

22. FOREIGN POLICY AND THE CONSTITUTION #1

Harrison H. Schmitt
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Former Senator Schmitt Faults President's Strange View of America's Foreign Policy Interests

America's self-interested relations with other nations make up a fundamental component of providing for the "common Defence," as required under the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States. The Founders recognized this fact in many provisions of the Constitution, both in the powers granted to Congress and in the role of the President as Commander in Chief and initiator of treaties. The President has the constitutional responsibility to set and carry out foreign policy, balanced by the power of Congress in providing funds necessary for implementation. Congress' power includes appropriating funds for the armed forces as well as the Senate's responsibility to "advise and consent" on treaties negotiated by the Executive.

Success in America's relations with other nations must be measured in terms of the elimination or sufficient reduction of foreign threats to the security, prosperity, and liberty of its people. With the exception of policies related to Canada and Mexico with whom we share common borders, America's historical foreign policies were largely determined by the fact that the country lies between two great oceans. Geographically, we are a maritime nation with military and commercial dominance on the seas being fundamental to national security and prosperity, respectively.

In the last Century, the advancement of technology extended the requirements inherent to a maritime nation to include military and commercial dominance of the air and, in the last 50 years, of space. Nonetheless, the basic national security principles related to being a maritime nation have not changed. Two of those principles remain the requirements for the projection of military and economic power and the creation of beneficial alliances away from our shores and borders. The success of coordinated foreign and defense policies can be measured by the extent to which those wishing us harm do not violate our borders and shores.

Traditionally, of course, American foreign policy focused on relations with nation states. Today a new enemy, less geographically defined but equally or more threatening has appeared and requires coordinated, imaginative, and complementary foreign, defense, and prosecutorial policies. Beginning in the 1970s, national leadership failed to fully recognize and act on the fact that, after about 300 years, radical Islam once again had declared war on Western Civilization, and now particularly on America.

The signs of a new era of conflict were clear: early hijackings of planes and ships, the 1972 murder of Olympic athletes; the fall of the Shah of Iran and the subsequent

hostage taking at the U.S. Embassy in 1980; the suicide attacks on the Beirut Marine barracks in 1983; the 1986 Berlin disco bombing followed by suicide attacks on U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and the USS Cole in 2000; and many other incidents throughout the world. Even the original attack on the New York World Trade Center in 1993 did not arouse America from its deep sleep of denial. Such murderous incidents by Islamic radicals should have alerted all previous Administrations that the conduct of U.S. foreign policy had to change.

Finally, we began to fight the war being waged against us after a suicide bombing using hijacked aircraft destroyed the World Trade Center and a portion of the Pentagon. Only heroic self-sacrifice by passengers prevented a similar destruction of the Nation's Capitol. This concentrated sneak attack on Americans in America briefly awoke the government, the national media, and most Americans to radical Islam's unrelenting hatred of us and all non-Islamic societies.

In response to the 9/11 attacks, President George W. Bush and the Congress took the military fight to the Islamic terrorists wherever they could be found, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq. Part of this new awakening became the creation of alliances with other threatened democratic nations. Before long, however, the will to protect themselves and civilization against this threat began to waver within the alliance, within the national media, and then within the leadership of America's Democratic Party. In spite of this retreat by its supposed leaders, however, the vast majority of Americans remember what is at stake.

Trends in the fight against Islamic radicals remain discouraging although American

sacrifices have created a fledgling democratic Iraq that has significantly reduced that country as a potential haven for international terrorists and a possible source of weapons of mass destruction. Also, actions initiated by President Bush in Afghanistan and northern Pakistan have forced terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda and the Taliban to fight for survival in the region's mountains. Developments in Iran, however, present even more serious threats than did Iraq and Afghanistan and should get more serious attention that they receive from the Administration and the President.

Although nominally a nation state, Iran has become the primary source of support for Islamic terrorists in the Middle East as well as developing anti-Western alliances of its own with China, North Korea, Venezuela, and anti-democratic insurgent forces throughout the world. Iran's aggressive pursuit of nuclear weapons and missiles to carry them threatens not only the existence of Israel but of the major population centers of the world.

President Obama has made it clear that he is not worried about the long-term consequences of the war being waged by radical Islam. He has ordered the Department of Defense to de-emphasized long-range missile defenses necessary to counter future attacks on the U.S. from Iran. Such anti-missile defense policies also increase the level of policy intimidation by China, Russia, or other nuclear-armed entities directed at North America and allies in Europe and Asia.

These and other unilateral retreats in foreign and defense policies fly in the face of long-term U.S. interests. For example, since World War II, the United States has pursued a bipartisan policy of deterring attack with weapons of mass destruction by making it

clear that such an attack would result in massive nuclear retaliation against the attacker. Even in light of the efforts by rogue states like Iran and North Korean to develop nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, and nuclear modernization activities by China and Russia, the President's budgets and Congressional appropriations do not provide for the maintenance and modernization of the this nuclear deterrence. In fact, the President recently has announced that nuclear retaliation by the United States has been taken off the table for attacks using other types of weapons of mass destruction. Illogically, the President would not retaliate for a nuclear attack if the attacker has signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty! We clearly are now less safe than we were just one President ago.

Our vulnerabilities also would be increased in the nuclear arena by Senate ratification of the nuclear arms reduction treaty negotiated with Russia. In the absence of China, India, Pakistan, France, the United Kingdom, and Israel, this treaty makes no sense even if we could expect all countries to comply with negotiated agreements of this type. Such Pollyanna efforts to put the nuclear genie back in its bottle fly in the face of the horrible record of compliance by our adversaries with past arms reduction treaties. There exists no evidence that these

treaty efforts have served long-term American security interests. On the other hand, the absence of global war between nations for the last 65 years shows that nuclear deterrence, indeed, has served American security interests. The potential of attack or intimidation by other, more modernized and less democratic nuclear powers remains a reality and must continue to be countered visibly and convincingly.

America cannot long endure conscious neglect of foreign and defense policies that weaken it relative to the many threats visible in the present and predictable in the future. Its first chance to begin to stem this decline will be with the new Congress in 2011 and an unrelenting insistence for it to act in America's interests and not just its own. In the meantime, the greatest pressure possible to put America's interests first should be imposed on the current Congress and the national media. A new President and constitutionally inclined Commander in Chief then must take office in 2013.

Harrison H. Schmitt is a former United States Senator from New Mexico as well as a geologist and Apollo 17 Astronaut. He currently is an aerospace and private enterprise consultant and a member of the new Committee of Correspondence.