in the United States.[12] The effects on American and Chinese history of this long and growing exchange have already been dramatic, and promise to reverberate and develop through many years to come.

This was only one of many ways in which the missionary movement contributed to the slow erosion of popular American prejudices and hatreds. The cause of interracial adoptions, for example, was enthusiastically supported by Nobel Prize–winning novelist (and missionary daughter) Pearl S. Buck. Having grown up in China among the Chinese, she simply did not share the racial prejudices that so distorted American life in her time. During the Korean War she joined the missionary community in urging Americans of European descent to adopt Korean war orphans—only a generation after laws were passed banning "Oriental" immigration into the United States, and a decade after many Japanese Americans were forced into internment camps for the duration of World War II.

Buck was by no means alone. Missionaries may have gone out to the field with prejudices of various kinds, which some of them may never have dropped, but for many the mission experience utterly changed their view of the world. As local churches developed in mission countries, missionaries increasingly had to learn to work first with and then under local church authority. With a handful of exceptions, most missionary salaries were too low to allow the missionaries to live in the remote splendor of the businessmen and government officials who went out from the West to govern Africa and Asia during the colonial eras. Their friends, neighbors, and professional associates were increasingly drawn from the countries where they lived; their children's playmates were "natives," and, through their ties to the alumni of mission colleges, their friends included leaders in the emerging nationalist movements of the colonial world. Patronizing and prejudiced as many missionaries undoubtedly were, the mission field was the first place in which large numbers of well-educated Americans learned to work as equals with people from other cultural backgrounds, and just as the mission boards had been among the first multinational corporations in American history, so too were they the first American organizations that systematically moved to place locals in positions of leadership.

That the United States was prepared for world leadership after World

War II is largely a result of the missionary movement. Missionary kids, fluent from childhood in foreign languages and at home in foreign cultures, were invaluable assets for American forces during the war, and after it for occupation and diplomatic missions and as key staffers in the vast international expansion of American business. According to one recent survey, roughly 50 percent of "foreign culture experts" during World War II were missionary offspring.[13] This was particularly crucial at a time when the European empires were collapsing across the third world, which is precisely where the American missions were located.

The process by which the "backwash" from a missionary movement changes the home culture is still under way today. Catholic missions and missionary orders in Central and Latin America have done much to sensitize American society to the values and concerns of those societies. The energetic and phenomenally successful mission work of the Latter-day Saints has made Utah one of the most cosmopolitan states in the Union. This geographically isolated state is increasingly involved in trade and other international relationships, thanks to the exchanges and contacts brought about by the Mormon missionary effort. With young Mormons expected to serve two years in the mission field, and with many foreign converts coming to Salt Lake City to study in its hallowed halls and sacred cloisters, Utah is surprisingly rich in dynamic young people who are fluent in a foreign language—and who have friends and connections abroad. The June 9, 1978, decision by Mormon spiritual authorities to admit black men to the full Mormon priesthood clearly reflected missionary experience, and it parallels the steps by which many other American church communities have moved beyond the racism embedded in popular culture.

Finally the presence of American and other Western missionaries abroad inspired a "missionary reflux," accelerating the penetration of American society by non-Western and Islamic religious ideas. Missionary endeavors to translate the sacred writings of other faiths into English may have been for purposes of arming Westerners for religious controversy with the heathens, but the ideas of those texts quickly found a place in American thought. Emerson and Thoreau read Hindu scriptures, and their thought, and the development of American intellectual life, was deeply influenced by these ideas.

More recently the United States has increasingly become the scene of conscious missionary efforts by such traditionally nonmissionary faiths as Hinduism and Buddhism, as well as by Muslims. These efforts, plus

immigration, have fostered the development of significant and growing bodies of non-Christian, non-Jewish religious believers in the United States, and the ideas and values of these religious traditions have disseminated widely into American life.

Thus, whatever their original intentions may have been, the missionaries helped open the door to non-Christian ideas in American culture. The result, in making the American public more respectful and tolerant of, and more informed about, non-Western traditions, has enormously increased the ability of the American people to play a constructive part in the development of a global civilization.

The missionary movement and the allied and assorted movements of philanthropic internationalism beginning in the nineteenth century also wrought substantial changes in the world beyond America's borders. Mission churches were planted that over time grew to have great influence in the politics and cultures of many countries; an international civil society took root along with the beginnings of global movements for peace, disarmament, arbitration, and human rights. American missionaries and philanthropists were not the only actors in this drama. Missionaries proceeded outward from much of Europe during the era. Britain in particular was home to a vibrant missionary movement and, particularly in the first half of the nineteenth century, was the unquestioned world center of the abolition and peace movements. Nevertheless, as time wore on, American missionaries, backed by the religious fervor and philanthropic bent of the American people as well as by the material riches of American society, moved toward center stage, and the British retreated into a supporting role. Since the late nineteenth century the percentage of American missionaries among Protestant missionaries world-wide has steadily grown.

