

THE PARADIGM DEBATE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR FOREIGN POLICY MAKING: TOWARD A REDEFINITION OF THE "NATIONAL INTEREST"

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PERHAPS no concept in the international relations field has received more thorough criticism and nonetheless managed to persist than the concept of "national interest." Despite its being discarded in many scholarly circles as a meaningless and useless analytical construct, even its most fervent detractors will recognize that the term has great currency not only among practitioners of international politics but also among the public at large both in the U.S. and elsewhere. One needs only to perform a cursory content analysis of speeches made by members of the foreign policy establishment and commentaries in the mass media to substantiate this observation. While it might be argued that the term "national interest" is utilized by decision-makers merely as a handy catch-phrase to facilitate their post-hoc legitimization and rationalization of foreign policy decisions taken, and by the public merely as an equally handy catch-phrase to avoid having to come to grips with the confusing world of foreign affairs, such an argument would seem to grossly understate the extent to which the term and everything it represents actually informs both the former's calculations in the decision-making process and the latter's reactions to the decisions that are produced.

Hence, the author would maintain that the concept is not passé but deserves continuing examination. This paper, then, is not meant to be still another attempt at making a critique of and discrediting the concept. Rather than a wrecking operation, the paper is intended to provide a reformulation of the concept, especially in light of changing conditions in the international system which have occasioned a large paradigm debate in the international relations field. This debate, the author would argue, has important implications for foreign policy making insofar as different definitions of the "national interest" tend to be arrived at depending upon which paradigm (or image of the world) one adopts. The author will attempt to relate the paradigm debate to U.S. foreign policy making and to offer some prescriptions for change in the formulation of American foreign policy based on this analysis.

THE CONCEPT REVISITED

As long as there have been nation-states, men have thought in terms of "national interests." It remained for Carr¹ and Morgenthau² and their fellow realists to enshrine this observation into a dictum and to turn the loose notion of "national interest" into a full-blown, well developed, and clearly labeled *concept* occupying a special place in scholarly discourse among more than a generation of international relationists. The widespread criticism of the utility of this concept that has followed the realists has been based primarily upon the argument that, notwithstanding the painstaking attempts by realists to elaborate the concept, it has remained highly amorphous and ambiguous both as a guide to action for policy-makers seeking to make sound decisions and as an explanatory factor for scholars seeking to understand international events. Regarding the utility of the concept as

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¹ E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis* (London: Macmillan, 1939).

² Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations* (New York: Knopf, 1949).

a policy-making guide, Arnold Wolfers summed up the “subjectivity” problem in his thoughtful essay several years ago:

When political formulas such as “national interest” or “national security” gain popularity they need to be scrutinized with particular care. They may not mean the same thing to different people. They may not have any precise meaning at all. Thus, while appearing to offer guidance and a basis for broad consensus, they may be permitting everyone to label whatever policy he favors with an attractive and possibly deceptive name.³

In a more recent writing, James Rosenau summed up the limitations of the concept as an analytical tool:

The reasons for this failure of the concept as an analytic tool are numerous. One is the ambiguous nature of the nation and the difficulty of specifying whose interests it encompasses. A second is the elusiveness of criteria for determining the existence of interests and for tracing their presence in substantive policies. Still another confounding factor is the absence of procedures for cumulating the interests once they have been identified. This is in turn complicated by uncertainty as to whether the national interest has been fully identified once all the specific interests have been cumulated or whether there are not other, more generalized, values which render the national interest greater than the sum of its parts.⁴

