

The Constructive Destruction of Liberal Internationalism and Strategic Scripting of Global Order

Sumit Kumar Bharti

PhD Scholar and Adjunct Faculty, Department of Political Science, University of Delhi.

ABSTRACT

The world order constructed by the winning combinations of transatlantic powers after World War-II has already been shattered by the ‘not a peaceful’ rise of China amid the global debacles of the rise of terrorist states despite the continuum of war on terror, nuclear proliferation amid cessation of the traditional treatise, and global financial crises of 2008 challenging Western-led globalisation. The geopolitical assertion of Russia and the calibrated retreat of the USA to regain the lost strategic heft post-COVID-19 crisis, specifically in Europe and West Asia, global abuse of human rights, climate change catastrophe and sectional violence across the regions have become common sense. Trump 2.0 has accelerated the process already in motion through his ‘Make America Great Again’ or MAGA, America First policy, and his foreign policy based on the estimated economic and strategic benefits. This paper strives to analyse the new global order taking shape under the policies of President Trump by destroying the ruins of the post-1945 world order, or the common sense and entering into the world of 21st-century realism, which is far more advanced and agile than the hydrogen bomb is to the bow & arrow.

KEYWORDS: World Order, Make America Great Again, Chessboard Diplomacy, Hegemony and Estimated New Global Order.

MAKE AMERICA ‘GREAT’ OR ‘HEGEMON’ AGAIN

Hans J. Morgenthau, in his classical epistemology of realism in ‘Politics Among Nations, The Struggle for Power and Peace’, propounded his six principles of realism and explained the significance of Human actors in the course of foreign policy of any nation. While elucidating his second principle, Morgenthau asserted that the contingent element of “personality, prejudice and subjective preferences, and all the weakness of intellect and will”¹ which the decision maker inherited are destined to deflect foreign policies from their rational course. Prima facie, the American foreign policy under Trump 2.0 seems to get deflected from its rational course under the catchphrases of MAGA & America first, however, critical scrutiny reveals that it’s a watershed moment in American foreign to align itself with the new realities of the 21st-century globalised world with a multiplex of power dynamism to maintain its monopoly over the ‘new global order’ that is destined to be constructed on the remnants of the pax-Americana.

The domestic downsizing of parasitotic bureaucracy under Elon Musk’s Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) is an indication to the world that the U.S. is heading towards Global POSE (Protection of Strategic Equilibrium) to counter the debates of the end of American supremacy. The estimated 50% cut in the defence budget to let Europe feel the heat of its security from Russia, and the proposal to do

away with USAID, is signalling that the U.S. is no longer interested in internal affairs or regime changes or stabilisation. The fewer foreign interventions in the domestic affairs of countries are compounded by the extraction of maximum profits for America, i.e. the Economic Estimation is going to be the guiding light for domestic & foreign policy for the next few years. This will have two simultaneous impacts. On one hand, it will make America financially prudent and economically prosperous, and on the other hand, it will bring chaos and uncertainty in the regions of the world, making them realise the importance of the role played by the U.S. as an upholder of world order.

The conundrum of threatening, announcing and postponing reciprocal tariffs by Trump, for many analysts, is quite obvious to deconstruct that the Trump foreign policy is an extension or formalisation of his “Trade policy”². However, in today’s ‘post-world-ordered world’³, geographical expansionism in the de-territorialised world is substituted by economic expansionism to make nations and corporations grow richer and stronger to have their hegemony across the regions and societies. Trump's policies are calibrating the next wave of global economic imperialism to set the stage for ‘new global’ settings, and the Environmental Evasion of leaving the Paris climate deal is another indication of estimated cost-cutting to bypass any convections which hinder the path of progress under any moral obligations. The immigration policies of Trump are guided by then President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s infamous operation called ‘Operation Wetback’ in 1945 to crack down on illegal immigrants and a massive deportation drive barring individuals from “terror-plagued counties, territories, and places”⁴ which are “poisoning the blood [of USA]” to preserve US ethnic homogeneity and cultural majority. America was not a part of the League of Nations (LONs) despite being based on the 14 points of President Woodrow Wilson, is now bypassing the World Health Organisation (WHO) and World Trade Organisation (WTO), implying that no liberal institutions are above or beyond America and if it does not serve the purpose of maintaining American Hegemony or benefit its interest, the U.S. will not hesitate to abandon the same to make that irreversibly redundant and irritably irrelevant.