Although it would be a serious mistake to measure the influence of the missionary movement by looking solely at its success in planting churches, the missionaries enjoyed a broad though not universal success in spreading their faith, and the churches they planted have in some cases gone on to play important roles in the history of many non-Western countries. South Korea is a case in point. Christianity was essentially unknown in Korea two hundred years ago. By 1995 33 percent of the population was Protestant, another 7 percent was Catholic, and a large additional number belonged to unique Korean syncretistic churches,

combining Christian and traditional Korean beliefs.[14] This group included the well-known and controversial Unification Church, led by Rev. Sun Myung Moon. For most of the twentieth century, the churches and their members played major political roles. Under the Japanese occupation, mission schools were among the few avenues open to Koreans wishing to escape the Japanese-dominated educational system, and the churches were reservoirs of Korean nationalism. During and after the Korean War the churches and the foreign missions were important in the construction and stabilization of the South Korean state, while the Christian churches played a leading role in the democracy movement that ultimately brought the South Korean military dictatorship to an end. Of the first two Korean presidents elected democratically the first, Kim Young Sam, was Protestant, and the second, Kim Dae Jung, was Catholic.

Although the demographic consequences of the missionary effort in China were not as dramatic, the long-term consequences of mission activity in China may be even more dramatic than in Korea. The tradition of Chinese students coming to American universities began under missionary auspices, and the continuing flood of Chinese students into American universities following the normalization of relations has once again resulted in the exposure of, ultimately, hundreds of thousands of China's best and brightest to a wide range of American ideas and influences.

The overseas Chinese, among whom missionaries and Chinese churches continued to work after 1949, have joined Christian churches in rates that approach conversion rates in Korea (14 percent in Singapore,[15] somewhat higher in Indonesia, the United States, and Vietnam, and substantially higher in the Philippines). This is not a universal trend: Only 3.6 percent of Taiwan's people are now Christian, and this figure includes non-Chinese tribal groups. In Hong Kong and Thailand the percentage is similarly low.[16] All in all, it appears that something between fifty and one hundred million people of Chinese descent around the world profess one or another form of Christian faith, a number equal to or higher than the total population of Britain or France and substantially larger than the total population of the United States at the time the American churches inaugurated their missionary program to China.[17] It is quite possible that in this century these communities will have great impact on the religious and cultural climate not only of Southeast Asia, but of China itself and the entire world. Anecdotal evidence suggests that despite (perhaps because of) Communist persecution of Christian communities in China, both Protestant and Catholic churches are experiencing

extraordinary growth, with a large number of conversions registered in the official, state-tolerated churches, and perhaps even more explosive growth among the unregistered Protestant and Catholic congregations.[18] Given the general disillusionment with communist ideology, the social upheavals associated with industrialization, and the decline of traditional Chinese beliefs since 1949, and given the religious fervor in significant elements of the overseas Chinese community, this century may well witness another sustained round of Christian missionary activity in China, this time spearheaded by Chinese leaders and Chinese churches and paid for with overseas Chinese money.

In Latin America old, cherished dreams of the missionaries may also be coming true, and in the process reshaping social and political realities. Guatemala and other countries may have Protestant majorities. In Brazil, Chile and elsewhere Evangelical and Pentecostal communities have experienced remarkable growth. Anecdotal evidence suggests that a major Protestant religious revival is also taking place in Cuba. This growth is transforming society in some areas of Latin America, and not merely in rural areas populated by indigenous minorities as was once largely the case, but in major urban centers as well. The astounding spread of Protestant Christianity among Hispanics in the United States will provide an increasingly wealthy and influential base of support for missionary efforts in the future. It appears likely that this century will see Latin America become a religiously mixed region, and the five centuries of identification of Latin American society with Catholicism will come to an end—with enormous implications for the political, social, and economic future of the Western Hemisphere.

American Catholic missionaries have also had a significant impact abroad. Once a mission field for foreign Catholic priests, the United States has become one of the most important sources of Catholicism's international strength. Both Catholic and Protestant missionaries from the United States have played a major role in the dramatic expansion of Christianity in Africa, an expansion that has continued and even accelerated after the end of colonial rule. As in the Philippines, Korea, and Taiwan, local Christians and their churches played important roles in democracy movements throughout Africa. Anglican archbishop Desmond Tutu is only the best known of a galaxy of African Christians who continue to struggle for African versions of Western democratic institutions. It is likely that without Christian missionaries, Islam would ultimately have replaced polytheism throughout Africa; the spread of

Christianity there has genuine world-historical importance. The vibrant Catholicism of many Africans seems likely to prove a major element in the continuing strength of the Roman Catholic Church in the third millennium. Meanwhile, church organizations continue to play leading roles in providing relief for the victims of Africa's wars and catastrophes, and any progress toward stable democratic rule in much of Africa will be to a very large extent the child of the churches planted by the missionaries in the colonial era.

