

Essay on us foreign policy

[Technology](#), [Internet](#)



Introduction

Joseph Nye's book titled *What Matters* is compelling in that it strives to predict the future of the US government foreign policy. But Yogi Berra, the great shrewd of baseball, was heard saying, "Never make predictions—principally about the future." He apparently had a point but if we go back three decades, to the late 1970s, the Cold War was in earnest, and conservative wisdom held that American power was in the decline. But of course no one saw the Internet coming. Why must we think we can do any better by looking forward 30-plus years?

Perhaps we will not, but planning is compulsory. A few of the planes and ships in use today were made more than 40 years ago, and some of those planned today will be the work-horses of the air force and navy in the 2040. The current energy reserves will help to determine the extent of our future dependence on oil and our impact on climate change. This kind of preparation is a form of prediction, and it needs us to stretch our horizons and imagine—and may be to shape—a better future.

The current trends will not essentially continue but the conditions may change so much that even sensible seers look preposterous and the ridiculous sometimes comes true. For instance, in 1978, was anyone predicting that China would have the world's fourth-largest economy or that the whole encyclopedias would be fixed on a silicon wafer smaller than a newborn's fingernail? Currently, the conventional wisdom avers that geopolitics in 2040 will be dominated by Russia, India, Brazil, and China. But this scenario assumes that their economic development will rise in a linear projection and that they will experience only some minor political disruptions

and it ignores probable conflicts of interest among them. It is also vital to remember that the more accurate the estimate, the more probable it is to mislead since there are countless possible futures.

To venture into the future, we must to begin someplace, however, and that means making certain assumptions. Among the assumptions is the populations of Europe, Japan, and Russia which will continue to fall; India's economy will not exceed China's; the frivolous pace of technological revolution will persist to drive globalization; and the US economy will however remain open and inventive.

The writer avers that the US National Intelligence Council which he headed in the early 1990s, and he made a comparable list, which projected a dozen relative certainties about the global landscape circa 2020. They included the globalization will continue but with a less Western orientation; the world economy will be substantially larger but with vital gaps between the haves and the have-nots and that the global companies will spread new technologies.

He also alluded that Asia will rise in significance; in-ground energy supplies will be satisfactory to meet the demand, but the supply disruptions are probable. It is apparent that he was not wrong in the cases of Asia rising and that they would be lesser Western influence in the world economic growth. This has now turned to be true in that China has become the country to beat in Africa where it is building world-class roads, stadiums and other infrastructures. The Western countries have been pushed to the periphery. As far as the issue of Asia rising in significance, this is also true. For instance, Japanese cars now fill up the African roads and the Western cars such

Mercedes-Benz, Volvo, BMW, Land Rover and lorries, such as the Bedfords are no longer seen on the African roads.

He also predicted that non-state actors, ranging from the charitable organizations to terrorist groups, will grow in number and power; and that political Islam will remain a compelling force which has turned out to be true.

He also stated that some states will amplify the capabilities of their weapons of mass destruction, and at the same time the others will seek to obtain them which has turned out to be true.

He was also not wrong when he predicted that an arc of instability will span the Middle East, Asia, and Africa and that the world war among great powers is not likely.

He was right when he said that the environmental and ethical issues will come to the fore and that the United States will remain the world's single most powerful actor. It is still a great power but as things now look, China will be a power to reckon with in the next few years. This is so because looking at the way they have been moving into Africa and the big grants they have been giving to any willing country, things can only get bad for the USA.

The writer predicts that the future in which, say, weapons of mass destruction are used frequently will be considerably unusual from one in which the most significant inclination is the spread of wealth through globalization and technological revolution for the better. This is one argument that I am not able to agree with because the countries that would have been able to use the weapons of mass destruction have since been subdued. This includes the Afghanistan, Iraq and lately Iran. But what will be

the key forces driving the future? The demography is an excellent place to start, where currently the world has 6.7 billion people and by 2040 and it will have approximately 9.0 billion and that easy fact will reshape everything. Just try to think of the world in 2040 as a small village with only 100 inhabitants. The population of the village would be something like, 56 Asians, 16 Africans, 4 Americans, 9 people from the rest of the Western Hemisphere. 5 would be from Western Europe, 7 from the rest of Europe, and 3 from the Middle East. But among the richest countries, the United States will certainly see its population amplify, to about 400 million from roughly 306 million while Russia's may well fall by roughly a third, to 100 million from 141 million.

With that as the context, and acknowledging the fact of the 12 relative certainties of the National Intelligence Council, what might that portend for global politics? So far as conservative nation-state politics is concerned, the most vital factor will be the continuing “return of Asia.” During the 1750, the continent had three-fifths of the world's population and three-fifths of the world's GDP. But by the 1900, after the industrial revolution in Europe and America, Asia's share had dropped to one-fifth of the world's GDP. By 2040, Asia will be well on the way to regaining its historical share and the greater clout of China and India possibly will create instability, but the emergence of new powers is a problem with precedents, and history can show how to influence the outcome. A century ago, Britain was able to accommodate the rise of American power without conflict, but the failure to put up with the German power led to two devastating world wars. One of the indication features of geopolitics currently, on the other hand, is the rise of non-state

actors helped and abetted by novel technology. But forty years ago, the immediate global communication was very costly and was thus restricted to the governments and corporations. Currently, anyone who can pay a few cents in an Internet café can have the world at his keyboard. The satellite photos that once cost the superpowers billions of dollars are now commercially accessible at no cost. The barriers to entry into the world politics have fallen, and this is why the non-state actors now crowd the stage. On September 11, 2001, one such faction killed more Americans than the government of Japan managed to do at Pearl Harbor. This is a new world in which we have very little experience, but the problems of the diffusion of power away from states possibly will turn out to be more difficult than the movement of power among them.

Conclusion

I agree with the writer, Joseph Nye when he predicts that the United States and the way it uses its power will be the final of the three key agents of change. Even though the United States might still be the world's most powerful country in 2040, the inconsistency of its power is that this nation—the strongest since the days of colonial Rome—might not be influential enough to protect its citizens by itself. The country will still remain military leaders, but it will not be sufficient enough to deal with the international threats such as the global pandemics, international crime, terrorism and climate change. By defeating the Islamist terrorism, for instance, calls for the much needed assistance, such as the sharing of intelligence amongst the police forces of diverse countries. It will also be compulsory to attract the hearts and minds of the mainstream Muslims. But although the US military

supremacy will remain essential, when used in the wrong way it could somehow weaken the soft power required to win in the future. The significant point is not whether my picture of the geopolitical world in 2040 is exact, but that we must start thinking about the implications of different scenarios and what drives them.

References

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