RECHRISTENING WARS AND STARTING ‘BUSINESSES’

The March 1, 2025 issue of ‘The Economist’ titled ‘The Don’s New World Order’ with pictures of six world leaders, with Donald Trump- the deal maker for MAGA, leading the list followed by Vladimir Putin- to restore Russia as a great imperial power, Xi- Jinping- wanting a world fit for China, Mohammed Bin Salman- modernise & lead Middle East & fend off Iran, Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Benjamin Netanyahu in decreasing order of the size of the pictures and relative strategic significance in deciding the formulation of upcoming global order.⁵ The signing of ‘The Abraham Accord’ to bring peace among diverging antagonistic allies of the U.S. to make the Middle East feasible for business and reduce Chinese influence, the plan to have Gaza and extending the multipurpose trade corridor of digitised world, the India-Middle East Economic Corridor (IMEC) to America is an estimated strategy to not only counter China’s Belt and Road Initiative and establish U.S. monopoly over global supply/ value chains but to tighten the control over new trade prospects. The prospects of the ‘Russia-Ukraine’ deal under dealmaker Trump with the possibility of getting the rights of extraction of critical minerals from Ukraine is a continuum of the process of breaking the BRICS+, and any projections of bolstering Russia-India-China (RIC) partnership, to have business with Putin to thwart China and trade with China to build pressure on Russia, Europe and India. The basic principle of the Westphalian World order, the philosophical premises on which the neo-liberal world order was constructed, that grants the sacrosanct status to the ‘Territorial integrity and Sovereignty, has now been compromised, and the sovereign territory has become an article for negotiations. The

Russian annexation of Crimea and now the land captured of eastern Ukraine is going to remain with Russia after the inevitable handshakes of Trump-Putin. Professor Sumit Ganguly, the director of the Huntington Programme on Strengthening US- India Relations at Stanford University in his recent article titled ‘At a global Crossroads’ categorically stated that the “breaking with European allies and abandoning Ukraine”⁶ to reach a rapprochement with Russia to undermine the growing ‘no limits’ partnership between Russia and China, specifying this strategic transformation as a ‘Tectonic Shift’⁷ in global politics.

Trump’s plan to ‘have Gaza’ will alter the borders of Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria and may influence the Suez Canal, post Basar Sriya is on the verge of disintegration, Xi is waiting for the right time to have a deal with U.S. on Taiwan, Tibet and South China Sea, the Sahel region in under the influence of Putin to the extent of loosening their national identity for pan Russian identity, central Africa is under the plague of ‘continuous civil wars, having unprecedented violence, the terrorist organisation now have territorial positions to govern as per their perverted dictates of Shariya to run their business and trade with sovereign states, has put the world on the path of new ‘national contract’ on the lines of ‘social contact’ where the every state is trying to maximise its expansion and minimises the retardation.

The classical realist’s inevitable and irreversible assertion on ‘relations of control’ defined in terms of ‘power’ is modified by the neo-realist by replacing power with ‘capability’, emphasising the ‘distribution of capabilities’ constraint by the synchronic international anarchy.⁸ Trump remains equivocal about dismantling the “Allied Burden Sharing Dilemma”⁹, encouraging the U.S. allies to do more for their security and spend more for collective defence, thus balancing allied self-reliance and maintaining dominant influence over them. The call for the European Union (EU) and Britain to take own responsibility for security- No more freebies of security, and proposals of equal burden sharing of expanses of NATO as Elon Musk, whom many political analysts called the Capitalist de-facto President, calls for the U.S. to leave redundant NATO and the UN is directing towards the new big game of geopolitics to establish a new ‘system of international relations’ which recognises and respects the new realities of complex power matrixes. Elon Musk, also the head of the newly founded Department of Government Efficiency or DOGE, emphasises Professor Amir Ali of the Centre for Political Studies (CPS-JNU), is promoting the ‘Platform Capitalism and Free Speech Absolutism’ encouraging the ‘marketing of Islamophobia’ in the freely flowing ‘marketplace of Ideas’ seeking to revive the ‘White Supremacy’ of the western world.¹⁰

New global right-wing triumphing leaders have now blurred the distinction between ‘leader’ and ‘regime’ and smashed the world order, targeting its neo-imperialistic policies that have led to their rise on the wave of populism to restore their national identity of prominence. However, the New ‘Estimated’ Global Order could not be free from the ‘Western Hegemony’ even after a visible publicised rift between the close strategic alliance between America and Europe, the strategic imperative to counter the Russia-China Alliance will make both the U.S. and Europe to make them work in close tandem. The countries of the Global South are devoid of ‘Cards’ to blunt the sharper edge of Trump’s Foreign Policy which wields “unmatched influence, setting agenda and shaping [new] international rules”¹¹, nevertheless the Trums present an opportunity for them to take their share in the new ‘global contract’ earnings from new Trade and Technology wars.