However great its religious impact has been, the key to appreciating the importance of the missionary movement in American foreign policy lies in understanding its nonreligious impact. A good example is in the former lands of the Ottoman Empire. Basically coterminous with the modern Middle East plus much of southeastern Europe, this region was the object of the first great missionary endeavor of the American missionary movement, antedating the major push in China by fifty years. Here the religious objectives of the American missionaries—the conversion of the Muslims of the Ottoman Empire to Christianity—were almost entirely frustrated. Furthermore, the method they chose—uplifting the Christian minorities of the empire both spiritually and materially—ended in the ruin of some of the world's most ancient Christian communities. The ultimate historical judgment on the American missionary record in the Middle East may be that the missionaries accomplished in one century what Islam failed to do in thirteen: eliminating Christianity as a living religion in much of the Middle East.

Yet, even though they failed to reach their religious goals, the missionaries changed the Middle East in ways that still endure.

Once the first missionaries realized that the region's Muslims were largely uninterested in the Christian message, they changed tactics. The American missionaries turned to the ancient Christian minorities of the empire, including communities of people who had survived under Muslim rule almost since the lifetime of the Prophet: Armenians, Syrians, Lebanese, the Nestorean and Chaldean Christians of Iran and Mesopotamia, the Copts of Egypt, and the considerable minority of Palestinian Arabs, who, one thousand years after the Muslim conquest, still chose to remain in the communion of their fathers. Additionally, because much of the Balkans was then still under Ottoman rule, the Greeks, Bulgarians, Macedonians, and others became objects of American Christian mission solicitude.

The Christianity of these ancient communions was very different from the American Protestantism of the era. Differences in dogma among the mostly Orthodox and Oriental traditions of the Eastern churches and American Evangelicalism were only part of the difference. Without the discipline of the Roman communion or the active lay leadership of the Protestant world, and condemned to second-class citizenship under the Ottoman system, the Christian communities of the Middle East were in a condition that the earnest missionaries found shocking—reminiscent, to those earnest disciples of Jonathan Edwards and Timothy Dwight, of the worst eras of stagnation, barbarism, and corruption in the Dark Ages of the West. The Scriptures and divine worship were often in tongues as indecipherable to the clergy as to the people. Both the laity and the clergy were in a degraded state, suffering from formalism, simony, apathy, illiteracy. No wonder, said the missionary strategists, that the Muslims show no interest in the religion of Christ. These Christian communities give them nothing to emulate or respect. The missionaries therefore decided to begin the conversion of the Ottoman world by reawakening the Christian communities.

The missionaries launched movements of national revival among the minorities of the Near East. Over time they enjoyed signal success. Printing presses published both practical and spiritual works in the contemporary languages of the minorities. Boarding schools and colleges were founded for both girls and boys. Bright students received scholarships to study in the United States.

Gradually this made an impact, both religious and otherwise. In some cases Protestant Christian communities seceded from the jurisdiction of the traditional authorities; in others the new influences were accommodated without an open break. Partly because European and Western influence was simultaneously on the rise in the Muslim world, Christianity ceased to be a social and economic disadvantage. Christian children educated in missionary schools spoke Western languages, understood Western concepts, and soon came to benefit from extensive business and social networks. As Ottoman minorities like the Greeks and the Serbs struggled for and gained independence in the European portion of the empire, Christian minorities grew increasingly discontented elsewhere.

The Muslim majority watched all this, and was inspired both to emulate the success of the minority by attending Western and even missionary schools, and to develop a national consciousness of its own. Turkish and Arab students flocked to American (as well as European) colleges in the region, where social and secular revolutionary ideas spread. Both

Turkish nationalism and Arab nationalism owe a great deal to the educational labors of the missionaries, but neither Turks nor Arabs embraced their religious ideals. The Christian minorities, long tolerated in the Muslim world under the enlightened precepts of the Holy Koran, were no longer seen as tame minorities. They were bearers of disturbing Western influence and, as Western pressure on the crumbling Ottoman and Arab worlds increased, they were seen as the conscious agents of foreign imperial powers.

As tensions rose, and continued to rise through the late nineteenth century and into contemporary times, increasing numbers of Christians in the Middle East took advantage of their familiarity with the Western world to emigrate—in many cases, to the United States. The proportion of Christians among the Arab population of Palestine has fallen by more than two-thirds since 1914.[19]

This is a religious failure on a grand scale, but the impact of the missionary presence on the secular and political scene in the Middle East has been profound, with consequences that will be unfolding for many years. Missionary educated intellectuals played a major role in the development of Arab nationalism; even today Palestinian Christians play a much larger role in the politics of Palestine than their numbers would justify. The continuing attraction of Western ideas, divorced from Christian theology, remains fundamental and profound; witness the democracy movement in contemporary Iran and the continuing discussions in the Islamic world about the proper role of women.

While American missionaries were not the only Western influence in the Middle East, until the 1940s the American missionary presence was unique in that it was relatively disinterested. Until the end of World War II Britain and France were the leading Western imperial powers in the region, and the United States had no bases and only modest investments. The result was a Middle Eastern sympathy for the United States that has still not entirely disappeared. Arab nationalists looked to the United States as a friendly, anti-imperial power until relatively recently; even as late as the Suez crisis of 1956, the United States took the Arab side against a coalition of Britain, Israel, and France. Turkey still sees the United States as a sympathetic power, as do the Armenians and the Georgians.

