

After the cold war ■ By Longin Pastusiak

# We need to build a new world order

**A** s the world stands at the threshold of the 21st century, the question is, will we sink into chaos or will we be able to create an international order? If I use strong words to present the alternatives it is only to encourage everyone to seek a solution to Henry Kissinger's diagnosis that "today's world is in a state of revolutionary disarray."

Unfortunately, contemporary politicians are so preoccupied with resolving current tensions and conflicts that they ignore a more ambitious goal, the creation of the new world order.

In the past, new international orders were established as a result of great wars — by the Treaty of Westphalia after the Thirty Years War, by the Congress of Vienna after the Napoleonic wars, by the Treaty of Versailles after World War I, at Yalta and Potsdam after World War II. Keeping in step with this history, a new world order should have been established after the cold war.

The notion is not new. Among contemporary politicians who have most often referred to the need for a new order was the first President George Bush. From the summer of 1990 to March 1991, he used the term "new world order" 43 times.

Unfortunately, however, the end of the cold war has only created more instability, more security challenges and more sources of international conflict. On the other hand, it has also created extraordinary opportunities for solving many problems resulting from the tension inherent to a bipolar world system.

When, in the early 1990's, the American political scientist Francis Fukuyama called the end of the cold war "the end of history," few initially thought of challenging that idea. It soon became clear, however, that instead of "the end of history" we were actually dealing with "a return to history," that is, a revival of traditional, historical sources of tension and international conflict. That trend is ironically called the "return to the future."

This is the general diagnosis. The long-range therapy should be the creation of a new world order.

That means defining the long-term economic, technological, military and sociopolitical trends that will decide the shape of future international relations. It includes all the dramatic transformations that are taking place as a result of the end of the cold war — the disintegration of the bipolar world system and cooperation rather than confrontation between recent ideological adversaries. The term "new world

order" also covers the emerging international system and the need to create a new balance of power, as well as new structures.

An important role in the new global order should be played by the United Nations — reformed and adapted to the new world balance of power, and to new challenges and threats. The new world order must be equipped with an effective instrument in the form of an international military force. That force must constitute a reliable deterrent to any potential aggressor who might think of using his army as a tool for pursuing political objectives.

The new world order also means a higher role for diplomacy and diplomatic techniques of international conflict resolution. It means shifting the emphasis

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from military to diplomatic methods. Arms reduction will continue to be an important component of the new world order agenda.

Many believe that the most effective way of ensuring world peace and stability is by way of the universal introduction of liberal free-market capitalism. The first President Bush often stressed the importance of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in shaping the new global order. Summit meetings of the Group of Eight most-industrialized countries have replaced the old superpower summit conferences.

The new order is often seen as a way of providing the world with more stability and security. But democratization and the growing struggle for sovereignty in various parts of the world to date have contributed more to a rise of tension and conflicts, more often internal than international (as in Yugoslavia, the former Soviet Union and Africa), than to stabilizing the situation. World stability must be treated as a desired long-term goal. In a shorter period, we must concentrate on constructing organizational mechanisms and tools meant to prevent aggressions.

If a global security system cannot be established, then we should aim at establishing regional security

systems. At present, we only have one effective Euro-Atlantic security system, based on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. But that system does not even cover all of Europe. Regions such as Asia, Africa and Latin America, which are less stable than Europe, have not established any regional security structures. The establishment of regional security and cooperation systems seems to be a desirable and feasible mid-term objective.

I have the impression that politicians are so busy with day-to-day affairs that they have forgotten about future generations. The ambitious task of formulating a new order for the future is awaiting a person, group or country that will be able to raise it in intellectual and political terms and give it an international dimension. The issue is live and urgent.

But I would like to stress that the new world order should not be the creation of one superpower, regardless of how strong it is at a given moment in history. Under the democratic principles that formally govern international relations, that task should be assumed by all players on the world political stage, even if it is obvious that the qualitative weight of individual states differs greatly.

The United States is in possession of the largest number of assets among all countries: the largest economy, the most formidable military, the greatest technological and financial potential, as well as the strongest political, ideological and cultural influence. Its budget and trade deficits, as well as domestic tensions, restrict U.S. involvement in the world, and its unilateralism does not contribute to its international prestige. But no country other than the United States can bring such a combination of so-called hard and soft power — political, economic, diplomatic, ideological, cultural and military might — to bear on world politics.

In the last decade the world has changed faster and more profoundly than in the entire period from 1945 to 1989. Today we know that the old world order has broken down and is disappearing, and that a new world order is only beginning to emerge. But it is emerging very slowly, too slowly. Time will not work in favor of the new order if it is not accompanied by a harmonized international effort. Today it is not enough to think and to dream about a better, more predictable and more secure world. Today we must act. Act locally, but think globally.

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