The twofold assumption which appears to be embedded in the concept of “national interest” is that (1) there exists an objectively determinable collective interest which all individual members within a given national society share equally and (2) this collective interest transcends any interests that a particular subset of those individuals may share with individuals in other national societies. The traditional critique of the concept has focused on the *first* assumption, with the caveat being that certain definitions of the “national interest” tend to coincide with the interests of some subnational groups more than others (e.g., the argument that a \$120 billion annual U.S. Defense Department budget benefits an individual on the welfare rolls less than it benefits, say, a McDonnell-Douglas Aircraft Company employee). Various subnational groups, so the caveat goes, whether they are located within the governmental machinery (bureaucratic or elected officials) or outside it (specialized interest groups) recognize the potentially disparate impacts of different definitions of the “national interest” and attempt to have official definitions (i.e., policies) adopted which are consistent with their particular interests. Thus, according to this line of reasoning, the concept of “national interest” and the associated treatment of nation-states as unitary, purposeful, rational actors (“blackboxes” or “billiard balls”) responding exclusively to stimuli from the international environment is a distortion of reality which vastly deprecates the degree of domestic dissensus that operates in national societies — both democratic and non-democratic systems — and that drives foreign policy at least as much as external forces.⁵

The latter critique is somewhat unfair insofar as Morgenthau and other realists are too astute students of politics not to recognize the role of domestic politics

³ Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1952), p. 147.

⁴ James N. Rosenau, *The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy* (New York: Free Press, 1971), p. 243. See, also, Fred A. Sondermann, “The Concept of the National Interest,” *Orbis* 21 (1977): 121–38.

⁵ This critique can be found in Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971); Roger Hilsman, *The Politics of Policy Making in Defense and Foreign Affairs* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971); Morton Halperin and Arnold Kanter, *Readings in American Foreign Policy: A Bureaucratic Perspective* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973); and Morton Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1974).

and conflicts of interests in the formulation of foreign policy. There is a very clear concern with domestic politics that can be found in realist writings.⁶ However, the realists do tend to argue that once internal conflict over defining the "national interest" in a particular instance is played out and some official definition (policy) ultimately emerges, the various contending subnational actors can generally be counted upon to coalesce and enable the nation to act in the aggregate, at least to the extent that they will not push their separate interests beyond national boundaries and will not form coalitions with subnational actors in other nations to oppose the established policy.

The reasoning here relates precisely to the *second* assumption articulated above, i.e., whatever the differences between various subnational groups in a national society, those groups have more interests in common with each other than they do with groups in other national societies. While the concept of "national interest" has been traditionally criticized mainly in terms of the weakness of the first assumption, it is the second assumption that would seem to bear further examination than it has thus far received since it runs squarely up against what a number of observers believe to be major new forces in world politics. The author is not referring here simply to the confrontation between, or convergence of, the interests of nation-states and the interests of the world community as a whole — which has, of course, always been a subject of discussion in debates over the "national interest" — but rather to a much more complex set of relationships. It is these forces and their impact on foreign policy making that we will now turn to as the central concern addressed in this paper.

FROM *International Politics* ("BILLIARD BALLS") TO *World Politics* ("COBWEBS")? ALTERNATIVE PARADIGMS

A growing number of observers of world affairs have called attention to two seemingly paradoxical but mutually related and reinforcing sets of trends which together, it is suggested, represent the "erosion" of the nation-state and interstate relations as we have known it over the past three hundred years. These trends are, first, *disintegrative tendencies within existing national units* (i.e., increasing domestic violence, crises of authority, and paralysis of problem-solving institutions) and, secondly, *integrative tendencies beyond the nation-state level* (i.e., increasing interdependencies, transaction flows across national boundaries, and proliferation of intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations.) While similar observations about the demise of the nation-state have been made in the past only to be retracted⁷ — indeed, forecasting the doom of the nation-state has long been a favorite pastime of international relationists — nevertheless the current observations cannot be so easily dismissed as shortsighted or pollyannaish.