Liberal democracy, in power almost nowhere in the Middle East, is a force with which the Middle East's rulers must nevertheless contend. A liberal, modernizing strain of Islam, developed by Muslim thinkers ear-

lier in the century and modeled, in some cases directly, on the steps Christian theology took to accommodate modern developments in science and politics, remains the leading ideological opponent of the fundamentalist movements that appear to be running out of steam in much of the Middle East. Here too, in Muslim rather than in Christian form, some of the core ideological concepts that the missionaries preached more than a hundred years ago are likely to play important roles in this century.

The secular contributions of the missionary movement may, on a global scale, ultimately have more impact than do their religious achievements. Liberal democracy has, officially at least, become the ruling ideology in southern, southeastern and most of northeastern Asia. China, Vietnam, Myanmar, and North Korea remain socialist with varying degrees of conviction and success, but none of these societies look as if they will be setting the ideological agenda for the future. In most of Africa, liberal democracy has no serious ideological rival; it haunts the chancelleries of the Muslim Middle East and duels with the recidivist national fascisms of the Balkan Peninsula.

Supporting this worldwide movement toward humane and liberal democracy is a host of civil society movements for human rights, protection of journalists, the defense of ethnic and religious minorities, women's rights, justice for refugees, disarmament, and other liberal causes. In many cases there are direct institutional links between these organizations and the missionary churches. In many others the links are cultural, ideological or personal. In some cases, like the Korean democracy movement, these movements are in large part based in churches. In others, as with the large network of farmer-based, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Thailand, missionaries, church-related development organizations, and foundations support indigenous, non-Christian movements. Throughout the third world, international movements against such evils as child labor, female circumcision, and debt peonage carry on the missionary tradition in the circumstances of the present.

In all its forms this global movement, controlled from no single center and focused on no single object, owes much to the missionaries, American and otherwise, who gave their lives to spread what they believed to be the linked messages of Christian faith and democratic government in the non-European regions of the world. It is only natural that Wilsonians seek as vigorously now to align American foreign policy with the goals of this great international movement as they did in the past.

Much of the history of this century will consist of the efforts of Wilsonians in the United States and their allies and kindred spirits abroad to realize the vision of universal brotherhood and peace.

Wilsonian Grand Strategy

Just as Hamiltonians developed a set of basic ideas about how to define and defend the national interests, Wilsonians through American history have worked from a basic set of ideas about American foreign policy. And while Wilsonian foreign policy concepts contain much that realists find hard to swallow, the core strategic ideas of the Wilsonian community are neither as impractical nor as contradictory as their critics often allege. Their logic is powerful; the Wilsonian approach to national security has much to recommend it, and the Wilsonian element in our foreign policy has made substantial contributions to the growth of the nation's power.

The first principle of Wilsonian foreign policy is that democracies make better and more reliable partners than monarchies and tyrannies. Far from naive, this perspective rests on a sophisticated understanding of political dynamics. Nonrepresentational governments are unreliable partners for several reasons. We can start by citing royal caprice. In 1756, Louis XV was widely believed to have gone to war with Frederick the Great to avenge himself for a series of insults that the Prussian monarch permitted himself at the expense of the French king's *maîtresse en titre.* (Frederick, for example, named the dog that shared his bed "Pompadour.")[20] To this add succession politics: In Hanoverian England, the Prince of Wales was almost always at political odds with the King. A power whose policy can change with a death or a marriage is hardly the most reliable of friends. Again, Frederick the Great's career is instructive: His throne was saved at the hour of defeat when the Russian czarina Elizabeth was replaced by her weak and Prussophile heir, Peter. This was the "miracle of the House of Brandenburg" that Josef Goebbels thought of when he heard of Franklin Roosevelt's death, and rushed excitedly to tell the Führer the news. But as Hitler and Goebbels discovered, democratic governments are less prone to rapid reversals than are autocratic systems.

This is only the surface of the argument. Nonrepresentative polities are unstable not simply because their rulers can be erratic. They are un-

reliable precisely because public opinion is imperfectly reflected in the government. Governments can adopt and pursue policies that have no backing in society. Those policies can last until the government falls in chaos and confusion, to be replaced, perhaps, by a regime that lurches equally uncertainly in another unsuitable direction. There is nothing abstract about this argument. The monarchs of Europe were constantly wobbling on their thrones in the nineteenth century; when revolutionaries didn't bring them down, assassins shot them. Policies in democracies are less likely to diverge from what is politically popular, and when democratic governments fall there is less danger of an overshoot in another direction. Democratic policies are pulled toward the center and toward a rational concept of interest, argue Wilsonians; that makes them more predictable and more likely to keep promises once made. Wilsonians think of monarchical, oligarchic, and tyrannical states as resembling pyramids balanced on their noses; democracies are like pyramids standing on their bases. The first kind are much more likely to move violently and massively in unpredictable ways.