‘EXCEPTIONALISM’ AND OPPORTUNITY FOR INDIA

Dennis Kux provided realistic descriptions and discrepancies of the relationship between India and the United States from the days of the Second World War to the end of the Cold War as ‘India and the United States: Estranged Democracies 1941 -1991’ categorically concluded in 1993 that the U.S. as a global

power pursuing its global interests has to need India less than “India has needed the United States”¹². The 9/11 Al-Qaida attack on the U.S. marked a strategic shift in its foreign policy towards the Middle East and South Asia, and the ‘War on Terror’ has a conscious policy initiative of ‘mobilising and strengthening the democracy’, in which the U.S. naturally recognised India- the largest functioning democracy in the world as a natural strategic partner.¹³ Indo-US civil nuclear deal of 2005, or the 123 deal, and the U.S. push for India's membership to nuclear regimes after India signed the first foundational defence agreement, the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) in 2002 led to India receiving the status of ‘major defence partner’ with Strategic Trade Authorization-1 (STA-1) in 2016 and signing of Logistic Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA).¹⁴ After the revival of Quad in 2017 and the signing of the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) in 2018, the estranged democracies became strategically engaged democracies with the partnership between India and the U.S. being upgraded to ‘Comprehensive and Global Strategic Partnership’ in 2020 with the inking of Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) triggered by the Chinese aggression in Golan Heights.¹⁵

J. N. Dixit in the chapter titled ‘Tasks Ahead: Challenges for India’s Foreign Policy’ of his classical text ‘India’s Foreign Policy 1947-2003’, categorically mentioned that the eternal challenge to India’s foreign policy is to counter the “unpredictability of interstate and intersocietal relations”¹⁶ since the international relations will remain “involved”¹⁷ subjected to the unruly human behaviour. A U.S. centric budgetary tariff regime [Indian Budget 2025-26] to conciliate the agnostic President Trump before the Prime Minister visited the White House in the disquieting diplomatic winters of 2025 when the world leaders trying to learn the handling and holding the ‘Lagrange point’ of divergent national interests in chaotically disseminated order of geopolitics displayed the maturity of India’s diplomatic depths. Trump's provocative assertions on the issues of having a ‘reciprocal tariff’ on India and deporting with humiliation illegal immigrants to India and India’s reconciliatory response is an acknowledgement of Indian policymakers looking ahead for their quest, in terms of Schaffer and Schaffer, for the Indian ‘Quest for Regional Primacy and Strategic Autonomy’.

The higher reciprocal tariffs, if and when applied, will indeed help in enhancing the global competitiveness of Indian agriculture, manufacturing and trade prospects, aligning towards ‘make in India’ and a developed Bharat by 2047. India is already a key strategic partner and occupies the central position, if not an ally, in the geopolitical and geo-economic strategic construct of Indo-Pacific, I2U2, QUAD, IMEC, Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF), U.S.- India COMPACT¹⁸ (Catalysing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology). ‘Mission 500’¹⁹ is envisioned to double the total bilateral trade to 500 billion dollars by 2030, and the progression of the Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) will strengthen the bilateral and multilateral ‘estimated coordination’ based on mutual benefits.

CONCLUSION

Henry Kissinger, in his celebrated ‘World Order’, while advancing the philosophical and geopolitical role of America in shaping the post-Cold War world order, which has to be acquired through a ‘series of intermediary’ stages, accepted that the world order cannot be achieved by any one country acting alone.²⁰ Margaret Macmillan, Professor Emeritus of International History at Oxford, in his ‘Stress Test’, while pondering on the questions: Will Trump Change the World? Can a Troubled Order Survive a Disruptive Leader? Concludes that “Americans are ...tired of being the world’s policeman”²¹; however, the policy of ‘U.S. withdrawal’ and the continued rise of right-wing nationalist leaders in Europe will only erode the liberal international order that facilitated America and Europe. This coincided with the arrival of the

moment of the 'Rise of the Rest' with bursting the balloon of 'Big Bangs of IR'. The strategic silence of Trump on China and Taiwan and, the pause on Tibet, is delicate Chess-Board diplomacy to not only bifurcate the growing China- Russia and Europe- Russia- China relations but to checkmate them bilaterally to have American means and ways. Donald Trump's assertion to Volodymyr Zelensky in the strategically calibrated 'Diplomatic Disaster' of the Oval Office on February 28, 2025, that 'You don't have the Cards right now' will become the new baseline for the conduct of foreign policy and global relations, and EUs 'Coalitions of the Willing' has neither the wherewithal nor the resources to replace the U.S.

Constructive destruction of the post-WW-2 Western order under the pseudocode of liberal internationalism and rechristening a truly global order reflecting the realities of the second quarter of 21st-century globalised societies indicates that the only thing consistent in geopolitics is its dynamism and fluctuation synchronisation with the new realities of realpolitik. The post-1945 world order has lived its utility for more than seven decades, and its rupture is inevitable given the radical strategic shifts and geopolitical gambling with emerging powers that have already emerged and erstwhile hegemons struggling to maintain a position of prominence in the new estimation of calculations of power and interests. Multilateralism and multilateral institutions may help make fundamental geopolitical transformation more legitimise and less chaotic; consequently, the United Nations will either reform itself or become redundant. The Trump turmoil shouldn't have meaning, nature and outcome determined in advance, as it remains an open question, consistently submitted to critical scrutiny; however, India is silently spearheading the global flux to gain a respectful position in the committees of nations.

ENDNOTES

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