The latter trends have appeared so striking to some as to cause a major rethinking and overhauling of the traditional paradigm or theoretical framework (variously labeled "international politics," "state-centric," or "billiard ball") within which phenomena in the field have been conceptualized in the past. Keohane and Nye, Coplin et al., Brown, Burton et al., Mansbach et al., and Morse are among those who have criticized the traditional paradigm, not on normative grounds but on empirical grounds, arguing that it never has adequately corresponded with

⁶ See Henry A. Kissinger, *American Foreign Policy* (New York: Norton, 1974), pp. 11–50; Roger Fisher, *International Conflict for Beginners* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969); and Hans J. Morgenthau, "The American Tradition in Foreign Policy: An Overview," in Roy C. Macridis, ed., *Foreign Policy in World Politics*, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1972), pp. 389–412.

⁷ For example, see John Herz, "The Rise and Demise of the Territorial State," *World Politics* 9 (1957): 473–93, and "The Territorial State Revisited," *Polity* 1 (1968): 12–34.

reality and that it is especially inadequate to comprehend contemporary events.⁸ Although these authors do not all share exactly the same viewpoint — Keohane and Nye along with Brown and Morse are more restrained than the others in attacking the traditional framework — all do see the need to consider an alternative framework. In place of (or beside) the traditional paradigm, another paradigm is suggested (variously labeled “world politics,” “transnational relations,” “cobweb,” or “complex interdependence”) which takes into account relatively new, more complex phenomena.

It is appropriate here to elaborate briefly these two paradigms since they have widely different implications for considerations of “national interest.” The “international politics” paradigm assumes that nation-states, acting through official representatives (decision-makers, diplomats, soldiers, etc.), are the only significant actors in world affairs. Neither *subnational* actors (bureaucratic and societal interest groups) nor *transnational* actors (intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, including multinational corporations) are treated as distinct and autonomous actors, with the former subsumed by the nation-state and the latter considered as extensions of the nation-state or, at best, marginal factors influencing nation-state interactions. The paradigm assumes a hierarchically ordered set of relationships, with demands flowing from bureaucratic and societal groups to national leaders located in the authoritative decision-making apparatus who resolve whatever internal conflict exists and whose actions then become the nation’s actions and the source of interactions between the national unit and other national units. In other words, this paradigm contains the assumptions surrounding the concept of “national interest” that were discussed earlier.

The key assumption of the “world politics” paradigm, in contrast to the “international politics” paradigm, is that subnational and transnational actors can and should be treated as distinct and autonomous actors apart from national actors and that there are no neat hierarchially organized patterns of influence and authority among these three categories of actors. The world is conceived of as a set of systems interacting rather than a set of geographically and legally defined entities interacting. In other words, not all stimuli which provide the inputs for world politics travel through and are emitted from Washington or Paris or Warsaw or Cairo; instead, some bypass national capitals and travel by way of places like Poughkeepsie and Peoria. The paradigm suggests that subnational actors can affect world politics *directly* — and not just indirectly through domestic political processes — by initiating or serving as targets of interactions with either foreign governments or subnational groups located in other countries. It tends to accentuate conflict within national units and cooperation across national units — allowing for the possibility that transnational coalitions of interests (either among bureaucrats or private interest groups in different countries) may be found that are stronger than international coalitions — although there is nothing in the paradigm which precludes the kinds of cooperation and conflict patterns assumed by the “international politics” paradigm. Insofar as this paradigm raises questions about

⁸ See Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., eds., *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971) and *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1977); William D. Coplin, John R. Handelman, Michael K. O’Leary, and John A. Vasquez, “Color It Morgenthau: A Data-Based Assessment of Quantitative International Relations Research,” paper presented at the International Studies Association Annual Meeting, March 14–17, 1973, New York; Seyom Brown, *New Forces in World Politics* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1974); J. W. Burton, A. J. R. Groom, C. R. Mitchell, and A.V.S. DeReuck, *The Study of World Society: A London Perspective* (Pittsburgh: International Studies Association, 1974); Richard W. Mansbach, Yale H. Ferguson, and Donald E. Lampert, *The Web of World Politics: Nonstate Actors in the Global System* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1976); and Edward L. Morse, *Modernization and the Transformation of International Relations* (New York: Free Press, 1976).

the integrity of the nation-state, it challenges the assumptions surrounding the concept of "national interest."