In particular, democracy guards against one of the most dangerous forms of misrepresentation and misgovernance: the domination of the state by a military elite. Such military states may, and frequently do, prefer war to peace; war consolidates military authority and ensures military control over resources. It is only civilians who benefit from peace and only democracy, say Wilsonians, ensures that the millions who seek peace can control the thousands who want war. To put it in a nutshell: Tyrants give power to generals; democracies give it to moms.

Furthermore over time democracies are likely to move toward increasing degrees of moral and political agreement. Mass-led societies are more like one another than societies directed by individuals or small classes. This homogeneity leads to increasing degrees of agreement over the proper constitution and rules of international society; democracies are more likely to agree than are aristocratic or monarchical states.

Democracies are also reliable because they tend to prosper. Successful capitalism depends on the rule of law, and democratic governments more than any others are likely over time to develop fair and effective legal systems. At the same time, because voters reward politicians whose policies lead to economic growth and punish those deemed responsible for recessions, democratic states over time can be expected to move increasingly toward effective economic policy.

Finally, these advantages tend to increase over time as democracies

grow more stable, more part of an order. Wilsonians look—with some justice—to the evolution of the Atlantic community in the twentieth century as a vindication of these theories. War among these societies was commonplace before they became democracies. Now war among them is almost unthinkable, and they have all grown very rich.

As a corollary to their support of democracy around the world, Wilsonians—again under missionary influence—became determined opponents of colonialism. The British *raj* was evidently not democratic; the less enlightened rule of other colonial empires was even less tolerable. Wilsonian opinion, which had flirted briefly with the imperialist option at the turn of the twentieth century, soon joined the chorus calling for the United States to give up its own colonies.

Wilsonian beliefs lead to the principle that the support of democracy abroad is not only a moral duty for the United States but a practical imperative as well. This belief first appeared in American politics at the time of the French Revolution, and it reappeared with every great European revolutionary movement of the nineteenth century. What we would now call Wilsonian voices called for intervention in the Latin American, Greek, Polish, Hungarian, and Cuban wars for independence. In 1848–49 the navy went so far as to pick up republican refugees after the collapse of the Roman republic. Wilsonians supported American interventions in Hawaiian politics as that kingdom slowly died, but Wilsonians were unable to trigger American armed intervention in a foreign war for independence until the intervention in Cuba in 1898. In the twentieth century growing American power gave more scope for Wilsonian interventions, and American forces engaged in "democratic" and "humanitarian" interventions with increasing regularity.

An important factor in the growth of Wilsonian determination to spread democracy was the startling success of American post–World War II policy in Germany, Italy, and Japan. Although all these countries had tried parliamentary systems in the past, none of these former Axis powers had ever known real stability under democratic rule. The experiments in democratic governance that began after World War II started under very unfavorable circumstances. All the countries had been devastated by the war; Italy was divided between an energetic and militant Communist Party and a somewhat obscurantist Christian right. Initially, very few politicians in Japan sincerely supported the American democratic experiment. In Germany, where most historians blamed the collapse of the Weimar Republic on the consequences of the harsh Treaty of

Versailles, the new democracy began life under far more adverse conditions than those of Weimar. Germany lost vastly more territory in 1945 than in 1919; its economy was far more bitterly disrupted, and its entire social order had been twisted and distorted by twelve years of Nazi rule.

Yet in all three cases, democratic governments put down roots, and all three countries became reliable American allies during the Cold War and after. These were hard cases; if democracy could take root in what had been Nazi Germany it could surely flourish anywhere.

The more sustained interventions for democracy, involving methods short of force, that characterized missionary activity in the nineteenth century also increased and accelerated in the twentieth. Organizations such as Radio Free Europe and Voice of America in the Cold War, and the National Endowment for Democracy, supported nonviolent efforts to spread democratic ideas and solidify democratic policies abroad. The vast network of nongovernmental prodemocracy organizations continues to ask for and to receive consular and diplomatic support from the United States in many places around the world, much as the missionaries did. The work of transforming the world on democratic lines goes on.

After the promotion of democracy, the next object of Wilsonian strategic thought is the prevention of war. Always brutal and destructive, war under modern conditions, say Wilsonians, is becoming unbearable and potentially risks the extermination of the human race. The modern antiwar movement dates back to the 1820s and 1830s, when evangelical Christian groups summoned a series of peace congresses to look for ways and means to end the scourge of war. As improved methods of communications, combined with a growing destructive power in arms, brought the shocking spectacle of modern war in all its horror closer to civilian readers, the antiwar movement gained strength, quickly moving in three complementary directions. The peace congress movement has continued under different institutional forms through the present day, convening international gatherings of activists to develop proposals for a peaceful world, and seeking through student exchanges and institutional ties across national boundaries to build a network of activists and organizations in many countries determined to stop war. The second branch of the movement sought to reduce the horrors of warfare by imposing codes of conduct on it and by limiting the production, distribution, and use of arms. This program led to the formation of the

International Red Cross and the Geneva Convention, and ultimately to such measures as contemporary treaties to ban land mines, to prevent the enlistment of children younger than sixteen in military forces, and to establish an international criminal court. The third branch of the modern peace movement seeks to prevent war by developing alternatives to it: forums to which nations can take disputes instead of fighting it out, and international organizations for collective security. This third approach led to the development, first, of bilateral arbitration treaties and, later, to the League of Nations, the World Court and the United Nations.

The original leadership in these peace movements was European, but American Wilsonians participated early on and sought, often successfully, to get U.S. government support for these ventures. After a national grassroots campaign spearheaded by Civil War heroine Clara Barton, President Chester A. Arthur brought the United States into the Red Cross system in 1881, and with his support Congress ratified the Geneva Convention in 1882. As the United States moved to the center of the world stage, Wilsonians sought, and still seek, to put the growing muscle of the United States behind the world peace movement. Where they can, Wilsonians want the United States to take the lead in this movement; when the United States lags, when it fails to sign the land mine treaty or falls behind in its UN dues, Wilsonians take on themselves the task of bringing the United States into compliance with what they hope will develop into a genuinely Wilsonian international order.

The Consequences of Wilsonian Politics

Judging from the low esteem in which some observers hold it, one might think that Wilsonianism is a major drag on American foreign policy. While there are problems, and we will examine them, it is important to understand the many ways in which the presence of Wilsonian tendencies in American foreign policy provides great benefits.

The first great benefit has nothing directly to do with our foreign policy but has nevertheless been of enormous value in that area. Despite Wilson's own sorry record on race, the Wilsonian idea that the American Revolution is incomplete, that the United States has a duty to fight until the equal rights of all are acknowledged and respected has had major consequences in American history. In particular it has provided an ideological and moral bridge that allows minorities, immigrant groups, and others to feel a strong patriotism and loyalty to a country

that oftentimes has been very reluctant to grant them their rights. Frederick Douglass felt—justly, from a Wilsonian standpoint—that he was the "real" American, while the racists and slaveholders around him were defective Americans. The "real" America was on Douglass's side, even as the defective and incomplete America of daily life trampled on his sensibilities and violated his rights at every turn.

Immigrants have looked, and still do look, at the Wilsonian idea of America and have found it to be something they could love and strive for in the face of discrimination and hardship. At the same time Wilsonian doctrine sends a message to nonminorities that they have a patriotic duty to make room for the immigrants, to welcome them into the community, and to struggle against the national heritage of racism. In peace and war this tradition brings the United States many blessings; without it this would be a much weaker and unhappier country.

Beyond the inestimable blessing of making the United States a more inclusive, welcoming, and united country, Wilsonian politics has conferred another great benefit on American foreign policy by aligning it with the major movements of contemporary history. There have been two fundamental movements in international society over the last two centuries: the spread of democracy, and the rise to independence and development of increasing portions of the non-European world. Some powers have stood in the way of these processes, and they paid a ruinous price. Thanks largely to pressure from the Wilsonian school, the United States has generally supported these trends, and reaped corresponding rewards.

The Wilsonian presence has also provided a strong base of popular support for an active, engaged American foreign policy, often enough for policies that serve Hamiltonian ends. As it happens a strong common set of concerns draws Wilsonians and Hamiltonians together. Although it is true that they often quarrel and fight—China policy being one venerable example, the struggle between Wilson and Lodge over the shape of the League of Nations another—the two schools are often able to work together on the set of interests and values they have in common.

After all, both schools of thought look to a stable world order as the ultimate, best-case outcome of their activities. The Hamiltonian hope that there will be a worldwide trading and investment system based on international law and enforced by honest, transparent judiciaries in many states—with a World Court perhaps in the background when national justice seems more biased than august—closely parallels much of the Wilsonian agenda.

Despite their yearning for peace, Wilsonians have often joined Hamiltonians in supporting, if necessary, war against states that make war on the international order. Hamiltonians may snicker when Wilsonians talk about war to make the world safe for democracy—and Wilsonians groan at the thought of Hamiltonians wanting to make the world safe for plutocracy—but in practice the targets of Wilsonian and Hamiltonian wrath are often the same. Hamiltonians may think the crime is principally an assault on the balance of power. Wilsonians see it as an attack on international law, or as the violation of neutrality. But since aspiring hegemons generally do have to trample on such inconveniences, the result is that just when American merchants need them most, American missionaries have often been ready to troop to the colors.

When it came to European colonial empires in the third world, Wilsonian idealism and Hamiltonian realism dictated the same course. Barring exceptional circumstances (such as the communist threat in French Indochina), Wilsonians believed that the United States should work by all peaceful means to undermine the colonial system. Wilsonian opposition to colonialism was more consistent and inflexible than the nuanced Hamiltonian approach. Nevertheless, over the long sweep of history the two schools of thought supported American policies that limited the extension of the colonial system and undermined it where possible.