What are we to make of these two paradigms? Which one more accurately reflects the current state of world affairs and is a more useful framework for scholars and, more importantly, policy makers to employ in their attempts to understand international phenomena? Judging from the considerable disagreement within the discipline, one might conclude that neither paradigm by itself quite captures contemporary reality, that each is a caricature of sorts (granted most paradigms or models are), and that the world is in flux somewhere between a pure "state-centric" system and a full-blown "world politics" system. Assuming this is the case — and the author has attempted to demonstrate this elsewhere through a "face validity" type of analysis⁹ — what are the implications for foreign policy-makers charged with defining and pursuing the "national interest"?

TOWARD A REDEFINITION OF THE "NATIONAL INTEREST"

The author would maintain that this discussion of paradigms is not merely an intellectual exercise but has important implications for the manner in which foreign policy is formulated, i.e., how the "national interest" is defined. Paradigms, after all, are nothing more than cognitive maps or belief systems which *scholars* operate with that help organize reality for them and help them make some sense out of the multitude of discrete events that occur in the world daily. Paradigms serve mainly to orient their research; they suggest what questions one ought to investigate and how one ought to interpret one's findings. They have the effect, likewise, of leaving certain questions unasked and unanswered.

However, paradigms are not just conceptual blinders that are confined to academia. *Policy-makers* and people in general have similar blinders that, if we want to avoid using the term paradigm, we can call "images." The images of the world possessed by policy-makers and laymen may not be as well developed as those held by scholars, and the former may not be nearly as conscious of them, but they exist nonetheless and perform similar functions. Where images help scholars collect and analyze data, they help policy-makers seek out and interpret intelligence relating to their environment and help laymen evaluate the decisions that policy-makers take. In this regard, it would seem appropriate to note John Maynard Keynes' observation that "practical men who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences," whether they realize it or not, often act on the basis of paradigms developed by "some academic scribbler of a few years back."¹⁰

In one of the earliest writings on "images," Kenneth Boulding points out how images operate and how the extent to which they square with reality has far more crucial implications for policy-makers than for scholars:

... we must recognize that the people whose decisions determine the policies and actions of nations do not respond to the "objective" facts of the situation, whatever that may mean, but to their "image" of the situation. It is what we think the world is like, not what it is really like, that determines our behavior. If our image of the world is in some sense "wrong," of course, we may be disappointed in our expectations, and we may therefore revise our image; if this revision is in the direction of "truth" there is presumably a long-run tendency for the "image" and the "truth" to coin-

⁹ J. Martin Rochester, "The 'National Interest' and Contemporary World Politics: A Case of New Wine in Old Bottles, or Old Wine in New Bottles?" paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest International Studies Association, May 20–22, 1976, Bloomington, Indiana.

¹⁰ John Maynard Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (London: Macmillan, 1957), p. 383.

cide. Whether this is so or not, it is always the image, not the truth, that immediately determines behavior.¹¹

Since the pioneering work of Boulding¹² and Harold and Margaret Sprout,¹³ a voluminous literature has reiterated the role of images in foreign policy making and international politics.¹⁴

The images of the world that decision-makers have, then, directly affect the decisions that they take. It follows from the previous discussion that the image which would seem to fit current reality best, and which foreign policy-makers ought to adopt if their conceptual apparatus is to be adequate to the task of apprehending the "objective" phenomena with which they must deal, is some combination of the "billiard ball" and "cobweb" paradigms. Perhaps the most critical problem and challenge for foreign policy-makers today is precisely the need to come to grips with this "schizophrenic" situation and to operate with a high tolerance for ambiguity while at the same time providing some degree of consistency and direction to foreign policy — in short, to reconceptualize and redefine the "national interest" in a way that reconciles and resolves the various tensions described above as much as possible. This is admittedly an arduous task.

There would seem to be two ways to attempt to resolve these tensions. One way, which can be thought of as the "old wine in new bottles" approach, is the approach which the author would argue characterizes recent attempts by the U.S. foreign policy establishment to handle the problem. The second way, which might be labeled the "new wine in old bottles" approach, is the approach which the author would pose as an alternative to the present U.S. foreign policy-making orientation. (Should some persons point out other possible combinations such as "old wine in old bottles" and "new wine in new bottles," the author would only note that these are not relevant to the problem of meshing traditional "billiard ball" perspectives and newer "cobweb" perspectives.)

The first approach essentially consists of policy-makers trying to resolve tensions by paying lip service to "cobweb" phenomena — i.e., casting policies in the language and rhetoric of interdependence — while in fact operating under the same old assumptions embodied in a "billiard ball" view of the world — i.e., defining and pursuing the "national interest" as if the structure and process of interstate relations in the contemporary era were basically unaltered from the past and subnational and transnational forces were inconsequential. Hence, a case of "old wine in new bottles," which U.S. foreign policy clearly resembles. The *outward* appearance is that American foreign policy-makers have adjusted their images of the world to conform more closely to the "cobweb" paradigm. To cite just a few typical official policy statements in recent years as illustrations:

The old order — in trade, finance, and raw materials — is changing and American leadership is needed in the creation of new institutions and

¹¹ Kenneth E. Boulding, "National Images and the International System," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 3 (1959): 120.

¹² Ibid.; *The Image* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956).

¹³ Harold Sprout and Margaret Sprout, *Man-Milieu Relationship Hypotheses in the Context of International Politics* (Princeton, Center of International Studies, Princeton University, 1956) and "Environmental Factors in the Study of International Politics," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 1 (1957): 309–28.

¹⁴ See, for example, Ole Holsti, "The Belief System and National Images: A Case History," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 6 (1962): 244–52; Dean Pruitt, "Definition of the Situation as a Determinant of International Action," in Herbert C. Kelman, ed., *International Behavior: A Socio-Psychological Analysis* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1965), pp. 391–432; Joseph de Rivera, *The Psychological Dimension of Foreign Policy* (Columbus: Merrill, 1968); Robert Jervis, *The Logic of Images in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970); John G. Stoessinger, *Nations in Darkness* (New York: Random House, 1971); and Michael Brecher, "Images, Process, and Feedback in Foreign Policy: Israel's Decision on German Reparations," *American Political Science Review* 67 (1973): 73–102.

practices for worldwide prosperity and progress. (President Ford, in a speech before a joint session of Congress, Department of State News Release, April 10, 1975)

All of us . . . are part of a world community. Our interdependence on this planet is becoming the central fact of our diplomacy. Energy, resources, environment, population, the uses of space and the seas — these are problems whose benefits and burdens transcend national boundaries. They . . . challenge the capacities of the international community with new requirements for vision and statesmanship. (Secretary of State Kissinger, in a speech before the Institute of World Affairs of the University of Wisconsin, Department of State News Release, July 14, 1975)

Everywhere in the industrial world you . . . find the same effects of interdependence. As countries grow closer, more players get into the act. No longer are national administrations exclusively or even mainly the medium for relations between countries. The other power centers — parliaments, regional and local governments, regulatory bodies — as well as individuals and firms, all conduct more and more business across frontiers. (Thomas O. Enders, U.S. Ambassador to Canada, in a speech before the Canadian Club, Department of State News Release, March 23, 1976)

However, there is little evidence that the U.S. foreign policy establishment has actually *internalized* this new image of the world and is utilizing it as the basis for formulating and conducting American policy. Such evidence would consist in changes either in the machinery of the foreign policy process or in the substance of the policy outputs themselves. While the Commission on the Organization of the Government for the Conduct of Foreign Policy was created to deal with the matter of revamping the foreign policy apparatus, it remains to be seen whether any innovative proposals emerging from the Commission Report will be implemented that address the problems posed by “cobweb” phenomena, such as the need for improved coordination between the old-line foreign policy agencies and those erstwhile purely “domestic” agencies whose concerns now include “international” dimensions. As for the substance of American foreign policy, it continues to reflect an overpreoccupation with “national security” concerns traditionally defined (i.e., protection from physical attack or subversion against the U.S. and its allies by other nations) and a concomitant deprecation of economic and other issue-areas which are potentially more threatening to the American people’s well-being and which are not as amenable to simple “we-they” formulas for aggregating national interests.