China policy over the last 150 years illustrates how the conflicting but also complementary perspectives of Hamiltonians and Wilsonians combined to shape policy. Even as missionaries battled merchants, lobbying to outlaw the opium trade that merchants saw as commercially necessary, both groups saw the need for the United States to oppose the partition of China while ensuring that American nationals benefited from all the concessions that the European powers were able to extract. Merchants wanted aggressive consular protection backed up by an effective naval presence for commercial reasons; missionaries wanted the same kind of protection for their own more spiritual goals. Both merchants and missionaries wanted, and still want, to see China establish a reliable, independent judiciary to provide both Chinese citizens and American investors with all the protections of the law. Working together, Hamiltonians and Wilsonians kept Washington focused on China policy; and certainly on Taiwan, and possibly ultimately on the mainland, Chinese society may well evolve in the broad general direction that both American schools would prefer.

Wilsonianism benefits American foreign policy in another important way. Since most great powers have guiding ideologies, it is a good thing that Wilsonianism is particularly well-suited for winning friends and influencing people abroad.

To begin with Wilsonianism is a universal, not a particular, ideal. That is, no races, individuals, countries, or cultures are in principle excluded from the Wilsonian vision of a world of peaceful democracies treating one another with respect.

This counts. In the British Empire foreigners were always seen as inferior, and the darker and less British-acting they were, the more inferior. When foreign peoples were brought into the British Empire, it was as subject peoples. This was a time bomb; Indians, among others, either had to abandon their self-respect or fight for their freedom.

In the American hegemony, by contrast, all nations and all peoples are assumed to be, or at least capable of becoming, equal. Not that all Wilsonians have subscribed to the equality of races. But unlike British imperial ideology, Wilsonianism has proved capable of evolving, and has generally been a force for the recognition of equality both within and beyond the United States. International law as imagined by Wilsonians will protect poor and weak countries as well as the rich and the strong. A fully Wilsonian system would replace might with right in the judgment seat of nations. This is an intoxicating vision, to which Ecuadorians and Ethiopians can subscribe as well as Americans, and it is a great advantage for the United States.

Wilsonian universalism also extends to classes. Everyone, rich or poor, is welcome to the shelter of the Wilsonian revival tent. Not all ideological movements have been so broad minded. Besides the lamentable economic strategies and tyrannical government structures that bolshevism built, and that hobbled its struggle for world domination, bolshevism was also at war with the most powerful and articulate elements in international society: the ruling bourgeois class of the capitalist countries and the petty bourgeois who dominate intellectual, journalistic, and cultural life. While bolshevism claimed individual converts from both classes, societies had to undergo wrenching revolutions and complete economic and social change to join the bolshevik camp. The deepest religious feelings of the common people had to be opposed; the basic interests of the elites had to be powerfully rooted out.

Wilsonianism doesn't have to work that hard to conquer. Emperors and kings can hang on to their thrones if they will share their power.

Despite the fears of past generations, experience in the United States and elsewhere shows the rich that their goods are safe in democratic societies—perhaps safer, since transparent legal systems erect more safeguards between the individual and state power. Whole societies can be, and have been, converted to Wilsonian values.

Furthermore the Wilsonian ideal is nonsectarian. That is, while it historically emerged from Christianity—and from Protestant, low-church Christianity at that—the Wilsonian ideal of a community of states all run on democratic lines is one that can actually be adopted by states and cultures that are neither Protestant nor even Christian. Democracy can be an ideal for Argentines, Indians and Japanese; it can also be one for Iranians, many of whom hope to see their Islamic republic incorporate more features of the Wilsonian program while maintaining its Islamic character.

For the United States to be seen as the main international supporter and avatar of so effective and seductive an ideology is clearly a major advantage in international affairs. It ensures that to some degree the most active, intelligent, and forward-looking elements in many other countries regard the United States sympathetically. While they can and do oppose American designs in particular cases, on the whole broad sectors of the active and progressive classes in foreign countries will be more likely to tolerate and even support American influence and power, and they will be slow to see anything but benefits from closer relations with the United States.

Even those governments like China's, which remain anti-Wilsonian, are haunted by the power and attraction of Wilsonian ideals. Not every generation of Chinese students will build models of the Statue of Liberty on Tienanmen Square, but many of China's best and brightest will continue to see Wilsonian ideas both domestically and in international society as the most beneficial means to China's own growth and development. The United States does not need a Comintern to spread its ideas and build political allies in the rest of the world; the natural appeal of Wilsonian ideas to the contemporary mind does that job without our help.

Another way in which Wilsonianism works to build support for the United States will be felt more in this century than in the last: the position of the United States as the most visible and powerful example of a country that believes in equal rights for women. There is every reason to believe that this will be the century of the woman, with the rise of

women to equal power and rights one of the most fundamental developments all over the world. U.S. feminism is perhaps the quality that Continental realism would consider its least useful asset from a foreign policy point of view; in reality, however, our successful and dynamic feminist movement, together with our advocacy of equal rights for women in international politics, will help keep the United States on the right side of history and make us powerful friends and allies among emerging leadership groups around the world.

An additional benefit provided by the Wilsonian school is one that ought to make Wilsonians uneasy. In effect, the power of Wilsonian ideas in American foreign policy is pervasive but not universal. Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, but the United States does not always conduct its foreign policy on Wilsonian lines. Again, this did not start with the world wars or with the Cold War, nor has it ended. Saudi Arabia is one of the least Wilsonian places on the face of the earth, but the United States can and does support its royal family. The United States steadfastly supported the very undemocratic regime of Indonesia's seven-term president Suharto, only withdrawing that support when his power was obviously disintegrating.