This condition is at least partly a commentary on the staying power of established images. Images once formed are very slow to change. As Festinger¹⁵ and others have pointed out, people do not shed their images easily since they provide a sense of psychic security and are built up through considerable investment of intellectual and emotional energy. Images tend to remain intact as “cognitive dissonance” is either *avoided* (by individuals seeking out only those information sources that can be counted upon to reinforce the established image, and ignoring any incongruous signals that might be forthcoming from the environment) or *resolved* (by forcing contrary stimuli into the established framework). Images can be shaken and perhaps revised only when, recalling Boulding’s remarks, one’s images come up against more and more stimuli that they are drastically at odds with and one’s expectations based on those images regularly fail to materialize. Even then, one’s images may be so “closed” as to resist change, although the possibility for change increases as it becomes increasingly difficult to fit existing stimuli into the established framework.

¹⁵ Leon Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957).

The resistance on the part of the American foreign policy establishment to changing its basic assumptions about the world, then, is understandable. While it may be understandable, it is nonetheless an unsatisfactory state of affairs. The clothing of traditional views of the "national interest" in "cobweb" symbols — the "old wine in new bottles" approach — represents in one sense an attempt by policy-makers to cope with "cognitive dissonance," to relax the tensions that are inherent in contemporary reality rather than resolving them. This leads to oversimplified definitions of the "national interest" which fail to take into account the complexities of the domestic and international environment.

Regarding the *domestic* environment, foreign policy making in the U.S., of course, has never been an uncomplex task, even when the foreign policy arena could be reduced to a single, seemingly all-embracing issue-area called "national security." The foreign policy process has never been free of domestic political influence and conflict, and policy-makers have always had to contend with internal as well as external forces. At the same time, while foreign policy in the past has not been immune from the same sorts of political pressures operating on domestic policy, the "politics of foreign policy making" has tended to be confined to a more narrow set of policy influencers residing in a few federal bureaucracies and on a few congressional committees. In this setting, when relatively few political actors were involved and physical survival seemed to be the overriding concern of foreign policy, it was somewhat easier to try to forge a national consensus based on defining the "national interest" in gross terms. More recently, however, the waning of the cold war (at least in terms of tight bipolarity) has weakened national security symbolism and given play to technological forces which have had the effect of supplementing (though not yet supplanting) the national security issue-area with a series of other issue-areas — environmental, economic, etc. — that touch different segments of society more unevenly than in the past and make consensus-building more difficult. As what were once wholly or almost wholly "domestic" issues take on "international" aspects, foreign policy is becoming more "domesticized" or "politicized," i.e., the circle of domestic political actors directly affected by and demanding access to the foreign policy process is widening both within and outside the bureaucracy, including more and more governmental agencies, societal interest groups, and congressional bodies.

The *international* environment of U.S. foreign policy-makers is likewise more complex than current official definitions of the "national interest" would lead one to believe. Coincident with increased subnational conflict is increased transnational cooperation as various groups are finding they have more interests in common with some elements outside their national borders than inside and, with the weakening of national security symbolism, greater legitimacy in pursuing these interests through transnational means. As transnationalism increases, it becomes imperative for the U.S. government in conjunction with governments elsewhere to develop rules and institutions for both the mutual protection *and* regulation of one's citizens operating abroad. The need for improved inter-governmental cooperation is created not only by growing transnationalism but by the existence of arms control, environmental and other problems that would be present even in the absence of transnationalism and that defy unilateral solutions. In addition to these problems of interdependence that face American foreign policy-makers, there are perhaps more thorny problems of *dependence* — of others upon the United States — that must be dealt with. The heightened sensitivity of other countries to decisions taken in the United States (whether it be the impact of soil conservation measures on the food needs of less developed countries, or the impact of anti-inflation legislation on the post-recession economic recovery efforts of Western Europeans, or the impacts of a whole variety of other policies) confronts American decision-makers with a growing *foreign* constituency whose interests may or may not be compatible — at

least in the short run — with those of the domestic constituency but which in any case may have to be catered to. In particular, American decision-makers will be hard pressed to resist the more intensified pressures likely to be forthcoming from Third World countries appealing to American leadership to adopt new policies that promote redistribution of wealth and that must inevitably require sacrifices by large numbers of Americans.

One can identify, in short, at least four classes of problems which are not altogether new but which are becoming more pronounced as a result of “cobweb” phenomena that U.S. foreign policy-makers are likely to be increasingly exposed to: (1) the problem of satisfying different groups that are affected unevenly by foreign policy decisions (such as the diverse impact of the economics of détente on American farmers and laborers); (2) the problem of dealing with subnational actors who have cross-cutting affiliations and interests (such as Environmental Protection Agency bureaucrats identifying with the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization position on offshore oil drilling in opposition to other government agencies, or airline pilots who must choose between adhering to an International Airline Pilots Association policy refusing to fly to countries that abet hijackers and adhering to the U.S. government’s policy not to take measures that would alienate those countries); (3) the problem of controlling transnational actors whose behavior can interfere with the conduct of foreign policy (such as the Lockheed payoffs to Dutch and Japanese leaders with whom the U.S. has had close ties, or the payments to Italian and Korean officials by other American multinational corporations); and (4) the problem of satisfying one’s “foreign” constituency in some circumstances to the virtual exclusion of one’s entire “domestic” constituency (such as the U.S. decision to permit the British-French Concorde to fly to the U.S. despite opposition from almost every sector of American society).

The “old wine in new bottles” approach fails to address these problems adequately. In its place, the author would suggest a “new wine in old bottles” approach which calls for creative responses to the problems of a changing domestic and international environment while working essentially within the traditional nation-state structures that will continue to be the primary form of human organization for the foreseeable future. This approach entails revised conceptions and perceptions of the “national interest” on the part of policy-makers and publics based on some modification of “billiard ball” images concomitant with at least partial acceptance of the “cobweb” paradigm. Such changed orientations would give impetus to the kind of elaborate institution-building within and across national boundaries which is needed to better manage subnational and transnational forces that threaten to produce chaos in domestic and world affairs.

In particular, with regard to institution-building *across* national boundaries, there is the need to engage in the sort of “constructive statesmanship for the last quarter of the twentieth century” which Seyom Brown has articulated.¹⁶ Brown, in stressing restructured relationships between nation-states, advocates implementation of the following “desiderata”: (1) Multilateral capabilities for resolving disputes should be enhanced. (2) International activities and projects with highly interdependent effects should be brought under common institutional roofs. (3) Populations substantially affected by the actions of others should be participants in the decision processes that authorize those actions. (4) Criteria of distributive justice, analogous to those prevailing in developed domestic societies, should be applied internationally when allocating burdens and benefits.