I won't unsettle readers by heaping up unpleasant examples; a quick glance through an atlas or a good newspaper should provide ample food for thought. How fortunate it is, then, that a foreign policy that is and perhaps must sometimes be so—well, so *morally challenged*—should be so radiantly garbed in ideals so sublime. How useful it is that so many people around the world see Wilsonian ideals as defining the norm of American foreign policy, and interpret its other aspects as unfortunate and temporary deviations from it.

In effect the very strength and sincerity of the Wilsonian school allows the United States to do something that democratic societies cannot easily do consciously: to play the suave and accomplished hypocrite. Wilsonians proclaim noble principles and sincerely plan to apply them—but then, alas, they sometimes lose policy battles. The Clinton administration extended most favored nation status to China despite that country's un-Wilsonian approach to human rights. The United States fell far behind in its UN dues, despite the fervent lobbying of its Wilsonian friends.

Yet if Wilsonians are disappointed by defeats like this, they are not discouraged. They see their job as moving U.S. policy step by step toward an ideal; they know that progress will be halting and slow, and

that at times there will be considerable backsliding. None of this affects their sincere (and therefore often convincing) declarations to foreigners about the enduring principles of American foreign policy, or their bedrock convictions about the superior morality and social organization of the United States. No mere and ugly fact can deface an image so sublime; no sin cannot be overcome by grace; no temporary weakness or failing can overthrow the right, the duty, and the destiny of the United States to spread its democratic revolution to the ends of the earth.

Far from sneering at Wilsonianism and its acolytes, realists should thank God that they exist. Annoying as Wilsonian moralists can be at times, on the whole they have done much to strengthen the hands of American foreign policy makers.

With all these advantages, Wilsonianism clearly brings great strengths to American foreign policy, but its critics are correct that the Wilsonian program involves the United States in difficulties and dangers. First and foremost it sets a high bar for American foreign policy success. The global triumph of democracy and the rule of law are ambitious goals, and they necessarily involve the United States in perpetual quarrels with a number of nondemocratic countries, some of which are quite powerful and important.

The very high and ambitious nature of these goals also makes strategic thinking difficult in a Wilsonian context. Given that we can't achieve the complete Wilsonian program everywhere on earth this week, where should we start? What evils shall we let fester as we prioritize other causes? How much repression of Turkish Kurds shall we tolerate to facilitate our efforts to force Saddam Hussein to treat Iraqi Kurds better? Do we ignore female circumcision in Somalia while we concentrate on judicial reform in that country? How many Chechens can Russian president Vladimir Putin kill before we withdraw support for his regime, and how many more kills does he get if we become convinced that the only alternative to a Putin government is a Communist restoration?

More positively, how exactly does one build a peaceful, stable, just, and democratic world? The fragmentation of the Wilsonian world into thousands of nongovernmental groups—many formed to advocate single issues—and its divisions along religious and ideological lines make all questions of strategic choice extremely difficult for politicians working in a Wilsonian context.

Wilsonian policy also involves contemporary American foreign policy

in a difficult contradiction. On the one hand, as global hegemon, the United States is by definition a status quo power. But to the extent that we are exporting Wilsonian values, we are a revisionist one as well. Many Wilsonians want to redraw the world's maps—to make Tibet an independent state, for example.

Wilsonians also want to make changes within international boundaries. They want dictatorial regimes to yield power to democratic opponents, peacefully if possible, through violent struggle if there is no other way. Thanks to Wilsonian strength in the American foreign policy process, Congress provides substantial sums of money for propaganda and other activities aimed at hastening the happy day of democratic transitions.

Both of these goals—boundary changes and regime changes—pose great challenges for other countries. It is not always clear how the United States will resolve the struggles between the conservative and radical trends in its foreign policy with respect to any given country or question. This naturally unsettles other states, both potential targets of our revolutionary diplomacy and other countries that will inevitably find their interests affected by American initiatives. European investors and their governments worry that the United States will impose sanctions on European companies that trade with regimes the United States seeks to isolate; a country like Turkey or Jordan must worry when the United States uses its power at the United Nations to force it to close its borders with an important trading partner.

All this gives the United States government one painful headache after another. Wilsonian lobbies demanding strong action against countries that persecute dissidents, permit the genital mutilation of women, suppress trade unions, hunt whales, eat dogs, oppress national minorities, or otherwise offend the moral sensitivities of some organized American constituency create constant demands for government action. This unfortunately decreases the comfort level of other countries with American power and increases their concern that too much American power endangers their vital interests.

Yet for students of American foreign policy the question of whether Wilsonianism is a good or a bad thing is an idle one. Wilsonianism, with all its virtues and its defects, is a real thing. It is deeply, probably ineradicably, rooted in American culture and history, and those who hope to shape the country's foreign policy must come to terms with it one way or another.