The latter recommendations relate in essence to the present *international* environment surrounding U.S. foreign policy-makers and to the *foreign* constituency they must deal with. While institution-building across national boundaries is vital, there is the even more immediate and less commonly addressed concern of institu-

¹⁶ Brown, *New Forces in World Politics*, p. 209.

tion-building *within* national boundaries, i.e., restructuring relationships among internal political actors in a way that takes into account the current *domestic* environment and constituency surrounding U.S. foreign policy-makers. While multi-lateral diplomacy, intergovernmental organization, and transgovernmental consultation should be encouraged as vehicles for treating problems that spill over national borders, every effort must be made to attenuate the divisive cross-national coalition building that can accompany such arrangements and that can prevent a coherent U.S. foreign policy. One way to lessen these centrifugal forces is to insure that all relevant subnational actors, including those bureaucratic agencies which have only recently assumed international-related functions but which have not yet been incorporated into the foreign policy establishment, have a reasonable opportunity to input their expertise and articulate their particular interests in the foreign policy-making process and that this occurs through clearly defined, well-coordinated lines of communication. Brown's recommendation, for example, that "international activities and projects with highly interdependent effects should be brought under common institutional roofs," while referring to institution-building across national borders, could apply equally to institution-building at home. The author has in mind as a possible model here the Food Committee of the Economic Policy Board-National Security Council — consisting of the Secretaries of State, Treasury, Agriculture, Labor, and Commerce, and the Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors among others — that was created to monitor sales of feed grains and wheat to the Soviet Union and was given a continuing mandate to develop and maintain data on grain production and exports.

In demonstrating awareness of the interrelationships between domestic and foreign policy, we need to facilitate not only increased participation by different bureaucratic actors in the foreign policy-making process but also increased participation by various societal interest groups and congressional bodies whose concerns may have formerly been of only marginal relevance to the process but which are now inseparably part of it. The current demands by Congress for a larger role in the foreign policy-making process are understandable in light of the involvement of more and more congressional committees in areas that affect and are affected by international events. While there might be some legitimate concern over the difficulties that an "opening up" of the foreign policy process would present for decision-makers trying to formulate and conduct a coherent U.S. foreign policy, the latter can be insulated from these pressures only at the cost of distorting the "national interest." The author is in effect advocating an *operational* definition of the "national interest" which emerges as the resultant of a much larger set of internal and external forces than are presently accounted for in the foreign policy process. The thing to do is not to ignore these forces but to build them into the process as systematically as possible.

One final prescription is that not only must policy-makers reorient themselves but so also must the public and that, indeed, it is the responsibility of the former to educate the latter to the new complexities surrounding the problem of defining the "national interest" — to the need to accommodate at times foreign interests seemingly at the expense of domestic interests and to the need to tolerate some degree of diversity of viewpoints if not parochialism at home over "what is best for America." The former's job will ultimately be made easier as a result. Secretary of State Kissinger seemed to be alluding to this education process, and hopefully accurately reflecting to some extent his own "self-education," in a speech on March 16, 1976, before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the Bicentennial Hearings on Foreign Policy Choices for the 70s and 80s:

I hope that this discussion of what we see as the issues of the future will be helpful in the building of such a consensus. The issues are complex; the degree of public understanding required to deal with them is higher than

at any time in our historical experience. And even if we can reach a consensus on objectives and priorities, our resources and options are limited and we cannot hope always to prevail or to be right.

It is admittedly easier for scholars to leap from one paradigm to another than for policy-makers to do so, although there are costs involved for both. For scholars, it might mean complete mental "retooling." For policy-makers, if they were to gravitate toward the "cobweb" paradigm, it might mean self-deprecation, might entail considerable redefinition of their role, and might at least in the short run heighten their insecurity about their environment. There is reason to believe, then, that policy-makers may well hold onto the traditional paradigm long after others have resigned themselves to its irrelevance. However, the costs of not changing paradigms are likely to be even greater for policy-makers. The possible consequences to be suffered by scholars clinging to the traditional paradigm — constantly low correlation coefficients and the like — are, after all, not as serious as those to be suffered by practitioners. While one might argue that policy-makers more than anybody else shape events and, hence, the paradigm that best fits reality at any point in time is the one that they alone can actuate and perpetuate, this is not borne out by current happenings. In the end, they would be advised to make the necessary adjustments in their thinking if they are truly to serve the "national interest."